

John Stanley James Writes as “A Vagabond” in 1877

Selected by Willa McDonald

A MONTH IN PENTRIDGE

BY A VAGABOND

I have been spending four weeks in Pentridge prison. A short sentence, most people will say, and entirely too mild a one for my deserts. I am afraid some will be disappointed when they learn that *this time* (for who can tell what the future may bring?) I have not been in gaol as a prisoner. No! I am getting on in the world. From the lunatic asylums to the Alfred Hospital was a step in the social scale of service, but the hall-porter was quite an humble individual compared to the warder-dispenser at Pentridge. For a month I have occupied that exalted position, and have been pushing pills, slinging draughts, pulling out teeth, and bullying patients as if to the manner born. I consider myself such a success in this line of business that I have thought of abandoning my vagabond career and becoming respectable. Two courses are open to me—to start a chemist’s shop and realise a rapid fortune by selling “pick-me-ups” on Sundays, and “ladies’ restoratives” during the week (I daresay there are people in Australia who have spent eighteen pence at the French chemist’s in Bond-street); or I may become a fashionable dentist; a polite style, plenty of “cheek,” and spotless linen would disguise my ignorance, and in a very short time I might drive fast horses. But I am afraid I am too honest ever to become wealthy and respectable—by such methods.

I was amiss about Christmas time. I don’t know whether it was the cricket match, the pantomime, or the English fare of the season (a horror in this



Published in the Melbourne Argus, February 24, 1877, page 4. First of an eight-part series, “A Visit to Pentridge.” Courtesy National Library of Australia.

climate!) which affected me. I felt that I wanted change of air. A gentleman who kindly interests himself in my movements agreed with me, but added a rider, "You also want work; you're getting lazy." I admitted the latter fact, but denied the former. "Work in general is a curse, and I hate it," said I. "It's real original sin. In particular, I am sure Providence never meant white men to work in this climate; they should only look on, and cuss the niggers. Indeed I am not sure that white men were ever intended to work anywhere? For myself, I know that I am a natural-born boss. A month by the seaside, with unlimited expenses, seems about all I am fit for now. My shattered health wants recuperating." "Sir," was the stern reply, "this is flippancy; what you want is work and change of scene, but, above all, work." I said I didn't, but it was no use. Having rashly admitted a knowledge of medicine, I was recommended to the Chief Secretary as a fit and proper person to fill the vacant post of dispenser at Pentridge prison hospital, and the pipes being laid, I made a formal application for the place. On the 13th of January I received an order to wait on the inspector-general, and 11 o'clock of that day found me in the dismal building which serves as the office of the Penal and Industrial Schools department. My letter gained me admission to Mr. Duncan, who looks a good man of the Scotch farm bailiff type. In tones of authority, he questioned me, and then handed me over to the chief clerk, Mr. Snelling, who took my signature to an agreement by which I bound myself under sundry pains and penalties to faithfully serve the Victorian Government as hospital warder, dispenser, and assistant. Then I received a letter of appointment to the Superintendent, and was told to be at Pentridge by 10 o'clock on the following Monday. Behold me then a vagabond no longer, but an embryo civil servant, serving the country for the magnificent salary of 6s. 6d. a day, with quarters, 1s. per diem being deducted for such. The dispenser I found was the only officer required to sleep on the premises, and therefore had to pay for his quarters, other warders commencing with 7s. 6d. a day. I found out afterwards what a sell this was on the poor dispenser.

It is a miserable ride along the Sydney-road to Coburg. The cabs, I suppose, are no worse than cabs on other routes, but under any circumstances, they are wretched conveyances. The road itself is a bad one, and the country dreary. This, which should be one of the finest boulevards around Melbourne, is spoilt through the difficulty of getting in and out of town. The road all the way to Brunswick and Coburg should be lined with pleasant cottages, but these will never be built until better means of communication are provided. Dwellers between Coburg and Brunswick and Melbourne labour under exactly the same disadvantages as inhabitants on the St. Kilda-road. Cabs generally will not start into town until they are full, and those who live

en route have to often wait or walk. Going out, too, the delay in starting is most wearisome and annoying. The one thing needed to make Brunswick and Coburg pleasant places of residence is a street railroad, or, as you would say here, a tramway. The road is wide enough for the track to be laid without there being a chance of inconvenience to other traffic. Clean, pleasant cars, regular periods of starting, and fixed fares would insure the success of such an undertaking, and not only would the present inhabitants of the German-named villages be benefited, but the property-holders *en route* would find that their “eligible building sites” would rapidly be disposed of. I write feelingly on this subject, as several times during the past month I have been greatly annoyed by the delay, having had to wait long at each end through there being no regular hour of starting. Coburg is getting quite a place. It was, I presume, first called into existence by the “Stockade,” although it has now repudiated its family name, Still, in spite of its shire-hall, orderly-room, Episcopal, Catholic, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan Churches which satisfy the wants of the village and surrounding neighbourhood, Coburg is as yet a mere appanage of Pentridge. The prison forms the whole topic of conversation, and its officials rule the place.

“You may change, you may alter the name as you will,
But the taint of the Stockade is over it still.”

When the swindler Gottheimer changed his name to Albert Grant, an old chum said to him, “My friend, you may change your name, but you can’t change a very prominent feature.” So with Coburg; it is no longer Pentridge, so to speak it ostensibly repudiates any connexion with a penal depôt, but it cannot get rid of those massive blue-stone buildings and high walls which form the most prominent feature in the surrounding landscape. In the village side trees have been planted and churches built, and a very endeavour made to hide the obnoxious thing, but walk a little to the north or the east and it stands out clearly defined on the slope of the hill, and one sees how large Pentridge is, and how small Coburg, as yet. However, the village has all the elements of a live place, and if they will only get a tramway, I think I will go and live there.

The outside of Pentridge is not very dreary-looking. The trees on the roadside, and the strip of greensward which has been left along the front, and enclosed by iron railings, relieve the monotony of the bare walls. The entrance is by an archway in the building used as offices and stores. This is guarded by double gates—the outer one of strong oak, the inner of iron bars. Doors in both of these admit those who have duties or business in the prison. Alighting from my cab, and knocking at the door, I was challenged through a little barred grating. On expressing my wish to see the superintendent I was

allowed to cross the first barrier, and found myself "between the gates," as the archway is termed in the prison. Seeing that my "swag" excited attention, I stated that I was coming to be dispenser. "So you're our new chemist," said the warder who admitted me "Well, you'd better go and see the super., then; he's in his office." Admitted through the second barrier, I was directed to the first door in the buildings on my left, and entering the office I was brought before the dread presence of the superintendent, Mr. Robert Gardiner. I found him a man looking younger than his years, with coarse features, a sharp eye, and a flexible nose like Lord Brougham's. He read my credentials, and called for the chief warder Warrick, ordering him to take me to the doctor, and see that I was properly inducted into my duties. I was accordingly conducted to the doctor's house, which, adjoined by the assistant-superintendent's, is situated on the left of the first yard entered. Dr. Reed was at home, and called me into his study to question me. I satisfied him that I was a most competent chemist, and that I should prove a valuable assistant, and then I was again turned over to Warrick. The chief warder of the guard is a quiet spoken individual, with a smooth manner, which has procured him from some the *sobriquet* of "Oily Gammon." His kind heart will not allow him to censure any one, so he will speak him mildly and kindly, leaving a little report in the book to be dealt with by the superintendent, who is another sort of a man. In justice to Warrick, however, I must state that I believe he often overlooks or condones slight sins of omission and commission, and, considering his position, is very fairly spoken of by the men. I have no fault to find with him; he always treated me well, although I believe he was instrumental in "patting" a few games on the new dispenser. Warrick led me out of the front gates, round the walls, and through a door into the portion of the reserve occupied by the Jika reformatory schools and inspector-general's and superintendent's quarters. These are all enclosed by one high wall, but outside Pentridge Gaol, which is walled in, a prison within a prison. Here, at what is known as the lower guardroom, I subscribed my name to a manuscript declaration, entailing on me more pains and penalties. I found now that, although a dispenser, and having full charge of the hospital, I only ranked as a junior warder. If I had been a chemist, I have no doubt this would have hurt my feelings; but of this more anon.

Escorted back by Warrick, I was handed over to the doctor, my immediate superior, and by him taken to the hospital, which is in a second yard, divided from the first by an iron fence. Here I found a sharp-looking warder, in appearance and manner remarkably like a terrier, who was temporarily in charge of the establishment, and who was to remain with me for a day to coach me in the duties of locking and unlocking. Dr. Reed took me round the building, and pointed out to me the prisoners who occupied positions as

“billets.” I found that I had seven of these under my control, the dispenser being the only official in the hospital. First there was the clerk, who assisted in keeping the hospital books, made out daily returns, and delivered medicine to the out-patients in two of the divisions. There were two wardsmen and a nurse (male) engaged to attend on a special case. These were all employed upstairs. Below I had the surgery and hall porter, whose special duty it was to attend to my immediate wants, a washerman and storekeeper, and last, but not least, the cook. These hospital billets, although some of the men worked hard and fairly earned more than their board, are the most coveted positions at Pentridge, owing to the amount of freedom and necessary communication with other prisoners. Disciplinarians consider that the hospital is the weak point in the administration. It is supposed to be the breeding ground of all discontent and defiance of authority, and to be the headquarters of “traffic” in tobacco, which is the sin without forgiveness in the superintendent’s eyes. With only one official, who has often to be absent from his post in other parts of the prison, and who cannot be mixing draughts and at the same time keep a strict watch in the wards, the discipline here cannot be so severe as in other divisions. Privileged prisoners employed in “billets” in the office or stores can, and do, march in and out on pretence of business, and have plenty of time to chat and “traffic” with their mates whilst the dispenser is engaged in the surgery below. But outside that little mischief can be done, as when patients are discharged from the hospital strict discipline in their own divisions should counterbalance the slight relaxation of authority which they had enjoyed whilst sick. Prisoners in the hospital are treated primarily as patients the one object being to cure them; secondly, they are treated as prisoners, but the rules and regulations they are subject to are scarcely more stringent than those in force at the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals. Of one thing I am satisfied—sick men at Pentridge are far better treated than those at the Benevolent Asylum; and with the exception of the associations and situation, their lot is equal to that of the inmates of many hospitals in Australia and Great Britain. They need not be afraid of surgical experiments with corkscrews and pocket knives. People may cry out at prisoners receiving so much attention and comfort, but they would be wrong. To Dr. Reed a sick prisoner becomes only “a case,” and his sole desire appears to be, by the best possible available treatment, to turn him out cured and fit for work. To the physician, the guilt of a prisoner is sunk in the pain of the patient, and he cares nothing for his crime or antecedents, except so far as they may throw light on the man’s condition, or give a hint as to “malingering.” That Dr. Reed is fully equal to the disagreeable and unthankful duties of a prison surgeon is proved by the very small percentage of cases in the hospital and of deaths and sickness.

In less than half an hour after I landed at Pentridge I had my first "case." It happened thusly. After being shown round the wards, and receiving instructions from Dr. Reed, we returned to the surgery. There the warder addressed the doctor, "I've just come up from A Division, and there's Ballyram wants a tooth out. Will you go down there, sir?" "You can pull out teeth, I suppose?" said the doctor, turning to me. I sort of hesitated. "Who was the man?" I asked. "The hangman Gately, but they call him Ballyram here," was the reply. I accepted the doctor's case of instruments with alacrity and expressed my readiness to pull out every tooth in "Ballyram's" head. I have never had any practice in dentistry, and this was my maiden effort in that line. With any other subject I certainly should have hesitated, as I dislike giving needless pain, but Gately I had little sympathy for. I had seen him but once—at the execution of Bondietto—a transaction which I give him credit for despatching with much neatness. But the man's brutal appearance corresponded with his vocation, and I could well believe that he enjoyed his work, and that he was guilty of the atrocities for which he is now undergoing punishment. So I did not mind giving him a little pain. If I proved a success in this line of business I would go on, but if not, I must renounce tooth-drawing under some pretence, and Gately alone would suffer by my inexperience. "Come along," said the warder. "I'll take you down to A Division." So locking up the surgery, which is secured by a heavy bolt, fastened with a Chubb's padlock, we sallied out. We marched into the entrance yard and down the pathway between the prison wall and the doctor's garden, and soon came to another wall, which is the boundary of the original prison for males. At the corner there is a tower, one of several which diversify the outer walls, and on a small and narrow platform on top of this, a sentry paces. The entrance is from outside by a small doorway and winding staircase inside the tower, so that the several sentries, armed with rifles and revolvers, are within their range masters of the position. A small iron door in the wall is opened by one of the prisoners who acts as gatekeeper here, another coveted and easy "billet." The sentry lets down the key in a little bag attached to a cord, and it is afterwards returned to him by the same means. My companion tells me that we are now in the A division, which amongst the prisoners is popularly known as "the model," being evidently christened such by some old London "prig" who had graduated at "the model," Pentonville Prison, in the Caledonian-road. This enclosure here is a large one, and is only occupied by the prison formerly devoted to women; and the cottages of the four chief warders, who, before they became civil servants, were called sergeants. But I must defer a thorough description, for "Balleyram" [sic] is waiting to have his tooth out. Entering the prison, passing the office, library, bath, and store-rooms, and through two gates of

strong iron bars, we find ourselves in “the model,” which is unlike its sponsor at Pentonville in that it is only designed for three wings or corridors, two as yet being built, instead of four as in the London institution, and that it only contains two tiers of cells. Three or four warders, dressed in the simple uniform of the penal institutions are lounging about a table over which are a number of hooks holding keys, staves, handcuffs, and other outward and visible signs of authority. To them I am introduced as the new dispenser, and we exchange polite salutations and a little badinage, after the manner of our kind. “He’s come to pull out Balleyram’s tooth,” said my introducer, and one of the warders escorts me to cell 93. The rattle of the key in the lock arouses the occupant, who springs to the position of “attention,” as required by the regulations, and entering I find myself face to face with the last minister of Victorian law—Gately—convict and executioner.

A frightful animal—the immense head, powerful protruding jaw, narrow receding forehead and deficient brain space, seemed fitly joined to tremendous shoulders and long, strong arms, like those of a gorilla, which he resembles more than a man. All the evil passions appeared to have their home behind that repellant, revolting countenance. With an instinctive movement, which my companions would not understand, I placed my hand on my hip. As a brute and a hangman (I trust this is not a premonitory warning) the man was alike distasteful to me. But in a second I remembered that here he was but a prisoner, No. 93, and the power of authority was visible all around me. I recovered my part, “Now, then, old man, let’s have a look at this tooth.” He opened his foul jaws. Faugh! “Sit down.” “Oh, doctor, don’t hurt me,” he cried, as with a professional air I opened the pocket case and spread the forceps on the little table. “Oh!” he cried as the first pull broke off a piece of the tooth, the forceps slipping. “Just hold his head, and if he stirs bang it against the wall,” said I to one of the warders. There was a laugh, the new dispenser was “a queer sort,” evidently. I took out the largest and strongest pair of forceps, which would pull a tooth out of a crocodile. One grip, a roar from Gately, a twist of the wrist, and out came the tusk. With the consciousness of talent, I wiped the instruments carefully, whilst the warders looked on admiringly. “I must get you to look at my teeth,” said one of them. “Have it out now,” said I. “If there’s one thing I can do better than another, it’s this—I’m—on teeth” The warder shuddered, and said he hadn’t time just then. This little operation gave me much *éclat*, and by the mysterious underground railroad of the prison was circulated through all the divisions to such an extent, that for a time I had quite a business in extracting old stumps, which only fell off after I broke two forceps in a man’s jaw. He wouldn’t try a third attempt, when I meant to put the bulldog on him, and have out that stump or his

jaw-bone. I left the cell fully satisfied of my capacity to pass as a dentist; and now the thing was over, amused at my first case. Poor Gately. All the world is down on him, and when free he had not a place to lay his head. A natural brute, he is as God, or the devil, made him, for it is hard to believe that any spark of aught Divine can rest in such a frame. An "old hand," he has had experience of the prisons of Tasmania, New South Wales, and Victoria, passing his whole life in and out of gaol. He goes by the several names of Gately, Balleyram, and Fagin, and was an Irishman and a Roman Catholic. But his long experience of prison life has taught him that, owing to the practice of confession, it is hard to gammon the priest, and, casting around for some other creed, by professing which he might obtain somewhat, Balleyram became a convert to Judaism. I never met a converted Jew—I believe they cost half a million each, and the article is then very inferior—but I have heard of such. A converted Christian I never heard of, and Gately, Fagin, or Balleyram should be celebrated on this account. I am afraid, however, that the respectable members of the Jewish race, who add so much to the prosperity of the colonies by their industry and public spirit, will no more own Gately than they would the Thompsons. However, he says he's a Jew; his intentions are good, and he ought to know. I did not examine him as to the tenets, &c., of his faith. The peculiar fact in this conversion is the cause—a longing for pass-over cake. Gately found out that Jews were supplied with this at the proper season, and seeing that it was a luxury compared to prison fare, has been running on the Hebrew ticket ever since. But this strange caricature of humanity is not all evil. On one occasion he saved the life of an overseer. Some years back they were working in the quarry, and a plot was made to "muckle" the overseer, who was considered a hard taskmaster. The one who was to strike the first blow knocked the overseer from the bank into the quarry. His leg was broken, and a prisoner approached to finish him with an axe, when Balleyram intervened, and by his threats and enormous strength subdued the rioters. For this, I am told, he obtained a remission of his sentence, and was afterwards appointed executioner. The effect of such an office on the individual may be learned from the evidence of warders who have known Gately for years. These all say that his conduct now is greatly worse than when he was an ordinary criminal. Let this be recorded to his credit—he *could* be degraded and made worse by the influences of his debasing office.

Leaving the A Division with my cicerone, at the door we met Mr. Begg, the chief warder there. He is the Beau Brummel of Pentridge. Faultlessly neat, his uniform seems unlike that of any other man. He wears immaculate linen and white cotton gloves. There is not a speck of dust nor a wrinkle about him, and in his get-up he is a credit to the establishment. Begg is as particular

about the neatness and order of his division as in his attire; dirt to him is real original sin, and the corridors, walls, doors, and locks are scrubbed, and rubbed, and polished to an extent unknown elsewhere. Begg welcomes me severely, his cold eye glancing over my costume, criticising my paper collar and shabby genteel coat. I am evidently not up to his standard of neatness and order. "When you come here to give medicine to prisoners," says he, "I hope you won't spill any on the stones. The other dispenser used to do so, and it leaves stains which we can't get out." After promising not to offend in this manner we return to the hospital. Sitting in the surgery, my companion more particularly instructs me in my duties. It seems that the dispenser has to sleep in a room upstairs, which during the day is occupied as an office, and is filled with shelves of books, instruments, a spirometer, microscope, &c. A few minutes before 6 in the morning I have to rise and get the keys from between the gates, and on the stroke of the hour, parade with the other warders. Then I come to the hospital, and unlock all the doors of the wards, kitchen, stores, &c. A prisoner is despatched to the divisions with medicine for the out-patients, to be administered before they go out to work. From 7 to 8 I am relieved for breakfast. On returning, I wait on the doctor, who makes a tour of inspection through the building, visits the wards, and examines the patients. He fills in a daily record as to their state, treatment, &c., "in the English language," according to the sensible regulations. Afterwards I have to see that the whole building is thoroughly cleaned, make up required medicines, and generally be all eyes and ears to prevent communication between outside prisoners and patients. At 10 o'clock, accompanied by a prisoner, I have to go to A division and give out the medicine there as ordered by the doctor. Soon after 11 the "muster" bell is rung, and I have to count all my patients. At half-past 11 the doctor again attends at the surgery, and out-patients and others complaining are brought thither by warders. Some are admitted, some ordered medicine to be given then in their cells. From half-past 12 to half-past 1 is my dinner hour. In the afternoon the superintendent will possibly be round, and I have to wait upon him. At 3 o'clock I again proceed to dose the solitary prisoners in "the model." At 5 o'clock there is evening muster, and a little before 6 I lock up all the wards and rooms in the presence of a man sent to assist me, who signs the night-book as a guarantee of the faithful performance of my duty. The night sentry, armed with cutlass and revolver, then arrives, and counts the prisoners in the different wards, seeing that he has the number on the list made out for him. At six o'clock the bell rings, and locking the outer door, leaving the sentry inside, I take the keys to the gate, and until ten o'clock am a free man. By that time I have to be again within the gates, and by one of the warders on duty there

am taken to the hospital, and locked in for the night. The amount of locking and unlocking is frightful. All the doors are secured by strong bars and heavy padlocks, those attached to the wards being also enclosed in a lock case. I think I had over 60 keys to contend with, and although in time I began to know these, still the process of locking up at night and unlocking in the morning was a tedious one, and in the event of a fire, before the keys could be obtained and all the patients released, I think some of them would stand a good chance of being burnt to death.

On this the first morning of my arrival in Pentridge I tried hard to master all those different details, determined, as far as my mission would allow, to faithfully fulfil the obligations I had entered into with the Government of Victoria. I carefully studied the regulation-book given me by Chief Warden Warrick. In this no such person as a dispenser is recognised, and special orders are made for his guidance by the medical officer, but my attention was drawn to the following rules, which would peculiarly affect me, although I suppose "His Excellency Viscount Canterbury and the Executive Council" had no such intention when they framed them:—

"4. In enforcing obedience by the convicts, they (the warders) will be firm but temperate, carefully avoiding the use of harsh or irritating language or gestures, and only resorting to force when absolutely necessary.

"7. They will on no account accept any fee or reward for the performance of any portion of their duties.

"8. They will not receive any present from, or traffic or hold familiar intercourse with, any prisoner, or with any friend or relation of a prisoner, or hold any communication with either, except so far as may be necessary for the proper discharge of their duties.

"9. When in presence or hearing of any convict, they are not to smoke, use improper language, or enter into discussions or altercations with each other, particularly on points of duty. They will always on such occasions be most guarded in their conversation and demeanour.

"10. They are not to write letters to newspapers on matters connected with the department, but if aggrieved must complain, through the proper channel, to the inspector."

The following acts I read are declared offences for which warders will be liable to punishment:—

"Talking, reading, or smoking when on duty. Wrangling, disputing, or quarrelling, whether on public or private matters. Introducing wine, beer, or any spirituous liquor into any part of the prison, unless ordered by the medical officer. Giving any article whatever to a prisoner, whether with or without a consideration. Entering into any correspondence or addressing any

communication whatever in his official capacity except through the proper channel. Removing any article or property from the prison without proper authority. Absenting himself from duty or from the prison without leave. Card-playing or gambling. Drunkenness.”

The list is pretty comprehensive, and as regards the “talking, reading, and writing to newspapers,” I am afraid I have rendered myself “liable to punishment.” The medical officers’ rules with respect to hospital management I carried out to the best of my ability, and I do not think Dr. Reed had anything to complain of in my conduct as a dispenser. I broke one regulation, however. “The dispenser is not allowed to prescribe or practise for any one outside the Stockade without permission from the medical officer.” I did have one patient, a very interesting case, and I am happy to say I effected a complete cure.

But I admit that as I read the rules and regulations, temptation entered into my soul. I remembered recent criticisms of a friend of mine. “You’re getting demoralised,” said he. “These mornings in churches, trips down the bay, and flirtations with nuns, are all very well in their way, but they are ruining you for work. You want to do something big, something to startle and attract general attention and sustain your fame. The public demands it, and they must be satisfied. You were splendid at the Benevolent Asylum and at Kew, but at a church and in a nunnery you’re only half a vagabond, and people will begin to think you’re played out. You must satisfy the legitimate demands of the public. People who have read you are like tigers who have tasted blood—they crave for more.” “Thank you,” said I moodily; “but how is this thing to end? Must I go on sacrificing myself forever? And when will the public be satisfied? Must I keep on working up sensational truths till there is nothing left for me but to shoot a bookmaker, and give graphic and truthful accounts of the arrest, imprisonment, trial, verdict, condemned cell, last hours, and drop, finishing my last copy before I was turned off? That would be a big thing, and might satisfy the public. At present I must do what I can; but I promise you, if I live, that I will do bigger things than any I have yet written about. You shall be satisfied that the preaching of Mr. Pearce and the prayers of the Rev. Mother have not demoralised me. I wish I could get up a ‘dog and-man fight;’ but here you have no ‘black country’ in which to locate it, although I firmly believe that Mr. James Greenwood wrote the truth in his celebrated article. I have seen a Staffordshire collier walk off with a comrade’s ear in his waistcoat pocket after a Sunday morning’s quiet amusement. However, wait patiently, and trust me, I am still as big a vagabond as ever.”

Now was my chance, a great one! I could make a grand *finale* to my Victorian career. There in the book I saw written prescriptions to be made up for the inspector general and his family. I could commence with poisoning them

all, follow up with the half-dozen warders who were taking physic, steal the keys, raise a riot amongst the prisoners, and let them loose on the country. Then Mr. Macpherson would be gibbeted by an indignant populace for his innocent share in the transaction. Anarchy would set in, whilst I, gaily sailing over the Pacific toward the Golden Gate, would concoct a pleasing tale for the *'Frisco News Letter* of the last escapade of "The Vagabond" in Australia. But I forbore, after battling strongly with the temptation. I think I deserve credit for my forbearance, for Gil Blas himself never had such a grand chance of playing the mischief generally.