


**PART 4**



**THE STORY  
OF THE  
AUSTRALIAN  
PEOPLE**

**J.N. RAWLING**

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*Is well fitted for the task he has undertaken in "THE STORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE." He is a graduate of Sydney University, where he specialised in history. His knowledge of this subject, gained as the result of many years' intensive study, has been re-inforced by over fifteen years' experience in the teaching of history.*

*After serving for three years on active service during the Great War, Mr. Rawling was appointed a lecturer in history in the A.I.F. Educational Service under the late Bishop Long, who highly commended him for his work done in this capacity.*

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*He is the author of several well-known pamphlets on historical and economic themes.*

# THE STORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE

## PART 4



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## FOREWORD

An apology is due to our readers for the long delay in publishing this Part 4 of the "STORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE." But best laid schemes gang oft a-gley and we can only plead that in the circumstances the delay was unavoidable. We feel sure that the future parts will appear regularly.

For the benefit of those who have suggested that each part should be complete in itself we have to stress the fact that this work is a BOOK in process of publication and NOT a series of parts. The complete book is kept in sight. It is impossible, therefore, to make each part complete in itself. Nor is it possible, as others have suggested, to place the notes, in each part. We have to keep in mind what the completed book will look like and the notes will have to come at the end of each book. We are aware that, as a result, readers will have to wait often to look up notes and references, but we feel that delay is preferable to having a choppy book when completed and bound. We take this opportunity to thank readers who have sent in suggestions, criticisms and appreciations.

The whole book is divided into Seven Books as follow: I, *Prelude and Perspective*; II, *Penal Settlement* (1788-1823); III, *Free Colony and Self-Government* (1823-1856); IV, *Democracy and Nationalisation* (1856-1885); V, *End of an Age* (1885-1901); VI, *Commonwealth and War* (1901-1919); VII, *The Latest Age* (1919-1938).

The book is being published in ten monthly parts which, when completed, may be bound to form a volume of 800 pages.

A list of errata is to be found on the detachable page at the end of this part.

## Chapter VII.

### CONVICTS AND MEN

Have the elder races halted?  
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied, over there beyond  
the seas?  
We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,  
Pioneers! O Pioneers!  
All the past we leave behind;  
We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied world;  
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the  
march,  
Pioneers! O Pioneers!

—Walt Whitman.

1.—Pioneers; 2.—The First Settlers; 3.—Settlers' Grievances; 4.—Meetings and Petitions; 5.—Revolt; 6.—Commerce, Industry and Labor.

IT has for long been customary for historians and others to invite Australians to hide their heads in shame because of what they call Australia's birth-stain. We have recently been warned, by one\* who, however, claims that the birth-stain has been wiped out, against imagining that our nation was founded by a noble army of martyrs. Our founders were convicts. We must admit the birth-stain!—We must not! There is no need to picture the convicts who came here as noble, pure and tender-hearted. But, if there was a birth-stain, it was a stain on the mother and not on the child. It was a stain on the social conditions and those who upheld them, on the diabolical laws and those who made them, that thousands of men, women and children were, year after year, sent out here as convicts. What else were they but an army of martyrs? And, if not a noble army, they had no lack of noble ones among them and a greater share than the ruling class that sent them out. They were not a noble army—they were merely ordinary

\* Professor Portus.

human beings, most of them, with a sprinkling of the cunning, the cruel and the debased, on the one hand, and the manly, the spirited and the self-sacrificing on the other. Most of them were the pitiable victims of circumstances and the social order, who, in a new country, found opportunities of becoming men and women more erect and of begetting sons and daughters who became like what they themselves might have been had England remained Merrie England or had the promise of the modern world not been belied. Most of those who survived the horrors of transport ships and convict service to become free men and women were more fortunate, in spite of the horrors, than those of their class who remained behind in England to give life to generations of C3 men. And the sons and daughters, born in a new land, the first white Australians, were within 20 years of the foundation of the colony, to attract the admiration of visitors to our shores. There was no birth-stain upon the founders of the Australian Nation. They were merely the disinherited of the old country who came to build a freer and more democratic society in a new.

**1.—PIONEERS.**—The employment of convicts to found or develop colonies was, of course, no new idea. We have already seen that the traffic in the North American colonies was a very profitable one.\* -But other countries had pursued similar policies in their colonies. As far back as 1497 Spain transported convicts to the West Indies. Portugal left convicts stranded on the coasts of Brazil. Similarly the French sent convicts to Canada in the 16th century. And, when Frobisher sailed on his second voyage in 1777 "for the discoverie of a new passage to Cataya, China and the East India by the north-west," he was given convicts by Queen Elizabeth some of whom he was to "sett on land upon the coast of Friesland . . . with weapons and virtualls such as you may conveniently spare, to which persons you shall give instructions howe they may by their good behaviour wyn the goodwill of the people of that country, and also learn the state of the same."<sup>1</sup> Sweden also founded the settlement of Fort Christina in Delaware with convicts. But Britain was "the first country which systematically used her dependencies as places for the reception and punishment of convicts."<sup>2</sup> The system began in the reign of James I. and lasted till late in the 19th century—until, in fact, 1867, when transportation to West Australia ceased.

\* See above, pp. 154-5.

1.—For notes and references to this chap., see end of Book II.

The treatment of the convicts made for some a sentence of death preferable to a sentence of transportation. In September, 1789, a number of men sentenced to death were offered a commutation of that sentence to one of transportation to New South Wales. Many refused it! Some later changed their minds, but three persisted in their refusal and chose death rather than Botany Bay.<sup>3</sup> We are fortunate in having a convict's comment on the choice made. "We have heard," says a convict's letter, in April, 1790, "that some convicts at home, who might have been pardoned for capital crimes, chose their former sentence rather than come here; and which, though it was contradicted, we cannot help thinking is true. . . . And really if you was to see with what ardent expectations some of the poor wretches watch an opportunity of looking out to sea, or the tears that are often shed upon the infants at the breast, you must have feelings that otherwise you never could have any experience of."<sup>4</sup>

"As for the distresses of the women," writes a female convict, "they are past description, as they are deprived of tea and other things they were indulged in in the voyage by the seamen, and as they are totally unprovided with clothes, those who have young children are quite wretched. Besides this, though a number of marriages have taken place, several women, who became pregnant on the voyage, and are since left by their partners, who have returned to Eng., are not likely even here to form any fresh connections."<sup>5</sup>

Another woman convict, who came out by the "Lady Juliana," writes, July 24, 1790: "Oh! If you had but seen the shocking sight of the poor creatures that came out in the three ships\* it would make your heart bleed; they were almost dead, very few could stand, and they were obliged to fling them as you would goods, and hoist them out of the ships, they were so feeble; and they died ten or twelve of a day when they first landed."<sup>6</sup>

Many of the women convicts of the First Fleet were, according to Phillip, "abandoned wretches." But Phillip was no philosopher

\* Of the Second Fleet.—What is called the Second Fleet consisted of six ships: the "Guardian," a warship converted into a store-ship—it should have arrived about January, 1790, but was wrecked; the "Lady Juliana," the "Surprize," the "Neptune," the "Scarborough," and the "Justinian"—the last-named bringing no convicts.

The Third Fleet arrived at Sydney between July and October, 1791. It consisted of 10 ships: the "Queen," "Atlantic," "William and Ann," "Britannia," "Matilda," "Salamander," "Albemarle," "Mary Ann," "Admiral Barrington," and "Active." H.M.S. "Gorgon" arrived within the same period. Two thousand and sixty-one male and female convicts were sent by this Fleet and 198 died on the way out!

to inquire into the implications of their state or the justice and accuracy of his description of them. And there were many who were not abandoned wretches even in the eyes of an Archbishop. The following letter of one such speaks for itself and for the heartlessness of the 18th century. "If, sir," she wrote to one who had helped her, "you have any success in your application for my pardon, you can send it me by any of the captains coming out to Botany Bay, which, I am sure, your goodness will endeavor to do for the sake of my motherless children; they are the only cause of my anxiety and unhappiness. I hope your generous exertions will one day restore me to them; yet, whether you succeed or not, that God, I sincerely hope, will reward you—fully reward you—for your past unequalled kindness to me. Pray, sir, be good enough to let my husband know you have had a letter from me, and beg him to take care of my dear children. I think it hard I did not see him before I sailed, for we laid a week at Gravesend, and I should have left my country less sorrowfully had I given him my last charges and bade him farewell."

The woman was Mary Talbot and her letter was published in the "Dublin Chronicle" for Nov. 1, 1791, whose editor added this note: "We have given the above unfortunate woman's letter a place in our paper, as her case is of that nature to interest us in her behalf. It appears that she was tried for stealing a piece of linen from a shop in Tavistock Street (the only theft she says she ever committed), and was sentenced to seven years' transportation. When the vessel was at Gravesend, a man, whose wife was a convict, contrived by a boat to get them on shore from the ship, and she was retaken some time after, and sentence of death pronounced for returning from transportations before her time; but after laying in Newgate near a year, received his Majesty's pardon on condition on going to Botany Bay for life, which she refused at the bar on account of not being permitted to take her children with her, and was taken back to Newgate in strong convulsions, and her shrieks were re-echoed through the whole gaol. The occasion of her committing the theft, from her own and her husband's account, was as follows: They were natives of Ireland. He was by trade a stone-mason, but on coming to England entered into the service of a merchant in Austin Friars, where he continued till after they were married, when he returned to his trade, and had worked with a stone-mason at the west end of the town, near two years, when he had the misfortune to have a stone fall on him, and was carried to St. Thomas's hospital; that during the time he was there, having nothing to support herself and children, she committed the theft

for which she was convicted; that fearing it might disgrace her husband she was tried by her maiden name; that after she escaped she secreted herself till her husband could procure means of their returning to Ireland; but venturing out one evening she was recognised by one of the gaol-runners, and unfortunately taken hold of."<sup>7</sup>

The treatment accorded to the convicts on board some of the transports roused the indignation of many of the military and ships' officers. "When severely pinched with gnawing hunger," says another letter from Sydney published in the "Dublin Chronicle" for September 25, 1792, "how have I seen many fine fellows supplicating in the most pressing manner imaginable for the damaged bread that was for the hogs and poultry. I have seen the poor fellows so exhausted with hunger and thirst that they could hardly stand alone." The conscience of Englishmen was not atrophied. There were protests that showed it was not the age but the men in control who were responsible for the horrors. Captain Trail of the "Neptune" did not escape. "Yesterday," we are told, "Thomas Kemp, John Bean and George Churchill, quartermasters on board the 'Neptune' (Captain Trail), lately arrived from Botany Bay and China; Robert Wright, John Gwyn, William Humphreys, George Wolfe and Michael Smith, marines; William Sabesfin, gunner; and Charles King, captain's cook of the above ship, came before Alderman Clark, at Guildhall, and made" the following affidavit:<sup>8</sup>

"That they sailed from Portsmouth in the 'Neptune,' Capt. Donald Trail and William Ellington, chief mate, having on board 500 male convicts, bound to Botany Bay; that during the voyage the captain and chief mate used the unhappy convicts ill by keeping them short in their allowance, allowing only half a pint of water a day; that 171 died on their voyage; that many of them were so hungry that they have seen several take the chews of tobacco from the mouths of the men that lay dead on the deck; that numbers used to steal the provisions from the hogs; and that when they arrived at Botany Bay the captain and mate stopped the boxes of many, took the things out, and threw the boxes overboard; that, soon after they had landed the convicts, the captain and mate opened a warehouse on the island and sold the provisions which the unhappy convicts ought to have had; that, when landed they were swarming with vermin;\* and that, on account of the above persons making complaint, they had been very ill treated by the captain and mate, and had wounds to

\* See above, p. 143.

shew of the ill treatment they had received." \*

The "Dublin Chronicle," of December 1, 1792, gives Mr. Evans's description of the convicts' quarters on the "Neptune." "The following," says the "Chronicle," "is the description he gives of the part of the orlop, or third deck, allowed for these unhappy sacrifices to the justice of their country. According to the dimensions given me of this place, it contained 75 feet, or thereabouts, in length, 35 feet, or thereabouts at the utmost, in breadth; and 6 feet 6 inches, or thereabouts, in height between the beams; and 5 feet 7 inches, or thereabouts, in height below the beams; within which space were built the miserable apartments for confining, boarding and lodging upwards of 400 male convicts in four rows of cabins one story high, viz., one row on each side of the ship from the mainmast forwards, and two rows in the middle, or midships, not quite so long. These cabins were about six feet in length and breadth, and the bottom boards of the lower cabin were four inches from the deck." \*

Yet there were organisations in England which were concerned to see that men and women, and children, too, sent out to New South Wales under such vile conditions, should receive—not amelioration of those conditions—but spiritual directions, advices and exhortations.

\* Trail had taken over the "Neptune" from Captain Gilbert after the latter had fought a duel with John Macarthur before it left England at the beginning of 1790. Gilbert was of "an indifferent character," says Mrs. Macarthur, and "took an opportunity of manifesting himself to us in such a light as precluded all further communication between him and Mr. Macarthur." But, when he was superseded, she found that "Mr. Trail's character was of a very much blacker dye than was even in Mr. Gilbert's nature to exhibit." A gauge, by the way to measure the sufferings of the convicts may be imagined after reading the horrors of the voyage, even for Mrs. Macarthur, the wife of the Captain of the Corps. Her journal also throws light on the relations between the officers, the utter selfishness of Captain Nepean and the quarrelsome character of Captain Hill whom we have already quoted as put under Macarthur. Captain Hill had to tranship to the "Scarborough" arrest by Nepean and the Macarthurs had to tranship to the "Scarborough" to get away from Trail and Nepean, the latter expressing his opinion that "the master of the ship had a right to do as he pleased." (See Mrs. Macarthur's Journal).—A part of Trail's instructions from the owners was to collect all unexpended provisions on their ships and, "at Port Jackson or China (at your option), . . . dispose of them . . . to the best advantage for our account." And he was to be sure that there was no "greater consumption [of provisions] than we have agreed for"—"but any of the provisions found necessary may be taken for the ship's use," that is for the ship's company for whom, of course, the ship's owners would have had to provide. (Historical Records of New South Wales, vol. II, pp. 750-2.) One hundred and seventy-one convicts died on the "Neptune"—"to the best advantage" of the owners. There were many Captain Trails and all of them did not sail on ships.

Both the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" and the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge" took an early interest in New South Wales and it is to the former that we owe the beginnings of education here. The Rev. Johnson was indebted to both societies for books sent out—although the names of the books sent will beget in us today smiles if not tears. The aim was to "amend" people when what needed amending were things. "The exiles," said the Bishop of Gloucester, in 1804, "were once dwelling among Christian friends in British dominions. Let them find in their native home a kind disposition towards them if they repent and amend." The "literature" was to help them to amend. Fifty prayerbooks, the S.P.G. sent out in 1789, and 50 testaments, 48 Dixon's Spelling Books, 25 Stonehouse's Prayers, 25 "Christian Monitor," 25 Kettlewell's "Office for the Penitent," 25 "Soldier's Monitor," 25 Woodward's "Against Swearing," 25 "Against Drunkenness," amongst others. It is to be hoped that the four dozen of Dixon's spelling books were well-thumbed and that we have cause to thank Dixon and the S.P.G. The other society, the S.P.C.K., has a greater claim on our gratitude, for, with the First Fleet, it sent out 100 of Dixon's Spelling Books—which may, however, have been swamped among the 100 Bibles 24mo., 100 Common Prayer Books (25, 8vo. Pica, 75, 12mo. Minion), 400 Testaments (50, Pica, 100 Long Primer, 250, 12mo. Brevier), 500 Psalters, 200 Church Catechism Books, 100 Osterwald's "Necessity for Reading the Scripture," 100 "Christian Monitor," 25 "Plain Exhortations to Prisoners," 50 Synge's "Religion Made Easy," 25 Kettlewell's "Office for the Penitent," 200 "Sermons on the Mount," 12 Wilson's "Instructions for the Indians," 100 Wilson's "On the Lord's Supper," 200 "Exercises Against Lying," 50 Woodward's "Caution to Swearers," 600 Stonehouse's "Administrations," 100 Stonehouse's "Most Important Truth," 200 "Child's First Book"—1st Part, 200 "Child's First Book"—2nd Part, 50 Lewis's "Catechisms," 200 "Christian Soldier," 100 Burkett's "Help and Guide," 20 Burrough's "Devout Psalmist," 100 "Exhortations to Chastity," 25 Daniel Hurley's "Conversion," 50 "Life of God in the Soul of Man," 50 "Porteus on Good Friday," 100 White's "Dissuasives from Stealing," 100 Stonehouse's "Advice to a Penitent," 50 Stonehouse's "Spiritual Directions," 6 "Worthington on Self Resignation," 6 "Great Importance of a Religious Life," 6 "Stebbing on Prayer," 12 "Manual of Devotions," 1 Set of the Society's Tracts, and others.

One wonders four things as one reads that formidable list: what became of them all, whether they were sent out here

\* Bonwick: Australia's First Preacher, p. 52.

because they had been rejected by the English aristocracy, whether, when the convicts had finished with them, they were read by the officers of the N.S.W. Corps, and, finally, about the terrific waste of ink and paper there has been since the invention of printing—or at least since the foundation of P.G. & P.C.K. Societies. One could wish that what happened often to the food\* sent out had happened to this cargo of trash—the gift from the self-righteous to the victims of the social order they upheld.

According to the Journal of George Thompson, who sailed in the "Royal Admiral" in May, 1792,\*\* the convicts in Sydney then worked from 5 a.m. to 11 a.m., and then from 2 p.m. till sunset. They were "allowed no breakfast hour because they have seldom anything to eat." They were employed felling trees, digging up stumps, rooting out shrubs, turning up the ground with spade or hoe, carrying timber. "From the heat of the sun, the short allowance of provisions, and the ill treatment they receive from a set of merciless wretches (most of them of their own description) who are their superintendents, their lives are rendered truly miserable. At night they are placed in a hut, perhaps 14, 16 or 18 together (with one woman, whose duty is to keep it clean and provide victuals for the men while at work), without the comfort of either beds or blankets, unless they take them from the ship they come out in, or are rich enough to purchase them when they come on shore. . . . The women have a more comfortable life than the men. Those who are not fortunate enough to be selected for wives (which every officer, settler and soldier is

\* In February, 1793, Grose ordered an investigation into the state of the provisions brought by the "Bellona". The following is a report of the investigators.

"Flour, 11,088lb. damaged in 69 casks; rotten, stinking and maggotty; occasioned in our opinions, by a continuance of wet on the passage out.

"Pork, 1 cask; stinking, rotten, and unfit for men to eat  
"Rum, 79 gallons, deficient in 7 puncheons; occasioned, in our opinion, from the stave of one cask being broke, and the heads of some others being started, so as to cause a leakage, which appears to have been owing to the slightness of the cask.

"Wine, 198 gallons, deficient in 19 hogsheads, which appears to have leaked out of the different casks from the pressure and weight that have been stowed on them, the bung and adjoining staves of many of them being flattened in, and the chimes of three casks broke, and the heads of several of them started

"Molasses, 1,172 gall'ns, deficient in 76 h'h'ds, which appears to have leaked out, owing to the heat fermenting it on the passage out, many of the casks being landed empty and others nearly out.

"Raven duck, 13,148 yards, in 68 bales; hammocks, 335, No.; rugs, 13, No.; brown cloth, 527 yards; rotten and decayed; occasioned, in our opinions, from a continuance of wet on the passage out."

—Historical Records, vol. II, pp. 15-16.

\*\* Records of N.S.W., vol. II, pp. 793-99.

entitled to, and few are without) are made hut keepers; those who are not dignified with this office are set to make shirts, frocks, trousers, etc., for the men at a certain number per day; occasionally to pick grass in the fields, and for a very slight offence are kept constantly at work the same as the men."

2.—**THE FIRST SETTLERS.**—Another sign of the negligence of the authorities in England was the fact that many of the convicts arrived in Sydney without any papers. Some of these had been sentenced years before the departure of the First Fleet from England and many who had been sentenced to seven years' transportation were not long in the colony before their sentences expired. One such was James Ruse, who had received a seven years' sentence in July, 1782. With him, Phillip determined to prove himself right when he maintained that only free settlers could make the colony sufficiently productive to become self-supporting. In November, 1789, Phillip, while waiting for Ruse's papers, placed him on an acre of cleared land at Parramatta. A hut was built for him, seeds, tools and stock were provided and he was to receive rations and clothes for twelve months. He was also promised 30 acres in the same place if he were of good behavior. Ruse undertook, if he were given another cleared acre, that he would be self-supporting by January, 1791. Although he was given only one and a half acres of cleared land, instead of the two asked for, he was successful in making himself independent by February, 1791, when he signified his intention of declining any further rations for himself. He also announced that he would be in a position by Christmas to take his wife and child "off the store" also. In February, 1790, the first land grant was made when Ruse was given thirty acres at Parramatta. It was called "Experiment Farm." It was on Clay Cliff Creek, an arm of the Parramatta River, and lay between what are today George and Brisbane Streets, Parramatta.

Phillip was more than satisfied with his experiment. Ruse's success changed the opinions of many, convicts and marines, who, like the marine officers, had had no desire to remain in the colony. In November, 1791, Phillip was able to report that there were over eighty settlers\* in New South Wales and Norfolk

\* The conditions under which grants were made were as follows: For marines and sailors: "To be clothed and victualled for eighteen months; to be supplied with a proportion of grain and a proper assortment of such tools and implements of husbandry as may be necessary for clearing and cultivating the land, as well as with such a proportion of hogs and poultry as may be necessary and can be spared from the general stock of the settlement, not to be less than two breeding sows, one cock

Island—forty-four of them were convicts whose terms had expired, the rest being sailors and marines.\*

It was not long before free immigrants began coming to New South Wales. Early in Grose's administration the first free settlers arrived. They were granted land near Parramatta, "on a situation at the upper part of the harbour above the Flats, and on the south side."\*\* There were only five of them and they called the place of their settlement Liberty Plains.† From the ranks of the emancipated convicts and the free immigrants the number of settlers rapidly grew. "For some years after this settlement was established," wrote Hunter, in August, 1796,<sup>10</sup> "it was an easy task for the commander-in-chief to visit every part of it in the course of a few hours, but it is widely different now; he cannot, were he in continual motion, do it now in as many days. We extend more than 40 miles in one direction, exclusive of a chain of farms for 20 miles along the banks of the Hawkesbury, and many on the different branches of this extensive harbour." There were reported<sup>11</sup> to be 600 farms on the Hawkesbury in 1798 and the population at the same time was: at Parramatta, about 2000 and at Sydney about 4000.

**3.—SETTLERS' GRIEVANCES.**—The settlers' farms were not as successful as they could have been and Hunter blamed "the abominable practice of drinking to excess" and "the disputes, quarrels, and a total inattention to industry."<sup>12</sup> He threatened

and six hens, to have half an acre of land cleared of timber, and the necessary assistance given for building a hut sufficient to shelter the settler from the weather and secure his property."

For convicts whose sentences had expired:—

"To be supported and clothed from the public store for eighteen months, to receive two sow pigs, with the necessary implements of husbandry and grain for sowing the ground the first year."

—Historical Records, vol I, pt, 2, p. 540.

\* Those who did not want to settle were given no help to leave. Those who had the fare or knew enough about ships and sailing to be able to work their passage to England were able to leave. Of the rest, those who did not wish to settle had to work, or steal, or starve. As far as the government was concerned a sentence of transportation was to be one of perpetual banishment. Phillip stressed the necessity of sending out free settlers to absorb these early unemployed as agricultural laborers.

\*\* Collins, vol. I, p. 267.

† "The most respectable of these people," says Collins, "and apparently the best calculated for a bona-fide settler, was Thomas Rose, a farmer from Dorsetshire, who came out with his family, consisting of his wife and four children. An allotment of 120 acres was marked out for him." The others were: Frederic Meredith and Thomas Webb (both formerly of the "Sirius") and the latter's nephew and Edward Powell (an ex-convict who now returned here a free man).

to stop government aid to those who showed no sign of becoming independent. But their debts still mounted—many were "frequently ruined, their crops mortgaged, their persons imprisoned, and their families impoverished, and falling back upon the public store to prevent starving through the heavy debts they contract, having no other means to which they can apply, that their ground by this means becomes useless for the want of strength to work it."<sup>13</sup>

Governor Hunter was evidently finally persuaded that it was not the drunkenness and improvidence of the settlers that was responsible for their failures and bankruptcies. In February, 1798, he called them together and asked them to lay before him in writing "a clear, candid, and just statement of their distresses and hardships."<sup>14</sup> At the same time he requested the Rev. Marsden and Surgeon Arndell to investigate their conditions. Their report we have already quoted.\* The grievances of the settlers were embodied in a petition that is important because it is one of the first evidences in our history of the public discussion of common grievances. The settlers begged the "immediate interposition" of the Governor to save them "from gliding down that precipice on which we have so long stood." They proceeded to give details of the high cost of living. Wholesalers and dealers were making enormous profits and never greater than at the time of writing. The extortion practised is most graphically indicated in a table.

Commodity	Price Paid by Trader	Usual Retail Prices	Price
			the Settler was Paying at Time of the Inquiry
Tobacco . . . . .	-/8 to 1/6 per lb.	5/-	10/- to 15/-
Sugar . . . . .	-/7 to 1/- " "	2/6 to 3/-	5/-
Tea . . . . .	5/- to 10/- " "	15/- to 20/-	40/-
Soap . . . . .	-/9 to 1/6 " "	2/6	3/6
Coarse Calico	-/10 per yard	3/-	
Cape goods**	?	5/- to 7/- per yard	15/- per bottle
Spirits . . . . .	5/- to 10/- per gallon		

The Governor was informed that he was looked upon as "the angel of deliverance" and that, if he would abolish the evils from which they suffered, he would at the same time as he was raising up the settlers "from ruin and distress," raise up for himself "a pillar of fame" and "his penetration and love of justice" would be "recorded down to future ages." They proposed a plan. Dealers,

\* See above, p. 213.

\*\* "Hardly fine enough for horse-wrappers."



pedlars and extortioners would have to be extirpated. "They are the engines of our destruction," said the settlers; "some, for want, entreat of them to give credit for a pound, and if he succeeds it is at the expense of drinking £5." They also robbed the laborer, who was paid in grain by the farmer, giving him 7/6 for a bushel of wheat that was sold later for 20/-. The settler should have other articles with which to pay laborers so that the latter would not be fleeced by the extortioners. "The sober and honest settler, who ought to be considered the chief support of the colony, is by such means often in want of the common necessities of life, while an illiterate grog-shop keeper is rolling in every luxury that the colony can afford." The settlers suggested as a remedy the pooling of their resources and the buying up of ships' cargoes. But, as those resources would not be sufficient, they requested an advance from the Governor and offered their crops as security. From what was thus bought—by the settlers' agent—goods would be retailed at a fixed price. It was an experiment in co-operation that they were suggesting as a means of nullifying the rapacity of the dealers.

Governor Hunter was quite well aware of the causes of the settlers' distress. The dealers, he wrote to the Duke of Portland, just after he received the settlers' petition, "and such of the officers as are concerned in trade, pocket the whole produce of the laboring part of the settlement, by the extravagant prices charged; . . . but whilst this destructive system prevails the unfortunate laboring man has no means of relief."<sup>10</sup> He was in favor of creating a public store, "upon an extensive plan, for the retail sale of the various articles of comfort and convenience," for "the speculators who call here, and the ruinous traffic which is carried on through those monopolies, which are made in opposition to my repeated orders and endeavors to prevent, will, beyond a doubt, without the interference of government, keep the settlers, etc., in a continual state of beggary, and retard the progressive improvement of the colony." Yet, convinced of the necessity of abolishing the evils he recognised and faced with two schemes, his own and the settlers', either of which would have broken the monopolists' power, he put neither into operation. Instead, he gave his approval to the agreement of the officers (June 18, 1798) that we have already mentioned,\* which, instead of breaking monopolies, strengthened them!

For the petty dealers of which the settlers complained were not the monopolists but merely the agents of the monopolists.

\* See above, p. 230.

As the settlers themselves knew when they asked in their petition: "Is the property he sells his own, or is he agent for a better man, rather a richer man than himself?"—and as the Governor himself also surely knew. Yet the latter believed the officers when they said they would "most readily stand forward in behalf of the whole colony"—and gave legal standing and governmental approval to their monopoly. His professed confidence in the officers says little for Hunter's intelligence or much for his ingenuousness. About eight months after\* he had given his approval of the agreement, he was writing again to Portland about the "generality" of the officers who were "absorbed in private dealings of some kind or other, and from whose monopolies a multitude of concealed petty dealers are supplied, who carefully watch the time in which the poor and thoughtless farmer reaps the fruit of his annual labor; being without an opportunity of laying out his little earnings to advantage, they pour in upon him a torrent of useless and often destructive articles, and they received his crop; through this means he is frequently left without bread for his family—ultimately ruined, and his person imprisoned at the suit of those petty dealers."<sup>11</sup> Perhaps neither stupidity nor innocence is sufficient explanation of his failure to act—perhaps fear to act against the officers is a truer explanation!

4.—MEETINGS AND PETITIONS.—On January 14, 1800, the settlers at the Hawkesbury held a meeting at which they drew up a list of prices which they had to pay for various commodities. The following is their list.<sup>12</sup>

"Average price of the necessary articles of life bought at Sydney, by us, viz. :—

		£	s.	d.
"Tea,	per lb.,	..	..	4 0 0
Sugar,	" "	..	..	0 2 6
Spirits,	per gallon	from £1/10/-	to	4 0 0
Soap,	per lb.	..	..	0 6 0
Tobacco,	" "	..	..	0 10 0
Butter,	" "	..	..	0 4 0
Cheese,	" "	..	..	0 3 0
Shoes,	per pair	..	..	1 5 0
Duck cloth,	per yard	..	..	0 5 0
Woollen cloth,	" "	..	..	2 0 0
Irish linen,	" "	..	..	0 5 0
Calico,	" "	..	..	0 4 0
Silk handkerchiefs,	each	..	..	0 10 0
Linen and cotton checks,	per yard	..	..	0 6 0
Hats,	each	..	..	2 0 0"

\* February 21, 1799.

It was pointed out that these were the prices to settlers in Sydney. When the goods were sold at the Hawkesbury the price was advanced by from 50 to 100 per cent.

About the same time the Parramatta settlers forwarded to Hunter a petition to be sent to the Duke of Portland.\* They had been reduced to "a state of beggary and want" and they pointed out that the Governor had been unable to help them. They pointed out, again, the causes of their distress: the monopoly of a "few individuals" who bought up cargoes and sold them at a profit of 100 or 200 per cent.—"without the trouble of taking the goods out of the ship"! The petition gave some examples. "Out of the 'Hunter,' from Bengal: Rum bought at 8/- per gallon, afterwards sold from 20/- to 30/-, 40/- and 60/- per gallon; tea bought at 10/- per lb., afterwards sold from 30/-, 50/-, 60/-, 80/-, and as high as £8 sterling per lb.; . . . Porter bought on board the 'Walker,' from London, at £8 and £10 per cask, was sold immediately from £18 to £20, £25, £30 and £36 sterling per cask. All the above articles were sold by the retailers to settlers and others with an advance of from £50 to £80 sterling per cent. on the above-mentioned prices. . . . By the above statement it appears that the settlers are obliged to pay from 500 to 1000 per cent. on the aforesaid articles." We do not find it difficult to believe the statement of the settlers that "if they continue to groan under this load of oppression, agriculture must soon be at a stand."

The remedy they proposed was the establishment of a public store. The petition was signed by 14 deputies representing 181 settlers. With this petition, Hunter sent to England two others—one from the Field of Mars, Northern Boundaries, The Ponds and Kissing Point settlers reiterating the complaints and proposed remedy of the Parramatta settlers; the other from the Hawkesbury farmers.

In the latter petition the grievances were succinctly set down:

"**Firstly.**—Your petitioners pray your Excellency's attention to the high price\* Government is obliged to give for wheat, being nearly double what it ought to be.

"**Secondly.**—That notwithstanding the enormous price thus given, the settler's profit is inadequate to his labor and expence, and is in fact insufficient to procure him the common comforts of life: for

"**Thirdly.**—Your petitioners complain that when the stores are open for the reception of wheat or pork, preference is given to the officers,\* to the great detriment and sometimes total exclusion of the settler.

"**Fourthly.**—That when the settler has turned either wheat or pork into the store he is forced to wait three months before he is paid. This delay proves highly inconvenient to him, without being any way advantageous to Government, since payment is made not in money but in bill.\*

"**Fifthly.**—Your petitioners complain that they have not a due allowance to till their land, while officers and other favorites have men allowed them out of number.

"**Sixthly.**—That your petitioners are not allowed to draw from the stores, at prime cost, agricultural and other necessaries.

"**Seventhly.**—That the Government cows and sheep, have not been distributed among settlers, but that the advantage arising from their milk, fleeces, dung, etc., are engrossed by a very few individuals; that in consequence of this the civil and military officers are become the sole graziers, and butchers are enabled by it to, and actually do, keep up the price of meat.

"**Eighthly.**—That when ships arrive, the officers, civil and military, are exclusively admitted on board; that they there forestall the whole of the cargo, and then retail it to the colony at the most extortionate rates, as we are ready to prove if your Excellency requires it."

The petition, which was signed by 173 deputies, was something more than a statement of grievances. It was a political manifesto of a class rapidly growing in size and importance and one laying the basis of an economically independent community. The work of some unknown village, Hampden, it offered at once a programme by which the Governor could abolish the economic ills from which New South Wales suffered and the men on whom he could base his authority for any action that resistance by the officers might make necessary. "Of all these grievances," concluded the petition, "we, your petitioners, pray immediate redress that will enable us, by a large abatement in the price of wheat and pork, to somewhat lighten the heavy burthen this colony has so long proved to our now much-distressed mother country; and sensible that your Excellency's mildness has been imposed upon, you authority thwarted, your good intentions defeated, by a set of men who have enriched themselves by plundering the colony, we here beg leave to proffer our services in whatever manner your Excellency's wisdom may judge proper in support of your Excellency's authority and Government, and for enforcing the laws of our country."

But Hunter was not the kind of man to place himself at the head of a farmers' movement against a military oligarchy, even when such a movement was on the side of the established government. His reply was platitudinous and defensive in tone. It presented the Governor's *intentions* as a description of actual *conditions* and took for granted that all of his orders and instructions had been carried out. It refused to admit what the Governor had always been complaining of to the Department in England, namely, that a monopoly existed and that it was largely in the hands of the military and civil officers and, further, that it was the cause of the settlers' ills. He blamed these upon the great distance of the Hawkesbury settlers\* from Sydney and upon the "disgraceful excesses" of which they had been guilty.

\* Then what of the Parramatta settlers, whose grievances were the same?

Hunter had two or three languages from which to choose according to whether he was addressing powerful military officers, or powerless settlers or the Secretary of State. In the language with which he addressed the last he was wont to approach nearest to the truth, the secrecy involved apparently giving him confidence to express it.

Hunter's reply to the Hawkesbury settlers was dated February 8, 1800. On April 16, King arrived in Sydney to supersede him. Until September there was a kind of dual authority, both King and Hunter issuing orders and instructions. In June, King called Hunter's attention to the fact that there were "upwards of seventy writs" being prepared against Hawkesbury settlers for debts that "have originated by the rapacity of individuals, by the exorbitant prices demanded for spirits."<sup>20</sup> Appealing to Hunter's humane feelings, King suggested forcing the creditors—"these assassins of public liberty and destroyers of individual industry"—to "relinquish their demands in part" and limiting their profit to 100 per cent. King also enclosed a list of convicts who were drawing rations from the store and working for individuals. Hunter had told the Hawkesbury settlers that, as far as he knew, the officers paid for their convicts and, if the settlers thought differently let them bring along proof. King was now supplying the proof.

Hunter's reply to King was that "the deceptions that have so often been practised upon me" gave him no reason to doubt the truth of the list that King offered. Of the settlers he said that they had "had too much consideration and attention paid to their interest, and sometimes at the public expense but if King could "suggest any means of lessening the exorbitant demands of creditors which the law will admit" he would be pleased. King in reply suggested fixing the price of spirits at 20/- per gallon, "invalidating all claims for a greater price" and "prohibiting the civil court from taking cognizance of any debt contracted for spirits above that price." He made an appeal on behalf of the "wretched objects" who, "on their way to jail," had appealed to him "to rescue them and their families from the oppression of the infamous traders with which this colony abounds"—blood-suckers, poison-dealers he called them. But Hunter saw no way of helping them "unless the courts of justice are entirely shut up." King replied that he, no more than Hunter, wished to see the courts of justice shut up. But he would "prevent the commissioned or other dealer from preying on the vitals of the public and the individual." "Forgeries and robberies," he said, "are hourly per-

<sup>20</sup> He did not do so, however, until September 28. Hunter left Sydney in the middle of October.

petrating; families are falling on the public stores for support; money has lost its value. All these evils, and many more, arise from the quantity of spirits with which this place is now inundated." And, he added, "a nine years' apprenticeship in these colonies has taught me that in following my own opinion of men and things I am oftener right than in relying on the advice of crafty individuals." In reply, Hunter complained of King's indirect insults and his "indelicate impatience" to see himself in complete control. There the matter rested until King took command.

On October 1, King issued a "Government and General Order" which aimed at remedying the abuses of which the settlers had complained. The number of officers' convict servants was limited and it was also ordered that no person whatever should enter into communication with any ship coming into port without the Governor's permission. When ships arrived the Governor would decide whether its cargo was to be bought by the government or not. In the former event, goods would be sold at the Government Store to all on equal terms. If the government did not intend purchasing the cargo, the prices were to be ascertained and no retailer was to make a greater profit than 20 per cent. Courts were not to take cognizance of any case where the price sued for was more than 20 per cent. above the purchase price, to be published after the arrival of each ship. Retailing spirits was forbidden as was also the landing of them without a written permit from the Governor. By another G. & G. Order, October 27, provision was made for the issuing of licenses to retail spirits to persons recommended by the magistrates. Hours of sale were also fixed and regulations made to prevent smuggling and illicit retailing. No credit above 20/- was to be given by a publican.

But the troubles of the settlers were by no means at end. "You will hardly believe it," wrote King to Sir Joseph Banks in April, 1801, "when I assure you that out of 300 settlers . . . upwards of 150 have assigned over their all to the vultures with which the colony has and does still abound,\* although a great number of them have been obliged nolens volens to retire from business." But he claimed that prices had been brought down so that "almost every European article can be purchased for nearly the prime cost in England."<sup>21</sup> The drink evils still existed, "however, the

\* The reader will have noticed from our quotations that neither the early governors nor the military officers were conspicuous for their knowledge of the King's English.

very discouraging restrictions I have put on that infamous traffic will, I have no doubt, completely strike at the root of that evil in another year. . . . This colony has been destroyed by the wonderful seas of spirits that have flowed into it. Its salvation will depend on its being totally done away. It has been the medium of labour, traffic and injustice."

In June, 1801, 82 Hawkesbury settlers petitioned King to suspend the Civil Court in order to save them from their creditors. Owing to floods, the former extortion practised by their creditors and the lodging in gaol the previous year of many of them so that crops weren't harvested, they could not pay, but faced imprisonment again. King could not suspend the court but appealed to the creditors "not to push their prosecutions further than is unavoidably necessary."<sup>22</sup>

To harass the settlers there came, besides the depredations of traders, visitations of nature. There had been "so many successive floods with the last two years," ran a petition to King from the Hawkesbury farmers in June, 1801, that they could "see nothing before them but their utter ruin." The settlers on the Hawkesbury were on low-lying land and its liability to flooding had been recognised at a very early date. The farmers there have suffered from severe floods from 1795 to the present day. In March, 1801, King was reporting that there had been "three successive inundations of the Hawkesbury since last December." The last of them, on March 2 and 3, "swept away the stacks of wheat and destroyed nearly the whole of the corn and swine at the place." The settlers, went on King, had been reduced to "such a state of woful misery that is but seldom seen or heard of. Thrice in four months have they been drove from their habitations to save their lives in trees and pieces of floating wood, until the floods subsided, when they found themselves deprived of every comfort, cloathing or shelter; their wheat that was housed, that in their stacks, and their growing corn totally destroyed; and what is a greater public calamity, their stock of swine nearly all drowned."\*

There is evidence that the settlers were organising in a manner that was not welcomed by the authorities. Hunter, in 1800, in his commission to certain officers (referred to below) to investigate rumors of "certain seditious assemblies and consultations of the people," seems not to be referring only to the convicts. And in 1798, in Norfolk Island there had been public meetings of

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV., p. 320.

settlers and there was a mention of a "Fraternal Society of Norfolk Island." That society was branded by Hunter, in a Government and General Order, as seditious.\* But neither "sedition" nor petitions availed the settlers much and they continued to be fleeced by the traders and persecuted by nature. For many the odds were too great, and they succumbed.

5.—**REVOLT.**—The convicts who were transported to Australia had been herded into the convict ships like so many cattle. But, while treated as beasts, they had more than the spirit of beasts. Amongst them the will to revolt was strong and frequently led them to action. On one occasion at least their rebellion was completely successful—they seized the ship and made good their escape.<sup>23</sup> Even in New South Wales the convicts did not docilely accept their lot. Especially after the arrival of Irish political prisoners were they anything but docile.

From 1800 onward, for a number of years, there were continual reports of proposed risings of the Irish convicts.\*\* In consequence of his receiving information of "certain seditious assemblies and consultations of the people . . . in different parts of this colony," Governor Hunter ordered an inquiry in September, 1800. Richard Dore, Judge-Advocate, Lt.-Col. Paterson, Capt. Abbott, Lieut. McKellar and Wm. Balmain held the inquiry. Their first sitting was on September 4; their report was given on September 12.

The first man examined was a Roman Catholic priest, James Harold, whose aim was to prevent the rising without implicating anybody. He knew what the plans were, he said, but "he would bring no man forward that he knew to be dissentient to government or making revolt whatever." The plans were, he informed the Commission, to surprise the outposts, seize their arms and advance on Sydney. Father Harold had called his informants "damnation fools." The plotters believed that, because of the number of disaffected men on board H.M.S. "Buffalo," they would be able to seize that ship and they were relying upon the support of a "number of discontented settlers at the Hawkesbury." Harold declared that he had influence enough to prevent the rising and had prevented it. Any attempt by the government

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III., pp. 408-10.

\*\* According to King, writing September 28, 1800, there were then about 450 Irish convicts in the colony, including the "Defenders sent out in 1794," 235 sent out "since the late disturbances" in Ireland and the Irish "sent out for felonies."—Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV., p. 185.

to ferret out the ringleaders would only cause further trouble and "they perhaps would have cause to repent it." Persisting in his refusal to give any names, Father Harold was committed to gaol.

Other witnesses implicated Joseph Holt and stated that it was intended to send a ship to France for aid. Another witness said that he believed Maurice Margarot, one of the Scottish martyrs, and John Boston, who had come out with him, were the ringleaders of the proposed revolt.

"After mature deliberation," the Commission completed its report. It recommended that five men whom it regarded with James Harold, "called priest," as the ringleaders should each receive 500 lashes, that Harold be forced to witness the flogging, that he, Holt and others be sent to a "distant and remote part of the territory," and that four others receive 100 lashes each. Holt was acquitted but other alleged ringleaders were sent to Norfolk Island. The floggings were duly carried out.\*

One result of the scare given the government was the foundation of a volunteer movement known as the Loyal Association. Palisades and other defensive works were erected, and rallying-places appointed for the Corps, the Association and other civilians in the event of a rising. Non-commissioned officers were delegated to drill the members of the Association, who were to

\* "One man, named Maurice Fitzgerald, was sentenced to receive three hundred lashes, and the method of punishment was such as to make it most effectual. The unfortunate man had his arms extended round a tree, his two wrists tied with cords, and his breast pressed closely to the tree, so that finching from the blow was out of the question, for it was impossible for him to stir. Father Harold was ordered to put his hand against the tree by the hands of the prisoner, and two men were appointed to flog, namely, Richard Rice, a left-handed man, and John Johnson, the hangman from Sydney, who was right-handed. They stood on each side of Fitzgerald, and I never saw two threshers in a barn move their flails with more regularity than these two man-killers did, unmoved by pity, and rather enjoying their horrid employment than otherwise. The very first blows made the blood spout out from Fitzgerald's shoulders, and I felt so disgusted and horrified that I turned my face away from the cruel sight. One of the constables employed to carry into effect this tremendous punishment, came up to me and desired me to 'look on, at my peril.' I frowned at the monster with disdain and told him I would demolish him if he attempted to interfere with me. . . . I have witnessed many horrible scenes, but this was the most appalling sight I had ever seen. The day was windy, and I protest that although I was at least fifteen yards to leeward from the sufferers, the blood, skin and flesh blew in my face as the executioners shook it off from their cats. Fitzgerald received his whole three hundred lashes . . . [and] . . . never uttered a groan. . . . When it was over, two constables took him by the arms to help him into the cart. He said to them, 'Let my arms go,' and struck each of them in the pit of the stomach with his elbows and knocked them both down; he then stepped into the cart unassisted, as if he had not received a blow. The doctor remarked, 'That man has strength enough to bear two hundred more.'—(Holt, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, pp. 119-121.)

receive no pay. Their officers were to be given "provincial commissions." William Balmain was appointed to command the Sydney Loyal Associated Company, and Richard Atkins that at Parramatta.\*

The punishment recommended by the officers was carried out on October 3, the Governor expressing the hope that the examples made would deter others. It did not have the desired effect. On October 12, Governor King was reporting\*\* to the Duke of Portland the details of a second "horrible plot," that was to have been put into execution on the 28th of the previous month, in case the first plan failed. The Rev. Samuel Marsden was the vigilant watch-dog in this case. He sent what evidence he could ferret out down to King, stating: "I think there will be sufficient evidence before the whole is complete to bring the matter to issue and justify some severe examples of punishment. They are an unaccountable set of beings. It is difficult to prevail upon any of them who are accused to say a single word." The man of God reported how he tried to prevail on one of them to talk:—

"Galvin, whom Steele accuses, was examined again yesterday before Steele, face to face, but denied the whole of the conversation which past between him and Steele on Saturday last, tho' they walked near four miles together. Steele told Galvin that on Saturday he (Galvin) said he knew where the pikes were, and that one man had handled the

\* On July 27, 1801, the Association, having lost its two captains (Balmain going to England and Atkins's successor leaving Parramatta), was disbanded by King. In October of the following year, however, the order disbanding it was revoked. At the same time, King recruited a mounted bodyguard of five convicts whom he conditionally emancipated and placed under the command of George Bellasis, transported from India for killing a fellow-officer in a duel. To him was given a Colonial Commission. The officers of the Corps refused to recognise either his rank or his men as soldiers. In February, 1803, when they were sent to Parramatta as a reinforcement, Captain Piper refused to make use of them. There followed a long correspondence between King and Major Johnston, the former defending his right to levy forces outside the Corps and the right of emancipated convicts to serve in them. Lord Hobart, in his dispatch of Feb. 24, 1803, approved of the establishment of the Volunteer Association. Because of the outbreak of war between France and England in 1803, King called for more free inhabitants to undergo training and the Association was re-embodied. Major Johnston was glad to use King's troopers in March, 1804, and as a result of his change of mind, King was anxious to increase their number, as well as to have a small body of volunteers in the artillery. In April, 1806, King received authority to rank volunteer officers next to officers of the regular army of the same rank. The volunteers were continued by Bligh and by the regime that deposed him.

\*\* By the same ship that took Governor Hunter home.

† Note, Marsden says "passed," not "alleged to have passed." He knew by a certain prescience that it had passed!

whole of them. He behaved so very insolent, and appeared so very hardened, that Mr. Atkins and I ordered him to be punished very severely in hopes of making him inform where the pikes were. Tho' a young man, he would have died upon the spot before he would tell a single sentence. He was taken down three times—punished upon his back, and also on his bottom when he could receive no more on his back. Galvin was just in the same mood when taken to the hospital as he was when first tied up, and continues the same this morning. He is not in a situation to be sent down to Sydney yet. I am sure he will die before he will reveal anything of this business."

Such steadfastness the gentle and reverend magistrate could not understand. Those Irish were indeed "an unaccountable set of beings." They preferred scourings to thirty pieces of silver. A choice surely incomprehensible to a Christian clergyman who admired most the steadfastness that helped one to lay up for one's self treasures on earth, in spite of moths and rust and thieves!

But Holt, who witnessed the flogging of Galvin, has a more realistic description:—

"The next prisoner tied up was Paddy Galvin, a young lad about twenty years of age; he was also sentenced to 300 lashes. The first hundred were given on his shoulders and he was cut to the bone between the shoulder-blades, which were both bare. The doctor then directed the next hundred to be inflicted lower down, which reduced his flesh to such a jelly that the doctor ordered him to have the remaining hundred on the calves of his legs. During the whole time Galvin never whimpered or flinched, if, indeed, it were possible for him to have done so."

Another inquiry was ordered by Governor King and Lt.-Col. Paterson, W. Balmain, Richard Dore and John Harris conducted it. They arrived at the conclusion that there was to be a rising and that the persons named by them were the "principal ring-leaders and most active in the conspiracy." But—and here a new principle in jurisprudence was established—"no act and fact being clearly established by proof to amount to a capital conviction, we submit to his Excellency, Governor King, the expediency of bringing them to severe corporal punishment, according to the number of lashes marked against their several and respective names." In effect, the Commission said, there is not enough evidence to convict\* these men of treason or sedition, therefore they must be severely punished. What was the

\* "The circumstances were clear and plain to everyone's convictions," runs King's explanation to the Duke of Portland, "yet no two evidences could be brought against a third person, such is the art with which they carry out their plans."—Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV, p. 319.

punishment deemed fitting for men whose guilt had not been proved? This—five men were to receive 1000 lashes each, four 500 lashes each, seven 200 lashes each! The sentences were duly carried out by order of Governor King who hoped that the "local situation, and the description of people will be a sufficient reason for any supposed severity I have been obliged to use with these misguided people."\*

Thus were two attempts by the Irish to regain their freedom circumvented. "Since then," wrote King on March 10, 1801, "we have been very quiet until the arrival of the 'Ann,' transport from Cork, with 135 of the most desperate and diabolical characters that could be selected throughout that Kingdom, together with a Catholic priest [Rev. Peter O'Neil] of most notorious, seditious and rebellious principals [sic!] which makes the number of those who, avowing a determination never to lose sight of the oath with which they are bound as United Irishmen, amount to 600,\*\* are ready, and only waiting an opportunity to put their diabolical plans in execution."†

The convicts at Castle Hill were mostly Irish and were characterised by King as "refractory." On February 15, 1803, fifteen of them absconded and, seizing arms and food from settlers, crossed the Hawkesbury and made for the mountains. They were retaken before they reached there. Two of them were executed.‡ King issued a warning to the convicts who had newly arrived not to be "imposed upon by artful designing knaves."\*\*† Some of the convicts had very vague ideas about the geography of Sydney—believing that, if they crossed the mountains, they could walk to China!‡

In March, 1804, occurred the big Convict Revolt, in which between three and four hundred convicts took part. It began at Castle Hill and soon the whole surrounding district was in a state of rebellion. Martial law was proclaimed in Parramatta, Castle Hill, Toongabbie, Prospect, Seven Hills, Baulkham Hills, Hawkesbury and Nepean. The rising showed signs of being well planned and prepared for, and might have succeeded. The plan seemed to have been to mobilise all who were prepared to

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV, pp. 234-238.

\*\* The grammar is King's.

† Some of the Irish who were concerned in the first plot mentioned above and were sent to Norfolk Island were leaders there in a conspiracy to seize the islands, in December, 1800.

‡ Three were taken to the gallows, but one was to be reprieved. The three cast lots for the reprieve!

\*\*† There were certainly knaves or worse amongst them. Two of the escapees committed rape on a young woman on their way to the Hawkesbury.

join in the districts between Parramatta and the Hawkesbury for a march on Parramatta. The taking of Parramatta was to be a signal for a rising in Sydney. The demand of the rebels when Major Johnston parleyed with them was for a ship to take them back home. But, if they had been as successful as the above plans anticipated they would probably have seized the reins of government and declared New South Wales a free and independent settlement. There were capable men amongst the political prisoners who would certainly have come to the fore if a revolutionary government had taken power. And, as the leaders and most of the rank and file of the activists of the revolt were Irish there was no sense of loyalty to England to restrain them. In 1804, there might have been set up an independent Australian Republic!

The Rev. W. Pascoe Crook gives a vivid account of how the news of the rising reached Parramatta. Crook was a missionary teaching children at Parramatta on week-days and preaching "constantly on the Sabbath." On one Sunday he would preach to "a little praying Society at Kissing Point" and on the next at Castle Hill (where Protestants went to church "by order of the Governor") or Toongabbie. There were two other clergymen, Messrs. Marsden and Hassall, but, said Crook, "I fear their large concerns in the world limit their usefulness." Both were evidently unheeding of their Master's warning. Both were prepared to risk not being able to squeeze themselves and their wealth through the eye of the needle. And Marsden, as we have seen, had implicit trust in the efficacy of the lash as an insurance against the thief or suspected thief who might break through and steal.

According to Crook's account, Hassall preached at Castle Hill on Sunday, March 4. All was quiet there when he left to return to Parramatta. With the coming of darkness the train for the explosion was literally lit—a house was set on fire as a signal. The rebels were led by two Irishmen, Cunningham and Johnston, who immediately set in motion the agreed-on plans. The former led a party into the houses of the settlers and seized all arms and ammunition. While doing so they found the man whose job it was to wield the lash hidden under a bed. They "beat him in a most unmerciful manner." This done and the arms collected, the rebels divided into two parties to go in different directions and collect more arms and recruits. They were to meet early in the morning near Parramatta, enter it and be joined by other convicts there. In the meantime, how-

ever, Parramatta was warned by some who escaped from Castle Hill.

"Parramatta was alarmed," writes Crook, "and the drums beat to arms between 9 and 10 o'clock. We had spent the evening at Mr. Hassall's, but were now in bed, and living in the skirts of the town, some distance from the barracks, heard nothing till between one and two in the morning, when Mrs. C. was awakened by voices, and heard one say, 'They will burn all the houses down here as they have done at Castle Hill.' I was then called and informed that the Croppies were coming, that Mr. and Mrs. Marsden and Mrs. McArthur were gone to Sydney by water,\* and that all the principal people had fled to the barracks. We slept on our cloths, shut up our house, took a small bundle of linen, and our little girl that we have under our care, and carrying her on my back, went to Mr. Hassall's. Here we found a Mr. Joyce, a settler, who had been forced out of his bed at Seven Hills, and had escaped. Having a good horse, the commanding officer ordered him out to reconnoitre. He shortly returned and reported that the rebels were at hand. Mrs. Hassall chose to remain with the children and a servant, but we went with Mr. Hassall into the barracks. I got a fowling piece, charged with a ball, and stood at my post appointed me."

They stood to till daybreak when Governor King arrived from Sydney with his bodyguard to announce that Major Johnston was on his way with 100 men.

News of the rising had reached Sydney at about midnight. The Corps were immediately mobilised and the Governor, with his mounted bodyguard, set out for Parramatta in advance of one Company of the Corps, consisting of two officers, two sergeants and 52 rank and file. Major Johnston took command when the detachment passed his home—at what is now Annandale. That was at about one thirty; at dawn they reached Parramatta, after a march of about 14 miles.\*\*

Back in Sydney, Lt.-Col. Paterson, who expected a rising there also, mobilised and armed the Loyal Association, and it, together with sailors and marines landed from H.M.S. "Calcutta," as well as "a brass six-pounder," stood on guard at vulnerable points. He seized all the arms of the settlers in Sydney that he could and kept an eye on "every male inhabitant of Sydney

\* The Rev. Marsden was evidently not as valiant when faced with Irish convicts in revolt as he was when dealing with Irish convicts trussed up for flogging.

\*\* From Annandale.

... well knowing that many of them only waited to hear the result of their schemes at Parramatta." Reporting to the military authorities in England, Paterson expressed his apprehension about what might have happened "if Major Johnstone ... had not been fortunate enough to fall in with them at the time he did." He took opportunity of the occasion to stress what he considered "the inadequacy of our military force to protect this extensive colony." His advocacy of an increase in the force was not disinterested—he desired promotion and expressed the hope that "His Royal Highness will take my length of services in to his consideration."

After reaching Parramatta, Major Johnston divided his forces into two. With one half and some of the Loyal Association, he marched along the road to Toongabbie. The other half, under Lieut. Davies, proceeded along the Castle Hill road. When Johnston arrived at Toongabbie he was informed that the rebels were on Toongabbie Hill. He detached a small party to attack them on the flank while he marched up the hill. Arriving at the summit he found that the rebels had retreated towards the Hawkesbury. He pursued them for 10 miles and caught them up. He rode forward with a Roman Catholic priest and two others and called upon them to halt as he wished to speak with them. They demanded that he come amongst them and speak to their leaders. Refusing to do so and taunting their leaders with cowardice, "if they would not come forward to speak to me," he was successful in inducing Cunningham and Johnston to approach and parley with him. "I represented the impropriety of their conduct," reported Major Johnston, "and advised them to surrender, and that I would mention them in as favorable terms as possible to the Governor. Cunningham replied that they would have death or liberty."

The Major's purpose was evidently to play for time, awaiting the arrival of his detachment, which he had out-distanced. When it appeared, however, he immediately finished with parleying and—"I claped my pistol to Johnston's head, while the trooper did the same to Cunningham's, and drove them with their swords in their hands" back towards the detachment. Thus, in the first place having by implication charged the rebels with being capable of treachery and therefore having refused to advance towards them, he himself had used treachery in order to get the leaders into his hands. The latter, by trusting the word of an English gentleman, had thrown away their liberty and their cause. The crisis was now passed. The initiative was in the hands of the military. The rebels formed into line, but,

without their leaders, were overcome with panic. They returned the fire of the detachment but soon broke and ran. "We pursued them a considerable way, and have no doubt but that many of them fell. We have found 12 killed, 6 wounded, and have taken 26 prisoners." There were taken from the rebels: "26 musquets, 1 fowling piece, 4 bayonets on poles, 1 pitch fork, 1 pistol, 8 reaping hooks, 2 swords.\*"

Thus ended the only revolt of convicts in New South Wales that was a serious challenge to the authority of the Governor. The rapid moves made by Governor King and Major Johnston, the support given these by the settlers and the Loyal Association, and the rebels' hesitation in attacking Parramatta were responsible for its defeat. The plan had been to attack at dawn, but the plan was not adhered to. Two parties of rebels had lost their way and did not join the main body. That was one reason for their failure to advance on Parramatta. Another was their belief that in a day or so they would be joined by several hundred more from the Hawkesbury. So they let the initiative pass into the hands of the authorities and, instead of pursuing the tactical advantage of an attack on Parramatta, waited for their allies. They drilled at Toongabbie while Major Johnston's force hurried towards them. And then they retreated to seek the allies who had not come to them, and found—

\* Joseph Holt, the Irish rebel, was accused of being implicated in the various threatened risings and was arrested on several occasions. The charge appears to have been false. In 1804, he was too comfortable to take part in a rebellion. He knew of the proposed revolt but refused to have anything to do with it—and advised against it. "I had at this time saved about £500," he says (Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 195), "and having so much to lose, besides putting my family in jeopardy, it was not for me to interfere." But, he adds, "had I no wife nor children, and been disposed to take the lead on this occasion, I could have made a short job of it. The military were so inattentive, careless and lax in their discipline, that any one of skill could have formed a plan to surprise them, and might have taken magazine, army and all, in an hour. The government had treated me in such a manner that I did not feel myself called upon to become an informer for them, and as for the unfortunate people, I knew they were not to be trusted, and therefore, I gave no advice as to how they ought to act. So, like a ship in bad weather, I determined to lie to, and let everyone take care of himself." He says that the "English were as much involved in the business as the Irish."—Holt's comment on the meeting of Major Johnstone with Cunningham, who approached the Major with his hat in his hands and who was killed on the spot, is: "But what else could have been expected from the conduct of a general who would condescend to take off his hat to the captain of an opposing force? If I had been in Cunningham's place, I would have taken off Captain Johnstone's head, instead of my own hat." (Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 201). Nevertheless, Holt was again arrested and, although no case could be made out against him, was deported to Norfolk Island, then in charge of the "man-killer, Foveaux" (Holt, Vol. 2, p. 230), and thence to Tasmania. It was not till February, 1806, that he saw his wife and family again.



defeat. For several days, the members of Corps found great sport in hunting fugitives. "I beg to assure your Excellency," reported Johnston, "that I never saw more zeal and activity than what has been displayed by the officers and men of the detachment for destroying or securing the runaways."

6.—**COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND LABOR.**—The settlement in New South Wales could not for long remain purely a convict settlement. The basis of a farming population was laid very early by free settlers and emancipated convicts. The emancipation of convicts also created a free working class for which the growth of trade, the investment in the colony by British traders and capitalists and the beginnings of industries and commerce found employment.

We have already seen that convicts formed the first working class in Australia. The work of the infant community was performed by men and women who were virtually slaves. They worked for the government and they worked for private individuals to whom they were "leased" or assigned. Government was the slave contractor, supplying labor wherever it was required.

We have seen, too, that the officers and others to whom land-grants were made were at first not required to pay for the labor they employed. Such a state of affairs was far from satisfactory to the British government, which aimed at running a convict settlement as cheaply as possible. Instructions were sent out that sustenance by government of convicts privately employed should cease. Grose and Patterson ignored such instructions and Hunter failed to carry them out. King, however, was more determined. By the end of 1801 he was able to report that there were 611 men and 261 women convicts "off the stores," and in March, 1804, there were "on the stores" only 94 convicts working for individuals.

The second stage in our labor history was, then, that of the employment of convicts in return for their keep. The slaves were still the property of government—their labor belonged to their employers.

The question of hours soon arose. Were the employers to fix the hours of labor or were the hours that obtained when the convicts were employed by the government to prevail? Phillip had fixed hours at: "from sunrise to sunset," upon the principle, evidently, that, since work was a good thing to help keep Satan behind one, "there could not be too much of a good thing."\*

\* Coghlan: Labor and Industry in A., p. 49.

But, seeing the differences in the capacity of the convicts, he introduced task-work. Instead of working from sunrise to sunset, men and women who completed their task were free for the rest of the day. The best workers were able to finish their work within a few hours. Hunter tried to revert to the post-Edenic sunrise-to-sunset day, but failed to maintain it. In a General order of June 11, 1799, he directed that the working-day was to finish at 2 o'clock—or 3 o'clock for any who were "permitted to have a breakfast hour, which does not appear by the late hour they begin their work necessary."\* The assigned convicts also demanded that their hours should be the same as those worked by the government employees. The employers, on the other hand, maintained that they were entitled to the whole time of their assigned slaves and claimed the privilege of "sub-letting" their convicts' labor to others! King ordered\*\* that the convicts were to work only for those to whom they had been assigned and were not to be hired out to others.

In a General Order of October 2, 1800, King published regulations to cover the whole system of assignation. By those to whom they were assigned, the convicts were to be fed and clothed according to the same standard that government-employed convicts enjoyed; they were to be properly housed; in return they were "to perform a full government task"—and, "if the master can give them employment for the remainder of the time at the established rate, they are to do his work in preference to any other person's."†

This reference to "work at the established rate," "for the remainder of the time," brings us to the **third stage** in the development of labor in Australia: the practice of working for wages after the day's task-work was completed and on Saturdays†—or even Sundays—when the convicts were free. In the meantime, however, the **fourth stage** had begun—that of free labor. At an early date there were men and women who had served their sentences or who had obtained pardons. These had to gain a livelihood by working for wages.

In addition to convicts working for government or masters, there were, therefore, two classes of workers for wages: free men who depended wholly on their paid labor in order to live and convict men who did not depend on their wages for a livelihood.

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, p. 679.  
 \*\* June 1, 1801; Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV, p. 380.  
 † Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV, p. 222.  
 ‡ They were often free by 10 a.m. on Saturdays.

What the latter earned by working for wages was over and above the "living" that was guaranteed them by the masters to whom they were assigned. There was inevitably, therefore, a conflict of interest between the two classes—a conflict from which resulted a tendency to keep down wages. This tendency was strengthened by governmental regulations. Governors sided with masters and settlers against attempts made by laborers to maintain wages at a higher level than the former thought necessary. The free laborers, denied a passage back to England when their sentences had been served and forced to remain here, were in a precarious situation. Their plight would have been worse had all convicts worked for wages in their own time. If they had done so, there would have been no work left for the master-less men. "The respectable convict," says Coghlan,\* "was the chief peril of the free laborers, the dissolute convict was his salvation." By "respectable convict" is meant one who wished to earn and save; the "dissolute" one was he who was not anxious to work after the hours that were obligatory. But the latter also helped to bring or keep down wages when he worked for the rum and tobacco he craved.

There are signs, however, that the workers, both bond and free, were keen and active in attempting to maintain their wages. As early as November, 1794, settlers on Norfolk Island were anticipating events, and, evidently proceeding from previous experience, were petitioning for a fixation of wages, as they feared demands for higher wages in the following year.

In a General Order of January 14, 1797, Governor Hunter stated that settlers had complained "that the wages demanded by the free laboring people whom they have frequent occasion to hire is so excessively exorbitant that it runs away with the greatest part of the profits of their farms."\*\* As a result, the Governor ordered what was being officially proscribed in "laissez-faire" England: a combination! He ordered meetings of settlers in the various localities to fix wages and penalties for paying more.† The meetings were held and, from the various rates laid down, the Governor drew up a scale of wages to apply throughout the colony.‡ The wages fixed were mainly for piece-work—including

\* P. 52.

\*\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, p. 189.

† Of course, the laborers were not to be consulted. As in England, so in Australia, combinations were to be illegal for workers, legal for employers. See below for treatment of workers who combined.

‡ Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, p. 197.

9/- per acre for falling forest timber, 10/6 per acre for clearing brush ground, 12/3 per acre for chipping fresh ground, 7/- per acre for planting Indian corn, 10/- per acre for reaping wheat, 9d. per bushel for threshing wheat, 3/- per 100 for splitting 7ft.-long palings, 1/6 per 100 for splitting 3ft.-long palings and so on. Daily wages were fixed for bond and free labor. For free labor: yearly wages, with board, £10; weekly wages with provisions (consisting of 4lb. of salt pork, or 6lb. of fresh, and 21lb. of wheat with vegetables), 6/-; a day's wages, with board, 1/-; a day's wages, without board, 2/6. Convicts working in their own time were to be paid 10d. per day.

After promulgating the order fixing the wages, Hunter fixed penalties for evading it. "It is also desired," he ordered, "that any settler or other person having occasion to hire laborers do give immediate information of any laboring man who, offering himself for hire, shall refuse to accept the regulated prices for labor already settled; such persons, being incapable of living in this country without work, will be immediately apprehended and prosecuted as a vagrant who has no visible means of support."\*

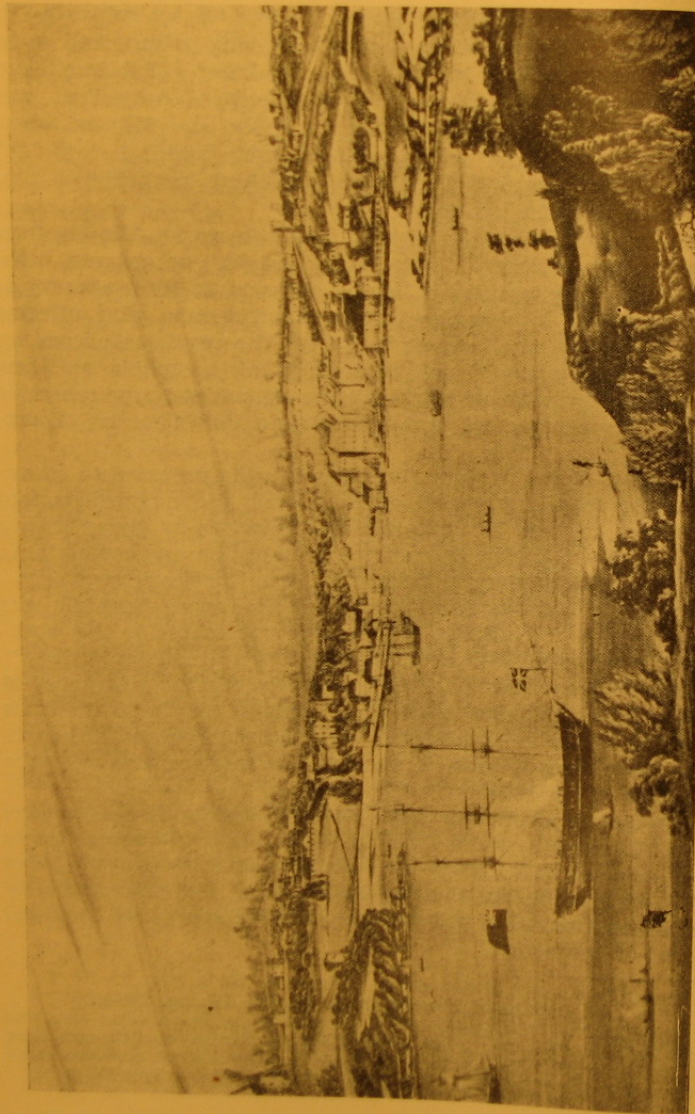
It appears that Governor Hunter, not being prepared to relieve the settlers by taking drastic action against the monopolists, had determined to drive them to relieve themselves by giving less to their workers. In the following September he was complaining that the settlers were not holding their meetings regularly—quarterly, he had suggested—and that the wages' schedule was being ignored. Evidently, either labor was scarce or the workers were united in their demands. Hunter warned the settlers\*\* that it would be impossible for him to remedy the grievances of which they complained unless they adhered strictly to the scale he had published. Hunter was keen to reduce wages, although, as we have already seen, it was not the workers who were the exploiters of the settlers.†

According to a contemporary,<sup>23</sup> however, the wages in 1809 were much the same as those fixed by Hunter in 1797—actual wages being as given above, piece-rates being slightly lower, 6/8 instead of 7/-, for example, for planting Indian corn. The same authority has left us a record of prices from which we can gauge the "real wages" of the period.

<sup>23</sup> Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, p. 204.

\*\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, pp. 298-9.

† Yet Hunter, in February, 1830, in answer to the settlers' petitions which ascribed their ills to the depredations of the monopolists and their retailers, harps on their failure to stick to his wages' schedule as the cause of those ills. See Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV, p. 31.



Sydney in the Time of Bligh.

Wheat, maize, barley and oats were 12/-, 5/-, 5/- and 4/6 a bushel respectively. Potatoes cost 10/- a hundredweight, cabbages 3d. each, turnips 4d. and carrots 6d. a bunch. Mann's list shows a wide variety of fruit that could be bought in his Sydney: peaches 2d. a dozen, figs 3d. a dozen, apples 2/-, pears 3/-, quinces 2/-, apricots 1/-. Strawberries and mulberries were 1/- a quart, cape gooseberries and native currants 8d., water-melons sold for 1/-, musk and other melons 1/-. The prices of oranges, raspberries, grapes, plums, almonds, pomegranates, limes, shad-docks, citrons, pineapples, nectarines and guavas were, he tells us, variable, "some being more scarce than others." In the vegetable line, the prices were: cucumbers 1d. each, mushrooms 8d. a quart, French beans 4d. a quart, onions 20/- a hundredweight, peas 1/- a quart, beans 9d. a quart, asparagus 2/- a hundred, artichokes 6d. each, spinage 1/- a dish, pumpkins 6d. each, cauliflowers 6d. each, brocoli 6d. a dish. Then, "beet-root, lettuces, raddishes, sallad of all kinds, horse-raddish, samphire, water-cresses, celery, endive and herbs of every description are extremely plentiful and to be purchased at reasonable prices."

The prices of meat the obliging Mr. Mann also preserves for us: beef, mutton, pork, lamb, kangaroo and goat mutton being, respectively, 1/3, 1/3, 1/-, 1/3, 8d. and 1/- a pound. Turkeys were 10/- each, geese 8/-, ducks 4/-, muscovy ducks 5/-, fowls 2/6, wild ducks 2/-, teal 1/3, rabbits 4/-, roasting pigs 5/-, pigeons 1/3 and kids 5/-. And, to finish with Mr. Mann's prices, eggs were 1/6 a dozen, butter 6/- a pound, milk 1/- a quart and cheese 2/6 a pound. The colony had surely advanced since the starvation days of Phillip. It was now a land of milk and honey—a paradise enow for those who had the wherewithal to buy.

Where and for whom did the laborers—bond and free—work? Mainly, of course, in the agricultural industry. There were absorbed most of those who either had labor to sell or were the industrial conscripts of the colony. But there was other work to do—both for government and private employer. For government, gangs of convicts worked on roads or on buildings—gradually bringing the haphazardly settled colony towards some semblance of a civilised community. Churches and public buildings were going up; roads had been constructed and were being kept in repair, between Sydney and the outlying settlement. Soon, in the time of Macquarie, the real age of building was to begin, a way across the Blue Mountains was to be found and convicts were to build a road in the wake of the pioneers who crossed them—a road to the golden prosperity to which the squatters fell heirs.



On October 30, 1798, Governor Hunter "cautions the settlers against the permitting worthless and idle persons to lurk about their farms."\*\* The chief constable was required to keep a list of laboring people in his area.

At times the Governor welcomed the arrival of convict labor, because it reduced his expenditure: "The artificers which have arrived in the 'Barwel,'" wrote Hunter on May 25, 1798, "will enable me to discharge from wages those whom I had been obliged to hire for completing the granaries, storehouses and barns which I have had occasion to erect."\*\* At other times he regretted its arrival for the unemployment problem it created: "I must observe," Hunter had written in June, 1797 (after he had just discharged more than 100, at their own desire), "that many of those who are just arrived have not more than 18 months or two years to serve, having been convicted in 1792 for seven years. This is extremely inconvenient and fills the country with vagabonds."†

Mann also gives a picture of the shops of early Sydney which are "particularly respectable and decorated with much taste. Articles of female apparel and ornament are greedily purchased; for the European women in the settlement spare no expense in ornamenting their persons, and in dress each seems to vie with the other in extravagance. The costliness of the exterior there, as well as in most other parts of the world, is meant as the mask of superiority; but confers very little grace and much less virtue, on its wearer, when speaking of the dashing belles who generally frequent the Rocks, who may often be seen of an evening attired in the greatest splendour, and on the following morning are hid from public view with extremely mean attire." But Sydney's inhabitants, tells Mann,‡ were "by no means so debauched as the tongue of prejudice has too frequently asserted. . . . On the contrary, virtuous characters are not rare, and honorable principles are not less prevalent here than in other communities of equal extent and limited growth. The instances of drunkenness, dishonesty, and their concomitant offences, are not more common than in the Mother country. . . . On the whole, considering the nature of the colony of New South Wales, the morals of the people are as free from glaring defects, as those of any other tract of equal population in the habitable world."

What were the amusements of the people of Sydney of a hundred and thirty years ago? Mann again gives us some infor-

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, p. 499.

\*\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, p. 390. See also p. 230.

† Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, pp. 235-6.

‡ P. 53.

mation. There were cricket, cards, water-parties, shooting, fishing and hunting the kangaroo. Amongst the convicts gambling was indulged in "to deplorable excesses." There had been a play-house, too, but as a result of certain abuses that grew up around it, it had been closed.†

By the time of Bligh the first generation of Australians was just reaching manhood and womanhood. These young men and women, born in a new country and not stunted by the deadly environment which had often broken their fathers and mothers, were the beginnings of a new race. "The children born in this country from European parents," says Mann, "are very robust, comely, and well made; nor do I recollect a solitary instance of one being naturally deformed. They are remarkably quick of apprehension; learn anything with uncommon rapidity; and greatly improve in good manners, promising to become a fine race of people." There were the beginnings, too, of Australian nationalism. The emancipated convicts, in the main, were content to remain here, while their sons and daughters looked upon the country as their free heritage.\* "The young Australian was constantly referred to as though he could already be differentiated from the Anglo-Saxon. The youths were described as tall, loose-limbed and fair, with small features, and though strong, not so athletic looking as Englishmen. They made clever and daring sailors, were already proud of their horsemanship and were willing and quick to learn any trade. It was, of course, impossible that in one generation a new type could have been evolved, and the fact was that the children of the convicts, born into better conditions and growing up in a healthier environment, reverted to the type of which their parents were debased examples."\*\* The establishment of New South Wales had initiated the parting of the ways. The Australian descendents of the pioneers were to become sturdier and bigger with each succeeding generation. England had still to pass through the horrors of the factory system that made it a nation of C3 men.

\* Commissioner "Bigge noticed that New South Wales was unlike any other British colony inasmuch as the colonists looked upon it as their future home."—Marion Phillips, p. 260.

\*\* Marion Phillips, pp. 260-1.

## Chapter VIII

## RUM PUNCHEON REBELLION

In Botany Bay, by Advices they say  
 A new Bona-Par-te has started,  
 Resembling the old one in habits and sway,  
 And subtle like him and false-hearted.  
 Howe'er the effect some may live to deplore,  
 Fortunes frolics will never forsake her,  
 For one was a Corsican tailor of yore,  
 And the other an English stay-maker!<sup>1</sup>

1.—Dramatis Personae; 2.—The Stage: N.S.W. in 1808; 3.—Addresses; 4.—Bligh and the Settlers; 5.—The Plot and the Opportunity; 6.—Deposition; 7.—Interregnum; 8.—Macquarie; 9.—Emancipists and Exclusives; 10.—Governor and Judge; 11.—Political Stirrings; 12.—Bigge's Report.

**I**N 1806, the evils that neither Hunter nor King had succeeded in putting down still flourished. Monopoly still exploited the settlers; the rum currency still prevailed; and, to the amount of spirits imported, legally and illegally, into the colony, was added that now distilled in the colony. Hunter had hidden his head so that he could not see all this—and had blamed the settlers for their own misfortunes. King was packing up to flee from them. A new Governor was on his way out who had gained the reputation of a martinet, who was a protege of Sir Joseph Banks and who, being a capable officer and a strict disciplinarian, was considered to be the man fitted to put down the rum traffic and to curb the rapacity of the monopolists and the tyranny of the N.S.W. Corps.

But there were many conflicting trends and circumstances that made the problem that faced Bligh, determined as he was to solve it, something beyond the mere damming of the flood of spirits. The New South Wales community was beginning to break out of the penal strait-jacket in which the British government intended keeping it locked. It was also differentiating

1.—Notes to this chapter are at the end of Book II.

into classes and conflicting interests which inevitably prevented the consummation of the second purpose of the government, namely, the creation, out of freed and rehabilitated convicts of a community of small farmers, content to remain small farmers under the paternal care of government and of the monopoly to which the trade of New Holland had been given. But a development that necessarily conflicted with British mercantilist theories and their particular beneficiary, the East India Company, was the passing of that trade into the hands of local traders who looked askance at the maintenance of New South Wales as a penal settlement ruled by a Governor whose wish was law and whose regulations were framed to confine their expansive and money-making tendencies. There was an additional conflict created by the land hunger of wealthy traders, officers and landowners whose ambitions in this direction are graphically illustrated by the actual grants of land made by the rebel regime. Finally, there were the small settlers who were cruelly exploited by the traders and who bitterly hated them. Bligh's administration and regulations benefited these last. They supported him when that same administration and those regulations determined the monopolists to secure his recall or overthrow.

**1.—DRAMATIS PERSONAE.**—It is of importance to make the acquaintance of the leading actors of the drama with which Sydney celebrated its twentieth anniversary. The leading man was, of course, John Macarthur, he who was later to boast of his success in having governors recalled. His career since his arrival in Sydney we already know. In 1808, he was the biggest landowner in the colony, one of its wealthiest merchants and a most efficient exploiter of the necessities of the settlers. According to the Return of December 31, 1807, Macarthur then held 8533 acres of land.

In 1808, the Rum Corps of the previous decade and a half was still the Rum Corps and some of its officers were amongst the biggest landowners. Its commander at the moment was Major George Johnston, his three seniors in the Corps being absent from Sydney. Johnston held 2834 acres. The six officers who, with the Judge-Advocate, composed the court to try Macarthur and who were, as we shall see, active in urging Johnston to arrest Bligh—for reasons connected with their own future—were Captain Kemp and Lieutenants Brabyn, Moore, Laycock, Minchin and Lawson. These held land respectively as follows: 390, 300½, 208, 1655, 383 and 361 acres. Most of them benefited

greatly from the spoils-to-the-victors policy of the rebel regime.\* Kemp was granted 800 acres (and 559 acres each went to G. A. Kemp and Elizabeth Kemp), Laycock gained 1420 acres, Lawson 1370 acres and Moore 384 acres. The same policy resulted in Johnston's granting his own son 2000 acres! Other officers of the Corps who received of the rebels' largesse were Captain Abbott, 1550 acres; Sgt.-Major Whittle, 260 acres; Lieutenant Bell, 1500 acres; Lieutenant Bayly, 550 acres (and Mrs. S. Bayly 260, Augusta Bayly 200, George Bayly 200, Henry Bayly 300); and Mrs. E. Paterson (wife of Colonel Paterson), 2000 acres (in Tasmania).

Some of the officers of the Corps were already some of the colony's biggest landowners before the rebellion. Among these were Captain Abbott (2031 acres) and Surgeon John Harris (2576 acres). Other big landowners in 1808 were: John Palmer (2292½ acres), Rev. Samuel Marsden, then absent in England (2855½ acres), Surgeon Jamison (2300 acres), D'Arcy Wentworth (1219 acres), and Thomas Moore (1920 acres). Then, among the 703 settlers of the December 31, 1807 Return, 22 held land of 300 acres and over. These 22 held 26,510½ acres between them an average of 1205 acres each. The rest of the 703 settlers can be classified as small farmers—383 of them held allotments of 30 acres and less, 71 held from 30 to 50 acres each, 127 from 50 to 100 acres each, 80 from 100 to 200 acres each, and 20 from 200 to 300 acres each. Thus in 1808 were the people on the land sharply divided into big landowners and small farmers. The land grants of the rebel administrations were to make the cleavage more distinct.

Apart from the officers of the Corps the principal supporters of Johnston and Macarthur were John and Gregory Blaxland, Simeon Lord, Surgeon Jamison, Assistant-Surgeon James Mileham and Surveyor-General Charles Grimes. Of these, Gregory Blaxland received 4000 acres, John Blaxland one acre in Sydney, Simeon Lord 1170 acres and 1 acre 7 perches in Bridge St., Sydney; James Mileham 500 (and Lucy Mileham 100 acres). Other supporters were also rewarded, John and Robert Townson, for example, receiving respectively 2250 and 2680 acres.

The settlers as a whole supported Bligh. Prominent and active

\* The total land grants made before the arrival of Macquarie were as follows: Phillip (26/1/88-11/12/92), 3,389 acres; Grose (11/12/92-Dec., '94), 10,674; Paterson (Dec., '94-7/9/95), 4,965; Hunter (7/9/95-28/9/1800), 28,650; King (28/9/1800-Aug., '06), 60,411; Bligh (Aug., '06-26/1/08), 2,180; Johnston (26/1/08-July, '08), 5,660; Foveaux (July, '08-Jan., '09), 8,325; Paterson (Jan., '09-Dec., '09), 68,101. Total: 199,355 acres.—Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. VI, p. 808.

on Bligh's behalf were George Suttor, of Baulkam Hills, who had come out here under the patronage of Sir Joseph Banks in 1800, and Martin Mason, of the Hawkesbury. When the settlers were planning sending a delegation to England to further the reinstatement of Bligh they chose Suttor and Mason as their representatives. Suttor, for one, suffered for his espousal of Bligh's cause. As did, indeed, others. The civil officers, with the exception of the three already mentioned as supporters of Johnston (Grimes, Jamison and Mileham) and one other, were loyal to the Governor: Commissary Palmer, Provost-Marshal Gore, Acting-Chaplain Fulton, Principal Superintendent of Stock John Jamieson and Naval Officer and Collector of Taxes Robert Campbell. The other exception was Judge-Advocate Atkins, who, as one would expect of his contemptible character, made his peace with Macarthur and Johnston and appeared as a witness for them at the latter's trial. George Crossley, the convict attorney, who was consulted by Bligh and Atkins, neither of whom had any knowledge of the law, suffered for his support of Bligh and for the indictment of Macarthur that he drew up. Finally, there is Bligh himself.

Bligh had already been through two mutinies: those of the "Bounty," in 1789, and the British Fleet at the Nore, in 1797. He has suffered in reputation as a result of the former—especially in Australia, where those who have accepted the Macarthur version of the 1808 rebellion have presented the "Bounty" mutiny as its dress rehearsal. But a more detached consideration of the 1789 episode will find many more factors explanatory of it than the alleged brutality of Bligh. There were many officers in the 18th century British Navy who were more brutal than he—incompetents who endeavored to hide their incompetence by a brutality that was not mitigated by any atom of justice. Bligh, however, was no incompetent, and he was considered a just man by many of his subordinates.<sup>2</sup> He was an indefatigable instrument of the 18th century harshness which was then regarded as necessary to enable the British Navy to continue to rule the waves. Efficiency, service, loyalty and discipline were his gods and for them he was prepared to spare neither himself nor his men. The lash he accepted as a necessary part of that efficiency,<sup>2</sup> if the maximum of service, loyalty and discipline was to be maintained. He was not prepared to spare the lash—and, within a week of the outbreak of the Mutiny at the Nore, he was one of the captains who was relieved of their command by the mutineers, and sent ashore.<sup>3</sup> Yet, after the mutiny was over he fought for his men against the Admiralty, the latter

having intended breaking faith by excluding some members of the crew from the promised pardon—Bligh won his point.

Bligh was no diplomat nor tactician. He possessed a violent temper, little sense of humor, and a high regard for his own dignity. And yet his temper often rapidly cooled and he was generous to the cause of the outbreak. His manner, language and temper, appropriate, perhaps, on his own quarter-deck, made, in Sydney, enemies of many who might have sided with him. It is certainly to his temper, and the results of it, that the rebels pointed when they endeavored to mobilise public opinion against him and in support of their own usurpation. They could not afford to point to his administration as their justification—his bad temper that led him into foolish errors was a veritable god-send to them. Nor could they point to his personal life—in an age of drunkards, he was remarkable as a temperate man and he was devoted to his wife and family. Of the leaders of the rebels, on the other hand, Paterson died a drunkard's death, Foveaux was a callous and inhuman libertine\* and Macarthur had a temper equal to that of Bligh's, a rapacity unequalled and an utter unscrupulousness.

Bligh, then, one of the greatest of 18th century maritime explorers and a Fellow of the Royal Society, was appointed Governor of N.S.W. in order to break the monopolists' power and to destroy the rum traffic. He was cast into the midst of the early class struggles of New South Wales. He failed in his purpose because the forces opposed to him were too strong, because the military power was in the hands of the monopolists and because the settlers were not strong enough or organised enough to back him up.

2.—THE STAGE: NEW SOUTH WALES IN 1808—There was, of course, something more behind the 1808 rebellion than a quarrel between Macarthur and Bligh or even than the desire of the former and his clique to continue to make profits from rum. The rebellion was also a revolt of the early Australian traders against the restrictive bonds in which British

\* Holt, who was sent to Norfolk Island while Foveaux was in charge there, writes: "Major Foveaux set the example here, by taking the wife of Sergeant Sherwin to live with him, and, what was worse, he confined the better to save his life, and to lose his wife, than to lose both. He was wise enough to perceive that it was very foolish to quarrel with the judge where there is no jury, for no man will give a verdict against himself." (Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 223.)

policy and commercial interests sought to hold them. Governor King had been opposed to trade with foreign countries. He had sent a letter to the French Governor of Mauritius informing him of the restrictions on the importation of spirits into New South Wales\* and he had refused to allow American ships to land spirits. And it was not merely because of the character of the trade—in spirits. "I am of opinion," he wrote to England, "that the introduction of foreigners of any nation in this peculiar colony will be productive of the greatest inconvenience, exclusive of their draining these settlements of the money that ought to revert to His Majesty's subjects and not to his enemies or doubtful friends. And another consideration which I would humbly suggest is the certainty of its opening a communication of the Company's\*\* territories, which His Majesty's Instructions pointedly forbids."

It will be remembered that Australia, from the beginning, was in the trade sphere of the Honorable East India Company.† The determination of that company to maintain its monopoly was shown in 1806. In that year Robert Campbell and Co., of Sydney, had bought a ship, the "Lady Barlow," and sent it home with a cargo of sealskins and whale oil—the whole valued at £15,000. When the ship arrived in London, however, customs officers refused to allow the landing of the cargo. The directors of the company had been active. Campbell's agent, William Wilson, appealed to the Trade Commissioners. When the case came before the latter, the chairman of directors of the company was present to oppose. Trading by New South Welshmen, he claimed, not only infringed the charter of the company and found no authorisation in that of the colony, but also constituted "piratical enterprises." "The inevitable consequence of building ships in New South Wales," he said, "will be an intercourse with all the ports of the China and India Seas, and a population of European descent reared in a climate suited to maintain the energies of the European character, which, when it becomes numerous, active, and opulent, may be expected to acquire the ascendancy in the Indian Seas." Australian trade, said in effect the Honorable Director of the Honorable Company, had to be stifled at its birth. The British whaling interests also appeared to oppose

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. V, p. 178.

\*\* The East India Company. See also Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. IV, p. 891, where King stresses the undesirability of trading with Americans, because "money drawn for necessary contingent expenses passes into the hands of strangers."

† See above, pp. 62, 116.



the appeal. Mr. Wilson lost his case. The only concession allowed was that the cargo could be sold to foreigners for export. It was sold for less than half its value.

Other ships were to arrive from Sydney—the "Honduras" and the "Sydney." Wilson and Sir Joseph Banks made appeals to the Trade Commissioners. "I would further, honorable sir," wrote Wilson, "beg leave to observe that if the colony is not encouraged, any increase of population will be an increase of misery; orphans will increase by the desertion of their despairing fathers, and the colony continue an expense to the mother country, while by encouragement the happiest results may be expected." Sir Joseph Banks drew up, at the request of the Commissioners, a statement of the position to be presented to the Court of Directors of the Company. The result was a compromise. The Commissioners were "to prepare instructions for the future government of the shipping concerns of the colony, on a plan suited to provide the inhabitants with the means of becoming less and less burdensome to the mother country, and framed in such a way as to interfere as little as possible with the trade prerogatives and resources of the East India Company." The cargoes of the two ships on their way were to be allowed to land and to be sold in England.

Macarthur had for long entertained, in addition to his trade and pastoral ambitions, aspirations that may be described as political, but which were necessary of realisation if his commercial aims were to be attained. We have already seen him charged with desiring the governorship and endeavoring to bring about the recall of Hunter and King. What he really aimed at was the obtaining of complete control of the colony for himself and the class associated with him and to change the regime from that of a convict settlement run in the interests of the British government, with its paternalism for the emancipated convicts and the small settlers, to one under which the interests of the traders of the colony would be paramount. The expanding forces of Australian trade could not be contained in the narrow space of a simple convict settlement. They must break the bonds or else the persons who directed and controlled them must be given a share in the government so that the cramping effects of the bonds might cease. The emancipation of Australian trade, even the dastardly traffic in rum, was thus clothing itself in the robes of aspiration for political independence. It was not, however, political independence that Macarthur and his associates finally achieved but a say in the government.

That Macarthur had long considered challenging the authority

of the Governors is shown in some notes of a conversation that King had with him. In these notes\* King tells us that Macarthur defended the legality of the introduction and the sale of spirits. He had taken some counsel's opinion on the matter while in England and he was now convinced of the "illegality of all local Regulations, and that no Order or Regulation by a Governor could be binding or legal unless sanctioned by an Act of Parliament." There can be no doubt that it was this counsel's opinion that fortified him, if it did not urge him, to throw down the gage of battle to Bligh.\*\*

An example of the profits made by the merchant monopolists and the Corps' traders is given in a letter† from Commissary Palmer to Governor Bligh. A trader buys 6½ gallons of spirits at 12/- per gallon—his outlay thus being £4/1/-. Watch how that grows to £28. With that spirit he buys maize from the farmers. But now the spirit is valued at £2/10/- per gallon—and the maize at 3/- per bushel. So, with the 6½ gallons (nominal value, at £2/10/- per gallon, £16/16/-), our trader buys 112 bushels of maize (at 3/- per bushel). But the Government Store price for maize is 5/- per bushel. One hundred and twelve bushels at 5/- per bushel places £28 to his credit. That is he has made a profit of £23/19/- on his original investment of £4/1/-. The sum of £28 is the price of an ox or cow. So by a few simple processes of exchange, monopolists who had the opportunity—or a mortgage over farmers' land—could stock their own farms with cattle which cost them £4/1/- a head. Or they could heap up for themselves at the Government Store huge credits at an expenditure of one-seventh of such credits.

3.—ADDRESSES.—Bligh's failings were speedily exemplified on the voyage out. He was on board the "Lady Sinclair," and Captain Short of H.M.S. "Porpoise" was in charge of the convoy, Bligh, however, being empowered to select the route to be followed and the ports to be visited. Bligh, senior to Short and Governor-designate of New South Wales, looked upon himself as in charge of the convoy. Quarrels followed. Once Bligh changed his course and Short fired two shots across his ship and threatened to fire the third into him if he did not swing back on to the original course. On arrival in Sydney, Bligh

\* Dated Jan. 1, 1806.—Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. VI.

D. 1.

\*\* Note what he said in court when he prosecuted Campbell. See below.

† November 4, 1808, Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. VI.

D. 801.

‡ Lieutenant Putland, Bligh's son-in-law, was in charge of the gun, and his wife was on her father's ship!

refused a grant of land that had been promised Short, who wished to settle here, and the latter's officers, with whom he had quarrelled, preferring charges against him, Bligh ordered him home to England to be court-martialled. Short refused to go and was arrested and sent home, together with his wife and children. His wife and one child died on the voyage. Short was tried and honorably acquitted. Bligh does not come out of the affair in a very favorable light but it is evident that, in Short, he had met a man of the same degree of cantankerousness as his own—a fact that probably accounts for his vindictiveness.

Bligh arrived in Sydney early in August, 1806, and assumed command a few days afterwards, upon King's embarking for England. On August 14, an address of welcome, signed by George Johnston, for the military; Richard Atkins, for the civil officials and John Macarthur, for the free inhabitants, was presented to him. The address formally expressed confidence in Bligh and entreated his "Excellency to believe that, anxious as we are for the improvement of agriculture and the extension of commerce (the two great sources of population, civilisation and morality), we are perfectly sensible, they alone are not sufficient to secure the welfare of our infant establishment, but that it is the indispensable duty of us all to combine with our endeavors to accomplish these objects a reverential regard to the laws, and a cheerful acquiescence in such measures as your Excellency may adopt to improve the true interest of the colony." An address signed by the same three was also presented to the departing King.

But the right of John Macarthur to sign for the free settlers was emphatically repudiated by settlers who knew nothing of the Addresses to Bligh and King until they appeared in the "Gazette."\* Two more Addresses were now presented to Bligh

\* Said the Sydney settlers in their Address: "We consider such addresses being signed for us by a person undeputed and unauthorised as an infringement on our rights and privileges, as well as being contrary to justice and equity; and as it is not our general voice, we proclaim it to be (in our opinion) highly unconstitutional, as well as he, the said John Macarthur's, taking a liberty that we have never allowed, nor will sanction; and we beg to observe that had we deputed anyone, John Macarthur would not have been chosen by us, we considering him an unfit person to step forward upon such an occasion, as we may chiefly attribute the rise in the price of mutton to his withholding the large flock of wethers he now has to make such price as he may choose to demand." (Historical Records of New South Wales, vol. VI, p. 189).—The Hawkesbury settlers spoke of "the infringement made on our rights, privileges and liberties by John Macarthur, Esq., who appears by the 'Sydney Gazette' to have signed 'for the inhabitants' without our previous knowledge, consent or authority, public or private" and emphatically stated that "had a public meeting been held they would by no means have authorised Mr. Macarthur" to sign for them. (Historical

—one from the Sydney settlers signed by 135 of them, the other from the Hawkesbury settlers bearing 244 signatures. Comparison of the Addresses shows that the official ones were bloodlessly formalistic, meaning nothing, while those of the settlers were vital documents voicing grievances and political aspirations at the same time as they conventionally expressed their confidence in the new Governor. In the settlers' case it was a confidence that, as the Sydney settlers said, "under your Excellency's auspices, . . . we as British subjects [shall] enjoy our country's constitutional rights." The Sydney settlers also promised to, "at the hazard of our lives and property, protect and support you in the due administration of justice."

The more important document was the Address of the Hawkesbury settlers. After congratulating Bligh on his safe arrival and his appointment, the Address spoke of the calamities from which the settlers had suffered. They were two. The first was the great flood of March, 1806, when the water rose "near ten feet perpendicular height greater than had been in this colony since it was first inhabited by Europeans."

The second was economic. The flood disaster, went on the Address, "happened at a time when the landholders, settlers and cultivators were struggling to overcome a still greater difficulty occasioned by the oppressions before in practice by a mistaken policy in oppressing the merchants and inhabitants in general by sending from this port ships that arrived with merchandise, of necessaries and comforts, by not suffering them to land their goods for sale, although the colony was in the greatest want of the articles they brought. In having for many years past reduced the price of grain and other articles, the produce of agriculture, to so low a price that the produce of the land would not pay the grower the expenses of cultivation, to the general ruin of the settler, and by not paying for such commodities in money, or such bills as would enable the settlers to purchase articles of necessity at a ready-money price, so that before this unfortunate flood (which gave the finishing stroke to the distresses of the inhabitants), the settlers were in general in that impoverished state that, exclusive of the great length of time it may take to restore the colony, a sum of £200,000 would scarcely restore it to the state it was when Governor Hunter left the colony in 1800."

They looked to his Excellency for their salvation and presented something in the nature of a Bill of Rights. They begged Bligh

Records of New South Wales, vol. VI, pp. 191-2).—Mr. Macarthur was certainly not popular amongst the settlers. They also stated they would not have signed the Address to King.

to avert distress

"By restoring the freedom of trade.

"By permitting commodities to be bought and sold at a fair open market (by all the inhabitants).

"By preventing that painful monopoly and extortion heretofore practised.

"By protecting the merchant and trader in their properties, and the people in general in their rights, privileges, liberties, and professions, as by law established.

"By suffering the laws of the realm to take their due course in matters of property without control.

"That justice be administered by the courts authorised by His Majesty, according to the known law of the land.

"By causing payment to be made in such money or government orders as will pass current in the purchase of every article of merchandise without drawback or discount."

And the address made, too, what was probably, the first plea for self government in our history:—

"We look up to the time when it may please His Majesty to authorise in such a manner as his justice may deem meet a legal authority to make local laws for the government of the colony."

The Hawkesbury settlers also, like those in Sydney, expressed themselves as ready "to lay down their lives and fortunes" to protect the Governor.\*\*

**4.—BLIGH AND THE SETTLERS.**—Having received and read the Settlers' "Addresses," Bligh determined to see for himself how many of their complaints were justified. He set out on a tour of the agricultural districts, anxious, especially, to see the damage done at Windsor and Richmond by the February and March floods. Evidence of the disastrous character of the floods was to be found in Sydney itself. There, coarse bread was selling at 2/6 a pound and even this, according to Captain Short, who arrived with Bligh,\*\* was "scarcely eatible," being "made from the sweepings of the granary." This was but an index of the distress and suffering on the Hawkesbury, whence the bulk of Sydney's corn came. There, together with loss of life, crops had been destroyed and live-stock drowned and swept away. Many settlers faced utter ruin and starvation. It was a scene of desolation that Bligh went.

He visited each settler, inquiring into his circumstances and needs. He then ordered some government cattle to be killed and divided amongst those who had suffered from the floods. That was not all the help he gave. Each settler was given an order

\* See also, above, p. 255.

\*\* See p. 285.

on the Government Store for articles he needed, Bligh obtaining a promise to pay in produce after the harvest. The prices were there and then fixed. Hitherto, it is to be remembered, the unfortunate settlers had had to pay for what they needed exorbitant prices to the monopolists and their traders. "This beneficent and patriotic arrangement of the Governor's," wrote Dr. Lang,† "was unquestionably the most judicious, the most philanthropic, and the most conducive to the rapid advancement" of New South Wales.\*

The evil effects of the rum traffic upon the conditions and circumstances of the settlers were not lost on Bligh. He took two drastic counter-actions against the evil. He first of all promised to purchase all the surplus wheat of the settlers after the next harvest for ten shillings a bushel. He then issued an order (14/2/1807), completely prohibiting "the exchange of spirits or other liquors as payment for grain, animal food, labour, wearing apparel, or any other commodity whatever."\*\*\* Drastic penalties were fixed and a half of the fines collected were to go to informers! Bligh had signed his own dismissal! It was thereafter to be war—war waged on a Governor, who had only his official position and the gratitude of a handful of settlers,† by the merchant monopolists, who had control of the only armed force in the colony, an armed force that was supposedly there to support the Governor: a war not so much waged openly as by subtle and underhand machinations and by the preparation of

\* P. 100.

\*\* "His Excellency the Governor," ran the Order, "laments to find, by his late visit through the colony, that the most calamitous evils have been produced by persons bartering or paying spirits for grain of all kinds, and to labourers for their hire; such the necessities of life in general, and depriving the settlers of their proceedings depressing the industries, and fixed penalties: comforts."—The order then prohibited the practice and fixed penalties: for a convict found guilty, 100 lashes and hard labor for twelve months; for a freed convict, three months' imprisonment and a fine of £20; a free immigrant, to lose all indulgences and to pay a fine of £50.—"His Excellency has the strongest confidence," concluded the Order, "from the known distress of the colony in consequence of this pernicious barter, that all officers, civil and military, will be aiding and assisting in carrying this order into full execution, which ultimately must tend to relieve the distress of the people, and to give credit and stability to the settlement at large."

† "No wonder then," proceeds Dr. Lang, "that the memory of Governor Bligh should have been warmly cherished, as it certainly was for a long period by the middle and lower classes of the settlers of older standing throughout the colony. 'Them were the days,' said a loquacious personage of one of these classes, at whose comfortable house I was glad to pass the night on one occasion. . . . 'Them were the days, sir, for the poor settler: he had only to tell the Governor what he wanted, and he was sure to get it from the Stores; whatever it was, sir, from a needle to an anchor, from a penn'orth of packthread to a ship's cable.'"—Lang: History, Vo. I, p. 100.

a plot that awaited only the opportunity for its enactment. The arch-plotter was John Macarthur.

The Governor's reforms, writes Dr. Lang,\* were "directly opposed to the private interests of that comparatively numerous and powerful class of individuals who had grown corpulent on the drunkenness of the colony, and who lived and moved and had their being, as **men of credit and renown**, on the increase of and perpetuation of that detestable vice. Certain parties of good repute could no longer sell the usual quantity of Bengal rum, Brazil's tobacco, Siam sugar, Young Hyson tea, or British manufactured goods at the **usual remunerating prices**—a change of system, which of course could not be tolerated. In short, the craft was in danger, and the rapid falling of the mercury in the harems of the colony portended a storm.\*\*

5.—**THE PLOT AND THE OPPORTUNITY.**—There is sufficient evidence to make it clear that the overthrow of Bligh's government was not the result of a fortuitous concourse of a despot's vagaries. All of these that the rebels cited—his bad language (surely no justification for deposition at the beginning of the 19th century), his atrocious temper, his vanity, his terror at being laughed at and so on—were merely used to bolster up a case. The real reason was that he was an obstacle in the way of the monopolists. To remove him was the aim of a plot. That that plot existed and was being worked out is quite evident—to Bligh as it is to us.

The plotters were at work in England as well as in Sydney. The initial aim was to have Bligh recalled, as Hunter and King had been. Bligh's enemies in London had plenty of ammunition. Englishmen had not forgotten the "Bounty"—nor would the friends of that ship's mutineers let them forget it. To this host of foes was added another when Captain Short arrived back in England with his story to mobilise friends. A successor was even selected for Bligh—Grose, by then a general! So widespread was the anti-Bligh propaganda that Mrs. Bligh (who had not come out to Sydney with her husband) became sufficiently alarmed to beg Sir Joseph Banks's intercession and that the "Morning Chronicle" of February 1, 1808, announced, falsely, of course, that Bligh had been recalled!<sup>19</sup>

In Sydney the anti-Bligh campaign began when the decision was taken to work for his overthrow. His enemies made use of the same means of propaganda as had been employed against

\* P. 100.

\*\* Dr. Lang's emphasis.

King. Writing to King, on October 25, 1807, Surgeon Harris referred to the "pipes"<sup>20</sup> that were being circulated. One called for a new Fletcher Christian to lead a mutiny in New South Wales as the original had done on the "Bounty": "Oh tempora! Oh mores! Is there no Christian in New South Wales to put a stop to the tyranny of the Governor?"

The Christian was there—as large as desired and soon there happened the events out of which could be constructed the machinery and the justification for the denouement of the plot.

The 1806 floods gave birth to an incident which illustrated the rapacity of Macarthur and gave occasion for his first clash with Bligh. It centred round a promissory note given Macarthur by one Andrew Thompson—an emancipated convict and the bailiff of Bligh's farm on the Hawkesbury. As was the custom of the time, the note was expressed in terms, not of money, but of wheat. When it was drawn, before the floods, wheat was selling at 7/6 a bushel. When payment was due, after the floods, the price had gone up by hundreds per cent. Thompson maintained that he was obliged to pay only the value of the wheat; Macarthur claimed that he should be paid the number of bushels mentioned in the note. Shylock would have nothing but his bond. The Civil Court decided against Macarthur, who appealed to Bligh. Bligh upheld the decision of the court. Macarthur ceased visiting Government House.\*

The Governor's decision was in harmony with his proclamation of November 1, 1806, by which he ordered that all cheques and notes be thenceforth drawn in sterling and not in produce. Just before Bligh gave his decision in the Macarthur-Thompson case, the "Sydney Gazette" made an allusion to it that must have rankled in Macarthur's mind. The paper said\*\* that it had become "dangerous for an individual to bind himself in the payment of any specific number of bushels of an article to which unforeseen events may have given even a ten-fold value—and Shylock still insists upon his bond."

Early in March, 1807, the ship "Dart," of which Macarthur was part owner, arrived in Sydney from London with two stills aboard—one addressed to Captain Abbott, the other to Macarthur. Abbott had ordered his and his agent, who was also Macarthur's agent, had sent the latter one also, on his own responsibility. The Naval Officer, who was at the time Surgeon John Harris,

\* "In the exceptional circumstances of the case, Bligh's decision certainly seems to have been reasonable and fair."—F. M. Bladen, *Historical Records of New South Wales*, Vol. VI, p. liv.

\*\* July 5, 1807.

brought the stills to the notice of the Governor who ordered them to be confiscated. Harris, however, in the case of Macarthur's, contented himself with keeping the head and worm and allowed Macarthur to take the boilers to his store to be unloaded of the medical supplies they contained. There they remained till October, when both stills were to be sent back to England on the "Duke of Portland."

Macarthur refused to give up the boilers when requested to do so by the new naval officer, Robert Campbell, saying that he would sell them to the master of some ship going to India or China, or else would use them for some domestic purpose. We are permitted to conclude that the domestic purpose to which Macarthur's boilers would be applied would be—the original purpose, when a new head and worm had been made for them, in defiance of the Governor's order forbidding the distillation of spirits. Bligh instructed Campbell to see that the stills went back to England. Campbell sent his nephew to seize the boilers, but he had no official standing. Macarthur, therefore, had an opportunity of prosecuting him for illegally seizing his property. The court decided in favor of Macarthur who made the most of Campbell's stupid error in sending an unauthorised person to seize the still. The illegal distillation of spirits and the defiance of the Governor's orders were hidden by the cloud of Macarthur's eloquence and he assumed the garb of injured innocence. "It would, therefore, appear," he harangued the court, "that a British subject, living in a British settlement, in which the British laws are established by the Royal Patent, has had his property wrested from him by a non-accredited individual, without any authority being produced or any other reason being assigned than that it was the Governor's order. It is, therefore, for you gentlemen, to determine whether this be the tenor on which Englishmen hold their property in New South Wales."

The next clash occurred in November, 1807, when Macarthur's schooner, the "Parramatta," returned from Tahiti. She had left Sydney in June and had had on board an escaped convict who had thus been carried to Tahiti. The missionaries there complained to Bligh and investigations were made. The court decided that the bond for £900 entered into by the owners of the schooner, Macarthur and Blaxcell, according to regulations, was forfeited and that the £900 penalty had to be paid. Macarthur appealed to the Governor, without success. The owners refusing to pay, the Naval Officer seized the ship. Macarthur thereupon notified the captain and crew that he was abandoning the ship and that they need not look to him for any more pay or

provisions. They went ashore and, as, according to regulations, seamen could not leave their ships and remain ashore, made affidavits in regard to Macarthur's action.

Bligh had Judge-Advocate Atkins send a letter to Macarthur, who lived at Parramatta, summoning him to Sydney to explain his action in depriving his crew of rations. Macarthur wrote refusing to appear.<sup>11</sup> Atkins then issued a warrant for his arrest. Francis Oakes, chief constable at Parramatta, had the task of presenting the warrant. Macarthur told him he would have spurned Atkins from his presence if he had served the warrant instead of Oakes. "I have been robbed of £10,000," he said, "but let them alone, they will soon make a rope to hang themselves." He warned Oakes to be well armed if he came again as he would "never submit till blood was shed." He also gave Oakes this letter:—

"Parramatta, December 15, 1807.

"Mr. Oakes,—You will inform the persons who sent you here with the warrant you have now shown me, and given me a copy of, that I never will submit to the horrid tyranny that is attempted, until I am forced; that I consider it with scorn and contempt, as I do the persons who have directed it to be executed.

(Signed) J. MACARTHUR."

This was an open declaration of war. Oakes reported to Atkins and Bligh and another warrant was immediately issued, directed to the chief constables of Parramatta and Sydney. These two worthies, with three constables, arrested Macarthur at the house of Surveyor-General Grimes and lodged him in gaol. On the following day, December 17, he was brought before the magistrates and committed for trial, being allowed bail.

Macarthur now began his counter-offensive. He demanded settlement by Atkins of a bill for £26/6/- drawn by the latter fourteen years before and which then, with interest, amounted to £82/9/5. Atkins agreed to pay but objected to the amount of interest. Macarthur appealed to Bligh to replace Atkins in the coming trial by someone more impartial. Bligh refused to interfere.

Another case of defiance of the Governor by Macarthur occurred over some land in Sydney. Macarthur had been given a lease of land by King on Church Hill. In October, 1807, Bligh had reported to Windham that, although Phillip, before he left Sydney, had given instructions that no part of Sydney should be leased, King had given and renewed certain leases in January, 1806, for fourteen years. The land leased was now needed by the government. One was Macarthur's. On January 13, Grimes informed Macarthur that he could not be allowed to build on his

lot but that he could choose land to an equal amount elsewhere. Much correspondence followed — Macarthur refused the sites offered and the suggestions he made were not acceptable to the Governor. In the end Macarthur defiantly informed Grimes that he intended keeping his original lease and proceeded to have it fenced in. On the lot was also a public well. Bligh had forcibly to put a stop to the work.<sup>12</sup>

Macarthur made another appeal to Bligh, on January 22, to appoint another judge than Atkins to try him. Bligh refused. He had not the power, he said, and Manners Sutton, Judge-Advocate-General at Johnston's trial, upheld him: "The Governor has no more right to change the Judge-Advocate who sits upon that court than he has to change a judge in England or anywhere else." Bladen,\* however, thinks Bligh should have done as Macarthur requested. On the other hand, it is possible that such a disciplinarian as Bligh looked upon the matter from the purely legalistic point of view. And legally he was right. It is evident, too, that Macarthur did not ask for a new judge out of the fear of the result of the trial, because he knew he could count on the six officers of the court as an overwhelming majority in his favor against the minority of one Judge-Advocate, but with the intention of using the opportunity thus given as a lever to remove Bligh. The latter's appointment of a new judge would not have altered the verdict—but Macarthur's unanimous acquittal would have made the Governor's position untenable and the power and the prestige of the Macarthur party more firmly based. As it was, Macarthur's triumph was attained only by open rebellion, and that triumph, Bligh felt sure, would be short-lived.

On January 11, Bligh discovered that Captain Abbott, who was a magistrate and at that time Commandant at Parramatta had arranged with Johnston to exchange duties with Kemp who was in Sydney. The aim, said Bligh, was to bring a pro-Macarthur magistrate to Sydney so that there would be "a preponderancy in the Benches of Justices." But Bligh defeated the attempt. "I allowed," he said, "the change to take place; but as we wanted no additional magistrate at Sydney, Captain Abbott's services in that capacity were no longer necessary," and he appointed another as a magistrate at Parramatta.\*\* There can be no doubt that the move to bring Abbott to Sydney was connected with a contemplated coup d'etat. It is also, therefore, evident that Johnston was a party to the plot.

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. VI, p. lviii.

\*\* Historical Records of Australia, 1st Series, Vol. VI, p. 424.

But there is further evidence. In a letter to ex-Governor King, written after the deposition of Bligh, Captain Abbott tells of what he considered a bungling of the whole matter. Abbott expressed to King his fears that some who had taken part in the rebellion would be "sent for." But, he continues, if Johnston "had followed the advice I gave him previous to his taking the step, that in that case—meaning the arrest of ye Governor—to send for Colonel Paterson immediately afterwards, and to go home with the Governor to account for his conduct, it would show that he had not done so to obtain the command, instead of oversetting everything and styling himself Lieutenant-Governor, which he has done. His seniority sufficiently established himself in the temporary command without assuming a title which none but his Majesty could confer."\* Now this advice could only have been given some time previously to the 26th, as Abbott, it is to be remembered, was at Parramatta.\*\* The conclusions to be drawn are that the proposal to depose Bligh did not arise from the events of Macarthur's trial, that there had been discussions amongst the officers, that Abbott had given advice about the procedure to be adopted and that the trial merely presented the opportunity.

Macarthur determined to make the most of that opportunity and to use it to force matters to a head. In the light of this knowledge every one of his actions is seen to be provocative and agitational—to "drive the Governor into violent and precipitate measures"† and the officers into open rebellion. Consider those actions in this light: his claim on Atkins for a paltry sum alleged to be owing, although the debt had been incurred so long before that it was covered by the Statute of Limitations; his driving the Governor to use force to prevent him from going on with the building on his Church Hill lot; his challenge of the right of Atkins to sit in judgment on him, although he knew the latter's presence as Judge-Advocate could not have affected the verdict; his manoeuvring of the officers into support of his challenge and into assuming the status and stigma of mutineers from which they could be relieved only by the deposition of the Governor and the legalisation of the mutiny; his melodramatic appeal to the court for protection, thus again manoeuvring the officers into defiance of the civil authorities by giving him a military escort. It all has the appearance of a well thought-out plan faithfully followed.

\* Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. VI, p. 832.

\*\* "I was at Parramatta at the time," he tells King.

† This is the admission made by his son, James Macarthur, who makes

As the zero hour approached preparations seem to have been made in matters of detail. It was an easy thing to make sure of the loyalty of the soldiers to their officers and Macarthur is said to have promised them extra wine. It appears also, from evidence given at the trial of Major Johnston, that, to prevent their being used, the mechanism of the guns had been interfered with—upon the orders of the adjutant, Minchin. Finally, the night of January 24 was chosen for the first of Corps mess-dinners that were to be held periodically. There, most of the principals of the rebel faction met and, amid bright scenes of conviviality, prepared plans for the morrow. The officers who were to form the court were there. Was there, too, Major Johnston who owed the "illness" that prevented his coming to town on the 26th to his inability to hold, as a gentleman supposedly should, the liquor he consumed. The bondsmen of Macarthur were there—Bayly and Blaxcell—and Macarthur's son, Edward, and nephew, Hannibal. Macarthur himself did not go into the dinner, but walked up and down outside listening to the band!

It was on January 25, that the court to try Macarthur met. It consisted of Judge-Advocate Atkins, Captain Kemp, Lieutenants Brabyn, Moore, Laycock, Minchin, Lawson. After the oath had been taken by the six officers Macarthur got up to state his objections<sup>23</sup> to Atkins's presiding at the court. In spite of the Judge-Advocate's objecting that there could be no court without him the officers allowed Macarthur to read out his six points and to make a speech in support. Atkins, of course, was right. It was no court. Macarthur, in making his speech, had begun the rebellion; the officers in supporting him associated themselves with him in that rebellion. Everything was evidently working to pre-arranged plan.

The courtroom was crowded with members of the Macarthur party and men of the New South Wales Corps. The soldiers cheered when Captain Kemp, in retort to Atkins who called out that he would commit Macarthur to gaol for contempt, exclaimed:

the statement that his father was warned of the pending arrest by an Irish settler of the Hawkesbury district, who had been carousing with Crosley, the attorney, who in his cups boasted of the coup which was preparing against Macarthur and finally pulled out the draft of the indictment. This the Irishman scoured and carried forthwith to Macarthur. It was the knowledge derived from the draft of Crosley's indictment which induced Macarthur to adopt the course he took towards Oakes, the head Constable, of refusing to submit when he came to arrest him at Parramatta. His object was to drive the Governor into violent and precipitate measures.—Macarthurs of Camden, p. 147. Note also his remark to Oakes about enough rope to hang themselves.

"You commit! No, sir, I will commit you to gaol." Atkins then shouted that he adjourned the court, but Kemp bade the people remain: "We are a court!" Macarthur, still playing to the gallery, then appealed for protection from the police. Addressing the officers and the soldiers, between whom and the civil authorities there was always friction, he asked: "Am I to be cast forth to the mercy of a set of armed ruffians—the police?" The rebel, anxious to pose as the martyr was given a guard of soldiers. The Provost-Marshal, William Gore, looked upon this as a rescue and reported to Atkins who, with Magistrates Arndell, Campbell and Palmer, issued a warrant for Macarthur's arrest. The six officers wrote to Bligh to the effect that they had allowed Macarthur's objections to Atkins and asked for another Judge-Advocate. Bligh replied that that was beyond his power. To a second letter Bligh did not reply, but wrote again asking for all the papers left in court by Atkins. The officers refused to part with these, but offered to supply copies. They repeated this in answer to a further demand by Bligh. At five o'clock the officers adjourned, allowing Macarthur his former bail.

Bligh thereupon decided to call upon Johnston for support against his rebellious officers. He lived on his farm at Annandale and it was there that Bligh sent him a message requesting his immediate attendance at Government House. Johnston sent a verbal reply that he could not go because he was too ill, having fallen out of his chaise on his return from the mess dinner of the Corps on the previous night.\* He was too ill, he said, even to write.

The next day, January 26, was the twentieth birthday of the colony. It was a full day. Macarthur was arrested early. The self-constituted court of the six officers met at 10, wrote two letters to Bligh again asking for another Judge-Advocate and requesting the release of Macarthur and adjourned at 3 p.m., having received no reply. Bligh's counter-moves were to summon each of the officers to appear before him and to inform Johnston, suggesting to the latter that, seeing that he could not be in town, "Captain Abbott should be directed to attend at Sydney, to command the troops in your absence." Johnston was still too "ill" to write but said he would get somebody to write for him by evening. An hour or so after receipt of Bligh's message, the suffering Johnston was so far recovered as to be able not merely to write, but to ride into Sydney, where he arrived at

\* In Bligh's copy of the "Trial of Lt.-Col. Johnston" is this in Bligh's writing: "It is well known that he was drunk on the 24th"—Mackness, p. 172.

about 5 o'clock. He drove straight to the barracks. At his trial Johnston had a story to tell to justify him in the action he took:

"An immense number of the people, comprising all the respectable inhabitants, except those who were immediately connected with Captain Bligh, rushed into the barrack and surrounded me, repeating, with importunate clamour, a solicitation that I would immediately place the Governor under arrest. They solemnly assured me, if I did not, an insurrection and massacre would certainly take place; and added that the blood of the colonists would be upon my head." The imagination of the gallant major had been working overtime to furnish a story, which, if it did not convince himself, was meant to convince his judges and to present himself, the commander of the only armed force in the country, as saving New South Wales from insurrection by—himself leading a rebellion! "Jack Boddice's turnip-headed tool" had magnified "the officers of the New South Wales Corps and a few other persons gathering round him who persuaded him to usurp the government"\* into an "immense number of the people"!

But the real leader was in gaol! Johnston's first act was to release Macarthur, who immediately took command behind the scenes. He advised and drew up a "requisition," armed with which Johnston felt safer. The requisition read:

26th January, 1808.

Sir,—The present alarming state of this colony, in which every man's property, liberty, and life is endangered, induces us most earnestly to implore you instantly to place Governor Bligh under an arrest and to assume the command of the colony. We pledge ourselves, at a moment of less agitation, to come forward to support the measure with our fortunes and our lives.

We are, with great respect, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

JOHN MACARTHUR, et. al.

The document was addressed to Johnston as Lieutenant-Governor. On the requisition there are over one hundred and fifty signatures.<sup>14</sup> But before the arrest of Bligh there were probably not more than five, if there were that number.\*\* The arrest was to take place; the signatures demanding the arrest were to be obtained later.†

\* Lang, Vol. 1, p. 114.

\*\* It is quite evident that nearly all of the signatures were collected after the arrest, but that they were represented as being made before—so that justification for Johnston's usurpation might be forthcoming in documentary form. Grimes, whose name appears tenth on the list, did not sign till after the arrest. Probably only the five signatures on the first page were made before the arrest: Macarthur, John Blaxland, Mileham, Lord, Gregory Baxland.—Mackaness, Chap. XLI.

† Dr. Lang has this comment on the signatories: "In addition to Mr.

6.—**DEPOSITION.**—The deposition of Bligh really began with Johnston's assumption of the title and authority of Lieutenant-Governor.<sup>15</sup> These were assumed before Macarthur's release. That he hesitated and needed Macarthur's backing is evidenced by his exclamation when the latter appeared: "God's curse! What am I to do, Macarthur?"\* Macarthur's reply was the "requisition"—upon which Johnston relied then and at his trial in 1811, until it was shown to be what it really was.

Fortified by the document and by Macarthur's presence, Johnston proceeded to the next item of the programme: the arrest of the Governor. The whole of the Corps was paraded and, at about half-past six, marched with colors flying and the band playing "The British Grenadiers," towards Government House in O'Connell Street. The House was surrounded and a party of soldiers was led inside, where magistrates, the Provost-Marshal (Gore), the clergyman (Fulton), and the Governor's secretary (Griffin) were arrested. The Governor's daughter, Mrs. Putland (who had just buried her husband), tried to prevent the entrance of the soldiers, crying: "You traitors, you rebels! You have just walked over my husband's grave, and now come to murder my father." She was brushed aside, but her father was not to be found. He had decided against passive surrender to the rebels. Two things seemed of importance to him at the moment: the secreting of official papers and the possibility of hiding for the moment, so that he could later make his way to the Hawkesbury, where he would have been able to rally the settlers in his support. The first he was able to accomplish. Had he succeeded in the second, the course of Australian history would undoubtedly have been changed.

Macarthur . . . there was his partner Mr. Blaxel, who was doubtless equally concerned in the affair of the Schooner, 'Parramatta'; there was Mr. John Blaxland, a settler, afterwards a member of the Nominee Legislature of the Colony, and his brother, Mr. Gregory Blaxland, also a settler, who had private grievances of their own, of the usual colonial character, in having neither got so much land nor so much convict labour as they thought themselves entitled to; there was Mr. Simeon Lord, whose right to an allotment of ground adjoining the Government domain the Governor had recently called in question; there was Mr. D'Arcy Wentworth, whom the Governor had suspended from his office as Assistant Surgeon, after he had been publicly reprimanded by Major Johnston for disobedience of orders, pursuant to the sentence of a General Court Martial; and there was Mr. Nicholas Bayly, who by some unfortunate mistake had no office at all under Governor Bligh, but was immediately made Provost-Marshal and Private Secretary by Major Johnston."—Lang, Vol. I, p. 115.

\* According to Macarthur's evidence; see "Early Records of the Macarthurs," p. 152.



Where to hide was a question difficult to answer in a comparatively small house that was surrounded by soldiers. Under a bed in a back room seemed the only possibility. There Bligh, having torn up some papers and hidden others under his waistcoat, took refuge. It was a precarious one and was doomed to discovery. He was found by two soldiers of the search party and the fluff that clung to his uniform furnished much-needed material for the spiteful propaganda used against him by the rebels. The episode was designed by heaven for the Macarthur party. That night, and for long after, it was made much use of, and, in cartoons and paintings publicly exhibited, Bligh was represented as being pulled from beneath the bed by the soldiers.

The charge of cowardice against Bligh will not stand. Cowardice is a purely relative quality. To take refuge from a whole regiment marching with fixed bayonets to take one, and led by one's bitter personal enemies, may be characterised as cowardice, but to the present writer it seems merely common sense. But it does not appear to him that Bligh *did* hide to save himself from the soldiers. Had he merely thought of himself he would probably have thrown in the sponge, surrendered, and gone home as Hunter and King had. But, in addition to the personal courage that we must credit to the Bligh of the "Bounty's" launch, we must surely ascribe another quality, tenacity. It was that characteristic that would have led him to make a bid for recovery of power, if he had been able to reach the Hawkesbury settlers, and which later kept him in Australian waters for several years awaiting and seeking opportunities to recover his position.

After his arrest, Bligh was handed the following letter, addressed: "To William Bligh, Esq., F.R.S.:-

"Sir,—I am called upon to execute a most painful duty. You are charged by the respectable inhabitants of crimes that render you unfit to exercise the supreme authority another moment in this colony; and in that charge all the officers serving under my command have joined. I therefore require you, in His Majesty's sacred name, to resign your authority, and to submit to the arrest which I hereby place you under, by the advice of all my officers and by the advice of every respectable inhabitant in the town of Sydney.—I am, sir, your most obedient, humble servant, George Johnston, Acting Lieutenant-Governor, and Major commanding New South Wales Corps."

After having rummaged through the house and collected all the papers they could lay their hands on (Bligh was able to

preserve those relating to the affairs of the 25th), the rebels placed sentries around Government House and left the Governor to his meditations.

There were celebrations during the night and Macarthur was "placed in a chair and carried about the town in a disorderly triumphant manner."\* That arch-conspirator was mightily pleased with himself. "My dearest love," he wrote to his wife later, "I have been deeply engaged all [this day in contending for the liberties of this unhappy Colony, and I am happy to say I have succeeded beyond what I expected. I am too much exhausted to attempt giving you the particulars, therefore I must refer you to Edward, who knows enough to give you a general idea of what has been done. The tyrant is now no doubt gnashing his teeth with vexation at his overthrow. May he often have cause to do the like!"]\*\*\*

A reading of the documents in the case—for and against, hearsay and first-hand information, actual recollections and those manufactured for a purpose, charges and counter-charges—leaves the causes of the revolt clear. Those causes were the interferences by the Governor with the monopolists and their traffic in rum. His decrees prohibiting barter in spirits and ordering that promissory and other notes be expressed in terms of sterling and not of goods, struck at a very profitable traffic. They made enemies for him—relentless enemies who determined on his overthrow. Those were the causes of the revolt. But from them have to be kept separate the excuses, the manufactured and exaggerated evils of which Bligh had allegedly been the origin, the preparation of a case for revolt and the creation of an opportunity. The rebels could not afford to admit the actual causes of the rebellion.

But into all of this enters another element, of which, perhaps, neither side was fully conscious. The trade interests of the young Australian community were growing and were finding barriers to their expansion in British colonial policy and trade monopoly.

But the real causes of the revolt were hidden, and have remained hidden, under the cloud of propaganda wafted over them by the whisperings, charges and falsifications of the victors. The campaign of the Macarthur party began, as we have seen, as soon as the aims of Bligh were understood. It

\* Letter of H. J. Washington to Sir Joseph Banks, quoted by Mackness, p. 202.

\*\* Records of the Macarthurs, p. 153.

went on with added zest after his deposition. The accumulated results of the campaign and of the defensive counter-campaign were examined by the court-martial that tried Johnston in 1811, but obviously, its lack of knowledge and even of interest considered, could not be completely sifted. They remain unsifted, so that the martinettism, arrogance and coarseness of language of Bligh, and the obstinacy and recalcitrance of Macarthur, are still offered as adequate causes of the 1808 revolt. With the understanding of the real causes comes the realisation that the charges against Bligh lose much of their importance, although they require a full and scientific sifting in the interests of historical accuracy.<sup>16</sup>

7.—**INTERREGNUM.**—Macarthur and his party in power, it was a case of spoils to the victors and woe to the vanquished. Macarthur was not content to remain for long the string-puller behind the scenes. Within a few weeks he was appointed Colonial Secretary.\* All witnesses agree that he was the real ruler of the colony. Johnston was merely his mouthpiece.<sup>17</sup> The ambition of many years had been realised.

What was done with the power he wielded?

The revolutionary regime had to be stabilised. The soldiers were presented in a Proclamation issued on January 27 as the saviours of the colony,\*\* and what facilities for propaganda existed were used to glorify the "ever memorable January 26, 1808" and its deeds. For the following Sunday Johnston ordered

\* After the Court of officers had re-assembled and acquitted him of the charge brought against him by Atkins.

\*\* The Proclamation issued by Johnston on January 27 runs, in part, as follows: "The Public Peace being happily and, I trust in Almighty God, permanently established, I hereby proclaim the cessation of martial law. . . . Words cannot too strongly convey my Approbation of the Behaviour of the whole Body of the People on the late memorable event. By their manly, firm and orderly conduct they have shown themselves deserving of that protection which I have felt it was my duty to give them, and which I doubt not they will continue to merit.

"In future no man shall have just cause to complain of Violence, Injustice or Oppression; no free man shall be taken, imprisoned or deprived of his House, Land or Liberty, but by the Law; Justice shall be impartially administered, without regard to or respect of persons; and every man shall enjoy the fruits of his industry in security.

"Soldiers!

"Your conduct has endeared you to every well-disposed inhabitant in this settlement. Persevere in the same honorable path and you will establish the credit of the N.S.W. Corps on a basis not to be shaken.

"God Save the King, by the command of His Honor, the Lt.-Governor."

NICHOLAS BAYLY,

Secretary.

—Historical Records of Australia, Series I, Vol. VI, pp. 240-1.

a church parade to be held at the new St. Philip's Church completed by Bligh, and "well-disposed" people were asked to attend "to join in thanks to Almighty God for His merciful interposition in their favour, by relieving them, without bloodshed, from the awful situation in which they stood before the memorable 26th instant." In the meanwhile, the official clergyman, the Rev. Henry Fulton,\* was dismissed—presumably because he could not be trusted to pray for the new regime with the right amount of fervor.

The loyal officials and magistrates of Bligh's regime all suffered. The magistrates were removed from office and Dr. Harris, Dr. Jamison, and Messrs. Grimes, Kemp, Minchin, Bell, Blaxcell and John Blaxland were appointed in their stead. The officials and other supporters of Bligh were brought before a revolutionary tribunal. George Crossley a lawyer, who had been transported for perjury, but who had been emancipated by King, was brought before it. Bligh and Atkins, both having no knowledge of law, had had to consult Crossley, as he was the only lawyer in the colony (others consulted him, too, even Macarthur!). He was now charged with practising after having been found guilty of perjury. He was found guilty by Macarthur's court, sentenced to seven years' transportation, and sent to serve them in the Newcastle mines.

For William Gore, the Provost-Marshal, who had arrested him, Macarthur had special hatred. He was brought before the tribunal and also sentenced to seven years in the Newcastle mines. Into the case of Judge-Advocate Atkins a double element of irony entered. Atkins was the really despicable person of Bligh's entourage—and yet he was condemned on charges based on scathing summing up\*\* of him by Bligh himself and discovered by the rebels amongst Bligh's papers! Then, when Atkins turned renegade against Bligh, he became one of the chief witnesses for Johnston at the latter's trial! Bligh had done the rebels at least one good turn. Edward Abbott took his place as Judge-Advocate. Nicholas Bayly became Secretary to John-

\* Fulton had been transported to New South Wales for complicity in the Irish Rebellion of 1789.

\*\* "With respect to Mr. Atkins," Bligh had written, "more particularly he had been accustomed to inebriety; he has been the ridicule of the community; sentences of death have been pronounced in moments of intoxication; his determination is weak; his opinion floating and infirm; his knowledge of the law insignificant and subservient to private inclination; and confidential cases of the Crown, where due secrecy is required, he is not to be trusted with."—Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. VI, p. 355.

ston and Provost-Marshal. James Williamson took the office of Commissary compulsorily vacated by John Palmer. Robert Campbell was dismissed from the positions of naval officer, treasurer and collector of taxes.

A meeting of the inhabitants was called early in February, where plans for sending a delegation to England were to be discussed and speeches of mutual congratulation made by the principal actors of the current drama. The supply of liquor was plentiful, as was also the enthusiasm. A sword was to be presented to Johnston, to cost not less than one hundred guineas, for having suppressed tyranny, and addresses of thanks were accorded to Johnston, the officers, and especially to Macarthur, the "chief instrument" of the glorious revolution. Macarthur was elected delegate and made a bloody speech about bloody-minded and bloodthirsty villains who wanted to drink his blood. Dissension, failure to subscribe the money necessary, and discretion after thought kept Macarthur in Sydney, and it was not till he went as a witness for Johnston that he left for England.

The rebels did not remain for long a happy family. There were disagreements over the allotment of spoils, there was revolt against Macarthur's domination of the government, and there was a collision between Johnston and the rum interests. A letter<sup>18</sup> from Macarthur to Captain Piper throws great light on the alleged disinterestedness of the "patriots" who had risked their lives—one Corps against one man!—to overthrow "tyranny" and "misgovernment." Some of the officers who had by now become oppositionists were sent to England with despatches.

Johnston found that he was faced with the same evils of the rum traffic as Hunter, King and Bligh had had to face. The "Jenny," an American ship, had brought a cargo of spirits into Sydney. Johnston refused permission for it to be landed. The ship was escorted out of the harbor. But, out of sight of land, it made for Broken Bay, where its spirits were landed—1200 gallons. As a result the ship was seized as a prize, but the Vice-Admiralty Court, that is, the officers masquerading under a pseudonym, refused to condemn it, and the smuggling thereby became legal.\* Johnston also felt himself unable to satisfy the rapacity of many of the "respectable inhabitants," who were sadly disappointed with the paradise they had hoped for with the overthrow of Bligh's tyranny. In this new Canaan the milk and honey did not flow quite quickly enough.

The mass of the settlers, who were loyal to Bligh, were not inactive. Indeed, their activities were such as leave no doubt that a very different story would now have to be told if Bligh had succeeded in escaping to them on the evening of January 26. In an address dated January 1, 1808, and signed by 833 persons, they had expressed their appreciation of "the manifold, great and essential blessings we freely continue to enjoy from Your Excellency's arduous, just, determined and salutary Government." They also stated that "we feel and hold ourselves gratefully bound, at the risque of our lives and properties, at all times, as liege subjects to support the same." But it was no spineless, flattering address. It voiced grievances which indicate the growing community consciousness of the people of New South Wales. Bligh was asked "to make representations to His Majesty in Council that he might be graciously pleased to allow such privilege of trade to their country vessels and themselves as other colonies have, and that the law might be administered by trial by jury of the people, as in England. Although elaborate explanations might be made on these subjects, and the greatest difference shown, from the time the regulations were appointed for securing a small quantity of prisoners planted on these shores, compared with the extensive rising greatness and enterprising spirit of the colonists over which your excellency now happily governs,"\* they felt that Bligh knew as much as they did of the necessities of the colony and would second their demands. In spite of these two grievances and demands, however, the settlers did not look upon the rebel regime as their own or as representative of their interests. They voiced the demand for the emancipation of colonial trade—but did not see their champions in Johnston, Macarthur and Co. They wanted trial by jury—but did not expect it from the junta that overturned the government. To it they sent in protests against its usurpation.

On April 11, the settlers sent a protest to Johnston against his appointment of Macarthur as Colonial Secretary. "We believe," they wrote, "that, under colour of discharging the duty of that Office, the said John McArthur has violated the law, violated public faith, and trampled on the most sacred and constitutional rights of British subjects. . . . We believe John McArthur has been the scourge of this Colony by fomenting quarrels between H.M.'s Officers, Servants and Subjects; his monopoly and extortion have been highly injurious to the Inhabitants of every description." And they demanded his removal.<sup>10</sup>

\* Historical Records of Australia, VI, pp. 373-4.

\* Mackenness, Vol. II pp. 277-8.

A week later an Address was sent to Paterson, begging that he return to Sydney and put an end to the "truly alarming" condition of the Colony: "His Majesty's Governor-in-Chief a prisoner; Public Officers appointed by His Majesty, Magistrates and other Officers, legally appointed, all removed; also five of the Magistrates created by the now ruling power, who acted with impartiality, and justly opposed the present measures, dismissed or resigned; their Acting Judge-Advocate sent home; the Civil and Criminal Courts annulled; the independent and impartial judgment of the Officers who composed them publicly censured and condemned by Proclamation . . . ; the Superintendent of the Police (John Harris, Esq.) also under Orders to leave the Colony. . . . The whole Government appears to be put into the hands of John McArthur, Esq., who seems a very improper person. . . . and the principal agitator and promoter of the present alarming and calamitous state of the Colony." The settlers went on to declare that they knew nothing of the proposed arrest of Bligh and that signatures to a "paper carried round to sanction what was done on that day" had been obtained by "threatening individuals with imprisonment" or deportation or "that they would be marked men who refused to sign it."<sup>19\*</sup>

The censuring and condemning of the officers of a court mentioned in the above address referred to the case of Oliver Russell. John Blaxland was a half-owner of the "Brothers," a ship engaged in the seal-skin trade and captained by Russell. The Blaxlands wanted to discharge Russell and tried to obtain the help of Johnston and Macarthur. These refused to help and, as a result, received divers threats, including one of assassination for Macarthur.\*\* The Blaxlands and Simeon Lord, however, went on board and assaulted Russell. The latter took the matter to court. Here the judges were friends of the Blaxlands, so that Russell and his Chief Mate found themselves and not their assailants on trial! In the midst of the proceedings, they heard themselves, upon the word of those they were prosecuting, "without Indictment, Trial, or the observance of any principle but a

\* This is borne out by the testimony of Thomas Arndell.—Historical Records of Australia, VI, p. 565.

\*\* Apparently a story of Hawkesbury settlers, alleged plans invented by Gregory Blaxland to frighten Macarthur.—Historical Records of Australia, VI, p. 397.

most un governable prejudice,"\* adjudged guilty of perjury, sentenced to seven years' transportation. At the same time the assault was considered proved and Gregory Blaxland was sentenced—to pay a fine of five pounds! John Blaxland and Simeon Lord were acquitted.

Such was a court of law under Johnston's regime, with Grimes as Advocate-General. A Proclamation was issued by Johnston annulling the sentence of the court and restoring Russell and his mate "to all the rights and privileges they were possessed of before the aforesaid sentence was pronounced."<sup>20\*</sup> Johnston took this course, not proceeding with a trial for perjury, because, he said, Simeon Lord was able to get witnesses to swear to anything he desired.† To rid himself of Grimes, and of John Harris, who was one of the officers not contented with Johnston's rule, he ordered these two to England to carry despatches. But as Harris became ill, Minchin‡ was sent in his place.

On May 1, the Hawkesbury settlers sent another address to Paterson.<sup>21</sup> "We have embarked our all," they told him, "and look forward to improvement that our children may reap the benefit of our industry. With pleasure we saw the colony reviving from the most melancholy calamity, the streams of justice purified,†† crimes of the deepest dye prevented, discipline established, a system of monopoly and extortion in some measure suppressed, that had been long and severely felt by us and our families, nearly to the deprivation of every comfort. As our hopes were beginning to revive," there came the eruption of the rebels, the arrest of Bligh and the overthrow of his government. They told of a reign of terror: threats of imprisonment and deportation to obtain signatures to an address of support to Johnston, imprisonment without trial, men taken from their families. They appealed to Paterson to deliver them "from the oppression, alarm and terror we have laboured under for some months past."

This address was sent down to Sydney, the settlers being under the impression that Paterson would arrive there in the "Porpoise," which Johnston had sent to Van Diemen's Land on April 19. Under the same impression, the Baukam Hills settlers also sent an address down to Sydney, welcoming Paterson and

\* Johnston, Historical Records of Australia, VI, p. 455.

\*\* Historical Records of Australia, VI, p. 277; Historical Records of New South Wales, VI, p. 573.

† Historical Records of Australia, VI, p. 456.

‡ See Note 18 to this Chapter.

†† The settlers evidently did not think Bligh interfered with the course of justice.

pledging themselves "to be ready to give you every information and support in our power in order that full satisfaction and justice may be given to the Governor (whom we highly revere)."<sup>22</sup>

But Paterson remained in his island refuge and Foveaux, when he arrived in Sydney, continued the rebel regime, refusing to reinstate Bligh. The settlers now determined to send a delegation to England. George Suttor, of Baulkam Hills, and Martin Mason, of the Hawkesbury, were selected as the delegates. The aims of the delegation were: "1st., to give full information by answering such questions as may explain the rise and progress of abuses in the colony, and enable His Majesty's Ministers to apply such remedies as in their wisdom may seem meet; 2ndly., to assure His Majesty's Ministers that the settlers had neither fore-knowledge, act or part, in what was done on the 26th day of January last, and that their signatures were extorted under threats, terrors and menaces; 3rdly., to pray that sufficient force may be sent out to reinstate" Bligh in his government and to "take such measures with the guilty as may prevent a repetition of the like acts of rebellion."<sup>23</sup>

The trip to England of the delegation did not eventuate. Instead a petition was drawn up, signed by twenty-five\* settlers and sent to Lord Castlereagh. It claimed that "a more proper person than His Excellency, Governor Bligh, could not have been found, who, by his most salutary orders put a stop to the bartering of spirits, and the strolling dealers who were generally employed by our trading officers, suppressing extortions and the Colonial cash notes, the drawers of which were making a trade of them, by charging from 25 to 40 per cent., whenever any of the holders of such bills presented them for consolidation. Your Lordship will be well aware that these and similar regulations were of the greatest service to the industrious, whilst they struck at the very vitals of that monopoly and extortion which had so long reigned in the colony, by which many of the officers and leading men had enriched themselves to the ruin of the inhabitants in general." This, they told Castlereagh, was the cause of the rebellion with which they had had nothing to do. The Colony was in confusion, farmers could not get cash for their grain, 2000 acres less were under wheat than the previous year, convict labor was being monopolised by the officers. They prayed for the reinstatement of Bligh so that "our prosperous state may be happily restored."<sup>24</sup>

\* The note was added that hundreds more signatures could have been obtained but for the "system of terror" reigning.

One of those most active in opposition to Johnston and Macarthur was George Suttor. He had been to the fore in organising meetings of the settlers and in collecting signatures to the various petitions and addresses. In November, 1808, he refused to attend a general muster ordered by Foveaux and was brought to trial for writing the latter a letter "containing contumelious expressions." He would not recognise the legality of the court that was trying him and refused to plead. "I deny the legality of this Court," he said; "you may do with myself as you please; my unfortunate wife and family I leave to the mercy of God, until peace shall be restored in the colony. I have nothing more to say." Pressed again to plead, he again denied the Court's legality, saying: "My allegiance is due to Governor Bligh, and Governor Bligh alone; and every drop of blood within my veins prevents me from ever acknowledging the legality of this Court." He was adjudged guilty and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine of one shilling.<sup>25</sup>

On July 28, 1808, Lt.-Colonel Foveaux, second in command of the Corps, who had been on leave in England, arrived in Sydney. Bligh immediately appealed to him to suppress the rebellion and reinstate him. Foveaux however, continued the revolutionary regime with himself as Lieutenant-Governor. He tried to induce Bligh to return to England. Bligh refused and appealed to Paterson, Commanding Officer of the Corps, then Lieutenant-Governor at Port Dalrymple. But Paterson, who had thought it better for his health to remain in Van Diemen's Land when acquainted by Johnston with the rebellion, was not to be changed from that opinion by an appeal from the vice-regal prisoner in Sydney after Johnston's superior and his own second-in-command had decided to continue the rebel regime. He would, he replied, await orders from England, whither he advised Bligh to go.

It was not till the following January, nearly a year after the rebellion, that Paterson arrived in Sydney on H.M.S. "Porpoise." On January 30, Bligh was taken from Government House and confined in two rooms at the barracks, with three sentries to watch over him. Before a week of such confinement had passed, Bligh signed an agreement to leave for England, Paterson agreeing to give him the "Porpoise," to allow him to return to Government House, and to permit any he wished to take to go to England with him. The agreement was broken by both sides. Paterson refused to allow Palmer to go with Bligh. The latter, on the other hand, had never intended to keep faith with rebels.

Once on board the "Porpoise" he arrested its acting-commander, pointed his guns at and ordered the "Admiral Gambier" not to take on board Johnston or any of the other rebels he named, and issued a proclamation\* declaring the Corps in a state of mutiny. A reply to this was given in a proclamation by Pater-son, on March 19, threatening to deal with any who held "com-munication or correspondence" with Bligh as seditious persons.

Bligh made his way to the Derwent settlement, where David Collins was Lieutenant-Governor. Collins received him and acknowledged his authority until he received Paterson's pro-clamation. He then repudiated Bligh and refused to allow him to read a fresh proclamation. A small war followed. Collins prohibited the sending of supplies to Bligh and punished those who defied the prohibition. Bligh blockaded the port and got his supplies from incoming ships. He remained in Tasmanian waters till news came of the arrival of Governor Macquarie, when he sailed for Sydney, arriving there on January 17, 1810.

8.—MACQUARIE.—The term of Colonel Lachlan Macquarie as Governor of New South Wales covers one of the important forma-tive periods in our country's history. In wealth, population and extent of area its progress was remarkable. Macquarie was Governor from January 1, 1810, till December 1, 1821. During that period the population grew from between 11,000 and 12,000\*\* to 38,778.† Port duties in 1810 amounted to about £8000; when Macquarie left they were nearly £30,000 a year. In March, 1810, there were 12,442 cattle, 35,888 sheep and 1,134 horses in New South Wales. The cattle had increased to 102,939, the sheep to 290,158 and the horses to 4,564, by October 1821. Macquarie found the colony practically confined to the county of Cumber-land. Beyond that there were settlements at Norfolk Island, Newcastle and Van Diemen's Land. By the end of his term, however, there were settlements at various points up to Port Macquarie in the north, to the Illawarra district in the south, while, to the west, the mountains had been crossed and settle-ment had been made beyond Bathurst.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the charac-ter of the colony was changing—its population was still pre-dominantly convict, but the free portion was becoming more and more important and was being actuated by aspirations towards democracy and self-government.

\* For publishing this proclamation, Palmer and Hook were sentenced to fines of £50 each and imprisonment, the former for three months, the latter for one month.

\*\* 11,950 in March, 1810. † In October, 1821.

Macquarie came out with instructions to send Johnston home under close arrest, to have Macarthur tried before a Criminal Court, to send home the New South Wales Corps and all its officers, to restore all officials removed by the rebel regime, to refuse to be bound by trials held or land grants made since the arrest of Bligh and to reinstate Bligh temporarily. This last Macquarie was not able to do, as Bligh was away waging his war on Collins in Tasmania. Macarthur and Johnston had already gone to England. Macquarie had with him the 1st Battalion of his own regiment, the 73rd, to replace the New South Wales Corps, which was to be thenceforth known as the 102nd. Ellis Bent came out as the new Judge-Advocate.

The instructions of the new Governor in regard to the liquor traffic were similar to those given to his predecessors: to destroy it.

Instead of killing the rum monopoly, however, Macquarie strengthened it, widened the area of its devastation and nar-rowed its base. Hunter had agreed to the creation of a monopoly by the officers,\* civil and military, of the colony. Macquarie gave a monopoly to three men!—three "opulent" contractors. In this respect his policy revealed the qualities of great flexi-bility and accommodation. For his first plan was to allow the free import of "good spirits under a high duty of not less than three or four shillings a gallon."<sup>51</sup> He allowed the private barter of spirits for other commodities to continue—himself buying land with that pernicious medium of exchange!<sup>52</sup> And now, in direct opposition to his instructions and his own first plans, he granted a monopoly to import rum to three of his "opulent" friends.

The monopoly was granted in payment of a new hospital that Macquarie saw was badly needed. Tenders were called for its building in May, 1810, and Messrs. Wentworth, Blaxcell and Riley were given the contract, which was signed on November 6. By its terms the builders were to be paid by being allowed to import 45,000 gallons of spirits, while no other permits to import spirits were to be granted before December 31, 1813. In addition, they were to receive 80 oxen for slaughter of not less than 450 lb. each (estimated value £2700), 20 convicts for three years (value of their labor, £1200) and 20 draught oxen on loan (value of their labor, £300). As it was estimated that the rum would cost £31,500\*\* and sell for £45,000 and the building of the hospital

\* See above, p. 218.

\*\* Including import duty of 3/- a gallon, which they were given six months to pay.

cost £18,212, a little figuring shows that, on paper, the contractors "hoped" to lose £512 on the transaction. But Blaxcell, Riley and Wentworth were not of such stuff as philanthropists are made of. Before the hospital was finished the small loss had grown into a huge profit.

Twice during 1812 the contractors complained that Macquarie had broken the contract—firstly by allowing masters of ships to pay for their refitting with spirits and secondly by his own paying of workman in spirits in excess of the amount allowed him by the contract. Macquarie admitted the breaches and, in compensation, added 15,000 gallons to the 45,000 the contractors were allowed to import and extended their monopoly by twelve months. According to J. Laurie, the contractors' agent, who gave evidence before Commissioner Bigge, his three employers made £10,000 profit each! The hospital was reported completed in March, 1816, and Francis Howard Greenway (of whom more anon) and two others were appointed a committee of survey. This committee condemned certain portions of the hospital and the contractors had to make alterations which were not completed until July, 1817.<sup>29</sup> Commissioner Bigge later described the hospital\* as in a "state of rapid decay from its bad construction."

The building of the hospital had repercussions far more devastating than the transference of £30,000 into the pockets of the contracting triumvirate. They imported at least 40,000 gallons more than the contract allowed them—the Governor considering himself adequately compensated for the breach, this time on their side, by the increase in import duties.<sup>30</sup> Spirits sold at 30/- a gallon while the monopoly lasted and at 17/- when it ceased! One of the contractors, D'Arcy Wentworth, was Superintendent of Police and he had a say in the granting of licenses to public houses. There were 31 in 1810—but 60 in 1811, 117 in 1812, 93 in 1813 and 110 in 1814!<sup>31</sup> The monopoly ended—and, in 1815, the licenses dropped to 85! There were not too many, said the Police Superintendent—they "were good for the trade and good for the Police Fund."<sup>32</sup> D'Arcy Wentworth was finding highway robbery far more profitable in New South Wales than on Finchley Common!<sup>33</sup>

\* The hospital is still (1937), in part, standing. It was constructed in three blocks on the east side of Macquarie Street. The south block was later used as the mint and is now doomed to destruction. The central block stood where now stands the Sydney hospital and was demolished in 1879. The northern block forms the central part of the N.S.W. parliament building.

Drunkenness and profligacy increased. Brawling and rioting were the ordinary scenes at inns and ale houses, licensed and unlicensed. The regulations governing the whole traffic were inspired by the interests of the brewers of beer and the importers of spirits. Prosecution of infringers of the regulations or of those whose houses were the regular rendezvous of debauchees, drunkards and criminals was frowned upon by a Superintendent of Police who looked upon Sydney with the eyes of the militarist who once exclaimed of London, "What a city to sack!" Prosecution would not be good for the trade—or the traders. Men, and women, were face to face with an open, enticing and unashamed temptation, convicts found it next to impossible to break away from old habits, workmen were forced to drink,\* the young generation of Australians risked defilement\*\*—but profits rolled in to the Rileys, the Wentworths, the Blaxcells and—government! During the rule of Governor Macquarie the annual consumption of imported spirits was about five gallons per head. A point of comparison is furnished by the reported consumption of spirits in England in 1830: six-sevenths of a gallon per head!<sup>34</sup>

9.—EMANCIPISTS AND EXCLUSIVES.—"I was very much surprised and Concerned, on my Arrival here," wrote Macquarie

\* Dr Lang has something to say of the effects on drinking of the hospital contract: "The wages of the artificers and labourers, and the prices of the material employed in the erection of the hospital, were, agreeably to the usual practice of the colony at the time, paid half in money and half in property, i.e., in tea, sugar, ardent spirits, wine, clothing, or any other article, either of necessity or of luxury, which the employer happened to have in his store, and which was uniformly charged to the labourer at an enormous percentage above its real value, or even above its market-price in the colony. Determined, however, that not a shilling of the money-half of the wages should ultimately find its way into any other pockets than their own, the worthy contractors erected one or more public-houses in the immediate vicinity of the place, where their numerous convict and emancipated convict mechanics and labourers received that moiety of the wages, doubtless, to induce the miserable wretches, whose inability to withstand such temptation may well be conceived, to expend the last farthing of their earnings in the purchase of their exorbitantly priced liquor. In providing, therefore, for the physical health of the colony, Governor Macquarie was actually over-spreading the whole surface of its body politic, in a moral and spiritual sense, with wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores, which surpassed the skill of the ablest surgeon to bind up, or the efficacy of the most powerful ointment to mollify."—History of New South Wales, p. 142. (His emphasis.)

\*\* But the young Australians, it would appear were remarkably sober—according to evidence given before the Committee on Transportation (1812), the Committee on Gaols (1819) and to Macquarie's despatches.—See Phillips, p. 108.

to Castlereagh on April 30, 1810, "at the extraordinary and illiberal Policy I found had been adopted by all the Persons who had preceded me in Office respecting those Men who had been originally sent out to this Country as Convicts, but who, by long Habits of Industry and total Reformation of Manners, had not only become respectable, but by many degrees the most Useful Members of the Community. Those Persons have never been Countenanced or received into Society. I have, nevertheless, taken upon myself to adopt a new Line of Conduct, Conceiving that Emancipation, when United with Rectitude and long-trying good Conduct, should lead a Man back to that rank in Society which he had forfeited."\* All of that was a most estimable object—if it meant the implementing of plans to give men and women whose terms had expired or who had been emancipated the opportunity, the means and the encouragement to begin life anew. But, whatever Macquarie may have thought he meant, what his announced intentions led to in practice was the giving of excellent opportunities to wealthy emancipists to become even more wealthy. He gave his support to, and threw in his lot with, the wealthy grafters, the slick traders and cunning adventurers. His "useful member of the community" was he who had become opulent. "Opulent" was his favorite adjective. He chose men who were opulent. He began his "rehabilitation" with former convicts who had become opulent and endeavored to convince people that he was concerned with straightening out the lives of those who had strayed. He chose, to begin with, the "opulent" Mr. Thompson, the "opulent" Mr. Wentworth, the "opulent" Mr. Simeon Lord. These he admitted to his table—for "they had long conducted themselves with the greatest propriety, and I find them at all times ready to come forward in the most liberal manner to the assistance of government"\*\*\*—as we have just seen!

Macquarie came to Sydney and found it a ramshackle and dilapidated township. He was determined to make it a city. He had some ideas about the necessity for planning and desired to erect buildings in keeping with what he thought Sydney should be like. He urged that an architect be sent out from England to lay out the city and to plan the desired buildings. But he had to contend with the government in England, which was concerned, not with the beautifying of a convict town 12,000 miles away, but with cutting down expenses. "I trust," wrote Lord

\* Historical Records of Australia, VII, pp. 275-6.

\*\* Historical Records of Australia, VII, pp. 275-6.

Liverpool to him on July 26, 1811, "that no public buildings whatsoever have been commenced, the construction of which was not indispensably required for the Public Service, and that you have directed your utmost vigilance to prevent unnecessary expenditure in the execution of the works now in progress."<sup>35</sup> We have to commiserate somewhat with Macquarie who was sincere in his desire to dignify his capital—although his conscience was easily stretched to consider a building "indispensably required" if only to provide a background for the inscription of his name and had a pleasing propensity to casting his blind eye to any frantic signals from England that he wished to ignore. The parsimony of Downing Street helps to explain his Rum Hospital contract—which indirectly forced the people of Sydney to pay for their own hospital and at the same time brought money into the government coffers, in the shape of duties, fees and fines. We have perhaps to commiserate with him the more—or, if not with him, with New South Wales and public morality—because of those with whom he was associated and who clung to him and his administration like so many leeches. He could not have foreseen that the Wentworth gang's paper loss of a few hundreds would grow into thirty thousand profit!

For most of the operations of contract-building during Macquarie's administration the Americans have since invented a descriptive term: racketeering! The wealthy—or "opulent"—traders of Sydney saw the Bligh winter of their discontent made glorious summer by this Macquarie sun—beneath whose comforting rays they were determined to make all the hay they could. As most of them were emancipists, or expirees, Macquarie could and did imagine that he was pursuing his pet theory, that New South Wales was a settlement for convicts in which none else had a right, and was helping to rehabilitate those convicts who had once again become free men. In reality he was helping to lay the foundations of huge fortunes for rich emancipist families which later desired, with justice to their new sense of respectability, to forget, and have others forget, the exploits of their founders and the origins of their wealth. In order to "get on," under Macquarie, the three most efficacious traits for an emancipist to possess were unscrupulousness, "opulence" and self-assertion. Conversely, the biggest handicaps were honesty, poverty and modesty. All this is best illustrated in the career of Francis Howard Greenway, Sydney's convict architect. Greenway was born round about 1780 in Gloucester and was, therefore, in his early thirties when he arrived in Sydney on the



"General Hewitt," in February, 1814. Convicted, according to Commissioner Bigge, of concealing effects at his bankruptcy, he had been sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted to transportation. He came to Sydney with an earnest recommendation from ex-Governor Phillip and, being an architect, was welcomed by Macquarie, who was glad of the opportunity to use him. He was given a ticket of leave and the position of Civil Architect as Assistant to the Inspector of Public Works at the princely salary of 3/- a day.<sup>30</sup> He had a vision of a new Sydney and he understood something of the graft that was rampant. "An elegant and classical pile of building," he told Macquarie, "may often be carried into effect by an able architect possessing integrity for a less sum of money than the meanest production of pretenders, whose only object is to gain as much as they can by those who are weak enough to trust them."<sup>37</sup> One of his first tasks was the condemnation of the Rum Hospital.

The new Civil Architect was now in a position in which, had he been unscrupulous, he could have accumulated a fortune. The fact that he died poor is proof that he lacked the three qualities that made for success in the New South Wales of Macquarie's day.\* He inspected and condemned. Condemned the lay-out of Sydney—wanted a Building Act, sewers, drains. Inspected the gaol and factory at Parramatta. Everywhere he went, he saw the slimy trails of corruption, rum, inefficiency, ignorance, plain thievery. A parsonage was to be built at Parramatta. The estimates varied: Greenway's, £2000; the contractor's, £5000. The contractor actually built it for £2500! In the same place a female factory was needed. Three tenderers wanted from £10,000 to £12,000 for the job. The successful tender, based on Greenway's figures, was £4800! One of course, made enemies—"those who," said Greenway, "would feel much more at ease could they remove a man who will not join with them to plunder the public as well as government."

He built the Macquarie Lighthouse—a piece of work "very creditable to the taste of Mr. Greenway," said Commissioner Bigge. He built the Hyde Park Convict Barracks—the work was done by the convicts under his supervision. He treated his men as human beings, hated flogging and substituted persuasion and humanity for it. His reward for the Barracks\*\* (begun March,

\* "The Governor," says Mr. Harvard, "unless served by a man of integrity and thorough technical knowledge, was powerless. . . . Greenway, had he been unprincipled, was in a position to acquire a fortune. It is not difficult to understand why he did not only remain indigent but was thwarted in the execution of his art."—R.A.H.S.J., Vol. 22.

\*\* This building had sentence of death passed on it by a vandalic gov-

1817, and finished May, 1819), was an absolute pardon. Then he had plans for a harbor bridge and for a Gothic cathedral where St. Andrew's now stands. But Commissioner Bigge thought Sydney was ornamented enough. But he built St. James's Church\* and the Governor's new stables which, in our generation, have been considered good enough for the people's conservatorium of music.

In the building of St. Matthew's, Windsor, Greenway again fell foul of the grafters. Tenders were called for the building of the church in August, 1817. Henry Kitchin, whom Bathurst had sent out as a settler and as one who could be of help to Macquarie, "having been regularly educated as a Surveyor and Architect,"<sup>38</sup> was given the contract. He was backed by William Cox, a maker of bricks, and John Piper. Kitchin's price was £400 above another estimate—and he received £400 before the foundation stone was laid. The work began. Workers engaged on it began to talk about the materials that were being used. The walls would not bear the roof, they said. Macquarie sent Greenway to inspect. He reported that things could hardly be worse, but suggested the sending of an independent committee. That committee condemned the whole job—mortar and bricks (over 100,000 of the latter—Cox's bricks—were rejected) the walls were pulled down and the foundations taken up! The govern-

ment in 1937. At the time of writing, however, December, 1937, it has been given a temporary reprieve.

\* It is altogether owing to the visit of a Czechoslovakian author to Australia in 1934-5 that a memorial tablet to the memory of Greenway was placed in St. James's Church in 1937. Until then there was nothing to commemorate him—except his work. In 1934, however, Egon Erwin Kisch came to Australia as a delegate to an Anti-War Congress. He was refused admittance by the Federal government but did land nevertheless. (For full story see Julian Smith: "On the Pacific Front"). While here he visited St. James's and, when he returned to Europe, had this to say of it in a book he wrote about his trip: "St. James's is a beautiful building; the slender tower relieving the severity and massive effect of the whole; and not by seniority but by simplicity does Anglican St. James's put in the shade Catholic St. Mary's that has been built on the opposite side of the square—a million pound copy of cathedrals in Europe. . . . Architect and master builder of St. James's was a convict. Francis Greenway by name, who is the designer of the best buildings in Sydney. . . . Is it necessary to add that among the countless memorial tablets in this abbey there is none to the memory of this master builder? But, then, he was a convict."—In an article in the "Sydney Morning Herald," for March 2, 1937, Prof. Charteris, after quoting the above, had this to say: "This reproach is just. . . . Beyond all question, Francis Greenway was a genius. . . . I am permitted, however, to add that Mr. Kisch's observations have already borne fruit. The Rev. Dr. Micklem, the rector, and his wardens are taking steps to erect on the outer wall of the church a memorial tablet to the architect genius and to the convict bricklayers who worked under him. Thank you, Mr. Kisch."

ment lost £900. Greenway completed the church with day labor.<sup>39</sup>

Macquarie had been instructed to grant land to emancipated convicts according to a definite scale.<sup>40</sup> He carried out his instructions, but the practice gave very different results from what had been expected. Many convicts were unfitted as farmers and readily sold their land—often for a mere pittance or for spirits. The granting of land to ne'er-do-wells was a god-send to those rapacious individuals who were blessed with the God-given capacity for "getting on." Nor was it necessary for one to be a ne'er-do-well in order, by losing to them one's farm, to benefit the canny ones. There were such things as mortgages and debts, failures of crops and the competition of bigger farmers, that were equally as favorable to the few with "ambition" as were improvidence and lack of ability. Many emancipists were called by the lure of possessing property to settle on the land; few, by the exigencies of their economic environment, were chosen. Many started out—settled on the Hawkesbury and the Nepean, at Campbelltown and Appin<sup>41</sup>—but the race was not to the swift or the strong!<sup>42</sup> Later, many of them were to become a law unto themselves and seek a living by preying on the land and its successful settlers—a game in which the prize was to both the swift and the strong.

The day of many of these was to come for a brief span after the barrier of the Blue Mountains was broken down in 1813. They could then get across and be beyond the reach of soldiers, police and grafters. That barrier was a desirable one for the early Governors but, with the growth of the Colony, it had to be broken. More land had to be opened up. Once the mountains were crossed exploration of the interior advanced rapidly. Pre-

\* "I had once occasion," writes Dr. Lang (History, p. 143), "to inspect a chart in the Surveyor-General's office, to ascertain something relative to a grant of land belonging to a reputable Scotchman, who had unfortunately fallen into pecuniary difficulties in the colony. On glancing at the chart, I observed that the land was bounded in one direction by a whole colony of small settlers, or proprietors of farms of thirty or forty acres each; but in afterwards adverting to the circumstance in conversation with the landholder, and asking him what sort of a neighborhood he had got, I was somewhat surprised to find that he had no neighbours at all in that direction, and that what seemed on the Surveyor-General's chart a number of small farms, was merely a portion of the large and undivided estate of a colonial proprietor, who had been a merchant in Sydney during the government of Major-General Macquarie, and who had purchased in the way of his business, and in all probability for ardent spirits, a number of the Governor's orders for small grants of land, which, it seems, he had kept in abeyance till their united acres amounted to an extent which it was worth while for him to select in that particular locality."

viously to 1813 exploration had been limited to the coastal areas. Phillip himself was the colony's first explorer. Discoverer of Port Jackson, he had described it as the "finest harbour in the world," although he was fresh from Rio de Janeiro, its great rival in the Southern Hemisphere.

Having established his colony on one of the coves of this harbor, he lost very little time in seeking knowledge about the new country. His many expeditions were made out of natural curiosity and interest and in order to find good soil for cultivation. He had first sent King to Norfolk Island, and, on March 2, 1788, he himself had set out for Broken Bay. The aim of both expeditions was the same: to seek land "capable of cultivation and of maintaining a few families."<sup>43</sup> On Broken Bay he found "some good situations where land might be cultivated," and he described the Bay as "the finest piece of water I ever saw." He named Pittwater after the Prime Minister. Just over a month later he explored the coast to the north of Port Jackson and discovered Lake Narrabeen. On other expeditions he journeyed towards the Blue Mountains, discovered the site of Parramatta, again visited the north coast and paid a visit to Botany Bay.

Governor Hunter also was keenly interested in exploration. It was under him that the explorations along the coast by Bass and Flinders were made: both discovering the Illawarra district in the "Tom Thumb" in 1797, Bass exploring the coast further south towards the end of the same year, and in the beginning of 1798, and proving, by reaching Western Port, that Tasmania was an island—all in an open boat, both together again circumnavigating Tasmania in 1798, and Flinders exploring Moreton Bay and the Queensland coast in 1799.\* During Hunter's term as Governor, also, the Hunter River was discovered by Lieutenant Shortland.

As the settlement grew the desire to find a way across the Blue Mountains became strong. Their very inaccessibility made their conquest more desirable—there was mystery, and in that mystery a promise of rich and fertile lands beyond. The early governors did not regret the barrier of the mountains which served as an impassable wall for their convict prison. To many convicts the mountains seemed to offer a way of escape. Only let us cross the mountains, thought many of them, and we shall find a delectable and inhabited country. Beyond the

\* Collins.

\*\* For Flinders, see also Chap. III.

blue of the mountains lay freedom. Many sought it—and many perished in the attempts to find it.

There were many attempts made to cross the mountains, amongst them being those of Captain Paterson in 1793, Henry Hacking in 1794, Bass in 1796, and George Cayley in 1804. Governor King, after this last attempt, said that to try to cross "the impassable chasms would be as chimerical as useless."\* Mann tells us that in 1807 he also tried to find a way across, but he soon gave up and decided to "leave the task of exploring them to some person more qualified mentally as well as physically for the arduous undertaking."\*\* The Frenchman, Barrallier, an Ensign in the N.S.W. Corps, also made an attempt.

The big drought of 1813 made it essential to conquer the "impassable chasms." The pastoralists and cattle-breeders were looking round for new pastures. Among these were two brothers, Gregory and John Blaxland, who had come to New South Wales in 1806, and who had become wealthy as breeders of cattle. It was Gregory who set out to find a way across the mountains. With W. C. Wentworth, son of D'Arcy Wentworth, and Lieutenant Lawson, formerly of the N.S.W. Corps, he set out on the task. Previous explorers had followed the valleys only to be blocked by the cliffs. Blaxland led his party "straight up the side of the ridge that overhangs Penrith, and deliberately kept along the top of the hills as due west as he could, avoiding every gully, and so piercing the heart of the tableland itself."† After seventeen days they were looking down "upon a grassy, well-watered valley, now called the Vale of Clwyd, stretching far to the westward."‡ A few years later, the youngster of the trio was to describe the achievement in a poem in a competition at Cambridge:—

As a meteor shoots athwart the night  
The boundless campaign burst upon our sight,  
Till, nearer seen, the beauteous landscape grew,  
Opening like Canaan on rapt Israel's view.

Surveyor G. W. Evans was sent on the trail of the successful explorers when they returned, and he made his way to beyond where Bathurst is to-day. Convicts were soon building a road along the track blazed by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth, and, in 1815, Governor Wentworth was rolling along it in his carriage. Over the mountains he laid the foundations of Bathurst. New South Wales had burst its mountainous bonds.

\* Quoted in Scott, p. 77.

\*\* Mann, p. 31.

† Jose, p. 44.

‡ Lang, Vol. I, p. 163.

## ERRATA

We have to apologise for the extensive list of errata and we thank correspondents who pointed some of them out. If we have missed any we would welcome being acquainted with the fact. Obvious literal errors are not included in the list.

**Part 1.**—P. 8, 7th line from bottom for **incredulity** read **credulity**; p. 14, 19th line: for **de** read **da**; p. 16, 4th line from bottom: for **VIII** read **VII**; p. 23, 5th line, for **Galvana** read **Galvano**; p. 27, 21st line, for **Alvoro** read **Alvaro**; p. 29, 4th line from bottom, for the second **and** read **the**; p. 31, 6th line from bottom, p. 33, 5th line, p. 35 10th line, p. 36, 13th line: for **Vera** read **Santa**; p. 36, 18th line, for **Tabar** read **Tobar** or **Tovar**; p. 40, 27th line, and elsewhere, for **Duyphen** read **Duyfken**; p. 42, 1st column, 12th line from bottom, insert a before **Columbus**; p. 43, 1st column, 28th line, for **Honduis's** read **Hondius's**; p. 48, heading for **Terra Australis** read **The European Background**; p. 53, 2nd line from bottom, for **ships** read **ships'**; p. 76, 27th line, for **Von** read **Van**; p. 80, 26th line, for **Viamingh** read **Vlamingh**.

**Part 2.**—P. 81, line 23, for **Portuguese** read **Dutch**; same page, line 24, for **Dutch**, read **Portuguese**; p. 106, 5th line, omit **was**; p. 107, 4th line from bottom, for **Bonnet** read **Bouvet**; p. 132, lines 5 and 14, for "**Sirius**" read "**Supply**"; p. 155, line 15, omit **\***; p. 155, omit second line from bottom; p. 155, after **contempt** read **"**.

**Part 3.**—P. 171, 9th line from bottom: insert comma after **chains**; p. 176, heading, for **Goose Off the Common**, read **Officers And Gentlemen**.

**Part 4.**—P. 255, 17th line: omit the first comma.

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