

"LAUNCESTON EXAMINER"

BACKWARD GLANCES by G. P. (Saturday, 5 November, 1892)

On the occasion of a recent visit to Hobart, as I wandered over the scenes of my childhood, I found myself mentally exclaiming against the Vandalism of Progress, which had improved places out of all recognition, and in some places had obliterated landmarks once so familiar, and still well remembered. Cold, unenthusiastic utilitarianism had crushed out all sentiment, I thought of the time when I had been accustomed to walk along the pebbly beach extending from the Commissariat (now Bonded) Stores to Murray-street, and of the difficulty experienced at a high state of the tide in passing along dry shod, as the waters dashed against the fence which skirted the foot of the hill at the back of old Government House—of old Government House itself occupied successively by Governors Sorell, Arthur, Franklin, Wilmot, and Denison; embowered and almost hidden in a sylvan growth of blue gum trees and native shrubs, its upper and lower piazzas festooned and secluded by creepers and trailing plants, and its old paling fence barring the further extension of Elizabeth street. Now that street has cut its way through the site of the old weather boarded vice-regal residence, which no longer exists, the trees and shrubs up rooted and burnt, and the hill on which it stood cut down and thrown into the river to form wharves and docks.

Shade of—no, we will not perpetuate the offensive cognomen—shade of Rev. Robert Knopwood, whose kindly shake of the hand and pat on the head in 1829, has given rise sometimes to the fanciful conceit that I must be somewhat of a link in the history of the colony between the quarter of a century that preceded, and the more than half a century that has passed away since. Kind, genial, and at times anti-clerically jovial little old gentleman! Where is the prettily situated cottage on the side of the Battery Hill, looking northwards, once occupied by you, and the picturesque garden sloping down towards the pebbly beach? Even in your time the clanking of chains was heard all day for years, proceeding from a large gang of some hundreds of prisoners engaged in cutting down the verdant slope, and hurling it into the river to form wharves. There was the old hulk moored close to the shore during the day, and when the men were safe on board at night, warped out some 60 or 100 yards—a prison, around which the waters of the cove formed an impassable moat. And now, where the hill, the cottage, and garden once stood, a row of substantial stone stores has been erected close under tile scarped cliffs, and the pebbly beach, and the sandy beach further on, where the whaleboats were drawn up in readiness for the signal shout 'There she spouts', are things of the past. Forgive, venerable shade, the liberty I have taken, and now R I P.

What is this? another shade? Yes, an old man cometh up. Very active, short in stature, clad in nether garments that reach to the knees; in summer wearing

stockings of purest white, low shoes with a broad silver buckle on each instep; in winter, his legs incased in high top boots, brilliant with Day and Martin's best polish, a coat cut away in front, vest reaching to the hips, frilled shirt front, high stock, and black beaver—he passes before my mental vision 'a fine old English gentleman, one of the olden time.' Issuing from this trimly kept garden at the corner of Macquarie and Molle streets, I recognise him as John Fawkner, the father of the founder of Port Phillip.

'Ah ! talk of "giving an inch and taking an ell," see how the airy visions troop along. Colonel Arthur, mounted upon a shadowy steed, stern and sphynx-like : beside him rides a gay young officer, his *aide-de-camp*; Judge Peddor (eagle-eyed); Judge Montagu and his brother Otto, the barrister; Joseph Hone (bland and benignant); Captain Montagu (Colonial Secretary) ; Gellibrand the elder, and his unfortunate son (late Attorney-General) ; T. G. Gregson; followed by his antagonist Jellicoe, on crutches; Burnett (sheriff) ; A. F. Kemp (*noli me tangere*); Collicott (postmaster) etc., etc. Magistrates—J. Lakeland, P. A. Mulgrave(single-eyed) ; James Gordon, Josiah Spode, N. Wood, etc. — Revs. W. Bedford and James Norman (England); P. Conolly (R.C.), Archibald Macarthur (Scotch); Benjamin Carvosso (Wesleyan). *Medical*—Drs. J. Scott, Crowther, Westbrook, Seccombe, and Bryant. *Journalists*—A. Bent, Robert Lathrop Murray, Dr. Ross, H. Melville, J. C. Macdougall, and Gilbert Robertson. But see, what a quarrelsome lot this last is! There go Andrew and Lathrop pitching into the doctor, and the latter good-humouredly defends himself till Gilbert rushes in, dignifying the doctor by the name of 'Slop,' and spitting venom as black as his face. See the doctor is fairly aroused now, and knocking the villainous set-up type into 'pye,' is felled by someone to the ground by a blow from a walking-stick. Pass on, pass on.

Thick and fast swarm past the visionary throng. Who is that little old man, infirm and stooping, clad in a long tweed coat, crowned with a broad brimmed yellow-coloured beaver, the hinder brim resting on his shoulders, from whose capacious pockets peep forth suspicious-looking long-folded papers? With his long nose, close set, sparkling and listless grey eyes, and tongue darting out between his toothless gums, and rapidly swooping round and moistening his sunken lips—he moves about amid the throng as if scenting his prey. Like a bloodhound on the track, he dodges in and out of the crowd; then comes the fatal spring and the ominous tap on the shoulder. Ah ! M—it is no use trying to evade your fate. Murphy 'the tapper' has come into personal contact with you, and with him you must go or be considered a prisoner at large. Yes, I recognise all your familiar faces, and could fill page after page with reminiscence, anecdote, and incident. But time and space are limited and the grave is sacred—so Presto! vanish!

Where am I now? On Battery Point. How often have I roamed over its bald,

but by no means smooth crown, unencumbered then by windmill, church, or dwelling—down to the grove of black wattles overlooking Sandy Bay, either in solitary musing or in the company of my schoolmates seeking for the exuding gum. Now the grove is swept away, and the sylvan site, and the bald stony crown are intersected by streets and covered with buildings. And thus I went on mentally persecuted by the recurrence of an old song heard in my youth:- Then were the days for games and gambols, Oxford street was covered with brambles, Hedges, ditches, ponds of water Now there's nothing but bricks and mortar. Heigho! heigho! one can but grieve For the good old days of Adam and Eve.

Utilitarianism versus Sentiment. So it has been, so it is, aye, and so it ought to be. And thus, rousing myself from the unhealthy reverie, and by a transition as rapid and violent in its contrast as those experienced in our sleeping dreams, I pass on to a more sober and rational mode of description. I am standing before the stone building at the lower end of Macquarie street, originally erected as a market, but now known as 'The Exhibition Building,' and recalling the time when it was a vacant marshy square plot then styled 'The Old Market Place.' (The buildings at the bottom of Murray street, which were erected about this time (1830-1) were known as 'The New Market.' (Afterwards the names were reversed.)

This square was ornamented with scores of mounds, the city's scavengings deposited there for the purpose of filling it up; there lay decomposing numerous specimens of the departed canine and feline races, and from the fetid slime and decay arose pestilential exhalations that were any thing but savory and agreeable. In winter time, after heavy rain, the conical tips of these mounds resembled islets in a miniature lake. At the angle of Campbell and Macquarie streets stood the stocks occupied at times by men, aye, and women too, who, with their feet made fast therein, were lazily basking in the rays of it summer's noontide sun, or enjoying (?) the genial rains and frosts and snows of winter.

Until a comparatively recent date a high brick wall extended from the (then) Waterloo Inn at the angle of Davey and Murray streets, Hobart, round the corner of, and along Macquarie street as far as the old Derwent Bank; from this point turning at right angles easterly, and again northerly to the point of commencement. This wall enclosed the area now occupied by several substantial stone buildings (of which the Savings Bank forms one) in Murray street, and ending in Macquarie street at the bookbinding establishment of Messrs Walch Bros, standing forward, however, twelve feet nearer to the foot path in Macquarie street than the present line of buildings. In the year 1828—and how long before that date I know not, another brick wall running north and south, divided the enclosed area into two parts, the entrance to each being from Murray street. That nearest Davey street was by a massive double gate with a

wicket, and led into H. M. Gaol; the other was simply a large door with wicket, opening into what was then known as the Female Factory. In this latter place the female convicts were confined. Colonel Arthur, who arrived here in 1824, and who, when he accepted the government of Van Diemen's Land, had no intention of being a Governor in name only—whose plans were very extensive and far reaching, and whose determination to carry them out fully was not to be thwarted—must have seen at a glance that the place afforded no scope for the exercise of the rigid discipline that he intended to enforce. In the year 1826 it is stated that more than a hundred women were crowded within the limited area of the factory. Those who were undergoing penal sentences were huddled together with those who were eligible for assigned service. Undisciplined, unclassified, and unoccupied, they spent their days in listless idleness, the bad corrupting the better, and all in a state of mind ripened for insubordination and mischief. In June of this year much of this insubordination existed, and on the 10th of that month in consequence of some alarming threats to the Superintendent and his wife (Mr and Mrs Drabble) a commission of enquiry was held, consisting of Joseph Hone; Esq., Roy. W. Bedford, Mr Kerby, and others, which resulted in four of the most outrageous of the women being hand cuffed and placed in confinement in the gaol cells. A few days afterwards a most desperate attempt at escape was made by the women, who succeeded in removing several bricks from the wall fronting on Macquarie street, and the inside of the walls that faced the streets had to be lined with thick boards to prevent further attempts. Not many days after the sitting of the commission above referred to, Mr Bedford on again visiting the factory was savagely attacked as soon as he entered the yard by a large mob of women who, with demoniacal howls and yells subjected him to the most gross and outrageous personal maltreatment. (To be continued.)

BACKWARD GLANCES by G. P. No. 2. (Saturday, 12 November, 1892)

The cause of this bitter and revengeful feeling against the Rev. W. Bedford was to be traced farther back than to the part he took in the late commission. In a few words it may be given, for the subject is a delicate one, and narrated in detail would present a dark picture of the state of society at that time. When Mr Bedford arrived in the colony in 1823, he, was then in the prime of life, entered upon the duties of his chaplaincy with all the zeal and ardour that new position and new responsibilities aroused and inspired. However, in the course of his visitations he soon came into contact with, and was very much shocked at the revelation of the gross immorality that then prevailed. Thinking that to expose it would be sufficient to effect its removal, he waited on the Governor, Colonel Sorell, with a long list of names of the offending parties, including not a few who were in the pay of the Government. The worthy chaplain was good

humouredly snubbed. On the arrival of Colonel Arthur in 1824, Mr Bedford waited on him, and found in that great reformer of abuses and rigid disciplinarian, a ready listener; the result being that a large number of women were disengaged from their unholy associations and sent to the Factory, vowing vengeance on the man who had been the means of their incarceration.

The children of the female convicts, who, from a certain age (I think from seven years old and under) who were allowed to accompany their mother in the transport ships, as well as the waifs born in the colony, were confined with their parents. It became evident that the cramped situation of the Factory was very unfavourable for all purposes of proper government and discipline. The Home Government was sending out more female convicts, until the place became so straitened by the rapid influx, that on the arrival of the female prison ship 'Borneo' in November 1828, temporary accommodation had to be provided for the human cargo in a stockade in the 'Paddock' ( now Government Domain) which for many years afterwards was utilised as a powder magazine.

If the Factory was crowded, then the Gaol must have been more so, for it is recorded that in the year 1826 as many as 200 prisoners were confined therein awaiting trial, a large proportion of that number for capital offences! How they could be crammed into the limited area is a matter for surprise, and yet it seems to have been the normal condition previous to and succeeding this date. The gaol delivery a few months before— viz, December, 1825—had relieved the establishment for a short time; no less than 71 being called up for sentence in one day, 18 of whom were to suffer death. But the Absconders' List, published monthly, showed that more than a hundred runaways were at large, and as apprehensions were daily being made, the relief to the establishment was but of short duration. The gaol at Launceston was in the same crowded condition, insomuch that the prisoners could not all lie down at one time, but had to take turns in lying down and standing up. Picture it, think of it—and the price of soap *six shillings* per pound! (No printer's error: *shillings* is right.)

The necessity for the erection of an Orphan School for the reception and education of the worse than orphaned children who were confined with their mothers in the Factory, and thereby, exposed to all the demoralising influences of their surroundings, occupied and pressed heavily on the mind of the Governor, and was being agitated in the public press. The delay in altering this state of things by the erection of buildings of greater dimensions more fitted for disciplinary purposes was, no doubt, occasioned by the uncertainty which then existed as to where the site of the capital of the colony and seat of government should be located. Brighton had at first been fixed upon, and great expense was incurred in laying the plan of a large town in that district. Streets were pegged out, the positions of public buildings, Gaol, House of Correction, Orphan School, as well as the churches, were surveyed and mapped. A few

small houses were erected, and then the locality was abandoned for what was considered a better site at Elizabeth Town, New Norfolk. Here also a large amount of money, as well as several months' labour was rendered abortive. Neither Brighton nor Elizabeth Town was destined to be the seat of government, which was at last definitely and finally determined should be located at Hobart Town (1826).

Presumably acting on representations made by the Governor to the Home authorities, the former received from the latter in 1826, instructions to commence the erection of buildings suitable for the purposes he had in view. The Factory (I have retained the appellation then in common use, although a meaningless one, inasmuch as no employment of any kind was given to, or enforced on its inmates.) The Factory, then, was to be superseded by an extensive pile of stone buildings at a distance of about a mile and a half from the town up the Hobart Town rivulet. The work was commenced at once. The Gaol was to be substituted for a building on a large scale to be erected at the rear of the (then) Supreme Court, on the site now occupied by the Post Office and a portion of Franklin Square. It was intended to front on to Macquarie street, and the rear to overlook the Cove. The hill on which the gaol was to be erected formed at that time a plateau which extended eastward by a gentle slope, and ended in a rather abrupt descent into the Cove, whose tiny wavelets rippled upon the pebbly beach at its base. In my memory the spot is associated with two events—the proclamation of King William IV in 1830, and its temporary occupation two or three years later by the blacks brought in by Robinson prior to their shipment to Flinder's Island. About 40 years ago—perhaps more—a gang of prisoners working in chains was employed in cutting down the hill to the slope of Murray street, and throwing it into the shallow waters of the Cove to form the present wharves. The state of the times is indicated by the cool announcement 'that the gallows was to be erected at the rear of the gaol in view of the shipping in the Cove.' Why was the 'gallows' mentioned if it were not considered an essential and permanent adjunct to the establishment—which was very near the fact—instead of a temporary erection to meet an extraordinary and terrible necessity! while the fact that to the seamen in the Cove was to be accorded the privilege of sharing, with the demoralised crowds on land, the pleasurable excitement of witnessing the mental and physical agonies of their fellow men, shows how familiarity with the most awful scenes of suffering tends to blunt the appreciation of their horrors. Fortunately for Hobart Town the whole scheme collapsed; for when the women were removed to their new quarters in 1829 the Factory area was thrown into the gaol, and the accommodation was found ample enough for more than a quarter of a century thereafter. 'Bisdee's Hotel,' as the place was facetiously styled, was neither to be sold nor let. (Mr Bisdee was gaoler at the time, but

about the year 1833 or 1834 he was succeeded by Mr Capon, the chief district-constable.)

The King's Orphan School was established and opened at Hobart Town in the early part of 1828—March, I think. The erection of the new buildings at New Town was set in operation, and they were completed in or about the year 1830 or 1831—I am not certain of the date. The church, which formed an adjunct to the schools, was a later addition. My memory does not serve me as to the locality occupied by the school from the period of its establishment in 1828 to its removal to the new premises at New Town. (On the accession of the present monarch the establishment was designated the Queen's Orphan School, and it was so called until it was disbanded a few years ago.)

'The Female House of Correction'—a more significant appellation than that of 'Factory'—was completed in the latter part of the year 1828, but was not occupied until the beginning of the following year. A particular description of the place is unnecessary. It still stands; the original, however, did not cover more than half the area of the present pile. Entering by the large double gate—the only opening in its four high stone walls—the visitor would find himself in a labyrinth of stone dividing walls reaching to the level of those outside, and enclosing workrooms, dormitories, nursery, hospital, offices, store rooms, officers' quarters, yards for the first, second and third class prisoners, in short, every part well planned and adapted to the object for which it was intended. As this edifice drew near completion (1828), the Governor decided to re-model the whole system. The services of the aged and effete superintendent, Mr Drabble, were dispensed with. A superintendent (Mr Esh Lovell), and assistant-superintendent (Mr Jesse Pullen), were appointed to the sole charge of the establishment, having under their control subordinate convict officials in the persons of clerks, constables, messengers, and matrons, all serving for an 'indulgence.' (To be continued)

BACKWARD GLANCES. BY G.P Number 3 (Saturday, 19th Nov., 1892)

At the early hour of five o'clock on a glorious summer morning in the month of January, 1829, a stranger passing by the door in the brick wall of 'The Factory' in Murray street, Hobart Town, would have seen its inmates streaming and swarming through the narrow portal like bees in search of a new home. Women of all ages—girls of 16 or 18, handsome in feature, but bold and unblushing; women of mature age, hardened and impudent; old women, ugly and wrinkled by intemperance and vice—were pouring out by scores into the street, where, as fast as they came up, they were formed into a long procession. No one will suppose from the above remarks that I—a child of seven years old—was given to moralising. To me it was simply a season of intense excitement; yet the sage

moralist, looking on the scene there presented, would have found food for sad reflection. As soon as the last prisoner had left, the door was slammed to and locked; and the procession—flanked by constables and a few soldiers from the garrison, and preceded and directed by the two superintendents—moved at a slow pace up Macquarie street towards their new quarters at the Cascades. The 'Borneo' women, who had been located in the Domain for several weeks, had been removed on the preceding day, and had prepared and pre-arranged everything in readiness for the arrival of the others, who, as they swarmed in through the big gates, at once sat down to their scanty regulation breakfast of coarse seconds bread and salted skilley. Then came the task of classifying, and the women were soon made sensible that a new order of things was being inaugurated, and were not slow to mark the contrast between their past condition and that into which they had now entered. Their 'house in town' had been a place for confinement rather than for coercion—of detention than discipline; their 'country house' was to be a 'house of correction,' where crime would meet with severe punishment, and the most rigid discipline be enforced, with 'ample scope and verge enough' to carry them out in their entirety. The list of sentences was read out at a general muster, and these terms whether newly received or partly run out were given effect to at once. Some went to the cells, some to the crime class, others to the second class, and the rest to the assignable class. A few went into the hospital. The children were taken from their mothers if old enough to be weaned, and consigned to the nursery. The prison dress was uniform, consisting of a dark brown serge, a close fitting white cotton cap, and coloured cotton neckerchief. On the jackets of those in the crime class were sewn two large letters C, cut out of scarlet cloth; the one being fixed on the right sleeve, and the other on the back. The women were employed in picking, carding, and spinning wool, and the whirr of the wheels was heard all day long, producing fine yarn for the purpose of being woven into the rough material from which the garments of the male convicts were manufactured. The washing for the hospital and the King's Orphan Schools—the latter only recently established—was all done in the 'House', and the premises appropriated to the latter occupation were rather extensive. Still the work in which they were employed was not laborious, and there were several hours in the summer days in which the women wandered listlessly about the yards. The dietary scale was very meagre, the rations per head per diem being one pound of coarse brown bread, and half a pound of meat (bone included), with one pint of "skilley" each morning and evening. In addition to the meat at dinner, there was served out a pint of water in which the latter was cooked, slightly thickened with flour. On one day in the week, one pint of pea soup well made and nourishing was substituted for the meat allowance. Such as it was it appeared to satisfy the women, or they made up their minds to bow to the force of circumstances.

In describing the penal character of the institution, it may be affirmed that one of the most severe modes of punishment—although comparatively short in duration—was confinement in the cells. These were situated on the ground floor of an isolated building, and hemmed in by stone walls in which no opening existed through which a single ray of light could penetrate. A massive iron-bound door in the stone wall opened into a long narrow corridor, on one side of which were eight cells, in size about six feet by four. Each cell had its own door which was bolted and locked on the outside. A similar door, corridor, and cells adjoined, each divided from the other by a thick stone wall, thus providing accommodation for sixteen inmates. Cold, damp, dark as Egyptian night, and silent as a vault, the entombed wretch, after being supplied with her allowance of a pound of bread and small 'piggin' of water, was left to her own reflections and introspection. For one half-hour out of the twenty-four, the occupant was allowed to walk in a solitary yard, taking nearly the whole of the short respite to accustom her eyes to the blinding sunlight ere she was again shut up in her dungeon. The ordinary term of sentence was one week, but in a great number of instances the penalty imposed was fourteen days. Confinement in the cells was invariably the introduction—kind of appetiser—to a longer or shorter period of imprisonment in the crime clags.

Another form of punishment that was only resorted to in cases of violent insubordination was the iron collar. This instrument of torture (I use the term advisedly) was formed of a band of iron of about an inch and a half in depth, opening by a hinge at the back and, being clasped round the neck, was fastened in front by a padlock. From this collar band projected four iron spikes of about a foot in length tapering off and terminating in sharp points, the whole weight of iron resting on the collar bones of the woman being as supposed, peculiarly painful and irritating. No alleviation of the terrible and dreaded torture was provided for in the sentence recorded, but the humane feelings of one of the superintendents—to whom the punishment was particularly distasteful—and who, I may say in passing, was altogether too sensitive for his position—supplied relief, as far as it was possible, in the form of padding, to make the punishment easier to be borne. The term for wearing the collar was from 24 to 60 hours, and was intended to be continuous; but as it was impossible for the unhappy sufferer to take rest in sleep, this official chose to incur the risk of censure by having it removed at night and replaced in the morning. There was also another collar, lighter in weight, having longer spikes of  $\frac{3}{8}$  round iron, each spike terminating in a knob. This was for those who were of a pugilistic turn, the knobs answering the same purpose, I presume, as those placed on the horns of cattle to prevent them from goring their fellows. This punishment was very rarely inflicted.

For all those sentenced to the cells or crime class there was invariably a

preliminary ordeal to be gone through in the loss of their hair. It certainly was a sight to arouse one's pity to witness the long flowing raven or auburn locks falling to the ground to the rhythmic snipping of the barber's great shears. The women looked upon it as a barbarous, personal outrage—a degrading humiliation. Many who would have borne stolidly any other kind of punishment shed bitter tears over the loss of their hair; some fainted, and now and then one would fight like a tigress for the retention of her highly valued and petted locks, and the operation had to be performed under the persuasive influence of physical force.

As a rule the women were submissive and orderly. Individual cases of insubordination occurred, but they were promptly suppressed and punished. There was, however, one instance of mutinous conduct which appeared to be general, and at the time was sufficiently alarming. As I was myself a witness of the whole scene, standing at the time at the window of our dwelling which overlooked it, and as all the details are still fresh in my memory I will endeavour to narrate them fully. Two of the most refractory women in the crime class had been sentenced for some offence to the cells. From some threatening remark dropped by one or both of them, the superintendents suspected that a serious *emeute* would take place when effect was attempted to be given to the sentence. They therefore took the precaution of keeping them back until all the women in the crime class—through which they would have to pass—were securely warded and locked in for the night. At dusk—which being summer time, was about 8 o'clock—the two prisoners were brought through on their way to the cells; but on entering the yard they refused to proceed any further, and during the interval that occurred, while the constables were being sent for, they stood at the unglazed iron-barred window of the ward, engaged in close conversation with those within. When the constables arrived they took the two struggling and resisting women to the cells by force. Then the storm of rage and fury burst forth from the (fortunately) confined women in the wards. Howls, yells, shrieks, curses and imprecations rose in one prolonged and discordant chorus. The superintendents seeing that matters were assuming a serious and threatening aspect, at once wrote to Mr Gordon (who was, I suppose, the Superintendent of Convicts at the time) describing the state of things, and asking for assistance in quelling the disturbance. The letter was sent off by the messenger, who was enjoined to make all haste. That messenger was a young man whose cognomen was 'Chequer Alley,' well known afterwards in Launceston for many years as 'Chequers' the bellman. Meanwhile, for more than two hours the uproar continued. Like excited caged wild beasts they shook the bars of their prison and hammered at the doors, and had they not been confined within stone walls would no doubt have effected an exit, the consequences of which in their infuriated state might have been disastrous. The

excitement seemed to be contagious, for those in the second yard who, divided by a stone partition which cut off all communication, could have had no idea of the cause of the tumult, joined in with the like howls, yells, and shrieks, till the mingled din and uproar must have been heard at a considerable distance outside the walls. At intervals fire was mysteriously produced, and aprons, caps, handkerchiefs, in fact, anything that was combustible was ignited, and the flaming articles were borne waving aloft to every part of the ward. Then arose the piercing shriek of 'Fire! Fire! Fire! Let us out.' At one time it was seriously feared that the place was on fire. One of the superintendents had stood at the door, and, patiently listening, was enabled to detect and make a list of fourteen of the ringleaders. Such was the state of things when, near midnight, Mr Gordon arrived, attended by twelve constables furnished with slaves and lanterns. The hushed silence as soon as they made their appearance was surprising. Taking his stand by the ward door Mr Gordon said, 'Mr Pullen, unlock that door.' Directly this was done Mr G. lifted up a formidable knobbed and knotted stick and cried out, 'The first woman that dares to rush out, I'll knock her down.' Then to the constables 'Go in with Mr Pullen, and bring out the women that he gives into your charge'. They had scarcely entered the ward when they were assailed by a shower of missiles—stools, buckets, pannikins, and other things. However, the ringleaders were seized—some of them being *sound asleep in their hammocks*, brought out and conveyed at once to the cells, the ward was locked, and silence and order once more prevailed. The next day the ringleaders were tried, and sentenced to twenty-eight days in the cells, in two instalments of fourteen days each with a week's interval, twelve months' hard labour in the crime class, which carried with it an additional six months in the second class, making eighteen months' imprisonment before they became assignable. Then ended what has been rather grandiloquently styled 'the mutiny of 1830.' (To be Continued)

BACKWARD GLANCES. BY G. P. No. 4. (Saturday, 26 November, 1892)

Friends and relatives were allowed to visit the women on production of an order to that effect from the Superintendent of Convicts. The interview was to be conducted in the presence of one of the superintendents, and was limited to half an hour. No gift or present of any kind was allowed to pass between them. These visits were generally discouraged, and difficulties were thrown around the obtaining of an order for the purpose. On one occasion a man of a pronounced Jewish type of countenance, medium height, spare almost to attenuation, and dressed in a new tweed suit, made his appearance with an order to see his sister, Mrs S. This lady was the wife of Ikey S., a well known 'fence'—or receiver of stolen property—in London. This nefarious trade he had carried on for many years, until at length—a warrant being obtained—a well-

organised swoop was made on the premises by the police, who seized an immense quantity of ill gotten booty contributed by the light-fingered gentry who infested the city. Ikey escaped capture and fled to America, but his wife was seized and transported. A reward of £100 was offered by the English authorities for Ikey's apprehension. When the time allotted for the interview had terminated, the man and sister (so styled) parted; but I was keen enough to notice the prolonged embrace, and, as their lips met, the passage of a gold coin from mouth to mouth. One of the superintendents had a suspicion that the man was the notorious Ikey, and immediately after his departure he rode into town and divulged it to the then Chief District Constable, Mr Capon; but he found that Mr Capon was well-informed, and had his eye upon him. The next vessel to England bore both the prisoner and his captor. Mr Capon delivered Ikey to the London police, and claimed and obtained the reward.

At intentionally uncertain seasons the Governor visited the establishment. He was dressed in semi-military costume; just a suspicion of scarlet piping down the out-side seams of his trousers, his frock coat closely buttoned up to the neck, a wide stock propping up the square chin, a white feather or elongated bob (I do not know its technical term) fastened on the side, and rising some six inches above the crown of the ordinary black beaver hat, a black belt round the waist from which depended his sword encased in its glittering steel scabbard. He was invariably accompanied by his nephew (who was also his aide-de-camp) the late Mr Chas. Arthur, of Norley, then a very young officer, clad in scarlet uniform. An orderly followed close in the rear. Dashing up to the gate at a smart canter, their approach was only announced by the thud of the horses' hoofs and the rattling of their accoutrements. Throwing the reins to the orderly, the Governor and his aide passed hurriedly through the gate, only recognising the superintendents (if they chanced to be in attendance) by a stern look and a condescending nod of the head. Leading the way himself he examined and pryed into everything. The yards, the calls, the wards, the drains, the spinning lofts, the washing and cooking departments, the hospital, and nursery, all received the closest inspection. Then, returning to the office, he unbent so far as to make a few remarks to the superintendents, suggested by the inspection, to give expression to his wishes, to write a short minute in the visitors' book, and then depart as cavalierly as he came. Col.Arthur did not believe in wasting words or compliments.

During my short sojourn of two years and a half at the Female House of Correction—from November, 1828, to April, 1831—no less than five shiploads of female convicts arrived from England; the 'Borneo', 'Lady of the Lake', 'Mellish', 'Harmony', and 'Eliza.' (I have a strong impression that there was another arrival, the 'Sarah' : I must leave this uncertain), and 'more and more to follow!' Was the anti-transportation movement, inaugurated some twenty years

after this, initiated too soon or not soon enough? For some days after the arrival of a female prison ship, a stranger, looking on from the outside, would have concluded that the 'Factory' was *en fete*. Vehicles of every description then used might be seen driving up to the gates and setting down the—well, I will make one word do for the wives of the wealthy, the middle class and the humble artisan, and style them all *ladies*. The ladies, then, alighted from their vehicles, and producing their orders for servants on assignment, the women were called in one by one and put through their catechism. "Can you wash?" "Can you sew?" "Can you get up fine linen?" "Can you cook?" "Are you fond of children?" etc. After thus examining some half-dozen a choice was made, and mistress and servant drove off together. Before the close of a week by far the larger portion of the human consignment was distributed amongst and in the homes of their masters in both town and country.

The visiting magistrates were Mr James Gordon, who was succeeded by Mr Josiah Spode, and who also in his turn gave place to Mr N. Wood. These gentlemen, during their term of office, made weekly visits to the institution for the purpose of disposing of any case or cases reserved for trial for crimes committed within the walls, the adjudication of which exceeded the discretionary power to which the superintendent was limited. A surgeon was appointed by the Governor, who exercised an almost despotic control in the management of the hospital, and who also paid his weekly visits to the establishment. For nearly two years—viz., to the latter end of 1830—Dr. Seccombe held the post, and was then succeeded by Dr. Bryant. The Colonial Surgeon, Dr. J. Scott, R.N., made periodical visits for the purpose of reporting on the sanitary condition of the whole place and its inmates. The hospital was never overcrowded; many of the cases only helping to swell the expenses of the nursery and Orphan School. To these cases Colonel Arthur showed no mercy. The unfortunate creature nursed her child for nine or twelve months, after which it was taken from her arms, and consigned to the tender mercies of strangers in the nursery. The mother was then sentenced to an imprisonment of eighteen months before she became eligible for assigned service. Many of the poor mites seemed discontented with the new world into which they had been ushered, and left it altogether; while those of stronger constitutions, but less fortunate, pined within the stone-wall enclosure, with only occasional peeps for a short time at nature's verdure outside, fighting for life against the neglect and peculation of their convict nurses for two or three years, when they were removed to the less confined and more healthy atmosphere of the Orphan School at New Town. The scenes witnessed at the separation of mother and child were sometimes very harrowing. One woman, for half an hour after her babe was literally torn from her arms exhibited all the forms of raving madness, till a copious flood of tears relieved her overwrought brain. Another—Mary

Sullivan—deliberately murdered her infant and was hanged for the crime in Hobart Town (1830), the first woman who suffered the extreme penalty of the law in the colony.

Before the church was built at New Town in connection with the Orphan School, the children were brought into town to the Sunday morning services at St. David's—a distance of three miles! There was an interval of rest during the service, and then they were marched home again—six miles in all. Many now living will remember the long procession wending up Elizabeth street and out on to the New Town Road—the wee toddlers of four or five years trotting wearily along, trying to keep up with the older boys and girls, who were very considerately (?) placed in advance of them! Here and there a mother might be seen skirting the procession, carrying her worn-out child for some distance, and, on leaving, loading it with cakes and sweet meats. 'What a cruel want of consideration' some one will exclaim. Yes, but then, consideration as to the limit of man's strength or woman's weakness or children's wants and weariness was, under the convict *regime*, too often—well, I will use the hackneyed expression, if only for the purpose of ridiculing it—'conspicuous by its absence.'

I had almost omitted to mention that, forming a part of the institution was a commodious chapel, in which religious services were held periodically—I think monthly—by the Rev. James Norman. The chapel was capacious enough to seat from 120 to 150 women. Pews for the superintendents and their families were placed on each side of the pulpit facing the audience. The responses were given by the women in a decorous and apparently reverent manner—"That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life." "That the rest of our lives may be pure and holy. Amen." Did they mean what they said? Ah well, let us not be too censorious; there are thousands at the present day who say the same words, or words having the same import, and mean as little : a remark that applies with equal force to all religious denominations. On the 1st April, 1831, Mr Pullen resigned his position as Assistant-Superintendent and removed into Hobart Town. As I had been for more than nine years a justly acknowledged member of his family, I left with him, and thus ended my connection with the Female House of Correction, and about 40 years elapsed ere I re-entered the place as a visitor. Mr Pullen was succeeded by Mr William Cato, the grandfather and great uncle of the present generation. Before the close of the year 1831 Mr Lovell also resigned and opened a school in Upper Murray street, Hobart Town. His successor was Rev. John Hutchinson, formerly a Wesleyan missionary to Tonga, and an ex-minister of that denomination in Hobart Town. ERRATUM—In No. 1, column 2, line 12 for " listless" read " restless." (Concluded.)