

THE
LIFE, ADVENTURES,
AND
CONFESSIONS
OF A
SYDNEY BARMAID.




The poor Barmaid having a little bit of supper after
her hard day's work.

SYDNEY :
PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHERS,
By E. T. Radcliffe, 44 Campbell Street, Sydney

All Rights Reserved.

THE COLLECTION
OF
JOYCE THORPE NICHOLSON
Feminist, author and mother
Books by and about
AUSTRALIAN WOMEN



Presented to the Baillieu Library
University of Melbourne
A.D. 2000

variant to
Feg. 11632 - [1891?]
in imprint &
wrapper

303/110

[SYDNEY BARMAID] \$725-



THE
LIFE, ADVENTURES,
AND
CONFESSIONS
OF A
SYDNEY BARMAID

With Portrait.

SYDNEY:
PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHER.

By E. T. Radcliffe, 44 Campbell-street.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

THE
LIFE, ADVENTURES,

Etc., Etc.

I was born in the month of December, 1860, in one of a terrace or row of houses off Kent-street, Sydney, my father being a fireman on a coastal steamer, long since wrecked. My mother, in addition to attending to her ordinary household duties, filled up her time in doing the washing of anyone who was kind enough to patronise her. She earned a good deal of money by those means, but I am sorry to say that it did neither myself or my two brothers much good, as a very considerable portion of it found its way into the coffers of the publican at the corner, my father ably seconding my mother in her endeavours to become an "expert" on the merits of that generous beverage colonial beer, or, as my elder brother facetiously called it, "colonial squirts!" This same brother was a bit of a wag in his way, and often amused me by his quaint sayings and witticisms. He christened the big brown jug in which the beer was always brought from the public-house the "regular trader," and I remember him on one occasion telling an old lady who was assisting my mother to put a quart of the nectar out of sight, and who remarked that it was "very good beer," that she ought to be a good judge, as she was a regular "common sewer"—or "connoisseur"—he did not know which was the more correct word. This lad, who at

the time I speak of was about fourteen years of age, got acquainted with some theatricals of a minor grade, and afterwards took French leave of his relatives to try his fortune with them. Poor fellow! I never heard of him since, but he may turn up some day when least expected. My other brother, who was my senior by a year, proved to be a very steady young man. He is strictly temperate, works hard as his trade (a carpenter), has a good wife, and is rearing an awfully large family.

At an early age I was sent to school, and in the course of a few years managed to become tolerably proficient in what the bush schoolmaster of a past generation called the three R's—reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic. When I arrived at the age of twelve years my mother said it was time I did something for my living, so the "Wanted" columns of the *Herald* were eagerly scanned on my behalf, with the ultimate result that I was duly installed as nurse-girl in the establishment of a medical gentleman in that part of Liverpool-street overlooking Hyde Park, and which some years afterwards I found out was nicknamed, no doubt in compliment to the many surgeons and dentists living there, "Butchers' Row!" I stayed with this family a little over two years, and was very kindly treated by the lady of the house, who made me several presents of cast-off finery, which were worked up by my mother for my adornment. My mistress often complimented me on my personal appearance, and this circumstance somewhat put high notions into my head, and made me think that I was destined to distinguish myself in a grade somewhat higher than that of a menial. My fellow-servants also were very kind to me, the cook, a kind-hearted buxom old Englishwoman, particularly so, she often pleasantly telling me that I was "the makings of a regular lady!" At this time I was rather tall for my age and (so people told me) good-looking. €

My mistress having granted me a holiday, my mother, to whom I faithfully delivered up my earnings, took me with her to the house of a fortune-teller in Woolloomooloo for the purpose of having "the cards read" for her. This having been done to my mother's satisfaction, the descendant of Mother Shipton, whose nose and chin almost met together like a nut-cracker, volunteered for a little refreshment in the shape of a shilling's worth of gin to give me an insight into the future, so far as related to myself. The old dame predicted that I would be brought into contact with rich gentlemen—(a prognostication which, as my mother afterwards said, was rather vague and required explanation)—most of whom would fall in love with me, and more than one "pop the question." She did not say whom I would ultimately marry, but assured me that my prospects were very bright, and wound up by saying that although I would be beset by many a wolf in sheep's clothing, I would come out of the ordeal spotless, and marry the best of the lot!

This intelligence sent both of us away in high spirits; my mother, who was a firm believer in the tribe, expressing her admiration of the old crone's ability as a seer. The amount of money spent by women and girls in this line is really astonishing. I have in my time known girls to consult these people two or three times a week on a variety of topics, such as love, marriage, future prospects, and also their physical condition, their belief in the "science" being unbounded. Many fortune-tellers are also lady physicians, in a sort of a way, and several of the younger and good-looking ones combine with their prognosticating another profession—one that is very easily learnt.

Shortly after this my mother instructed me to demand from my mistress an increase of salary. I do not know whether or not the lady was at this particular time pressed

by her costumier for payment of an account due; but this I do know, that when I mentioned the rise, her temper rose to such a pitch that I was glad to beat a hasty retreat. My mistress appeared to be frequently in trouble over money matters, and the doctor and her had frequent altercations on the subject; he was also troubled by the green-eyed monster, an aristocratic looking individual, who frequently called when master was on his rounds, being the cause of the trouble. A violent scene took place on one occasion, the whole of the domestics being greedy listeners. After a good deal of recrimination on both sides, the doctor, before leaving his wife's presence, finally discharged his bile by yelling at her: "He's as much your cousin as I am!" It was said in the kitchen that "master had a man from a Private Inquiry Office watching missus!"

On my next visit to my mother I reported progress, with the result that I was shortly afterwards brought home, and in a few days transferred to a grand house in Macquarie street North, where I was half-starved, overworked, and had always considerable difficulty in getting what little I earned. I stopped at this place about eight months, at the end of which time I returned home to attend on my mother, who had become so unwell from some internal complaint that she was unable to leave her bed for a considerable period. I must say that during my mother's illness my father's conduct was nearly all that could be desired. He brought home the greater part of his earnings, and indulged more modestly in what he apologetically termed "quenchers." "My dear," said he to me on one occasion, "you must not think too hard of your poor father for taking an odd glass or so of beer"—(he generally took *pints*)—"firemen are a thirsty lot, their occupation makes them so."

My mother having regained her health, it was necessary

that I should look out for another situation. I was now over fifteen, tall, and—(may I be pardoned for saying so?)—prepossessing in appearance. After a solemn deliberation, at which my brother and self were present, it was decided that I should seek a position as an assistant in a shop or hotel and eschew menial labour altogether. "You were never made for rough work, my dear," said my mother, "besides the pay will be much better." I cordially acquiesced in the decision, and the compact was affirmed by the "regular trader" previously mentioned being despatched to the corner for a bumper to give a proper finish to the proceedings.

The following morning I procured a copy of the *Herald*, and quickly scanning the proper column, my eye caught the following advertisement:—

WANTED a respectable young person as
Barmaid; one who has not been out
before not objected to. Apply — Hotel,
King-street.

This was just the advertisement that suited me; so having read it to my mother, I lost no time in having breakfast and getting ready for an application. Being possessed of a fair stock of tolerably good clothing, &c., and having at my first place acquired the art of dressing with some little degree of taste, I made a presentable figure as I called at the hostelry in question. I found that several young persons were there before me, but as the lady of the house had not yet come down, that fact did not make much matter. While waiting for the arrival of the "missus," I had a good opportunity of studying the girls who were about to compete with me for the billet. One was a coarse-looking lump, who stared insolently at me, and remarked to her friend that "that one would never do," another (the friend alluded to) seemed to be more of

a floor-scrubber than a barmaid, and was probably one of those young ladies who advertise in the papers for a "situation as housemaid and to assist in the bar." There was one very decent-looking girl—a fragile young creature, who evidently felt uncomfortable, it being most likely the first time she was ever in a public-house, at least in the character of an applicant for a situation. The other young persons were evidently "out before," as they seemed quite at home and chatted pleasantly to each other. At length Mrs. — came down, and seeing us standing in the hallway, called us into a back parlour, and carefully scrutinised us. Without speaking to anyone she went behind the bar and spoke to a girl who was busily engaged in polishing the brasswork. After a few minutes, the girl came into the room where the applicants were assembled and informed us that the "missus" was ready to interview us in the front parlour, but that only one at a time was to go in. The bold faced lady immediately pushed herself forward and marched to the room in question; but the conversation between herself and Mrs. — lasted but a few minutes, and resulted unsatisfactorily to the "maid." I was next called in, and having truthfully answered all the questions put to me, the landlady requested me to go back to the room where I came from, as she thought I would suit, and she merely wished to speak to the others "for form's sake." About ten minutes sufficed to interview the remainder, and all got sent about their business except the quiet young person, who rejoined me. The missus then came and spoke to us, telling my young friend that she was afraid she was too inexperienced for the duties, but that if she would leave her address she would probably be communicated with. The landlady appeared to have some compassion for the girl on account of her youth, and regaled her with a biscuit and a bottle of gingerbeer

previous to her departure. I was then formally engaged at 15s. per week, my employer promising me an increase of salary after a short probation. I was to commence my duties on the following morning. I then went home and informed my parents of what had taken place, and having packed up my valuables, waited till the evening for my departure. I arrived at the hotel about 9 p.m., and was shown to a very neat little bedroom by a rosy-faced domestic named "Jinny," who in the space of about fifteen minutes told me the history of everyone connected with the place, adding that my predecessor got the "sack" for having been caught "kissing the master," who, the girl informed me, was a "very nice man, but who dursn't call his soul his own, as the missus was very jealous, and watched him like a cat watching a mouse!" Up to this time I had not seen the gay Lothario; but I made up my mind to be very circumspect in my conduct towards him.

The girl having taken her leave, I retired to rest, and after cogitating on hotels, jealous landladies, bars, toffs, rich old swells, marriage, money, jewellery, carriages, and a host of other things, fell off into a deep slumber, not awakening until the sun of a bright summer's morning was glittering through my bedroom window.

Having dressed and made a hasty toilet, I was taken in charge by my friend of the previous night and initiated into the mysteries of a bar. These may be readily understood, and need not be here recapitulated. Notwithstanding it was my first attempt, I got on very well, the landlord complimenting me on my success. "It's like billiards," he said; "some get into the way of it all at once, while others make a very poor attempt, and never become proficient."

I had not been many minutes in the bar before I was called on to serve several customers, and this I did under the superintendence of Jinny, to that young lady's satis-

faction. I found no difficulty in dispensing the fluids; in fact, to me it was an easy matter, notwithstanding that my previous knowledge in that line did not extend beyond my visits to the public-house where my maternal relative purchased her beer.

After a week or so I began to be somewhat interested in my customers. There was one gentleman who came regularly every morning for his whiskey, and whose hand shook like an aspen leaf. He was, I believe, a teacher of music, and he confidentially informed me on one occasion that he could do nothing until he had imbibed a couple of "rosiners!" he said they put life in him. Another individual—a builder's foreman, or something of that sort—came in punctually for a tonic in the shape of a gill of rum, which he generally polished off at one gulp, he seldom making two bites at his cherry. Many patronised "long beers," swallowing pint after pint without any visible effect. I have seen a man pour six pints of beer down his throat within an hour, and then steadily leave the hotel to follow his occupation as a navvy. Beer does not seem to be so injurious to the system as spirits. The regular tipplers generally come to a bad or untimely end. Many of them

Go mad and beat their wives,
Plunge, after shocking lives,
Razors and carving knives
Into their gizzards.

There were many others who came regularly for their "morning,"—from the professional man to the street sweeper, each with the same object—the satisfying of an unnatural desire for a stimulant.

There was a second bar attached to the premises. It was upstairs, and fitted up in rather elegant style—mirrors, vases, flowers, pictures and statues of semi and wholly nude females, &c. The furniture was luxurious,

consisting of i laid tables, soft-seated chairs, an ottoman, and a magnificent spring couch, capacious enough to comfortably accommodate two.

The goddess who presided over this temple of Bacchus and Venus was an elegant but rather massive lady, about twenty-seven years of age, who had evidently moved in a superior station of life previous to her hotel engagements. She dressed sumptuously and with good taste, spoke several languages, and played very nicely on the piano, at least the gentleman who drank the "rosiners" told me so. She did not reside on the premises, her nest being somewhere in the neighbourhood of Woollahra, whither she was driven every night—often in the "wee small hours—in a cab, being generally accompanied by some well-to-do looking customer. She seldom arrived at the hotel before 11 a.m., the place being made ready for her reception. Her patrons were not numerous in the day-time. I do not know what the arrangements were between herself and the proprietor of the hotel; but there was a great deal of champagne and other expensive wines consumed in the room, and I once heard the landlady say that Miss — was the "mainstay of the house." She encouraged none but solid customers, that is, men to whom a five-pound note would be of little moment; and she exhibited a profound contempt for that small salaried class known by the generic term of "barbers' clerks." She was kind to all the servants, the "boots" assuring me on one occasion that she was "a perfect brick!" Sometimes she would shut the door of her room for an hour or more, and from the laughing and gay chattering going on, it was evident that she and her guests were enjoying themselves.

I had now been employed as a barmaid for five weeks, and saw and felt nothing very attractive in the occupation; in fact, I considered myself harder worked than the house-

maid; but as I was located in the common "dispensary," and had to attend to every guzzler who could raise a three-penny piece, and at the same time assume a pleasant look which often belied my inward feelings, it was only natural that I felt dissatisfied and wished for a change to the "realms above." One of my customers, a fast young bank clerk, who has since "done" four years for allowing his employers' money boxes to leak, assured me that I was only wasting my time in my present situation, as I could do much better by following in the footsteps of my fashionable friend up stairs, who, he said, was "coining money!" On one occasion I gave the missus a hint of my feelings on the subject, adding, in a good-humoured way, that I was sorry she had not another private bar—one that I could take charge of. "My dear," said she, "I do not wonder at your wish to better yourself; but to be candid with you, you are only acquiring experience in the profession; have a little patience; by-and-bye you will be all right." If she had said *all wrong*, she would have been more of a prophetess. Later in the day she informed me that my salary would be increased to £1 per week, it being the opinion of herself and her "old man" that I was deserving of encouragement.

Nothing very unusual took place for about three weeks, when one afternoon we were all suddenly thrown into a state of excitement and alarm in consequence of a violent altercation taking place in the private bar, accompanied by the upsetting of furniture and smashing of glassware. Such was the noise made that a crowd gathered and a general rush up stairs took place. The door was, however, locked, and the mob, for it was nothing better, had to be content with listening to the choice recriminatory language that wafted itself through the keyhole. At length the landlord demanded admittance, and no heed

being taken of his request, the door was burst open, revealing a strange scene. A tall, gentlemanly looking man, minus his coat, and bleeding from a wound in his forehead, stood in the centre of the room. Miss — was sitting on a chair, gasping for breath and disarranged in more respects than one; the furniture was nearly all upset, and everything betokened a recent savage struggle. Notwithstanding that an explanation was repeatedly asked for, none was vouchsafed, and the crowd descended to the street, each individual giving his (very chaste) explanation of the cause of the row, which for the remainder of the evening was the chief topic of conversation in the front bar.

The landlady had a long interview with Miss —, but nothing came of it, and as the latter did not turn up on the following day, the former took charge for the occasion. The day after that a highly scented pink-enveloped note came from the fair creature, who had resigned her charge and recommended as her successor a young person known to both parties. This lady was duly installed, but was not a success, the takings from that part of the house becoming "small by degrees and beautifully less." The loss of business begat a loss of temper on the part of both my employers, and on one occasion the boss insinuated very strongly that the receipts were less than they should be. As this was an almost direct accusation against me of pilfering, I gave him a bit of my mind and notice to leave at the same time, and three days afterwards bade adieu to the — Hotel.

It may interest some of my fair readers when I state the fact that during my comparatively short stay at my first hotel I received no less than three offers of marriage. One was from the clerk of an attorney whose offices were in Elizabeth-street, and the others came from two specimens

of the "bone and sinew," who were engaged on a building in course of erection in the neighbourhood. I have not the least doubt that the offers were genuine; but as I had previously made up my mind to fly at higher game, the proposal of each of those ardent youths was kindly but firmly rejected. It is nothing unusual for a barmaid with any pretensions to good looks to get an offer of marriage; but the men we want won't marry us, and the men that would marry us we would not have. I have, however, known one or two instances in which a girl hooked a junior bank clerk or so, but the position of neither party was much benefitted thereby. A rich old landowner, or a gold-miner with a payable claim, is what we desire most.

After spending a few weeks at home, I took a situation at another house in King-street. The proprietor was a foreigner, and in addition to his wife, there were about fifteen females to do the work of three, the house being a small one. It was what is known as a "night house," and being near one of the entrances to the Theatre Royal, did a good business after the performances were over. I have seen the place crowded up to about three in the morning, the authorities not being then so strict as they are now. The outside public can have no idea of the scenes enacted in that and similar establishments in the neighbourhood dignified by the euphonious title of "Cafés;" suffice it to say that at the time I speak of they were little better than houses of assignation, the majority of the girls being sly strumpets. It was part of the latter's duty to incite the men to call for drink, bottled stuff being in most request. Should a gentleman show a tardiness in taking the hint, one of the Hebes would coolly approach him, and seating herself on his knee, and throwing her arms around his neck, the order would be coaxed out of him in what is

called a "jiffy." When woman pleads (in a certain way) who can resist?

On several occasions I was taken to task by my employer for not being "energetic" enough. He said that I was possessed of good looks, and he wished me to make the most of them—to his advantage, he might have added. But paying little heed to what he said, I quietly pursued the even tenor of my way and let the others do the kissing and coaxing business. I saw quite enough in that establishment to open my eyes, the conversation of the girls being quite *recherché*. When one takes a situation in a house of that sort for the first time, she is at the commencement shocked, then inquisitive, afterwards begins to relish the dishes served up to her, and finally takes everything as a matter of course.

It may be thought by the uninitiated that our visitors and night birds were all young bloods out for a lark. Nothing of the sort! There was the hoary-headed old sharebroker, who might be seen on any Sunday in the year marching solemnly to church, with a sackfull of bibles and prayer-books under his arm; he was not insensible to a good glass of wine or P.B., particularly when served up by a charming young creature, who added *zest* to the "nip" by sitting in his lap and playfully toying with his whiskers. No, certainly not. Then his bloated friend the land agent, auctioneer, and what not; he, too, was killed with work, and saw no harm in spending an hour or so in such good company; besides, it was too late to go home now, and he would try and get a "shake-down" somewhere.

Who is that personification of wickedness in spectacles over there, talking to the girl in muslin so thin that you could read the prospectus of a swindling mining company through it? Oh, that is one of the partners of the celebrated firm of Nogold, Stamper, and Co., who in the space

of about a twelvemonth got up nine companies under the No-Liability Act, every one of which was wound up in liquidation. He is making lots of "tin," and does not mind circulating a little of it in seeing "life."

The rich shopkeeper, the saintly chairman of the social purity meeting, the spouter at temperance soirees, the great biblical authority who in the absence of the pastor (most likely "suffering a recovery") frequently fills the pulpit; the elderly merchant, with his spotless white vest and gold eye-glass; the barrister, in want of a "refresher;" the doctor, seeking a "subject;" the legislator, desirous of personally investigating matters; the architect, carrying out his plans; the attorney, like a sly old fox, watching his opportunity; the bank manager, taking an interest in matters collateral; the commission agent; aye, and even the man in "holy orders" (and disguise)—all patronised this haven of temporary rest and pleasure.

These old sinners are, as a rule, gregarious; you seldom find them in such a place at night without a companion or two of about their own age. In the day time, however, they each and severally spend many a quiet and pleasant hour in a private bar with the object of their "love," or whatever else you may call it.

In proof of the fact that clergymen are to be found amongst our admirers, I need only refer to an extracted paragraph that recently appeared in several colonial papers, to the effect that a great clerical scandal had lately disturbed the serenity of the Glasgow church people:—"The well-known minister of a large parish died a short time since, and nearly all his reverend brethren in and around the city preached elaborate funeral discourses, in which they deplored his loss and descanted upon his virtues. It now turns out, however, that this pious pastor was something of a whited sepulchre, for he bequeathed the bulk of his

property to a Glasgow barmaid, while his widow is left nearly destitute."

After spending about three months in this den, I left for the purpose of joining another girl in the lesseeship of a private bar in Castlereagh-street. We paid a rather stiff rent per week, getting the liquor at a certain rate, and charging a certain price to our customers, the difference being ours. We got on very well for a few weeks, when we quarrelled, my partner deploring my want of tact in pushing the trade, and I retorting by accusing her of making the bar the medium of her own private little game. In answer to this she said I was long enough at the business to know on which side my bread was buttered, and advised me either to do as she did or abandon the profession altogether. We continued together until the termination of the time agreed on between the landlord and ourselves, he having reserved the right to make other arrangements should he so desire. We then dissolved partnership. My friend, who was about twenty-three years of age, once informed me that she was connected in one way or another with public-houses since she was ten. She certainly was an adept at her trade, and I would give odds in her favour for cold-heartedness and ability in extracting the last coin from her infatuated patrons. There are some girls who have a little compassion for their victims, but this one had none. She was for ever begging gloves, handkerchiefs, bottles of scent, jewellery, money, &c., from gentlemen. She was disgustingly insatiable.

There is not at most times much difficulty in a good-looking, experienced girl getting a situation in a hotel. Customers like a change, and landlords knowing this are always on the look-out for a fresh face. I therefore had no difficulty in getting another position. This time it was on a salary at a respectable hotel in George-street. In the

bar there was another girl, who dressed very stylishly, considering the salary she got; she also wore a profusion of jewellery. But "the cat was let out of the bag" in a very unexpected manner. One of the housemaids being engaged in cleaning her room, and observing a new dress hanging on a peg, minutely examined the article with admiration, and seeing a very small pocket in an unusual place, her curiosity was aroused, and a farther examination disclosed a second similar receptacle in another part. The "slavey" dropped to it all at once, and communicated the discovery to a sister domestic, who in her turn informed the missus, and the latter consulted her husband. The barmaid was immediately summoned into the presence of her accusers; the dress was produced, no satisfactory explanation was given, and the culprit was ordered to pack up and depart at once. It seemed that she was in the habit of pilfering small sums throughout the day, concealing the amounts in the secret pockets, which she emptied on visiting her room. Before the introduction of the "cash register" pilfering by employés was carried on to a great extent, the theft being difficult of detection and proof; and even since the introduction of those machines the landlord does not get all he should.

People often wonder how it is that barmaids dress so grandly. There are, say, three ways of doing it. The first is honestly: should a girl get a good salary and spend everything she earns on dress, she may keep up a good appearance. The second plan is the mode adopted by the young lady with the secret pockets. And the third way—well, the third way can only be alluded to inferentially. I lately heard an experienced young person affirm that the "register" was the cause of much immorality!

While in this situation I became acquainted with a gentleman about thirty years of age. He was a regular

visitor to the house, and occasionally had his meals there. At first he would merely approach the bar and call for what he required. After a while he passed the compliments of the day, his manner never being obtrusive. By degrees he became chatty and friendly, and on several occasions invited me to accompany him to the theatre, which invitation I once accepted. A short time after that I went with him to Botany, it being a Sunday. Whilst walking about the grounds there he proposed that I should become his wife, stating that it was his intention to take a trip to England should I accede to his request, adding that he was in a good financial position. I had before this time reason to think that he intended to "pop the question," and had made up my mind to accept him; so giving him an encouraging though not final reply, we shortly afterwards left for town, he leaving me at the hotel in a kind and gentlemanly manner. The following day he called at a time he guessed I would not be very busy, and in the course of a hurried conversation I gave my consent. He then took his departure, but promised to call early the following morning. He did so, and it was arranged that we were to be married in a few days, the matter, at his request, being kept quiet.

Notwithstanding that everything seemed fair and square, I had some misgivings, and an uncomfortable feeling took possession of me on the morning of my intended marriage. I had previously asked for and obtained permission to absent myself from my duties, on the plea of urgent family affairs. My gentleman was waiting for me as I left the hotel, and we walked in the direction of Church Hill, where, he said, the clergyman who was to perform the ceremony resided. When near Margaret-street I saw two men, who were standing at the corner of Hunter-street, look at us in what I thought a very strange manner. After exchanging a

few words between themselves, they hurried across the street towards us, and one of them taking my intended husband by the arm, and addressing him by a name different to that by which he was known to me, said, "I want you!" My companion became deadly pale, and turning to me, said, "My dear, you had better return; I have some important business with these gentlemen; I will explain everything." But the detectives, for such they were, politely but firmly insisted that I should accompany them as far as the police station, adding that I should be allowed to depart as soon as I had answered them one or two questions. On our arrival at that place I was ushered into a room and requested to be seated. After the lapse of about ten minutes I heard several persons walking along a passage, then the unlocking and opening of a door, and the shutting and bolting of same. I was then escorted into an office where a man sat behind a desk, and questioned as to my relationship with the prisoner. I told the exact truth, which, I was afterwards informed, coincided with the statement of my unhappy friend, who, it seemed, had done his best to save me from further annoyance. After giving my name and address, and answering two or three unimportant questions, I was allowed to depart.

My would-be husband was brought up at the Court on the following day, charged with forgery, and committed for trial at the Criminal Sittings, to be holden in the ensuing month. He was found guilty, and received a heavy sentence.

This is an illustration of the many risks a girl runs in picking up chance acquaintances. I could give many such instances. I remember a case in which a very good, honest girl "kept company," as the saying goes, with a respectable looking young fellow, who was arrested on a charge of stealing jewellery, &c., from the very house where his

inamorata was employed, having previously wormed out of the confiding lass all the particulars about the residents. He had the baseness to say that he received the articles from the barmaid (his intended), and caused the poor thing much unhappiness. However, his story was not believed, and he received a well-merited sentence of six months' hard labour.

Girls cannot be too careful. But I suppose the men say the same thing—they are often taken in. I knew a waitress in one of the grand "coffee palaces" who was the virgin mamma of two very fine children. She was a dashing looking creature with long golden hair—(it cost her 7s. 6d. per week for the stuff that gave it the proper auriferous hue)—and was generally admired by the patrons of the establishment, both old and young. She "set her cap" at a spooney-looking but comfortably off and respectably connected young fellow, and successfully hooked him. They were married, and it was several months before he became aware of her little ante-nuptial trippings. The cream of the joke, however, lay in the fact that the beautiful tresses he had so much admired turned to their original dirty sandy-brown colour, the lady finding the 7s. 6d. per week a regular tax on her. Some girls with no pretence to physical beauty have in a great degree the art of "making themselves up." She was one of them.

I remained in this last situation a considerable time, and only left it through illness. I resided with my mother for several months; but I was not a burden to her, as I had accumulated a fair sum. Most girls spend their money as fast as they get it, but I had always a few pounds to lay my hands on.

As it was my intention to rent a private bar, I was on the look-out for one, and hearing of something that I thought would suit me, I lost no time in interviewing the

proprietor, who evidently meant business. He received me very courteously, but gave me to understand almost at the outset that he was a "man of the world," and had gone into the hotel line to make money, and that if I would work with him it would be much to my advantage. Having taken me upstairs and shown me the private bar, he eloquently dilated on its attractiveness. "Where," said he, "will you find one more elegantly fitted up?—nice pictures, beautiful mirrors, cut glassware, rich furniture"—(there was the usual massive spring couch there)—"strict seclusion, a lunch thrown in, and all for six quid a week. I will endeavour to further your interests in every possible way, and I don't think you will have cause to complain." Thus he rattled on. Being anxious to commence business again, I closed the bargain, giving him what he elegantly termed a "quid" as a deposit, the balance to be paid on the following morning, the terms being strictly in advance. The place was in Castlereagh-street, in the vicinity of the Theatre Royal. I took possession in due course, and for the first few weeks had no cause to complain. The landlord acted up to his promise in endeavouring to further my interests, as in making my advent known to his customers he extolled my mental and other virtues to the skies. Being possessed of good looks, and having acquired a courteous manner, I got along very well, many a bottle of champagne being opened to my health.

Notwithstanding the high rent I was paying, my pecuniary prospects were looking very bright, and I was beginning to look forward to the time when I could either leave the profession or arrange for a house on my own account. My plans, however, at least for a time, were knocked on the head by a circumstance that occurred during my fourth week's tenancy.

On the Monday evening, about half-past ten o'clock, I

was engaged in counting up the money, as my rent was due the following day, when two well-dressed men came into my bar. I had never seen them before, and did not like their looks; but thinking that they were sent up from below by the landlord, I got ready to attend to their orders. After serving them, I resumed my occupation of counting the money, when one of them informed me that a little girl was waiting at the head of the stairs with a parcel for me. Not thinking of anything wrong, I advanced towards the door, when I was suddenly seized from behind by one of the wretches who encircled my neck with his left arm, almost choking me, whilst his right hand prevented me from making any resistance. I quickly lost consciousness, and remembered nothing further until I awoke to the fact that a crowd of persons were about, one bathing my forehead with toilet vinegar, and the others doing what they could to bring me around. I was garotted and robbed, every shilling in my possession being taken, including the loose cash in the till, in all about £12. Nobody saw the men come in or go out, and I could give but a vague description of the miscreants.

I was so ill that I could not go home that night—(my residence being in the neighbourhood of Surry Hills)—and was therefore accommodated with a bed in the hotel. I fully intended to place the matter in the hands of the police, but the landlord advised me not to do so, as it would bring trouble on the house and do me no good; he also volunteered to bear half the loss. I agreed to this, and continued on as before; but the circumstance had a great effect on my constitution, and it was some time before I fully recovered my equanimity. I have reason to think that some "hanger on" of the hotel laid on the two men to rob me.

For some weeks after this occurrence things went on

smoothly enough, and I was beginning to recoup myself, when another event happened that upset me altogether, and caused me to resign my lesseeship in fear and disgust.

Amongst my patrons was an elegantly dressed and good-looking foreigner of about thirty-five years of age, who often would spend an hour or so in the bar, smoking a cigar and sipping claret, of which he always purchased a bottle. He was courteous and agreeable to a degree, and I never remember him saying anything of an offensive nature, a practice, I am sorry to say, quite common with frequenters of bars, both public and private. He did not appear to have had any acquaintances amongst my visitors, from whom he kept himself very much apart.

I had just opened the bar on one wet day, when he came in, and having made some remarks about the weather, he ordered a bottle of his favourite wine and seated himself at a small table. While placing the wine before him, he informed me that he had been purchasing some perfumery that morning, and wished to have my opinion of it. He produced an ordinary round scented bottle, and invited me to smell the contents. I did so, and immediately a strange feeling overcame me, and I became helpless and almost unconscious.

* * * * *

When I partly regained my senses, I found myself reclining on the couch and roughly shaken by the landlord, who inquired in a loud tone if anything was the matter? I did not answer him, but looked around the room, expecting to see someone else in it; but no other person beside the landlord and myself was there. The bottle of wine, which remained where I had placed it, was untouched, but the brute who ordered it was nowhere to be seen, and I never laid my eyes on him since.

I was so agitated with this occurrence that I left the place that very afternoon, notwithstanding the urgent appeal of the landlord not to "leave him in the lurch."

I need scarcely state that the circumstance I have just related upset me terribly. For fully a week I felt confused and dizzy, the effect, no doubt, of the stuff which my foreign acquaintance induced me to inhale. I lost my appetite, and felt so nervous that the slightest sound startled me. However, being of a strong constitution and rather sanguine temperament, I recovered by degrees, and began to look around for another opening. This came quickly in the shape of an advertisement for a barmaid in a superior house, where I had called on a previous occasion only to find that the situation was filled up, but was given a promise to be remembered in the future. On presenting myself this time, I was spoken to very kindly by the proprietor, who complimented me on my general appearance and engaged me at once, remarking at the time that I was just the girl he was on the look-out for. I was to take charge of the private bar, at a salary more liberal than any I had previously received, I retaining the right to sleep away from the premises.

The customers in my department were a rather superior lot, most of them being connected in one way or another with wholesale houses or large business establishments.

Amongst the regular visitors was an elderly gentleman of the "white vest and gold eye-glass" genus, who seemed to take a great fancy to me, and frequently brought me bouquets, having heard me on one occasion say that I was very fond of flowers. He came regularly every day, and seemed much pleased when he could indulge in a chat with me on the quiet. On one occasion I was agreeably astonished by his presenting me with a very handsome brooch, which could not have cost less than £10, saying at the

time that I was welcome to everything he had! The old gentleman was evidently "struck." In answer to a question of mine, he said he was a widower, but had a grown-up family, some of whom were engaged in the establishment of which he was the head.

I rather liked the old spark for his preference for me, as I believed it to be genuine; and on his next visit, when he began love-making, I told him that if his intentions were honorable I would gladly marry him, as I believed his disposition to be of a kindly nature. This offer of mine appeared to check his ardour, and he stammered out something about "offending his family," and shortly afterwards took his departure.

Contrary to his usual custom, he did not visit the bar for the next two days, and when he did come, there being no other customer present, he came to the point at once. He said he had duly considered matters, and provided the marriage could be kept a secret from his family, he saw no reason why it should not take place,—of course, if I were still agreeable.

I may state that in the interval of the two days I made inquiries as to my admirer's position, and found them to be all I could desire; so telling him that I would obey his wishes to the letter, and appointing a time and place of meeting on the following Sunday, I allowed him to impress a chaste salute on my lips, which sent him away in a state of ecstasy. He was "struck," awfully "struck!"

True to his appointment, he met me on the Sunday, and giving me £20 to buy a wedding-ring and any little nick-nacks I might require, he informed me that he had taken a furnished house at Waverley, and made every arrangement for our approaching nuptials, which were to take place at 11 a.m. on the following day. We had dinner in a hotel, and after a drive round the Domain

as far as Lady Macquarie's Chair, we returned to the city, where he left the cab, enjoining me to be at a certain place at half-past ten on the Monday.

On reaching home I thought seriously over the situation, and firmly resolving to do my duty and be faithful to the man who was about to give me his name, I calmly awaited the final act.

Precisely at the time appointed he approached the place of rendezvous, and calling a cab, we were driven to the house of a Presbyterian minister in one of the suburbs. We were evidently expected, as "his reverence" was standing at the gate ready to receive us. No time was lost in performing the ceremony, the witnesses being the servant woman, and an old man who looked like a gardener. I saw my husband present the clergyman with two £5 notes, which were received with many thanks and bows. The witnesses also received a present, and both retired highly pleased. The minister having handed me the marriage certificate, with wishes for my happiness, we left for our future home. On our arrival there, I found it was everything that a reasonable woman could wish for. A servant had been engaged, and a stock of provisions, also wines, spirits, beer, &c, laid in, so that my personal effects were the only things I required, and these I brought from my previous residence in the afternoon, my husband having left after dinner to call at his place of business. I also despatched a note to the proprietor of the hotel, excusing my absence on the plea of illness, and informing him that I did not intend to resume my duties.

My husband returned shortly before tea-time, and after that social meal, we sat sipping wine and chatting pleasantly, until the clock gave us a gentle hint that it was time to retire.

* * * * *

During the day following that of my wedding, I had plenty of time for reflection. What a number of strange incidents had occurred since I first left the parental roof! Scarcely out of my teens, and married! Married! Yes, I was married; but was it the marriage I had hoped for? No; but my position was much bettered nevertheless. It was true that my partner was old enough to be my grandfather, but his liberality and kindness made up for a good deal of shortcomings. I had a good home, with plenty of leisure, and I resolved to devote the time at my disposal to the improvement of my mind. There was an elegant piano in the house, but as I felt no inclination to learn it, it stood untouched. Although very fond of listening to the piano when well played, I had no desire to swell the ranks of that numerous and ever increasing class of young ladies who "howl everlastingly and paw ivory." Reading, a little sewing, and an occasional walk, filled up the interval between meals, my only companion in the absence of my husband being a poodle, which I had brought from my late residence. I did not demean myself by making a companion or confidante of the servant, who was a sharp-featured individual, and looked for all the world as if she had been weaned on vinegar and fed on unripe gooseberries; besides, I had reason to think that she was a sort of spy on my actions.

A few days after our marriage my husband presented me with a diamond ring and bracelet, and several other articles of jewellery, and seemed to do all he could in return for my promise to obey him in the matter of keeping our marriage a secret from his family. More than once he cautioned me, as his relatives, he said, would make it exceedingly uncomfortable for both of us should they find it out.

About a fortnight had elapsed when one evening he

came home in a state of great agitation, and in answer to my inquiry as to whether anything was amiss, he said, "My dear, something has occurred; do not ask me any questions now; I shall tell you the cause some other time; give me a glass of brandy; my nerves are unsettled." I did so, and after I had supplied him with a second one, he called me to his side, and, kissing me affectionately, said he loved me more and more every day! After a suitable response on my part, he became calm and we had tea, the remainder of the evening being passed in the usual quiet manner.

He left the following morning as usual, but did not make his appearance at the house for three days, having sent me a note telling me not to be alarmed at his absence. When he did come he was considerably under the influence of something stronger than lemonade, and on my asking for an explanation, he said I would know everything in a day or two, and that he had taken an extra glass to "drown sorrow!" I thought it best not to say anything further then, but began to think that there was some mystery about him that required elucidation. He shortly afterwards retired to rest. Next day, after breakfast, I spoke to him about the strangeness of his manner, when he said, "Don't worry me, my dear; I told you last night you would know all in a few days." After an affectionate good-bye, he left for town. The thought struck me that he was about to become a bankrupt; if so, I would be left in a nice predicament. The sequel, however, proved that money was not the cause of his trouble.

That afternoon I was about to leave the house for a half-hour's walk, when an elderly gentleman rang the bell, and on the door being opened, inquired if Mr. — lived there. On being answered in the affirmative, he said he wished to see Mrs. — on urgent business. He was shown

into the parlour, and on my entering it, I recognised him as a gentleman I had seen on more than one occasion. The recognition was mutual, and he requested me to be seated, stating that he had some important intelligence to communicate.

With a preliminary introduction and a considerable amount of softening verbiage on his part, he informed me that Mr. —, my husband, had acted most foolishly, not to say rascally, in marrying me, inasmuch as he was already a married man, his first wife being still living. He (the speaker) did not for one moment imagine that I was hitherto aware of it; but such was the fact, and Mr. — had consulted him, as a lawyer, on the subject. It was a most delicate and unpleasant matter to be mixed up in, but as he was a personal friend of Mr. —, he had called on me with a view to some arrangement being made whereby the matter could be settled amicably. Of course (the lawyer said) my "husband" for the time could be prosecuted for bigamy; but that course would probably ruin and kill him at the same time, and not do me any good in a pecuniary point of view. What he (my visitor) proposed was, that Mr. — should pay me a sum of say £500, as a slight compensation for my wounded feelings, an agreement to be signed by which I renounced all claim on him for the future. The lawyer further stated that Mr. — was as fond of me as ever, and that nothing but his extreme love for me could have induced him to commit such an outrageous piece of folly.

The intelligence fell like a thunderbolt on me, and it was some time before I could utter a word. The lawyer, observing the state I was in, endeavoured to cheer me up, remarking that I was still very young, and with the cheque it was proposed to give me, I could again make a good start in life.

I quietly agreed to accept the terms, but informed him that I required the money in hard cash before I would touch pen, ink, or paper; otherwise I would take whatever course I considered most conducive to my advantage. This proviso was agreed to, and before leaving, the lawyer appointed a meeting at his office the following afternoon at three o'clock.

After the legal gentleman had left, I became so unwell that I was compelled to lie down; but trouble had visited me so often during the past few years, that I had begun to take matters stoically, and consequently the effect was not so great as it might otherwise have been.

I was at the office at the appointed time, and read the document, which had been previously drawn up. The amount agreed upon having been paid over to me in crisp bank notes, I signed, as it were, my death warrant, in the presence of a witness, and the affair was completed. Mr. — was not present, but I was informed that I could remain in the house at Waverley until the end of the following week. I then took my leave. When I got outside I recollected that I had left one of my gloves on the table, and returned for it. The lawyer and his clerk were sitting at the table conversing, and did not hear my approach. I heard the former say that I was "a nice girl, but devilish cute," no doubt alluding to my insisting on the payment being made in cash. His criticism was interrupted by an announcement on my part of the purpose for which I had returned. With a profound bow and some confusion he handed me the article, and I then finally took my departure. I may here state that while in the profession more than one of my employers cautioned me as regards cheque transactions.

Some of my readers will, no doubt, think it incredible that a well-bred man, the head of a large establishment,

and with a grown-up family, would deliberately run his head into a noose for the temporary possession of a good-looking girl; but cases of the kind are not uncommon. I have before me a copy of the *Herald* containing a report of the trial of a well-known auctioneer in an inland town, who on a visit to the city became "struck" on the daughter of the proprietor of the hotel where he put up. Finding the young lady strictly virtuous, he proposed marriage, was accepted, and the wedding was duly celebrated. The usual announcement appeared in the papers, and in less than a week discovery ensued. He received two years' imprisonment. When a man becomes "struck" or infatuated with a woman, he will do almost anything to gain his ends. It would also appear that when old men fall in "love," they entirely lose possession of their reasoning faculties.

Five hundred pounds is a large sum of money for a girl in my position to become suddenly possessed of; but I did not allow the circumstance to upset my reason. I placed the amount in one of the banks on a deposit receipt, and drew on my modest little nest-egg in the Post Office Savings Department for current expenses.

I remained at the scene of the "honeymoon" (!) until the end of the time allowed me, and then returned to my old quarters in Surry Hills. As I had kept my marriage a profound secret, nobody was a bit the wiser, and I thus luckily escaped much annoyance. I would gladly have had a parting interview with Mr. —, as he was a dear, good-hearted old soul; but he religiously kept out of my way. Perhaps it was for the best that he did so, as it is quite within the bounds of possibility that he might have had a return of his disease—for it would be ridiculous to call the mad infatuation that frequently takes possession of elderly people by any other name. It is really asto-

nishing how full of "love" these old bucks are: they see beauty in every girl, and are not slow in expressing their appreciation. They put me in mind of that ancient rhymist Ovid, who, in singing the praises of our sex, says:—

No certain form inflames my am'rous breast,
All beauty is alike to me the best;
A hundred causes kindle my desires,
And love ne'er wants a torch to light my fires,
When on the earth the modest virgin looks,
That very modesty of her provokes;
And if I chance to meet a forward fair,
I'm taken with her frank and easy air;
If foolish, I in that can see no harm,
And in her very folly find a charm.
If with her tongue or with her heels she's brisk,
Her prattle pleases and her gamesome frisk.
But if she's heavy, I suppose at night
She'll change, and prove, as I would have her, right.
The fair that sings enchants me with her voice;
Oh, what a gust it gives a lover's joys!
When her shrill shakes afresh his bosom's wound,
And from her lips he kisses off the sound;
When her soft fingers touch the silver strings,
And sweetly to the sounding lute she sings;
Who can resist such strong redoubled charms?
Her music melts me, as her beauty warms.
If in the dance the nimble nymph I find,
And view her how she her pliant limbs does wind,
How artfully she to the music moves,
I cry, "How happy is the man she loves!"
My humour, in a word, is plainly this:
All objects please, and nothing comes amiss;
With every size my passion does agree,
And tall and short are both alike to me.
The fair, the olive, are to me the same,
Alike the swarthy, and the sandy dame.
When her black curls adown her shoulders flow,
Such Leda's were, her skin as white as snow;

And when her golden locks her head adorn,
I straight compare her to the saffron morn.
My love with no complexion disagrees,
But all alike my ready passion please!

This infatuation or exuberance of the tender passion is not confined to the "lords of creation." I have known more than one ancient dame to be "struck" on the opposite sex, the object of their affections generally being young fellows between 18 and 30. Good looks are not always the cause. I knew an hotel-keeper's wife who fell in love with a clerk, who was over six feet in height and thin enough to crawl through an ordinary gaspipe, and to such an extent did she carry her passion, that it was a subject of general talk in the house. Unknown, of course, to her husband, she kept him well supplied with pocket-money, and also handkerchiefs, ties, and even shirts! It was a godsend to the poor devil, who was in the receipt of only thirty shillings a week. Many an elderly woman with a little money and a snug business becomes enamoured of some worthless individual, and marries him, only to find out her mistake when it is too late.

The circumstance of a man falling in love with a couple of ladies at the same time seems rather strange, but it is nevertheless a thing that sometimes happens. I have known it to occur in one or two instances, the gentleman being unable to give pre-eminence to either, each claiming his passion by turns. I should imagine it is an unenviable frame of mind to be in, but the ailment is generally short-lived.

Love is very seldom or ever governed by reason and discretion. It is, however, the thing that "makes the world go round," and the barmaid's occupation would be insipid without a taste of it.

About a fortnight after I had left Waverley my attention was drawn to an advertisement amongst the "Personals" in the principal morning journal, to the effect that "if Miss —, lately barmaid at the Blank Hotel, would call at No. So-and-So Elizabeth-street, she would hear of something to her advantage." That evening I reconnoitred the building mentioned, and found that it was a private dwelling. Having rang the bell, the door was opened by a tidily dressed servant, who, it appeared from her manner, expected me. I asked to see the lady of the house, and was thereupon shown into a parlour. The lady very soon appeared, and I lost no time in stating the reason of my visit, producing at the same time the advertisement. I was informed that the person who wished to see me resided out of town, and if I would kindly call at noon the following day an interview could take place; but further information my informant could not, or would not, give. Resolving to see the matter out, I was at the place at the time appointed, and was told that the party was in readiness to see me. I was ushered into the presence of a stately old dame with a hooked nose, who scrutinised me, rather insolently I thought, through her gold eye-glass. She broke the silence by requesting me to be seated, and asked me if I were the young person whom she advertised for. I replied in the affirmative. She then requested me to give her the particulars of my relationship with Mr. —, adding that she had heard some very ugly rumours. I considered this a very cool, not to say "cheeky" request on her part, and telling her that I had responded to the advertisement in order that I might become acquainted with the advantages mentioned, I declined to hold any further conversation on the matter until I was made acquainted with them. This seemed to somewhat upset her, and she hesitatingly gave utterance to something about being

liberally paid for any loss of time I might experience; also adding that she was the wife of the gentleman in question, and had a perfectly good right to know everything! I saw at once "how the land lay," and putting as much dignity into my manner as possible, I said:—"Madame, the information you seek I will give without payment of any description whatsoever. The relationship which existed between your husband and myself was of a very limited nature. He was a visitor to the house where I was employed, and beyond serving him with what he required, and being spoken to in a kind and courteous manner, I know nothing of him. I wish you a very good morning." I then walked out of the room and took my departure, leaving her ladyship in a state more easily imagined than described.

After the liberal and gentlemanly manner in which Mr. — behaved towards me, it would have been the basest ingratitude to have betrayed him; and I lost no time in informing the lawyer of the incident mentioned above, at the same time assuring him that my late husband had nothing to fear from me, my feelings towards him being of a very friendly and grateful nature. From putting one thing and another together, I have every reason to think that the sons of Mr. — were the individuals who imparted the "ugly rumours" to their mother.

Whilst walking in the Botanic Gardens one day, I met the old musician who drank the "rosiners" in the establishment where I was first employed as a barmaid. In the course of conversation he informed me that a lady and gentleman, friends of his, and for whose respectability he could vouch, were about to take an hotel in Melbourne, and that if I could raise £150 I could join them, as their funds were rather limited. Giving him a hint that I could possibly get that sum, he within an hour introduced me to

the parties, who were of German nationality, but each possessing a good knowledge of the English language.

Being anxious to leave Sydney, at least for a time, I entered into partnership with the couple, an agreement having been drawn up by a solicitor. I was to have a third share in the business, each one giving their services.

Having made an arrangement with the bank whereby half of my capital was transferred to their branch in the Southern City, the trio left, the old musician placing his services at my disposal in the way of looking after my luggage and personal comfort. I think he was a little bit "struck," as when the vessel was about to start and all strangers ordered ashore, he pressed my hand in a fervent manner, and said, "Ah! Miss —; I wish I were rich for your sake!"

After a favourable passage we arrived at our destination, and my partners lost no time in proceeding to the hotel, which was situated in Little Collins-street. I was not favourably impressed with the appearance of it, as it was dark, dirty, and ill-smelling; but my friends said that the painters, &c., would soon put all that to rights. After the head landlord had been seen, and matters settled to the satisfaction of everyone connected, we took formal possession and proceeded to put matters straight, the place when cleaned and freshly painted presenting quite an attractive appearance. Business, however, was very dull, and before long I wished myself back in dear old Sydney.

The City of Melbourne is a dirty, stinking hole, and the excessive death rate is not to be wondered at. Unless one can reside at St. Kilda, Brighton, Toorak, or some other favoured spot, one cannot exist with any degree of comfort; but no doubt many Sydneyites have had a painful experience in the matter.

I will not inflict on my readers an account of the troubles and anxieties attending a struggling business, suffice it to say that the house never paid from the start, and I had to advance many a ten-pound note to keep the ship afloat. Besides, its patrons seemed to be an impecunious, or at all events a careful lot, the German element preponderating.

Finding the concern was a losing game, I insisted on a dissolution of the partnership, in accordance with a clause in the deed, which provided that after the termination of six months one or more of the partners could withdraw, certain conditions to be observed. After considerable trouble in endeavouring to find a purchaser for the place, and none being forthcoming, an appraiser was called in, who, in consideration of a mortgage and sundry other reasons, valued my share at £50, which was actually less than what I had advanced to pay current expenses, not taking into consideration the £150, which was "sunk" so effectually in the business, that I never laid my eyes on it again. I had no fault to find with my partners, whom I found to be an honest, industrious, and energetic couple; but the house was a notoriously non-paying one, an hotel broker once telling me confidentially that "Old Nick and all his daughters couldn't drive a trade in it!" Few of the tenants remained longer than six months, my German acquaintances vacating the premises almost immediately after my leaving. My evil star seemed to be in the ascendant just about this time, as I became affected with a sort of low fever, and had to spend a considerable time at St. Kilda in order to bring myself round, my finances suffering as a natural consequence.

I did not brood over my losses; on the contrary, I felt pleased that I was well out of a bad speculation, and happy in the knowledge that I was far above want.

During my convalescence it was my practice of an afternoon to sit on the esplanade or reserve facing the beach, and alternately read and view the "ever changing sea." I also occasionally took notes of those who made the spot their favourite promenade, and on one occasion I was startled by seeing the clergyman who tied my nuptial knot, which, alas! was so soon to be undone. He was attired in semi-clerical fashion, and evidently taking a holiday, preparatory, no doubt, to returning to his usual employment of curing souls and making couples happy—if not to the end of their lives, at least for a time. I could not help looking at him with what might be termed a "stare," and he, observing my manner, advanced with a bow, and said that he thought he had the pleasure of "seeing me somewhere before." I remarked that the thought was mutual. He then sat down and began talking of the scenery and other local matters, asking my opinion thereon, and dealing out hyperbolic compliments by the yard. He evidently did not recognise me, and I gradually drew him out, inwardly enjoying the fun. He said he had just come down from the country to spend a few idle weeks, and if I would honor him with my friendship, he would endeavour to acquit himself in such a manner as to gain my esteem, telling me at the same time that he was a bachelor, with a great desire for the companionship of a charming young lady like myself! All this was very nice—but as he was a married man with several children, I was rather astonished at his "goings on." However, I resolved to give him plenty of line before landing him, and let him proceed. He wished me to meet him in the same place after tea, but this I declined, promising, however, an interview the following afternoon.

After he had left I began to think that the number of wickedly inclined married men was out of all proportion

to the good ones—that is, if there be any good ones amongst them. Here was an old sinner, my senior by nearly thirty years—a preacher of the Gospel, bless the mark! and attending a Convocation of his brethren, as I afterwards found out, endeavouring to hoodwink a young woman. Ugh! He hadn't even the merit of wealth to recommend him.

The following (Sunday) afternoon my "lover," who, by-the-bye, spoke with a strong Scotch accent, came to the trysting place, and having expressed his disgust at the number of people about, suggested that we should walk a little further along the beach, in order to get clear of the crowd. Having acquiesced, we went a considerable distance and then rested.

We had scarcely been seated when a small boy passed by whistling. My clerical friend, who smelt strongly of whisky, reproved the youngster, telling him that it was sinful to "whistle on the Saibbath." He then renewed his love-making, but I cut him short by asking him if he did not think it a sin to drink "whu-ky" and make love on the Sabbath? He said he did not think so, as one was a nourishment and the other an outpouring of heavenly feeling!

I was beginning to get thoroughly disgusted with the old reprobate, and to bring matters to a finish, asked him if he had any proposition to make, as I intended to leave Melbourne within a week. He did make a proposition, but it was of such a nature as to convince me that a sanctified look and straight-cut garments are no guarantee that the owner thereof is not a libertine—and a hypocrite to boot. Indeed, it was not the first time I had been spoken to in a similar manner by so-called "divines," many of whom take advantage of their calling to ruin innocent young girls.

Observing from my manner that his base overtures were not received with any degree of favour, he was about to speak; but I motioned him to be silent, and in a melodramatic fashion told him to "Begone!" I then returned to my lodgings, leaving him standing in a semi-dazed condition.

It may be said that clergymen are no worse than other men. That may be very true; but from the nature of their calling we are led to expect at least a chaste example. My idea of a "curer of souls" is—one that renounces the world and all its "poms and vanities;" but how few of the brethren answer that description? They get married, have large families, give parties, go to concerts, build houses (sometimes with their parishioner's money), become connected with mining and other swindles, drink wine (and P.B.), flirt with barmaids, now and then elope with another man's wife, and generally carry on in a style quite the opposite to that adopted by the saints who flourished in past ages. In fact, a "divine" of the present day is nothing more than a stipendiary expounder of the Gospel, and very often not much of a hand at that either, besides being an individual who has a great disinclination to practise what he preaches. Most of them have a strong yearning for the "bawbees," and are incessantly imparting to their respective congregations a gentle reminder to "stump up."

Clergymen, as a rule, worship at the shrine of Venus!

It was, I believe, Bishop Heber who said that certain things in this world were lovely, and "only man was vile." He wasn't far out in his calculation. Any woman visiting Melbourne cannot fail to agree with the seemingly libellous statement. The majority of the men in that sweet-smelling city spend the greater part of their time in making attacks either on a girl's pocket, or her virtue—if she has any.

My health being completely restored, I left Melbourne for the scene of my childhood. Absence is said to make the heart grow fonder, and it was so in my case. Although I had been away from Sydney only nine months, it was with unspeakable pleasure I again entered our beautiful harbour. After a journey along the Yarra, with its low-lying ti-tree flats and horrible slaughter-houses, it was, indeed, an agreeable change.

After a few days' rest, I began to look about for another situation, as it was my intention not to encroach on my deposit of £250, which I had left in the bank at interest. My loose funds amounted to about £20, and this, with carefulness, was sufficient to last me several months. Besides, I had my jewellery, &c., all right; so that altogether I was in a "sound financial position." And here let me advise every girl who reads my book to put away a trifle now and then in the Savings' Bank, with the determination of letting it remain there until urgently needed. No matter how small her salary, she can, without much self-denial, spare an odd half-crown or so, and it is astonishing how little by little accumulates. The knowledge that she has a "nest egg" will give her courage, and in many instances save her from unpleasant consequences. Half-a-crown a week amounts to £6 10s. at the end of a year. It is certainly not a very large sum; but it would nevertheless purchase a respectable looking four-poster, with blankets, and several other useful little etoeteras, and as every girl makes up her mind to get married as quickly as possible, the fact I have mentioned is worthy of consideration.

Some hotel-keepers have a great objection to their barmaids patronising the Savings' Bank. They are unreasonable and hard-hearted enough to expect the girls to spend all their earnings on dress.

Hearing that there was a bar to let in a house not a hundred miles from the King-street entrance to the Theatre Royal, I called to interview the proprietor; but that individual not being at hand, I had a chat with the retiring tenants, two young women, one of whom was single and the other married, or supposed to be married. The latter was the mother of three children, and there was a thing in the shape of a man who did the loafing and touting business, the juveniles being out "at grass." The girls told me that they were paying a rental of £8 per week, but could scarcely clear expenses, the bar being a threepenny one, and advised me to have nothing to do with the concern.

It is almost needless to say that the bar was only a blind for their real mode of getting a livelihood. I was personally acquainted with one of the "maids," and she let me into the secret. They were to a great extent identified with the shipping interest, and while I was making the inquiries a grizzly old skipper entered, and, having familiarly addressed the doves, "shouted" liberally.

As may be readily understood from the nature of their occupation, a great many barmaids acquire a liking for "drink," and when the passion once gets a firm hold of them, then good-bye to their respectability: their downward career is swift and humiliating. I have known several very sad cases in which nice girls became totally ruined by an over-indulgence in drink; and in one instance only can I remember where a reformation took place, the circumstances being worth relating:—

The young woman, who had been at the bar business about a couple of years, acquired a strong *penchant* for bottled stout, never losing an opportunity of indulging in her favourite beverage when invited to do so. In figure she was inclined to *embonpoint*, and, as might be expected, the large quantities of Bulldog and Guinness she imbibed

increased the "adipose tissue"—I believe that is the correct scientific term. She married a German journeyman tailor, who had saved a considerable sum of money, and was therefore able to provide her with a comfortable home. But her love of Three X proved a curse to herself and her husband, and the end of each year saw the domestic misery increase.

At length the climax came; their household effects were seized and sold for non-payment of rent, and the family, which included two young children, were ejected from their home, and had to take refuge in a miserable tenement in a Woolloomooloo lane. It was no longer bottled stuff she drank, but colonial beer, rum—anything, in fact, in the shape of liquor that came within her reach, and she became apparently irreclaimable, frequently making her appearance amongst the "drunks" at the police court.

One evening the husband came home, only to find the "wife of his bosom" lying drunk on the bed, and the two children, hungry and dirty, anxiously awaiting his arrival. He gave the poor things their supper, and proceeded to finish a coat he had been preparing for a neighbour, and having placed a "goose iron" on the fire, got ready to give the article the finishing touch. Every now and then he would glance at his drunken spouse and mutter a "Donnerwetter" between his teeth, when, suddenly starting up, he seized the now red-hot iron, and applied it to a certain portion of his wife's anatomy. With a hideous yell, she jumped up and rushed out of the room into the street, her screams gathering a large crowd in no time. A couple of policemen appeared on the scene, and assuming that it was a case of the "horrors," took her to the lock-up. Her screams continuing, the police doctor was sent for, and, not being able to properly diagnose her case, that gentleman

simply ordered a strong opiate, which had the desired effect. In the morning she was very reticent as to the cause of her trouble, but admitted to the policeman that she had been drinking. She was remanded for seven days for medical inquiry, her burn, it is presumed, being in the meantime suitably attended to. At the end of that term she was discharged, and returned to her home a sad but repentant woman. Her husband received her kindly, she in her turn promising to become a total abstainer for the future. This promise has been faithfully kept, her home having regained its former comfortable appearance. Whilst spending an evening with her, about two years after the occurrence, she informed me that she had entirely lost the appetite for any kind of liquor, it being no self-denial on her part to keep away from it. She also told me confidentially that when the occurrence took place she thought she was in Hell, and that Satan himself was administering the first instalment of her punishment! Once I had a private chat with her husband, and asked him if he did not think his act a cruel one. "Not a bit of it," he exclaimed. "De goose is a very goot bird; it did save Imperial Rome, and it did save mine vife!"

I could give many instances in which barmaids were ruined through a fondness for liquor; but the following brief extract from the *Star* of November 19, 1890, will, perhaps, be sufficient:—

"A DRUNKEN WIFE.—The divorce suit of Blank v. Blank, heard before Mr. Justice Windeyer this morning, was the old old story of an ill-assorted match. The petitioner was a storekeeper near Bourke in 1885, when he became fascinated by a barmaid in one of the hotels of the town and married her. In 1888 they came to Sydney, and respondent gave way to drunken habits. On June 20 last the husband coming home heard voices in the house,

and on going in with two friends discovered his wife drunk on the bed, and a young man hiding underneath it. The decree *nisi* was granted, with costs against the co-respondent."

I took the advice of the young women, and gave the house a wide berth, for several reasons. In the first place, after having successfully engineered several first-class sixpenny bars, I would be losing caste by becoming connected with a common "long beer" concern; besides, I would have had twice the work to perform to make the same amount of money in the more refined establishment, not taking into consideration the sale of bottled stuff, &c. The class of customers, too, somewhat influenced me in the matter.

In mentioning the circumstance that one of the young women had three children, it may not be out of place to remark that a good few of the so-called "barmaids" are mothers. In fact, the term as applied to the female dispensers of stimulants is a misnomer, and some other appellation is needed—say that of "barwoman." I have known several married ladies to act in the capacity, and pass themselves off as innocent virgins; for with youth on their side, good looks, an assumed artless manner, and no tell-tale wedding-ring, who is to know the difference? Men, as a rule, have an objection to their "nectar" being served up to them by mothers of families; hence the deceit practised by the charming creatures. Most gentlemen, particularly the "struck" ones, take everything for granted, and never care about making inquiries so long as they are sweetly smiled upon. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise!"

I have noticed that the mature, well-developed barmaid has generally in her train a greater number of young men than the more girlish one, whilst the latter finds more

favour in the eyes of the elderly beaux. This fact is, without doubt, an illustration of the trite aphorism—"Extremes meet."

Many times a man begins to love a barmaid in jest, and afterwards the real feeling takes possession of him, and for this reason we humour a feigned passion, as it may lead to something better. I knew a case in which a girl and one of the customers used to indulge now and then in a little good-humoured badinage, and their acquaintance ripened into a downright genuine affection on both sides. The ardent youth, however, was poorly off, and the barmaid, as a matter of course, equally so. Therefore, nothing came of their billing and cooing but unwelcome twitterings from their friends.

Love is blind, it is said. This may explain why some young men marry before they can see their way clear to the support of a family. It may also account for the fact that the arrows from Cupid's bow strike indiscriminately old and young, rich and poor.

A great many people are of the opinion that love is a disease, and that when one is attacked by it, the victim is not in a state to look at things in a reasonable manner. More than one ancient writer took this view of the case, Ovid recommending occupation as the most effective remedy. He says:—

If therefore you expect to find redress,
In the first place take leave of idleness.
'Tis this that kindled first your fond desire,
'Tis this brings fuel to the am'rous fire.
Bar idleness, you ruin Cupid's game,
You blunt his arrows and you quench his flame.
What wine to plain trees, streams to poplar grove,
Marshes to reeds, is idleness to love.
Mind business, if your passion you'd destroy;
Secure is he who can himself employ.

In the matter of food, &c., the same poet says:—

Mushrooms of every sort provoke desire,
Salacious rockets set your veins on fire;
The plant I recommend is wholesome rue,
It clears the sight and does the blood subdue;
But, in a word, of all the herbs that grow,
Take only such as keep the body low.
If my opinion you would have of wine,
It quenches love, and does to love incline.
A little breath of wind but fans the fire,
Whose flame will in a greater blast expire.
In wine you must no moderation keep;
You must not drink at all; or drink so deep,
So large a dose, as puts your cares to sleep.

The celebrated Sydney Smith, in one of his humorous moods, defined marriage, which may be looked upon as an outcome of love, as "an insane desire on the part of one man to pay for the board and lodging of another man's daughter!" When men in all seriousness go down on their knees to our sex and implore us to become their wives, at the same time using such extravagant expressions as "Divine perfection of a woman!" "Angel!" "Dear, beautiful duck!" "Star of my existence!" "Lovely creature!" &c., it is only fair to conclude that there is a soupçon of temporary insanity in the transaction. Certain it is that there is often a deal of repentance for the act. "Marry in haste and repent at leisure," and "Hot love is soon cool," are proverbs as old as the hills, a few weeks—a few days in many instances—proving quite sufficient to bring the patients round to their normal state. Poverty is an undoubted extinguisher of love; therefore, improvident marriages are not likely to prove happy. But "love can't be controlled by advice, nor Cupid his mother obey," as the old song says, and impecunious marriages will go on as usual notwithstanding the many "frightful examples."

After some weeks of enforced idleness, I took the management of a private bar in one of the most respectable houses in the city. I was paid a weekly salary, with a small commission on the sale of bottled wines. I did fairly well at the commencement, and my trade increased, several of my old customers from other establishments cordially welcoming me. I got on famously, the proprietor, who had a touch of the gentleman in his composition, complimenting me on my tact, and more than once making me a small present when settling accounts.

Amongst the patrons of the place was a wealthy little foreigner, who made fierce love to me, and spent a considerable portion of his spare time in the room. He was always good for a bottle of champagne, and seemed much pleased when I would make one of the party. In the matter of paying for wine, he was a perfect gift to his acquaintances, as they, knowing his weakness for the fair sex, would place a coin on the counter and challenge him to call "man" or "woman" for a bottle; they would place the "man" side up, with the result that he would answer quite the opposite way, his reply invariably being the same—"I do like the vimmens!" He was the life and soul of those assembled, and always appeared to be in a merry mood.

On one occasion I was rather astonished at seeing my "husband" walk into the room. It happened, fortunately, that there were no other visitors present. He did not seem to be in the least embarrassed, but came forward and greeted me most affectionately. He said he had accidentally heard of my being located in the neighbourhood, and lost no time in paying a visit. He inquired after my financial position, and gave me to understand that such was his confidence in my friendship, he would never see me want for anything so long as he had the means,

also adding that his lawyer had informed him of my kind letter respecting the meeting with a certain relative of his in Elizabeth-street.

I briefly gave an account of my proceedings since I had last seen him, not forgetting to mention the fact that I had still £250 of the separation money safe in the bank. He then said I was a good girl and deserved encouragement, at the same time presenting me with a twenty-pound note to "buy anything I liked with." He also hinted that he was a little more independent in regard to his family, and that, in consequence, they had ceased to "worry" him. I have no doubt he was alluding to the old "Dragon" who advertised for me, in order to sift the "ugly rumours" she had given ear to.

As several customers came in at this moment, the conversation ceased, and I served him with his favourite tot—a glass of pure cognac, having partaken of which he quietly departed. He was not a constant visitor to the bar, but came often enough to assure me, when the coast was clear, that his affections were unaltered. I had in my own mind every reason to believe that his love for me was genuine, and I thanked my stars that I had at least one true friend.

One evening I was introduced by the merry little foreigner to the captain of a ship which was on the berth for London. He was a fine, big fellow, but had a sinister look, and would have been all the better for a little more refinement of manner. He appeared to be considerably "struck," judging from the frequency of his visits and protestations of admiration. He was very anxious that I should look over his "boat," as he called his vessel, and as his invitation was renewed on more than one occasion, I consented to do so on the Sunday afternoon, his departure being announced for the following day. I had not a very

high opinion of the gentleman, and took the precaution of bringing a lady friend with me, at which he seemed much disconcerted, as he told me, whilst promenading the deck, that he expected I would have come alone. We had an early tea in the cabin, shortly after which I expressed my intention of returning homeward. He offered no objection to this, but, calling me aside, asked me to return to the ship after leaving my friend at her residence, as he had something very important to communicate. I gave him an evasive answer, and bidding him and the first officer "Good evening!" we left.

I need scarcely say that I did not return. The vessel left early the following morning, and three days afterwards I was informed by one of the customers that about a fortnight previously my nautical admirer had expressed his determination to coax me down to the ship, and under some pretence give me a sleeping draught, so that I would not awake until far out on the "briny;" but as he was "half-seas over" at the time, no notice was taken of his atrocious utterances.

What a narrow escape! Bishop Heber was right—"And only man is vile!"

Some time ago there was a considerable traffic in barmaids carried on between certain parties in New Caledonia and their agents in Sydney. To such an extent did the objectionable practice exist, that attention was called to the matter by the *Herald*, with the result that a sort of semi-official investigation took place, and everything laid bare in the columns of the journal mentioned. It appeared that females were openly advertised for, and engaged ostensibly as barmaids, but actually to stock disreputable houses in Noumea. There was no denial attempted on the part of those concerned, the only excuse being that the girls knew full well for what purpose they were engaged.

This was only partly true, as I was informed by one of the returned "maids" that more than one decent girl was inveigled into signing an agreement to proceed to the French colony, only to find out when too late what her prospects were. On their arrival at Noumea the girls were received in a seemingly kind manner by their employers, who invariably advanced them a small sum of money, thereby getting a "hold" on them at once. New faces, as a matter of course, attracted a certain class of customers to the houses, and there was the usual dancing and wine-drinking indulged in. What followed may be surmised, but cannot be described. With little or no knowledge of the language, and occupying, according to the French laws, a position below that of our Sydney vagrants, it may be imagined that their lot was an unenviable one.

In the course of a long conversation, my informant said enough to convince me that for downright immorality and general wickedness, Frenchmen take the palm. I would most strongly advise every young woman in search of a situation to let New Caledonia remain in the distance.

A barmaid's occupation is fraught with danger. A soda-water bottle may burst unexpectedly, and goodness only knows in what direction the splinters may fly. I could give the name of a young lady, the sister of an hotel-keeper, who lost the sight of one of her eyes through the bursting of a bottle; and whilst sojourning at St. Kilda I was introduced to a Brighton landlord who met with a similar accident. I also heard that a few years since in one of the Sydney hotels a vulgar young wench tried to pull a tight-fitting cork out of a soda-water bottle with her teeth, and that the obstinate stopper having by this means been slightly moved, suddenly shot down her throat.

killing her almost immediately! There is an air of probability about the story, but I cannot vouch for its truthfulness.

Barmaids frequently marry betting men—or, I should say, individuals who affect to be such. These gentry generally keep a little bit of a shop about the size of a sentry box, which they dignify by the title of "Divan," "Emporium," or something of that sort, the name of some celebrated racehorse being painted on the window. Their stock-in-trade consists of about seven and sixpence worth of tobacco, a few bundles of unhealthy-looking cigars, a package or two of cigarettes, a stack of empty cases, a great many show-cards, and an unlimited amount of that commodity known to all sections of society by the term "cheek!" How they manage to knock out a living is best known to themselves.

On one occasion a gentlemanly dressed foreigner—(foreigners again)—came to the bar and ordered a glass of stout, tendering in payment a £5 note. I looked at the note very carefully, and told him that I had not sufficient change, but would send down stairs for it. He said not to mind doing so, and produced a half-crown. There was something very strange about his manner, and the thought instantly occurred to me that the note was a forged one. I have always been very careful of offending anyone; but on this occasion some mysterious influence urged me to tell him that I thought the note was a bad one. He looked at me steadily for a few minutes, and said, in fairly good English, that I had a "brave" face, and he would confide in me. He then gave me to understand that he was an engraver, lately arrived in the colony by one of the French mail steamers, and that if I would "work" with him, he would make my fortune. He then laid open his plans. I was to pass the notes to my customers, or the landlord, as

the case might be, the profits to be equally divided. After a time (he continued) I was to resign my situation, and take another, where the operation could be repeated, and so on.

Having patiently listened to all he had to say, I took a good look at him, and addressed him thus—"You said you would confide in me, and for that simple reason I shall not at once denounce you. Your proposition to rob my employer and his customers is an infamous one, and deserves punishment. However, you are safe on this occasion; but if ever you enter these premises again, under any pretence whatever, I will immediately send for the police. Go away at once."

He coolly emptied the glass of what remained in it, put on his hat, and with a graceful bow and a curious looking grin, left the room.

There was no need to caution my employer, as he was very careful in scrutinising whatever paper money came into his possession, and I therefore did not mention the matter to him, nor, indeed, to anyone else.

About six weeks after the foregoing occurrence took place, an individual answering my foreign customer's description was arrested through the instrumentality of a man to whom he made overtures of a nature somewhat similar to that in my case, and on his residence being searched, a most complete apparatus for manufacturing bank notes was discovered. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to a long term of penal servitude. Since then, another party was caught almost red-handed at his "manufactory" at Alexandria, and was dealt with in a similar manner. On being arrested, he admitted to the detective that, during the previous week, he had passed upwards of two hundred spurious £1 notes in the neighbourhood of Redfern and Waterloo.

Professional "smashers," as these rogues are called, are not the only individuals who try to pass bad money on barmaids. Many well-to-do and seemingly respectable men see no harm in paying for their beverages in very doubtful, if not spurious money. They appear to think the hotel-keeper fair game to victimise, forgetting the fact that the butcher, grocer, and brewer have each to be paid in good and lawful coin of the realm. Apart from the dishonesty of the transaction, it is one that might cause considerable trouble to the culprit. I have known several "gentlemen" make a practice of selecting from their loose silver the most worn and defaced coin in their possession, and paying for their refreshment therewith; while at the same time if one were to call at their several places of business and do a similar act, there would be a considerable amount of grumbling. The barmaid is frequently "hauled over the coals" by her employer for taking such money, and very often is punished by being paid her salary in the identical "Tommy Dodds." In my opinion, the practice alluded to is a dishonorable one.

Amongst the customers in my department was a young bank clerk—a melancholy looking specimen of the genus "Homo," who would frequently sit in the room for an hour or more at a time, sipping beer and torturing himself with a "cigar," which he would light afresh about every three minutes. When no other gentleman was present he would strike up a conversation, the burden of which on his part was the "immensity" of his love for me, and he went so far on one occasion as to propose marriage. To humour him, I said I had no objection, provided he was in a position to support me comfortably. He said his salary was only £100 per annum, but his prospects were good. I replied that I had no doubt they were; but until his hopes were realised, I declined to enter into the bonds of wedlock with

him. Having drunk his beer, he bid me "Good night!" remarking as he left the room, that he was "sick of the world, and wished to be out of it." The following evening he came in as usual, and showed me a revolver, with which (he said) he intended to put an end to his misery. Some persons coming in, he asked for a glass of beer, and left shortly afterwards. The next night he paid me a visit, this time producing a small chemist's packet with the word "Poison" printed on it; that, he remarked, would effectually "settle matters." Two days afterwards he turned up in the flesh, and confidentially informed me that he intended to drown himself, and I would probably have an opportunity of reading a full account of his death in the newspapers. The following evening he again came, and having swallowed three beers in rapid succession, became what is known in drinking phraseology as "crying drunk," and wept bitterly. After this he did not make his appearance for a whole week, and I was beginning to wonder at his absence, when he suddenly stalked in, defiant and savage, and informed me in severe tones that he had become "a woman-hater," and I was the cause of it all! He still patronised the bar, but never afterwards broached the subject of "Love."

I recount this little circumstance merely to give my readers an idea of the strange characters one meets in a private bar. I have seen men make awful exhibitions of themselves while "under the influence," the various stages of drunkenness being developed in a very diversified manner—love-making, singing, crying, quarrelling, spouting, and even praying! Some individuals become very liberal in their cups, whilst others are quite the reverse, and think everybody is trying to "have" them; but all, or nearly all, act the fool. "O, wad some power the giftie gie us, to see oursel's as ithers see us!"

The end of the year was now approaching, and the chief topic of conversation in the bar-room was the Melbourne Cup, and many private bets, from a new hat to a "pony," were made amongst my customers. I received more than one invitation to take a trip to the Southern Capital and see the grand race, but declined for several reasons, the chief one being a fear of giving offence to my lover-husband and dear friend. He was present on one occasion when such an invitation was made, and seemed to be much pleased when he heard me decline it, telling me the next day that probably he would take me there himself. In a conversation with the landlord shortly afterwards, that gentleman informed me that his wife and eldest boy very much desired to visit Melbourne during the race week, and that if I particularly wished it, I could go with them, as I would be company for his wife, who had a great liking for me. I informed Mr. — of this conversation, and he acquiesced in it at once. He said he was desirous of visiting Flemington himself, and whilst not appearing to be one of the party, he would at the same time be in a position to show me a little attention. This being settled to the satisfaction of all concerned, and being well supplied with the necessary funds, we left in the express train, arriving at our destination in the best of spirits. We put up at a first-class hotel, Mr. — making all the arrangements, and we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves in the interval between our advent and the commencement of the races, taking lovely rides and drives in the day time, and visiting some theatre or concert room at night. I may state *en passant* that during my previous stay in Melbourne I took equestrian lessons from a high-class professor of the art; and the knowledge I thus gained now stood me in good need. We went in style to the races, and our comfort was well looked after. To me it was a time of most

enjoyable excitement, and I felt more than ever determined never to join the ranks of the "drudges" by marrying a poor man—that is, if I could possibly help it. Money! no wonder people strive for it. What comfort, pleasure, independence, and serenity of mind does the possession of it bring!

We stayed a week in Melbourne, and returned thoroughly satisfied with the trip. Almost the first person I spoke to on resuming my duties was my young friend, the bank clerk of suicidal tendencies. In greeting me, he remarked that I looked "more beautiful than ever!" and in order, I suppose, to give expression to his unreciprocated feelings, heaved a deep sigh. Poor fellow! he was very much "struck."

About a week after our return from the races a discovery took place of such a nature as to cause the most intense excitement, not only amongst the residents of the house, but even its frequenters, it being nothing more or less than the discovery of the dead body of a child, which had lain where it was found for a considerable period. In connection with the hotel there was a lumber room, where the boxes of departed guests were kept, and these had accumulated to such an extent as to cause the landlord much inconvenience, the space being limited. Amongst a heterogenous collection, ranging from the modest shoe trunk to the mysterious-looking "iron chest," was one which, from the length of time it was in the room, might justly be termed "the oldest inhabitant." It was supposed to be the property of a young lady, who with her parents put up at the hotel about five years previously, the former settling the bill, and leaving the article behind, with a request that it was to be kept until called for. The box was put into the lumber room, and no further thought was given to it until the things were being overhauled. There

being no name or address on the lid, the article was opened, with the result that the dried-up body of an infant was found in the centre, tightly wrapped up in many folds of a piece of sheeting. The remainder of the contents consisted of ladies' clothing, but without any name or initial; in fact, there was nothing to give the slightest clue to the ownership. As a matter of course, the police were communicated with, and a medical examination of the body took place; but so long a time from its birth had elapsed, that beyond the fact that the remains were those of a male child, nothing definite could be stated, and at the inquest an open verdict was returned. It was surmised that the "young lady" had, unknown to her parents, given birth to the child, and took this means to hide her shame. The matter was not further inquired into.

When the frequency of cases similar to the foregoing is taken into consideration, it is a matter of wonder that the Government do not establish a foundling hospital. Some goody-goody people object to an institution of this description on what they are pleased to term "moral" grounds; but it must nevertheless be admitted that it would put an effectual stop to infanticide and abandonment of infants, instances of both of which are painfully numerous. I have been given to understand by several experienced women, and also by more than one medical man, that concealment of birth, with the more serious crime of child murder, is much more common than people imagine. Then, again, the cases of "malpractice," as they are mildly called, that crop now and then in the newspapers, would almost entirely disappear were a foundling hospital in our midst. There is no use in our rulers shirking the question; they must either choose between a continuance of "murder most foul" and an institution such as that I have alluded to.

A barmaid's opinion of the various kinds of beverages indulged in by the sterner sex may be of interest to temperance advocates and others. In the first place, I look upon the practice of habitual dram-drinking, even if the article be pure, as injurious to the vitals and dangerous to the morals.—(I am sermonising now.) Beer-swilling, although less hurtful to the constitution, is an objectionable habit, and one that tends to bemuddle the brains. "Drink beer, think beer," was a favourite expression of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson, who also remarked on one occasion that "beer was a drink only fit for boys, port wine for men, and brandy for heroes!" It certainly requires an heroic frame to be able to battle with the fiery effects of brandy. Wine, especially pure colonial wine, is, in my opinion, the least injurious of the lot, even if taken to excess. It does not leave behind it that craving for a stimulant so common with the other articles, and when used in moderation is, no doubt, nourishing. My favourite old poet praises the generous fluid, but whilst doing so administers a gentle caution. He says:—

Wine warms the blood, and makes the spirits flow;
Care flies, and wrinkles from the forehead go;
Exalts the poor, invigorates the weak;
Gives mirth and laughter, and a rosy cheek;
Bold truth it speaks; and spoken, dares maintain;
And brings our old simplicity again.
Love sparkles in the cup, and fills it higher;
Wine feeds the flames, and fuel adds to fire.
But choose no mistress in thy drunken fit;
Wine gilds too much their beauties and their wit
Nor trust thy judgment when the toppers dance;
But sober and by day thy suit advance.
Night is a cheat, and all deformities
Are hid, or lessened in her dark disguise.
The sun's fair light each error will confess,
In face, in shape, in jewels, and in dress.

One afternoon my dear friend, Mr. —, paid me a visit, and we had a long chat. He informed me that Mrs. —, the lady whom I have irreverently named "The Dragon," was dangerously ill, and that two medical gentlemen had pronounced her case hopeless. Should her death occur, as the doctors prognosticated, he would request me to resign my position, and live in retirement until a proper time had elapsed, when we could be openly reunited. He also stated that, of course, he would see to everything, and endeavour to make the time pass agreeably to myself. I expressed my gratitude for his honorable conduct, and assured him that my feelings towards him were of a most affectionate nature. He promised to call again shortly to report matters; and after giving him a kiss, which really sprung from my heart, he took his leave. Ten days afterwards the old lady died, and within a fortnight I resigned my situation, and became the occupant of a charming little cottage ornée at a suburban watering-place. Here I passed a delightful time, having every comfort a young lady could desire, including a well-selected stock of literature. Five months passed swiftly and pleasantly, and the termination of the sixth was to see me the acknowledged and legal wife of the man who had proved so true.

But my hopes and aspirations were, alas! soon to be destroyed. One forenoon, after a cheerful parting, Mr. — took a conveyance for town, and had just reached his office, when he was seen to stagger and fall heavily to the ground; he was seized with apoplexy, and never again became conscious, dying within six hours. I read an account of the sad affair in the newspaper, and the effect it had on me can readily be imagined; my only friend was dead, and I felt, as it were, alone in the world!

A few days after the funeral I called on the lawyer, who received me very kindly, and said he was not surprised

to see me, having been in M——'s confidence all along. My friend (he continued) had died without making a will; but under the circumstances his sons, who were honourable men, would no doubt do something for me, and he would endeavour to put my case in a favourable light. The lawyer acted up to his promise, and I had a visit from the eldest son the following evening.

My visitor, who was about my own age, good-looking, and to all appearance a perfect gentleman, greeted me most kindly. Coming to the point at once, he said that his two brothers and himself were unanimous in the opinion that, whilst not legally liable for any claim I might make on them, I was entitled to some consideration at their hands, and they had agreed to present me with the sum of £300 from their private accounts. The house in which I resided had been taken for twelve months, and they would see that I was not disturbed in possession for the remainder of the term. After presenting me with the sum stated, and accepting a glass of wine at my hands, Mr. —— took his departure, not, however, before paying me a compliment by saying that I was a beautiful woman, and he did not wonder at his father's steadfast liking for me. He also asked for permission to renew his visit, which I freely granted.

There is a lining of silver to every cloud. Who knows what is in store for me? I may be happy yet!

AU REVOIR!

SPC/NICH

A 823-2

LIFE

