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I reflected very often on the above story, told me by the captain of the vessel as I was on my way to Australia, but the many incidents of the voyage, and the prospect of our speedy arrival in the land of gold, soon drove the tale from my mind.

Our ship reached Victoria in safety, and I had no time in getting up the country to see the gold fields that had recently been discovered. I was fortunate enough to get a black 'boy' to lead my pack-horses, and I set out with a couple of fresh-kill revolvers, a good rifle, four good horses, two of them laden with a tolerable 'swag.' I travelled about forty miles a day for four days, camping out each night, and at last came to a good sized public house, where I determined to stay for a few days to give a spell to my horses. I was luckily enough during my stay, until a gentleman came who was a treasure as a companion. He was much my senior, and seemed to have a thorough knowledge of the world. I had never met a more fascinating man, and was delighted that we were to travel together.

We did travel together, and well for one another that we did so. On the second day we came to a creek where I proposed we should stop and lunch. I had scarcely spoken when a horseman passed us at a rapid pace. He wore a red Garibaldi shirt, and a helmet hat, with a red puggaree streaming behind it. He had hardly disappeared over the steep bank on the opposite side, when two shots were heard, followed by a shout. We hurried our horses over the creek, and in a few seconds beheld the person who had passed us over-throw, his leg pinned to the ground by his horse, which had fallen, and a man in a mask, about a dozen yards off, taking aim at him with a revolver. We dashed on, but my comfounded horse came down with me, his feet having landed in a hand-cuff's hole. I staggered to my feet, much shaken, and was in time to see the issue. The red horseman and one bushranger, fired simultaneously, and the robber swerved in his saddle, but he came very close to the other and extended his revolver again. The other's fate had been sealed by the promptness and skill of my companion. He took a long shot, the robber's pistol fell to the ground, and, uttering a howl of rage and pain, he galloped toward the scrub. When we reached the fallen man, and had released him, he said, gaily:

'Well, by Jove! that was touch and go! Your shot saved my life, sir, and a better shot with a revolver I never saw.'

'Who could your assailant have been?' said my companion.

'Oh, one of Mickey's gang, of course.—They have become very troublesome lately, and don't scruple to take life. I am certain I hit the second, for I saw him fall. He gave him a stinger. He has killed my horse, though, poor brute, and I would not have taken two hundred for him this morning.—Gentlemen, my tent is not far from this, and there's plenty of room.'

We made him mount one of our spare horses, and we soon came to his tent, a capital tent of galvanized iron.

'Now then, Bob, look sharp about dinner,' Bob looked sharp, and we were soon seated at a table, on which we saw kangaroo steamer, and preserved potatoes. Nor were welcome liquors wanting. There were sparkling kool, cherry and pale brandy.

After dinner we lighted our pipes (he and I) and he soon became very communicative.

'I came out without twenty pounds,' he said, 'and no one could believe how lucky I have been. I dropped on large nuggets; I got advances from the banks and purchased large quantities of gold for two pound ten per ounce, for which I received three pound sixteen. I bought bits of swamy ground in a place that was wanted in a township, and soon afterwards got as many pounds for them as I had given for them. If riches could give happiness, I ought to be one of the happiest young fellows in the Australia.'

He said this with a deep sigh, and smoked meditatively. My travelling companion was very silent the whole evening. He took a little wine, and listened to our host with great attention. A fine young fellow our host was—a man every inch of him. He had evidently been reared as a gentleman, a bush life had not made him forget his early habits.

'Have you ever been in Ireland?' he inquired, after a pause in our conversation.

'Often,' I said, 'on visits.'

'In what counties particularly?'

'Many counties, the last I visited in was Clare.'

'Indeed! I don't know many families in that county. Did you ever meet a Mrs. Aspin?'

'I met her but a short time ago.'

'How was she. Does she still live at Belvedere House?'

'She does. She is a very lovely woman, but in most delicate health. She never goes out, save to spend a quiet evening with her intimate friends, the Crossleys, who are friends of mine. It was there that I met her. They say she pined away from the time of her husband's departure, and was brought to death's door by the intelligence of his decease. They were both at that time much younger than her husband, she loved him most affectionately. He was well worthy of her love. A genuine, a noble fellow. He lost his life on his way to India, in trying to save a poor seaman from drowning.'

'He was the noblest of men,' said our host; 'although I never knew him personally but only through others.'

As he said it he seemed much agitated, and took a glass of wine, and a second and a third.

'Poor Caroline! poor Caroline!' he said in a low voice; then suddenly looking up, 'I have been a sad scamp and a disgrace to my family; but sooner or later the truth will be known. She was my favorite sister, I was the youngest child and was spoiled. I entered the army, went to India, took to gambling, took to drink, and at last proceedings were taken against me for forgery, which was wholly innocent, but a brother officer informed me privately that there was no chance of my acquittal; so I made my escape, he furnishing me with the means.—I went home under a forged name, and I saw my father, who would not receive me, saying that every mail from India contained shocking accounts of my depravity, which had broken my sister's heart, and his. I went to my sister Caroline, saw her in private often, but never could prevail upon her to mention my case to her husband. He was too honorable a man, she said, to advocate the cause of an outlaw, and he would, she was sure, deliver his own brother up to what he believed to be merited punishment. She sold her own jewelry to enable me to leave the kingdom, and we parted with great tenderness, for she did not believe me guilty. But on the dismal evening she felt a presentiment of evil, and she was nearly right, for on my crossing the footbridge that led from the garden, part of the plankings gave way, and I was plunged into a perfect torrent. Although a good swimmer,

must have perished but for one of the planks that had fallen with me. I drifted away, clinging to this, and was landed, much bruised, a mile down the river, 'James,' she wrote, 'you have brought a great grief upon me. I think and hope that I am going to the grave.'

But at that moment my travelling companion raised his head, looked wildly at us, and cried out in a solemn voice, 'Most merciful heaven! Oh, most merciful heaven!'

He strove to rise from the table, and could not, but fell back helpless on the rude couch.

'Apoplexy!' I exclaimed; 'undo his neckcloth.'

'No,' he faintly murmured; 'look at this James Mowbray.'

With trembling hands he pulled out a miniature from his bosom, and held it out to our host.

'My sister Carrie!' cried the latter.

'It is the picture of my wife, James Mowbray. I am Reginald Aspin.'

He and the seaman had been picked up by a whaler, and forwarded by the first passing vessel. It did not much diminish the happiness of our host by informing him that the brother officer in question had met with an accident in *py sticking*, and had before his death confessed that he had committed the forgery attributed to Mowbray. The news just arrived in Europe as I was leaving.

A multitude of times since the above incidents occurred I have visited my home in Ireland, and the very happiest days I ever spent in my life, were spent at that Belvedere House in the county of Clare. And the very greatest romping I ever had was with three young chubbies, and one little girl, the three former bearing respectively the names of Reginald, James and that of your humble servant; the latter that of Carrie.

Why are the pimples on a drunkard's face like the cuts in a witty contemporary? Because they are illustrations of Punch.

A young lady "burst into tears" the other day, but has since been put together again, and is now wearing hoops to prevent a recurrence of the accident.

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