CHAPTER IV.

THE trial of the two highwaymen and Arthur Bastow came off in due course. The evidence given was similar to that offered at Reigate, the only addition being that Mr. Bastow was himself put into the box. The counsel for the prosecution said:

"I am sorry to have to call you, Mr. Bastow. We all feel most deeply for you, and I will ask you only two or three questions. Was your son frequently out at night?"

"He was."

"Did you often hear him return?"

"Yes; I seldom went to sleep until he came back."

"Had you any reason to suppose that others returned with him?"

"I never saw any others."

"But you might have heard them without seeing them. Please tell us if you ever heard voices."

"Yes, I have heard men's voices," the clergyman said reluctantly, in a low voice.

"One more question, and I have done. Have you on some occasions heard the sound of horses' hoofs in your yard at about the time that your son came in?"

Mr. Bastow said in a low voice:

"I have."

"Had you any suspicion whatever of the character of your son's visitors?"

"None whatever. I supposed that those with him were companions with whom he had been spending the evening."

Mr. Bastow had to be assisted from the witness-box, so overcome was he with the ordeal. He had not glanced at his son while giving his evidence. The latter and his two fellow-prisoners maintained throughout the trial their expression of indifference. The two highwaymen

nodded to acquaintances they saw in the body of the court, smiled at various points in the evidence, and so conducted themselves that there were murmured exclamations of approval of their gameness on the part of the lower class of the public. The jury, without a moment's hesitation, found them all guilty of the offenses with which they were charged. Bastow was first sentenced.

"Young man," the judge said, "young as you are, there can be no doubt whatever in the minds of anyone who has heard the evidence that you have been an associate with these men who have been found guilty of highway robbery accompanied by murder. I consider that a merciful view was taken of your case by the magistrates who committed you for trial, for the evidence of your heartbroken father, on whose gray hairs your conduct has brought trouble and disgrace, leaves no doubt that you have for some time been in league with highwaymen, although not actually participating in their crime. The words overheard by Mr. Thorndyke show that you were prepared to hide their booty for them, and it is well for you that you were captured before this was done, and that no proceeds of other robberies were found in the house. The evidence of the Bow Street officers show that it had for some time been suspected that these men had an accomplice somewhere in the neighborhood of Reigate, for although arrested several times under circumstances forming a strong assumption of their guilt, nothing was ever found upon them. There can now be little doubt who their accomplice was. Had you been an older man I should have sentenced you to transportation for life, but in consideration of your youth, I shall take the milder course of sentencing you to fifteen years' transportation."

The capital sentence was then passed in much fewer words upon the two highwaymen. As they were leaving the dock Bastow turned, and in a clear voice said to John Thorndyke, who had been accommodated with a seat in the well of the court:

"I have to thank you, Thorndyke, for this. I will pay off my debt some day, you make take your oath."

"A sad case, Mr. Thorndyke—a sad case," the judge,

who had greatly complimented the Squire on his conduct, said to him as he was disrobing afterwards. "I don't know that in all my experience I ever saw such a hardened young villain. With highwaymen it is a point of honor to assume a gayety of demeanor on such occasions; but to see a boy of eighteen, never before convicted, exhibiting such coolness and effrontery is quite beyond my experience. I suppose his record is altogether bad?"

"Altogether," the Squire said. "His father has, during the last two years, been quite broken by it; he owned to me that he was in bodily fear of the lad, who had on several occasions assaulted him, had robbed him of his savings by means of forgery, and was so hopelessly bad that he himself thought with me that the only possible hope for him was to get him to enlist. I myself recommended the East India Company's service, thinking that he would have less opportunity for crime out there, and that there would be a strong chance that either fever or a bullet would carry him off, for I own that I have not the slightest hope of reformation in such a character."

"I would have given him transportation for life if I had known all this," the judge said. "However, it is not likely that he will ever come back again—very few of them do; the hulks are not the most healthy places in the world, and they have a pretty rough way with men who give them trouble, as this young fellow is likely to do."

Mr. Bastow, as soon as he had given his evidence, had taken a hackney coach to the inn where he and the Squire had put up on their arrival in town the evening before, and here, on his return, John Thorndyke found him. He was lying on his bed in a state of prostration.

"Cheer up, Bastow," he said, putting his hand upon the Rector's shoulder. "The sentence is fifteen years, which was the very amount I hoped that he would get. The more one sees of him the more hopeless it is to expect that any change will ever take place in him; and it is infinitely better that he should be across the sea, where his conduct, when his term is over, can affect no one. The disgrace, such as it is, to his friends, is no greater in a long term than in a short one. Had he got off with

four or five years' imprisonment, he would have been a perpetual trouble and a source of uneasiness, not to say alarm; and even had he left you alone we should always have been in a state of dread as to his next offense. Better that he should be out in the colonies than be hung at Tyburn."

"How did he take the sentence?"

"With the same bravado he had shown all through, and as he went out of the dock addressed a threat to me, that, under the circumstances, I can very well afford to despise. Now, if you will take my advice, you will drink a couple of glasses of good port, and then go to bed. I will see to your being awakened at seven o'clock, which will give us time to breakfast comfortably, and to make a start at nine."

"I would rather not have the wine," the Rector said feebly.

"Yes, but you must take what is good for you. I have ordered up a bottle of the landlord's best, and must insist upon your drinking a couple of glasses with me. I want it almost as much as you do, for the atmosphere of that court was enough to poison a dog. I have got the taste of it in my mouth still."

With much reluctance the Rector accompanied him to the private sitting room that the Squire had engaged. He sat down almost mechanically in an easy-chair. The Squire poured out the wine, and handed him a glass. Mr. Bastow at first put it to his lips without glancing at it, but he was a connoisseur in wine, and the bouquet of the port appealing to his latent senses, he took a sip, and then another, appreciatingly.

"The landlord said it was first-rate, and he is not far wrong," John Thorndyke remarked, as he set down his own glass.

"Yes, it is a fine vintage, and in perfect condition," Mr. Bastow agreed. "I have drunk nothing better for years, though you have some fine bins."

"I would take a biscuit, if I were you, before I took another glass," the Squire said, helping himself from a plate on the table. "You have had nothing to eat to-day, and you want something badly. I have a dish of

kidneys coming up in half an hour; they cook them well here."

The Rector ate a biscuit, mechanically sipped another glass of wine, and was even able to eat a kidney when they were brought up. Although September was not yet out, the Squire had a fire lighted in the room, and after the meal was over, and two steaming tumblers of punch were placed upon the table, he took a long pipe from the mantel, filled and lighted it, then filled another, and handed it to the Rector, at the same time holding out a light to him.

"Life has its consolations," he said. "You have had a lot of troubles one way and another, Bastow, but we may hope that they are all over now, and that life will go more smoothly and easily with you. We had better leave the past alone for the present. I call this snug: a good fire, a clean pipe, a comfortable chair, and a steaming bowl at one's elbow."

The Rector smiled faintly.

"It seems unnatural——" he began.

"Not at all, not at all," the Squire broke in. "You have had a tremendous load on your mind, and now it is lifted off; the thundercloud has burst, and though damage has been done, one is thankful that it is no worse. Now I can talk to you of a matter that has been on my mind for the last three weeks. What steps do you think that I ought to take to find a successor for you? It is most important to have a man who will be a real help in the parish, as you have been, would pull with one comfortably, and be a pleasant associate. I don't want too young a fellow, and I don't want too old a one. I have no more idea how to set about it than a child. Of course, I could ask the Bishop to appoint, but I don't know that he would appoint at all the sort of man I want. The living is only worth £200 a year and the house—no very great catch; but there is many a man that would be glad to have it."

"I have been thinking it over, too, Thorndyke, when I could bring my mind to consider anything but my own affairs. How would Greg do? He has been taking duty for me since I could not do it myself. I know that he

is a hard-working fellow, and he has a wife and a couple of children; his curacy is only £70 a year, and it would be a perfect godsend, for he has no interest in the Church, and he might be years without preferment."

"I should think he would do very well, Bastow. Yes, he reads well, which I own I care for that a good deal more than for the preaching; not that I have anything to say against that. He gives sound and practical sermons, and they have the advantage of being short, which is a great thing. In the first place, it is good in itself, and in the second, specially important in a village congregation, where you know very well every woman present is fidgeting to get home to see that the pot is not boiling over, and the meat in the oven is not burnt. Yes, I will go down to-morrow afternoon and ask him if he would like the living. You were talking of selling the funiture; how much do you suppose it is worth?"

"I don't suppose it will fetch above seventy or eighty pounds; it is solid and good, but as I have had it in use nearly forty years, it would not go for much."

"Well, let us say a hundred pounds," the Squire said. "I will give you a check for it. I dare say Greg will find it difficult to furnish, and he might have to borrow the money, and the debt would be a millstone round his neck, perhaps, for years, so I will hand it over with the Rectory to him."

So they talked for an hour or two on village matters, and the Squire was well pleased, when his old friend went up to bed, that he had succeeded in diverting his thoughts for a time from the painful subject that had engrossed them for weeks.

"You have slept well," he said, when they met at breakfast, "I can see by your face."

"Yes, I have not slept so soundly for months. I went to sleep as soon as my head touched the pillow, and did not awake until the chambermaid knocked at the door."

"That second glass of punch did it, Bastow. It is a fine morning; we shall have a brisk drive back. I am very glad that I changed my mind and brought the gig instead of the close carriage."

In the afternoon the Squire drove into Reigate. He found the curate at home, and astonished and delighted him by asking him if he would like the living of Crowswood. It came altogether as a surprise to him, for the Rector's intentions to resign had not been made public, and it was supposed in the village that he was only staying at the Squire's until this sad affair should be over. Greg was a man of seven or eight and twenty, had graduated with distinction at Cambridge, but, having no influence, had no prospects of promotion, and the offer almost bewildered him.

"I should be grateful indeed, Mr. Thorndyke," he said. "It would be a boon to us. Will you excuse me for a moment?" And opening a door, he called for his wife, who was trying to keep the two children quiet there, having retired with them hastily when Mr. Thorndyke was announced. "What do you think, Emma?" her husband said excitedly, as she came into the room. "Mr. Thorndyke has been good enough to offer me the living of Crowswood." Then he recovered himself. "I beg your pardon, sir, for my unmannerliness in not first introducing my wife to you."

"It was natural that you should think of telling her the news first of all," the Squire said courteously. "Madam, I am your obedient servant, and I hope that soon we shall get to know each other well. I consider it of great importance that the Squire of a parish and the Rector should work well together, and see a great deal of each other. I don't know whether you are aware, Mr. Greg, that the living is worth £200 a year, besides which there is a paddock of about ten acres, which is sufficient for the keep of a horse and cow. The Rectory is a comfortable one, and I have arranged with Mr. Bastow that he shall leave his furniture for the benefit of his successor. It will include linen, so that you will be put to no expense whatever in moving in. I have known these first expenses to seriously cripple the usefulness of a clergyman when appointed to a living."

"That is good of you indeed, Mr. Thorndyke," the curate said. "We have been living in these lodgings since we first came here, and it will indeed make matters

easy to have the question of furniture so kindly settled for us."

"Will your Rector be able to release you shortly?"

"I have no doubt that he will do that at once. His son has just left Oxford and taken deacon's orders; and the Rector told me the other day that he should be glad if I would look out for another curacy, as he wanted to have his son here with him. He spoke very kindly, and said that he should make no change until I could hear of a place to suit me. His son has been assisting him for the last month, since I took the services at Crowswood, and I am sure he would release me at once."

"Then I should be glad if you will move up as soon as possible to the Rectory. I know nothing about the necessary forms, but I suppose that Mr. Bastow will send in his resignation to the Bishop, and I shall write and tell him that I have appointed you, and you can continue to officiate as you have done lately until you can be formally inducted as the Rector. Perhaps you would not mind going round to your Rector at once and telling him of the offer you have had. I have one or two matters to do in the town, and will call again in three-quarters of an hour. I shall be glad to tell Mr. Bastow that you will come into residence at once."

On returning at the appointed time he found that the curate had returned.

"Mr. Pilkington was very kind, and evidently very pleased; he congratulated me most warmly, and I can come up at once. We don't know how to thank you enough, Mr. Thorndyke."

"I don't want any thanks, I can assure you, Mr. Greg. To-morrow I will send a couple of women in from the village to get the place in order, and no doubt Mr. Bastow will want to take away a few things. He is going to remain with me as tutor to my son. I am sure you and I will get on very well together, and I only hope that your sermons will be no longer when you are Rector than they have been while you have been assisting us. Long sermons may do for a town congregation, but in my opinion they are a very serious mistake in the case of a village one. By the way, I think it would be as well

for you to get a servant here, and that before you go up. Mr. Bastow's servant was an old woman, and in a case like this I always think it is better not to take one's predecessor's servant. She generally resents any change, and is always quoting how her last master had things. I mention this before you go, because she is sure to ask to stay on, and it is much easier to say that you are bringing a servant with you than to have to tell her she is too old or too fat. Don't you think so, Mrs. Greg?"

"Yes, I think it will be much better, Mr. Thorndyke. Even if I cannot hear of one likely to suit us permanently, I will take someone as a stop-gap. One can easily change afterwards."

"The old woman will do very well," the Squire said. "She has two married daughters in the village, and with a shilling or two from the parish she will manage comfortably. At any rate we shall look after her, and I have no doubt Mr. Bastow will make her an allowance."

Never were a pair more delighted than Parson Greg and his wife when two days later they took possession of their new home. Half a dozen women had been at work the day before, and everything was in perfect order. To Mrs. Greg's relief she found that the old servant had already gone, the Squire having himself informed her that Mrs. Greg would bring her own maid with her. Mr. Bastow said that he would allow her half a crown a week as long as she lived, and the Squire added as much more, and as the woman had saved a good deal during her twenty years' service with the Rector, she was perfectly satisfied.

"It is a good thing that she should be content," the Squire said to Mr. Bastow. "She has a lot of connections in the village, and if she had gone away with a sense of grievance she might have created a good deal of ill-feeling against your successor, and I am very anxious that he should begin well. I like the young fellow, and I like his wife."

"We are fortunate, indeed, Ernest," Mrs. Greg said the following morning, as with the children, two and three years old, they went out into the garden, where

the trees were laden with apples, pears, and plums. "What a change from our little rooms in Reigate! I should think that anyone ought to be happy indeed here."

"They ought to be, Emma, but you see Mr. Bastow had trouble enough; and it should be a lesson to us, dear, to look very closely after the boys now they are young, and see that they don't make bad acquaintances."

"From what we hear of the village, there is little fear of that; the mischief must have begun before Mr. Thorndyke came down, when by all accounts things had altogether gone to the bad here, and of course young Bastow must have had an exceptionally evil disposition, Ernest."

"Yes, no doubt; but his father could not have looked after him properly. I believe, from what I hear, that Bastow was so dispirited at his powerlessness to put a stop to the state of things here, that, except to perform service, he seldom left the house, and the boy no doubt grew up altogether wild. You know that I was in court on the second day of the examination, and the young fellow's insolence and bearing astonished and shocked me. Happily, we have the Squire here now to back us up, the village has been completely cleared of all bad characters, and is by all accounts quite a model place, and we must do our best to keep it so."

The news of the change at the Rectory naturally occasioned a great deal of talk. At first there was a general feeling of regret that Mr. Bastow had gone, and yet it was felt that he could not have been expected to stay; the month's experience that they had had of the new parson had cleared the way for him. He and his wife soon made themselves familiar with the villagers, and being bright young people, speedily made themselves liked. The Squire and Mrs. Cunningham called the first afternoon after their arrival.

"You must always send up if anything is wanted, Mr. Greg; whenever there is any illness in the village we always keep a stock of soups and jellies, and Mrs. Cunningham is almoner in general. Is there anything that we can do for you? If so, let me know without hesitation."

"Indeed, there is nothing, Mr. Thorndyke. It is mar-

velous to us coming in here and finding everything that we can possibly want."

"You will want a boy for your garden; and you cannot do better than take young Bill Summers. He was with me for a bit last year, when the boy I have now was laid up with mumps or something of that sort, and he was very favorably reported on as being handy in the garden, able to milk a cow, and so on. By the way, Mrs. Greg, I have taken the liberty of sending down a cow in milk. I expect she is in your meadow now. I have seven or eight of them, and if you will send her back when her milk fails I will send down another."

"You are too kind altogether, Mr. Thorndyke!" Mrs. Greg exclaimed.

"Not at all. I want to see things comfortable here, and you will find it difficult to get on without a cow. I keep two or three for the special use of the village. I make them pay for it, halfpenny a pint; it is better to do that than to give it. It is invaluable for the children; and I don't think in all England you see rosier and healthier youngsters than those in our schools. You will sometimes find milk useful for puddings and that sort of thing for the sick; and they will appreciate it all the more than if they had to look solely to us for their supply."

"How is Mr. Bastow, sir?"

"He is better than could be expected. He himself proposed this morning that my boy Mark should begin his studies at once; and, indeed, now that the worst is over and he has got rid of the load of care on his shoulders, I hope that we shall have him bright and cheerful again before long."

Such was indeed the case. For some little time Mr. Bastow avoided the village, but John Thorndyke got him to go down with him to call upon Mr. Greg, and afterwards to walk through it with him. At first he went timidly and shrinkingly, but the kindly greetings of the women he met, and the children stopping to pull a forelock or bob a courtesy as of old, gradually cheered him up, and he soon got accustomed to the change, and would of an afternoon go down to the village and chat with the

women, after he had ascertained that his successor had no objection whatever, and was, indeed, pleased that he still took an interest in his former parishioners.

Mark was at first disappointed at the arrangement, for he had looked forward to going to a public school. His father, however, had no great trouble in reconciling him to it.

"Of course, Mark," he said, "there are advantages in a public school. I was never at one myself, but I believe that, though the discipline is pretty strict, there is a great deal of fun and sport, and you may make desirable acquaintances. Upon the other hand, there are drawbacks. In the first place, the majority of the boys are sons of richer men than I am. I don't know that that would matter much, but it would give you expensive habits, and perhaps make you fonder of London life than I should care about. In the next place, you see, you would be at school when the shooting begins, and you are looking forward to carrying a gun next year. The same with hunting. You know I promised that this year you should go to the meets on your pony, and see as much of them as you can, and of course when you were at school you would only be able to indulge in these matters during your holidays; and if a hard frost set in, as is the case three times out of four, just as you came home, you would be out of it altogether.

"I must say I should like you to have a real love of field sports and to be a good shot and a good rider. A man, however wide his acres may be, is thought but little of in the country if he is not a good sportsman; and, moreover, there is nothing better for developing health and muscles than riding, and tramping over the fields with a gun on your shoulder; and, lastly, you must not forget, Mark, that one of my objects in making this arrangement is to keep Mr. Bastow with us. I am sure that unless he thought that he was making himself useful he would not be content to remain here; and at his age, you know, it would be hard for him to obtain clerical employment."

"All right, father. I see that the present plan is the best, and that I should have but little sport if I went

away to school. Besides, I like Mr. Bastow very much, and I am quite sure that I shan't get so many whackings from him as I used to do from old Holbrook."

"I fancy not, Mark," his father said with a smile. "I am not against wholesome discipline, but I think it can be carried too far; at any rate, I hope you will be just as obedient to Mr. Bastow as if he always had a cane on the table beside him."

Mark, therefore, went to work in a cheerful spirit, and soon found that he made more progress in a week under Mr. Bastow's gentle tuition than he had done in a month under the vigorous discipline of his former master.

Mr. and Mrs. Greg dined regularly at the Squire's once a week.

"Have you had that Indian servant of yours long, Mr. Thorndyke?" Mrs. Greg asked one day. "He is a strange-looking creature. Of course, in the daytime, when one sees him about in ordinary clothes, one does not notice him so much; but of an evening, in that Eastern costume of his, he looks very strange."

"He was the servant of the Colonel, my brother," the Squire replied. "He brought him over from India with him. The man had been some years in his service, and was very attached to him, and had saved his life more than once, he told me. On one occasion he caught a cobra by the neck as it was about to strike my brother's hand as he sat at table; he carried it out into the compound, as George called it, but which means, he told me, garden, and there let it escape. Another time he caught a Thug, which means a sort of robber who kills his victims by strangling before robbing them. They are a sort of sect who regard strangling as a religious action, greatly favored by the bloodthirsty goddess they worship. He was in the act of fastening the twisted handkerchief, used for the purpose, round my brother's neck, when Ramoo cut him down. The closest shave, though, was when George, coming down the country, was pounced upon by a tiger and carried off. Ramoo seized a couple of muskets from the men, and rushed into the jungle after him, and coming up with the brute killed him at the first shot. George escaped with a broken arm and his back laid open by a scratch of the tiger's claws as it first seized him.

"So at George's death I took Ramoo on, and have found him a most useful fellow. Of course, I was some little time before I became accustomed to his noiseless way of going about, and it used to make me jump when I happened to look round, and saw him standing quietly behind me when I thought I was quite alone. However, as soon as I became accustomed to him, I got over all that, and now I would not lose him for anything; he seems to know instinctively what I want. He is excellent as a waiter and valet; I should feel almost lost without him now; and the clumping about of an English man-servant would annoy me as much as his noiseless way of going about did at first. He has come to speak English very fairly. Of course, my brother always talked to him in his own tongue; still, he had picked up enough English for me to get on with; now he speaks it quite fluently. When I have nothing whatever for him to do he devotes himself to my little ward. She is very fond of him, and it is quite pretty to see them together in the garden. Altogether, I would not part with him for anything."

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For some years life passed uneventfully at Crowswood. It was seldom indeed that the Squire's authority was needed to set matters right in the village. The substitution of good farmers for shiftless ones in some of the farms, and the better cultivation generally, had given more employment; and as John Thorndyke preferred keeping two or three cottages shut up rather than have them occupied by men for whom no work could be found, it was rare indeed that there were any complaints of scarcity of work, except, indeed, on the part of the Rector, who declared that, what with the healthiness of the village and the absence of want, his occupation, save for the Sunday duty, was a sinecure. Mr. Bastow was more happy and much brighter than he had been for many years. The occupation of teaching suited him, and he was able to make the work pleasant to his pupil as well as to himself; indeed, it occupied but a small portion of the day, the

amount of learning considered necessary at the time not being extensive. A knowledge of Greek was thought quite superfluous for a country gentleman. Science was in its infancy, mathematics a subject only to be taken up by those who wanted to obtain a college fellowship. Latin, however, was considered an essential, and a knack of apt quotation from the Latin poets an accomplishment that every man who was a member of society or aspired to enter Parliament was expected to possess. Thus Mark Thorndyke's lessons lasted but two or three hours a day, and the school term was a movable period, according to the season of the year and the engagements of the Squire and Mark. In winter the evening was the time, so that the boy shot with his father, or rode to the hounds, or, as he got older, joined in shooting-parties at the houses of neighbors.

In summer the work was done in the morning, but was not unfrequently broken. Mark went off at a very early hour to drive perhaps some twenty miles with his great chum, Dick Chetwynd, for a long day's fishing, or to see a main of cocks fought or a fight between the champions of two neighboring villages, or perhaps some more important battle.

When Millicent Conyers was ten years old she came regularly into the study, sitting curled up in a deep chair, getting up her lessons while Mark did his, and then changing seats with him while he learned his Horace or Ovid by heart. At this time she looked up greatly to him, and was his companion whenever he would allow her to be, fetched and carried for him, and stood almost on a level with his dogs in his estimation.

Five years later, when Mark was eighteen, these relations changed somewhat. He now liked to have her with him, not only when about the house and garden, but when he took short rides she cantered along on her pony by his side. She was a bright-faced girl, full of life and fun, and rejoicing in a far greater amount of freedom than most girls of her age and time.

"It is really time that she should learn to comport herself more staidly, instead of running about like a wild thing," Mrs. Cunningham said, one day, as she and the

Squire stood after breakfast looking out of the open window at Mark and Millicent.

"Time enough, my dear lady, time enough. Let her enjoy life while she can. I am not in favor of making a young kitten behave like an old tabby; every creature in nature is joyful and frolicsome while it is young. She is as tall and as straight as any of her friends of the same age, and looks more healthy; she will tame down in time, and I dare say walk and look as prim and demure as they do. I was watching them the other day when there was a party of them up here, and I thought the difference was all to her advantage. She looked a natural, healthy girl; they looked like a set of overdressed dolls, afraid to move or to talk loud, or to stretch their mouths when they smile; very lady-like and nice, no doubt, but you will see Millicent will throw them into the shade when she is once past the tomboy age. Leave her alone, Mrs. Cunningham; a girl is not like a fruit tree, that wants pruning and training from its first year; it will be quite time to get her into shape when she has done growing."

John Thorndyke had occasionally made inquiries of Mr. Bastow as to the whereabouts of his son. At the time the sentence was passed transportation to the American colonies was being discontinued, and until other arrangements could be made hulks were established as places of confinement and punishment; but a few months later Arthur Bastow was one of the first batch of convicts sent out to the penal settlement formed on the east coast of Australia. This was intended to be fixed at Botany Bay, but it having been found that this bay was open and unsheltered, it was established at Sydney, although for many years the settlement retained in England the name of the original site. As the condition of the prisoners kept in the hulks was deplorable, the Squire had, through the influence of Sir Charles Harris, obtained the inclusion of Bastow's name among the first batch of those who were to sail for Australia.

Mr. Bastow obtained permission to see his son before sailing, but returned home much depressed, for he had been assailed with such revolting and blasphemous lan-

guage by him that he had been forced to retire in horror at the end of a few minutes.

"We have done well in getting him sent off," the Squire said, when he heard the result of the interview. "In the first place, the demoralizing effect of these hulks is quite evident, and it may be hoped that in a new country, where there can be no occasion for the convicts to be pent up together, things may be better; for although escapes from the hulks are not frequent, they occasionally take place, and had he gained his liberty we should have had an anxious time of it until he was re-arrested, whereas out there there is nowhere to go to, no possibility of committing a crime. It is not there as it was in the American colony. Settlements may grow up in time, but at present there are no white men whatever settled in the district; and the natives are, they say, hostile, and were a convict to escape he would almost certainly be killed, and possibly eaten. No doubt by the time your son has served his sentence colonies will be established out there, and he may then be disposed to settle there, either on a piece of land of which he could no doubt take up or in the service of one of the colonists."

CHAPTER V.

THE scene in the convict yard at Sydney, five years after its foundation as a penal settlement, was not a pleasant one to the lover of humanity. Warders armed to the teeth were arranging gangs that were to go out to labor on the roads. Many of the convicts had leg-irons, but so fastened as to be but slight hindrance to their working powers, but the majority were unironed. These were the better-behaved convicts; not that this would be judged from their faces, for the brutalizing nature of the system and the close association of criminals had placed its mark on all, and it would have been difficult for the most discriminating to have made any choice between the most hardened criminals and those who had been sent out for what would now be considered comparatively trivial offenses.

The voyage on board ship had done much to efface distinctions, the convict life had done more, and the chief difference between the chained and unchained prisoners was that the latter were men of more timid disposition than many of their companions, and therefore less disposed to give trouble that would entail heavy punishment. But it was only the comparatively well-conducted men who were placed upon road work; the rest were retained for work inside the jail, or were caged in solitary confinement. Each morning a number, varying from half a dozen to a dozen, were fastened up and flogged, in some cases with merciless severity, but it was seldom that a cry was uttered by these, the most brutal ruffians of the convict herd.

This spectacle was just over: it was conducted in public for the edification of the rest, but, judging from the low laughs and brutal jests, uttered below the breath, it signally failed in producing the desired impression. Two of those who had suffered the severest punishment were now putting on their coarse woolen garments over