their purification, which ought to have consisted of at least fourteen, instead of three days, could date only from that time—their previous detention at Lemon Valley having been useless. But, again, Old Woman’s Valley was anything but a proper place to send human beings to. A natural excavation out of the cliffs on the shore, and the hills which lead from them, up into the interior of the island, but which, as they descend towards the sea, approach each other, and form an abrupt and narrow ravine, from which a stream falls down on the rocky shore beneath, from a height of about fifty feet, is the place which is designated by the name of Old Woman’s Valley. But where the officer and crew were obliged to pass their three days of purification, was simply the sea-shore at the foot of the ravine, amidst the rocks and stones there, with no shelter, except what a narrow damp cave afforded, to protect them from the ardent heat of a tropical sun during the day, and the chilling rains that then fell during the night. And this was the hospitable treatment of British sailors who had been employed in the most arduous, dangerous, and glorious of all enterprises—the rescuing their fellow-creatures from slavery—received from the hands of their own country-men! Had there existed an absolute necessity for sending the officer and crew to Old Woman’s Valley, on account of no other places being available for their reception, there might have been an excuse; but there was a place, a place peculiarly suited for the occasion, from the circumstance of its distance of upwards of two miles from James’-town, its being surrounded by barren hills, without any inhabitant, so that there could be no fear of intercourse between the officer and crew, and the people of the island. This place is Banks’s Battery, where there is a large barrack, occupied then by only a serjeant and two soldiers, who could have been removed, and their accommodations given up to the officers and crews of all slavers bringing infectious diseases to St. Helena. Banks’s Battery ought to have been adopted for the quarantine quarters, where the period of purifying infections could have been passed with some degree of comfort, instead of Old Woman’s Valley, without a shed, or the least protection against the weather.

Having been appointed Surgeon to the liberated Africans by his Excellency the Governor, Major-General Middlemore, on the 18th December, the Colonial Surgeon, who had hitherto had the medical charge of them, was ordered to accompany me on the following day to Lemon Valley, and instal me in office there. The harbour-master’s boat conveyed us to the station; and the first impressions I received, both of the Valley and its occupants, were exceedingly disagreeable and disgusting. The wild toppling hills around, the seat of perpetual barrenness; the rocks and stones which everywhere strewed the ground, and obstructed the paths; the dirty, mean-looking huts that had been the dwellings of the fishermen; and worst of all, the abject, miserable, emaciated, squalid, and filthy appearance of the Africans—formed the various parts of a scene which seemed to combine all that the imagination could conceive of wretchedness. Emaciated as the most of them were, they were nevertheless considered to be healthy, when compared with those who were put on board the “Andorinha,” the hospital shlp.
Amongst them there was a general appearance of weakness and stiffness of the limbs, owing no doubt to their having been cramped up on board a ship—they seemed to drag themselves along, not walk; and looked very downcast, as if life had no further enjoyments for them; and appeared afraid and alarmed at the voice or gesture of a white man, who, they certainly had strong reasons hitherto to consider, could be nothing to them but a bourreau. From the almost universal prevalence of diarrhoea amongst them, the ground around their dwellings was covered with filth, although they had been landed only two days before. Many amongst them were covered with craw-craw, a loathsome but not dangerous disorder, that attacks the arms, legs, and other parts of the body, leaving thick scales, sometimes immense crusts of humour, over all the body. The greater part of them, whether children or adults, were affected with umbilical hernia; and if the great size of the tumour was an object of curiosity, it was a subject of apprehension for the uncertain tenure of the life of the person so affected, for it seemed as if it would burst from the least accident. Large sloughing ulcers on the breast, or the upper part of the arms, indicated where they had been branded by the Portuguese slave-dealer. This is called aitchirrimbo by the negroes, and is performed by heating an iron, with letters on it, generally the initial letters of the proprietor's name, red-hot, and applying it to the breast or arm, out of which it burns the skin, and leaves the mark of the letters. The branding is of course attended with cruel suffering, when the hot iron is hissing and smoking, and burning into the flesh; and is often followed by nearly as severe pain for weeks and months afterwards, on account of the sores not readily healing, and from a bad constitution or other causes fretting into ulcers. The object of the aitchirrimbo is to mark the slave, who can never efface it except by cutting out the piece of flesh. Exposed as the Africans were, for they had as yet received no clothing from the Establishment, their only covering being a bit of sailcloth, or a torn cotton handkerchief around their middle, of even which a great number were destitute, the sores with which they were affected, and their emaciated appearance, were brought fully to the view—and often had the eye to be averted to escape the sight of horrible and loathsome diseases.

Amongst them, however, were some who were passable in their appearance, being free from sores and eruptions, sleek and rather corpulent, with their hair neatly plaited and ornamented with strings of beads, and coins and pieces of metal, their necks and arms decked with necklaces and bracelets, and with large glittering copper rings around their legs for anklets. But there were others, free from disease, who were hideous from dirt alone; their hair, the growth of many years perhaps, hanging dishevelled on every side, and daubed over with red and yellow ochres, which had entangled and caked it into knots and patches.
AN EXCURSION TO THE WELLINGTON FALLS, 
VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.

BY THE EDITOR OF "THE HOBART TOWN COURIER."

The vivid description given by a correspondent, of a stupendous cataract on the south-west portion of Mount Wellington, excited an interest in our minds, which nothing but an actual visit to the scenery described would satisfy. We considered that if, on inspection, the falls and its localities were found to be at all commensurate with the ideas conveyed in the communication, it was matter of regret that scenery of such imposing grandeur should longer remain hid from the world, and particularly from the admiration of the inhabitants of Hobart.

With these impressions, we determined personally to visit the "Great Falls of Mount Wellington," and having found on actual investigation that the description given is no exaggeration, but that anything that it falls short of the actual grandeur of the scenery, we give our readers, land especially for the guidance of those who may wish to pay these remarkable falls a visit, a brief account of our interesting excursion.

Having engaged our guide to be in attendance, with two men to carry three days' provisions, in case of accident or unforeseen delay, we commenced our journey from Degraw's Mill at four o'clock in the morning, being accompanied by two friends; these, with the three guides and two volunteer assistants, made our party consist of eight individuals. We proceeded to ascend the mountain by what is called the "middle path," selected by our guide as being not only the easiest and most gradual ascent, and affording the best views of the surrounding scenery, but also as developing, in the greatest degree, the botanical arrangement of the face of Mount Wellington, incident to the various climates through which it is necessary to pass before the summit can be attained. The outset of our expedition lay along roads formed, many years ago, for the convenience of timber carriage, traversing which beaten paths, even had there been sufficient light, would not have created further interest than is manifested by an excursion to any of the hills around the city. As daylight advanced, these mountain tracks gradually became less distinct, being now seldom used; till at sunrise we found ourselves on the "middle path," clear of all other beaten paths 1000 feet above the level of the sea. Here the different species of Eucalyptus, the prevailing timber tree, with one species of Acacia, attain to an immense magnitude, and the ground being at the same time free from underwood, allows these majestic trees an opportunity of developing their stately growth and huge proportions to the wondering eye of the tourist beneath them.
For the next mile and a half the road proceeds in an oblique direction up the side of the hill. Here there is not much change in the species of vegetable productions; yet those already mentioned, gradually, as we ascend, assume a less growth, incident as well to the increasing scarcity of soil as to the effects of a more ungenial climate. At the upper end of this tract, where a hut is built, the soil becomes more scanty; its place being supplied by masses of basalt, the situation of which is the result, probably, of the same convulsion which gave being to the mountain itself. This hut, we were informed, is 1700 feet above the level of the sea. The road, for a short distance from the hut, is directly up the hill, and almost immediately on leaving it vegetation assumes a widely different character. *Eucalyptus* is still the predominant "lord of the forest;" but now it is attended by many beautiful and odoriferous species of plants, as underwood. *Sassafras*, *Tasmania*, *Gaultheria*, *Richesia*, *Sprengelia*, *Correa*, *Friesia*, &c., are here in sufficient abundance to stock all the botanical gardens in the universe, delighting the tourist with the beauty or splendour of their flowers and seed-vessels, and gratifying him by the fragrance which they disseminate around. This scene is soon abruptly changed by one of those stupendous freaks of nature, which appear to have been occasionally enacted by her for the express purpose of forming exceptions to the rules by which geologists attempt to illustrate her actions. On attaining an altitude of 250 feet above the hut, further progress appears to be arrested by a precipice 50 feet high. On inspection, this abrupt rock is found to be sandstone! Reposing on the bosom of one of the highest basaltic masses in the world, 1500 feet above the visible base, and 2000 feet below the summit of the basalt, with the same material extending for miles around, is a small table of the purest freestone, well adapted for the purposes of architecture. The top of this table is attained by steps formed in one of the crevices in its side. Here vegetable productions undergo quite as sudden a change as is exhibited in the mineral kingdom. If the extreme scantiness of the soil upon and around this rock were not sufficient to expose the sudden transition that had taken place from one formation to another, the alteration in the genera and growth of plants would itself be sufficient to create inquiry. *Eucalyptus*, still predominant, is stunted and shrubby, and the underwood entirely changed; *Boronia*, *Andersonia*, *Oxylomium*, *Phelabium*, and *Pultenea* are now general, but they merely prevail to the extent wherein the sandstone appears, which is about 70 yards from north to south, and 100 from east to west, having a perfectly level summit of that extent, three sides of which are precipitous, and the west side running to the acclivity of the mountain.

Here we have one of the most interesting views, obtainable during the tour, of the City, with its shipping; the sinuosities of the river, with its bays, peninsulas, and islands—Pittwater, Frederick Henry Bay, Storm Bay extending to the south as far as the eye can reach. To the east we even obtained a distant glimpse of the South Pacific Ocean, between two high hills, a chain of which was pointed out to us as being Tasman's Peninsula. This spot is admirably adapted for a pic-nic, and with but trifling labour in one portion of the ascent hither, is to be made easily
accessible for ladies. A spring or well close by of pure water is called "Dickinson's Well," after the name of our guide, to whom we are indebted for all the botanical pleasures of our journey. In his early rambles up the mountain, being struck with the enchanting views obtained from this favoured spot, he formed this small basin for the reception of the water trickling from the rock, and for the convenience of parties who might in future visit the place.

The White Patch, as this rock from its appearance is named, is considered 2000 feet above the level of the sea, or about half the altitude of the mountain. Our path now took a southerly course, and ran parallel to the base of the hill for about two miles; this course was judiciously chosen by our guide, to attain the less precipitous and least obstructed part by which to surmount the remaining acclivity. On this part of the road we sat down to a sumptuous bush breakfast, already prepared by two of the party who had preceded us for that purpose to the well previously mentioned. On this spot most of the trees are dead, and everything manifests signs of a less genial climate. About 200 yards before we reached the place at which we left the forest path to mount the unbeaten mountain brow, we passed a subterraneous waterfall, the hollow rumbling noise of which is slight at this period of the year, but like an earthquake in the rainy season, as if pouring into an enormous cavern. The place of divergence from the path, upon which much future ease or difficulty depends, is not marked, but appears to be left to the judgment of the guide; and to his experience of the locality of the mountain more or less exertion is either caused or avoided in the further ascent, as the case may be, and "now comes the tug of war!" In continuing to ascend, nearly all the plants abounding in the mountain gradually disappear, and are replaced by others of more hardy genera. The Eucalyptus, determined to be supreme, still struggles for existence, even to the mountain top, but there can assume no more imposing an appearance than a stunted shrub. At 250 feet of altitude, the Hakea is remarkable for its singular pine-like leaves and white blossoms. A little higher commences the famous Waratah, the beautiful scarlet blossoms of which are very attractive at this season of the year. The locality of both the last-mentioned plants is confined to a belt about 1000 feet wide; perhaps the latter ranges a little higher in favourable situations. Near to and upon the summit the plants are very remarkable to the eye of one who seldom quits the plain; the foliage, the flowers, or the seed-vessels, having generally some striking characteristic to attract attention—Epacridae (an extensive tribe), Lisanthe, Andersonia, Monotoeca, the Mountain Richiea, and numbers of others, are in bloom at every step.

We reached the mountain summit at half-past 8 A.M., in prime order to prosecute our further investigations. Unfortunately the last 500 feet had to be encountered through a fog, which, on attaining our present position, was more dense, and as we proceeded along the plain towards the Falls became a drizzling rain, which soon claimed a closer intimacy with our bush clothing than was absolutely pleasant, but could not
however damp our spirits. Moreover, our landmarks were enveloped, and we depended alone upon the skill and care of our guide to pilot us over the somewhat coarse *turkey carpet* spread on the mountain top. At half-past nine we reached the commencement of the bed of the stream which drains the plain at the top of Mount Wellington, and, in part supplies the Falls. Down this bed, consisting of huge rocks, increasing in magnitude as you descend, we proceeded, à-la-kangaroo, by hops and jumps, (dancing the Polka is a joke compared to the exertion requisite to be kept up for about four miles,) until a cheer, bursting from the foremost of our party, announced to the rear our near proximity to the great object of our toil. And now all were brought to a stand—each became silent—gazing with admiration at the wonderful and magnificent works of nature here exhibited. An abrupt fall of twenty or thirty feet compels the visitor to halt; beneath him the waters are received into a basin, and flowing over an edge are at once lost to view. This edge is the top of the Great Fall. On looking to discover what is become of the water, the spectator beholds immediately before him an enormous chasm, on each side of which the basaltic rock, assuming its columnar form, rises to a far greater altitude than the place from which he is now viewing the magnificent scene. The base of these columns, the bottom of the chasm, cannot be seen, in consequence of the depth and extreme narrowness of the rent, which appears to proceed at a right angle from the bed of the river. To obtain a view of this tremendous rent, it now becomes necessary, first, to ascend the hill, then to proceed along the bush for a short distance, and finally to descend a very precipitous path until you reach the bottom of the towering basaltic columns, from the summit of which the liquid element is now seen rushing headlong down. We proceeded up the chasm described by Tyro, till the spray of the cataract fell in a shower around us, from whence viewing the majestic fall, the stupendous precipices on either side, and the magnificent and beautiful scenery by which the whole is enclosed, we feel the attempt difficult—if, indeed, it would not prove abortive—to describe the *ensemble* of the scene, which will affect individuals differently according as the taste and perceptions of the grand and sublime in nature have received cultivation. It is to be regretted that our little party, suddenly formed, were not prepared to measure the height of the cataract, which, in our estimation, is about 200 feet. Upon this point there is a difference of opinion; our guide estimates the height at 150, while some few individuals who profess to have visited the spot give a much meaner altitude to these romantic Falls. The summit of the basaltic columns on each side of the Falls appear to be fifty or sixty feet higher.

After feasting our eyes for some moments with the wild and romantic scenery by which this place is surrounded, having attained the object of our search, we were unwillingly compelled, before we had sufficient time fully to satisfy our admiration, to retrace our steps by the same route which we had already traversed in approaching the Falls. It is the opinion of our guide—and from his knowledge of the mountain we doubt not he is correct—that an easy horse road may be made from the
city along the south-east acclivity of Mount Wellington, which would obviate the necessity of an ascent of some 700 or 1000 feet, and make the Falls approachable by a not very difficult ride of 10 miles. If this be the case, it is highly desirable that such a road should be immediately commenced, and we would recommend subscriptions to be opened for that purpose; the funds collected to be at the disposal of a committee, who shall see it properly expended in the object for which it is subscribed.

The vegetation on the margin of the stream, along which we had to ascend, is very different from the city side of the mountain; but the ruggedness of the road, combined with the continual drizzling rain, prevented accurate attention to the vegetable kingdom.

By 8 o'clock we had returned to where the stream leaves the plain on the mountain top. Here we again halted our now weary limbs, having procured keen appetites from the length of the journey, and the incessant exertion of skipping and jumping from rock to rock, both up and down the bed of the river. At this place, on each side of the watercourse, the basalt assumes a most singular appearance; the whole plain appears very roughly paved with huge blocks, each of which leans towards the direction taken by the stream, exhibiting a "regular confusion," which, viewed from a distance, gives the country the appearance of roughly-ploughed land; and not a single plant appearing between these masses of stone, assists in the delusion. The sight of this strange and remarkable frolic of nature is alone sufficient to repay a visit to this grand depot of natural curiosities.

Our return across the plain exercised the experience of our guide to the utmost, the denseness of the fog completely precluding the sight of all objects at a greater distance than 10 or 15 yards. Furthermore, the irregularity of the "heather" put our pedestrian abilities to the test, and induced us to remark, that a carpet, with the ends of the threads cut shorter, would be more in unison with the now increasing tenderness of our feet. On attaining the eastern acclivity, the peril of attempting a descent in a fog struck us most forcibly. Any one portion of this precipice first struck upon, in coming from the plain, will appear to the unpractised eye exactly like all the others, and without great circumspection and care on the part of our guide we might have commenced our descent either in the direction of Brown's River or that of New Norfolk, or of any of the intervening places. An examination of the nature and growth of the plants around us seemed, however, sufficient for him; and after a little delay, required under the circumstances to bring conviction to his mind of being in the proper direction, we commenced our descent at half-past four. This downward portion of our journey was the least agreeable; and after struggling through the fog and the scrub, and over the rocks for a good clock hour, which seemed to us like two full hours rolled into one, we found ourselves once more in the "middle path," within 100 yards of the very place which we left in the morning to commence our ascent. All difficulties being now considered as surmounted, we agreed to proceed round to the stream, or "springs" as it is called, which supplies, or rather ought to supply, the town with water. We gratified ourselves with a view of this useful watercourse; and wondering by what clever
contrivance it happened that with such a prolucid and plentiful stream as may here be seen running, the inhabitants of the city below should be literally gasping for a cup of clear water, we abandoned for the present the solution of the riddle, put our best leg forward, which after such a scramble was in good truth nothing to brag of, and, with a rapid descent, gained the spot at 8 o’clock P.M. from which we had started sixteen hours previously.

ON THE DEFENCELESS STATE OF ENGLAND.

Mr. Editor,—That which is not only interesting, but of vital importance to the Mother Country, must naturally prove of moment to the Colonies; and as the attention of our Government, and that of politicians, has of late been drawn to the defenceless state of our maritime ports, and the coast generally,—principally, I believe, owing to the sentiments expressed by M. Thiers, in his fourth volume of "The Consulate and the Empire,"—I think it right that every writer who possesses any degree of patriotism should, by every means in his power, point out the vulnerable part of Old England, in lieu of lulling ourselves into the absurdest of all beliefs, that we are sheltered from a coup de main.

Lord Palmerston, able statesman and diplomatist as he is, takes a right view of the case. On more than one occasion has he pointed out to the nation at large the defenceless state of our coasts, when compared with those of France, whose maritime ports bristle with cannon, and are of far more difficult access than our own. Lord Palmerston knows that we are no longer in the days of Pitt—good old times, as some good old noodles are pleased to call them—when everybody trusted to the wooden walls of our sea-girt isle, when the navies of France were insignificant compared to ours, because they had been swept from the face of the ocean. These good old folk of these good old times actually declared, that 120,000 Frenchmen, had they effected a landing, would have been eaten up, muskets, knapsacks, and accoutrements included, cre they could have reached London. All this, Mr. Editor, is very fine in theory; it may do to amuse the children of those good old times, and such tales as these might figure to advantage on the same shelf with Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-Killer.

Let us merely presume, for the sake of argument, His Majesty Louis-Philippe dead, embalmed, and quietly slumbering in the tomb of all the Capulets at Dreux, with a more warlike and sanguinary monarch seated on the Throne of July.

We will also presume the entente cordiale transformed into a casus belli, and that at a very short notice. Now, Sir, where should we be, with neighbours (and a pretty restless set they are) having a standing army of nearly 350,000 men, exclusive of artillery, cavalry, engineers, and a well-armed and beautifully-equipped National Guard? I rather
fear we should find ourselves in a sad plight were an invasion bruited, but in a great mess were it accomplished.

No doubt, Mr. Editor, many persons will “Pooh! pooh!” and declare all this to be nonsense. They will call me fool, ignoramus, and talk of our army, our navy, our pensioners, remnants of a glorious army of martyrs, and pompously brag of the immense utility of the railways now constructed or in contemplation, which will enable the Commander-in-chief, whoever he may be, to concentrate his soldiers, or send them to the right-about, at a moment’s notice, to the threatened points. They will rave about the valour and patriotism of our shopkeepers and burgesses in general, and talk of a thousand things, which are easily said when the enemy is at a distance. God forbid that we should ever have an invasion! for I anticipate, were it conducted by men of experience, possessing a knowledge of John Bull’s foibles, and well acquainted with the country, the results would be terrible. There can be no doubt, if Napoleon had had steam at his command, that he would have landed—marched to London—and have planted the tricolor on the cross of St. Paul’s.

We, I mean the English, are not a warlike people. We are a nation of farmers and shopkeepers, who prefer handling the ruler to the musket. The French, on the contrary, are fond of soldiering and fighting; it is their hobby. Little boys in the Tuileries may be seen strutting about with tin swords before they have lost their milk teeth—by the time they have attained their teens, they talk of Napoleon and learn to fence—and their eighteenth year finds them either drafted into regiments of the line, or else figuring in the uniform of the National Guard. By the time they are of age, every man knows how to handle a musket; and, what is worse, they dream of glory and sanguinary battles, with an utter contempt for death.

Supposing, for instance, that 200,000 such men, animated with hatred towards la perfide Albion, and burning with desire to crush her pride, were to land, say 150,000 in three different parts of England, and 50,000 in Ireland. The first question would naturally be—What is to be done? and the second—Where are we to find soldiers to drive them out again or take them prisoners? I am very much afraid, Mr. Editor, if we have to wait until the first question be put, it will be, as the cockneys quaintly say, all hup with us, for no one knows where the troops, I will not say the men, are to be found who will be able to oppose the murderous advance of so formidable a foe. If my estimates are correct, I do not think that we have 40,000 men in England to oppose the invaders: Ireland cannot be left unguarded; on the contrary, she would require a further increase of from 40 to 50,000 men to fight the enemy and keep the discontented in subjection. Zounds! Old England would find herself in a pretty stew! It is mighty fine talking of arming invalids and volunteers. The former, it is true, might serve to defend fortified towns, if we had any; but as regards the latter, why not one-eighth of them would know whether to load a gun at the muzzle or the breech, and ten to one the rear would blow out the brains of the front rank.
Government is evidently in a plight, though the Ministers will not confess their uneasiness. Our rulers, though they see the necessity of adopting some steps to prevent or overawe an invasion, which may some day be contemplated, know not how to commence. If they arm a large militia in England and Scotland, they must do the same in Ireland; and it is not likely that the Duke of Wellington will consent to the forming of a National Guard, some 100,000 strong, one-half of whom are O'Connellists and mad for repulse. That would be raising a hornet's nest about them. With regard to England, our rulers no doubt consider the remedy as bad, if not worse, than the evil, for the discontent—I say discontent, for there is no use shutting our eyes to the fact, that the existing obnoxious corn, poor, game, and other laws, have greatly dissatisfied the mass of the people, who now begin to reason, in lieu of blindly believing the sayings of their aristocratic masters, as their forefathers did in those dear, good old times so much regretted by many—the discontent which now prevails will be a mark to the arming of the middle classes in England.

It appears to me, Mr. Editor, that pending the question, To arm or not to arm? we shall continue to live in the fear of a foreign invasion.

The railways, which are considered of so much use in England, will prove of the same utility in France. She will be enabled, in an incredible short space of time, so soon as these railroads are completed, to send whole regiments to the points of embarkation, without giving our spies time to notify any such contemplated movements; and ere the news of their embarkation reaches England, the enemy may be halfway across the Channel.

If one-half of the money lavished on royal progresses at home and abroad, in church-building and church extensions, in sums thrown away upon missionaries and all such-like absurdities and manias, were devoted to vital purposes, England might have a standing army of at least 150,000 men. Our pensioners, drafted into veteran corps, would form useful and powerful auxiliaries, if stationed along the coast, ready to act in cases of emergency. Though not an Arago or an astrologer, I prophesy, that the day is not far distant when we shall have to turn to soldiering in self-defence; though it is not genial to the feelings of an Englishman to have to buckle on the sword or attend drills, thereby neglecting his business. But it must come to this, otherwise the visit which may be paid by "la Jeune France" to Old England may be anything but an agreeable one. Gare la bombe!

Neither have we a single stronghold where our troops might seek temporary shelter in expectation of reinforcements, or check the advance of the invaders. The fortifications at Portsmouth are ineffectual, and Brighton and other towns on the coast might be blown to atoms in the course of a few hours. The banks of the Thames are very defenceless, and a French steam fleet entering that river unawares would play sad havoc, and perhaps burn our fleet of merchantmen in the Pool. These are disagreeable truths, Mr. Editor; they are