

THE DIFFICULTIES OF MY POSITION

THE DIARIES OF PRISON GOVERNOR
JOHN BUCKLEY CASTIEAU
1855-1884



EDITED AND INTRODUCED BY MARK FINNANE



John Buckley Castieau
Photograph courtesy of
Ian McKellar and Brian Castieau

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The book is dedicated to the memory of my father, Peter Kevin Finnane (1926–2001), who often listened to my stories from Castieau and would have enjoyed reading this original voice from nineteenth-century Melbourne.

Mark Finnane
Brisbane, 2004

INTRODUCTION

John Buckley Castieau was of the gold-rush generation, one of the many thousands of young and anxious immigrants to Victoria in the early 1850s. They became builders of state and society, creating colonial institutions in a British heritage but shaping them pragmatically to suit local circumstances. Castieau's historical significance is modest. Weighed on the scales of historical attention against those many talented, ambitious and successful peers of his generation, his name scarcely survives in the written record of the times. What he left behind him however were the diaries he kept over the three decades of his time in Victoria. As diaries can do, they enliven our sense of urban life at a time of great creativity.

One of the earliest products of the nineteenth-century revolution in government was the bureaucratic prison. In place of the eighteenth-century institution, that barely kept the incarcerated separate from those outside, the nineteenth-century prison was an enclosure peopled by inmates and staff whose lives were ordered by an increasingly refined governmental apparatus. There were careers made at all levels of this system, entire lives worked out through a career as inmate, or as warder, as prison governor, or as matron. Castieau became one of those who sought financial security in this service.

Victoria's penal institutions were the product of an enthusiasm for institution building that dominated the 1850s and early 1860s. By the time fiscal exhaustion brought on a temporary halt there was already an enviable list of major institutions—gaols, hospitals and asylums—describing a carceral map of Victoria.¹ Gaols and prisons would not attract the interest in the twentieth century that they did in the nineteenth, as visible signs of order and civilised accomplishment. When the celebrated English comic actor Charles Mathews arrived in Melbourne in 1870 he was struck by colonial puffing about such places, reflecting back to the members of the Yorick Club the questions he typically faced:

'Are you not surprised at Melbourne?' How do you like our town?
'Have you seen our town-hall, our Parliament-houses—and our gaol?'
(Much laughter.)²

The task of running such places was given to those who had come to the colony expecting a fortune from gold, or simply a security from the opportunities which gold would bring in its wake. We do not know exactly why

1 See Peter Lynn and George Armstrong, *From Pentonville to Pentridge: A History of Prisons in Victoria* (Melbourne: State Library of Victoria, 1996) and James Semple Kerr, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Australia's Place of Confinement, 1788–1988* (Sydney: S.H. Ervin Gallery in association with the Australian Bicentenary Authority, 1988).

2 *The Argus*, 29 March 1870, p. 5.

What makes Castieau exceptional in the historical record is what he left behind him—a collection of diaries that cover (intermittently) three decades of his life as prison warder, governor and inspector-general; his years as a young lad in the wild early days of the newly-separated colony; his hypochondria; his feelings as a Victorian husband and father with a capacity for ironic reflection on the relations of the sexes; and his experiences as an urban clubman who read and conversed with some of the leading figures in Victorian cultural life of the 1870s. The diaries are, above all, a vital record of daily life in Melbourne during its years as one of the Empire's leading cities. As a rich domestic and professional daily record, they demand attention beside other personal insights into colonial life, such as those of the police functionary and clubman Frederick Standish, or even of the more literary Annie Baxter Dawbin.⁵

Castieau's background is obscure—and across 30 years of diary writing there is very little reference to his pre-Australian life. His marriage certificate of 1858 reports his birth at Gosport, Hampshire in 1831, the son of a Major John B. Castieau of Portsmouth and of Emma, née Whitcombe.⁶ He migrated to Australia in 1852, accompanied by his sisters, 27-year-old Harriette and 21-year-old Emma, both of whom feature regularly in the early diaries.⁷ Their parents appear to have separated and the three emigrant children kept contact with their father by regular correspondence. The fate of their mother is unknown and unmentioned in the diaries, but the Major, as Castieau refers to him, lived on to the age of 92, dying only three years before Castieau in 1882.

Into the 1870s Castieau was still sending his father copies of *The Australasian*, the illustrated Melbourne weekly, every month. The distance between the children and parents seems greater than that between Australia and 'Home'. Major Castieau had enlisted in the British Army during the Napoleonic wars and had obtained successive promotions during a long service with the Royal Marines.⁸ He was periodically engaged in service in

- 5 On the value of the Standish Diary (not published) see Paul De Serville, *Pounds and Pedigrees: The Upper Class in Victoria 1850–80* (South Melbourne, Oxford University Press 1991), ch. 2; and for Annie Baxter Dawbin (now extensively published for the years 1858–1868) see Annie Baxter Dawbin, *The Journal of Annie Baxter Dawbin: July 1858 – May 1868*, ed. Lucy Frost, Academy Editions of Australian Literature. (St Lucia, Qld: UQP with State Library of New South Wales, 1998).
- 6 The Major was in turn the son of a William Castieau (born c.1752) and Phoebe Johnson (c.1765), married at St Anne's Soho, Westminster, 1784 (information courtesy of Ian McKellar). William might be the William Castieau, author of the 'astronomical, mechanical and every other branch of the mathematics' sections of an enlightenment dictionary, held by the National Library: Percival Proctor and William Castieau, *The Modern Dictionary of Arts and Sciences ...* (London: The Authors, 1774).
- 7 Obit *The Argus*, 26 January 1885. Marriage register, Christ Church, Beechworth, 30 Dec 1858. Public Record Office Victoria Shipping lists. They departed on the *Northumberland*, which left Plymouth for Port Phillip via London on 12 August 1852.
- 8 The military service is documented through successive volumes of the official Army lists. See *The Army List* (London: HMSO, 1870), p. 88.

Spain and Portugal throughout the 1830s, that is during the first 10 years of Castieau's life. In the few references to his father in the diaries there is a good deal of emotional tension—and a distinct sense of inadequacy—when finally a photo of a now 84-year-old 'hale, hearty, upright old chap' arrives in the post in 1874⁹. For the rest, there is only silence.

There is no evidence of contact with the mother, but in 1870 Castieau was ready enough to respond to a 'Mrs Castieau' from Nottingham who had written claiming him as her son; they exchanged photographs but perhaps nothing more.¹⁰ He was, it appears, like many colonials, one whose voyage across the world was a dramatic break with a childhood in another place, but bearing the cultural baggage of that childhood and youth. There was some family misfortune in the past, a hardship to which Castieau alludes in 1855, chastising himself for 'foolishly squandering means which if properly applied would have rendered efficient service to many at home who were the means of saving us all as it were from misery if not destitution'.¹¹

Since he almost certainly had no money, the most important item of this immigrant's baggage was education. Was he a great-grandson of one of England's Enlightenment scholars, William Castieau, who composed the mathematics section of the 1774 London publication of *The Modern Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*?¹² Whatever the case, his own education prepared Castieau for a life in a colonial Victoria that was vitally engaged with contemporary literature, journalism and popular theatre, as well as giving him access to the all-important economic billet. Against the background cultivation of his literary sensibility, he daily reflected on his own and other's fortunes, disappointments, sorrows and fates. Writing the diary was a solace, and a means of personal reformation. In the diary Castieau registered his failings and his progress in meeting the social and ethical aspirations characteristic of his time.

He was scarcely alone in this pursuit in his era but this, we must remember, was a man whose daily task was the imprisonment of others. Prisoners write diaries, but how many prison governors? That is one reason for reading Castieau—from him we learn much about the routines of punishment in the everyday life of a prison in the colonial period. Another reason is the extraordinary record the diaries provide of masculinity and domesticity in the colonial era; Castieau's reflections have attracted some attention in just such a context.¹³ A third reason is the insight his record of daily life gives into the lineaments of the administrative state in the nineteenth century; what were

9 See Diary, 14 December 1874.

10 Diary, 21 January 1870.

11 Diary, 27 December 1855.

12 See above, note 6.

13 See David Goodman, *Gold Seeking: Victoria and California in the 1850s* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1994), pp. 149, 163–167. Goodman's use of the diary is restricted to the early years when Castieau was single, not the majority of the 30-year period when he was married.

the conditions of life as a public servant in this age of the burgeoning state? Castieau's persona is not a unified one—the diaries are invaluable in enabling us to approach an understanding of this person's many masks. Reading his diaries suggests some need to qualify the kinds of differences between women's and men's diary keeping, suggested by other historians.¹⁴ Castieau certainly chronicled a 'public' world, but the domestic minutiae of everyday life are also captured in his relentless record. In the following pages I explore the ways in which the diaries capture these aspects of a life in colonial Victoria.

DIARY OF A PRISON GOVERNOR

By the time Castieau was appointed to head Beechworth's gaol in 1856 he had already spent some years in the colony's infant penal system. His initial appointment as a turnkey to the Melbourne Gaol on Christmas Day 1852 was followed by his promotion to senior turnkey a week later and an appointment as gaoler to the Eastern Gaol in 1854. His subsequent promotion in March 1856 to the position of governor of the Beechworth Gaol was to be the turning point of his life, enabling him to consolidate a career in the prisons service, and to build a network of political and social associations that served him well when he returned to Melbourne in 1869. It was also the pathway from bachelorhood to marriage and domesticity. He left Melbourne very much the single man but by the time he returned to take up his position as governor of the metropolitan gaol, he brought with him a wife and six children. His 12 years service there was eventually to be rewarded with appointment as Inspector-General of Penal Establishments in 1881, prior to being forced by ill-health and government dissatisfaction to retire in 1884.¹⁵

How did Castieau reflect on his career? What was his perception of his role and responsibilities? The prison, like other major public institutions of the nineteenth century, was regulated by a system of records that included admission, discharge and punishment books, and a daily chronicle of events and other matters of note. The records survive remarkably well in many jurisdictions and in Victoria no less so. Castieau's diary however is a private record, its purpose being to monitor his own life, in its various dimensions. His work is rarely forgotten but neither does it obscure the more important issues of colonial life—getting on, enjoying oneself, establishing and maintaining a reputation, being a part of the world. The diary begins self-consciously and purposefully, and in the aftermath of a fundamental event in the making of Victoria:

14 Cf Penny Russell, *A Wish of Distinction: Colonial Gentility and Femininity* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1994), pp. 62–63.

15 Public Record Office Victoria: VPRS 538.2, Officers' Register 1852–1887, John B. Castieau, folio 50. This is the full service record.

Purchased this Diary for which I paid 10/- and considered reasonable, it being but 50 per cent over the Home cost. Went to the Main Gaol to hear tidings of the State Prisoners, charged with Treason in taking up arms against the Government at Balaarat ...

There is a great deal of excitement in the Town, and the Gaol Authorities fearing violence have barricaded and strengthened the Entrance, as well as made a door as close to the Court as possible by which to take the prisoners too and from Trial. I remarked that people might break doors to get out, but that I hardly thought they would break them to get into the prison.¹⁶

The solid stone walls of the later colonial gaols signified a material distinction between the law-abiding and the criminal, but from his unique perspective Castieau documented a constant movement into and out of the prison of prisoners, visitors, officials, cabinet ministers, the media and, in less auspicious times, of royal commissioners and other official investigators. Castieau's work as a prison governor can be seen above all as a position that oversees these constant movements. A detailed account of this career would exceed the space available here so I restrict my exposition of this process to a small number of instances—to the management of communications with other agencies; to the marshalling and management of press commentary; and to his role as a guardian (sometimes a guardian angel) of the prisoners themselves.

The development of a career as a prison governor required careful management of information about the prison—and about one's career. Early on, Castieau was conscious of the interaction:

Mr Wintle called this morning, previous I had received a letter from him enclosing Returns to be made for the Blue Book. These returns were for the whole year & I hastily imagined, an intention to impose upon me other peoples work, so I indignantly sat down to write a letter stating my inability to furnish the required information.

I sent the letter in and then of course as I always do, considered I had acted hastily and that my refusal might be construed into laziness or disinclination to give satisfaction. I shall never get on unless I think before I act.¹⁷

'Get on'—the phrase summons up all the tactics disclosed by Castieau as he seeks to place himself in the best position allowed by his circumstances. 'Getting on' demanded the cultivation of the right kind of connections, and in this young city the press was vital to the making of reputations, of persons and institutions.

16 Diary, 16 January 1855.

17 Diary, 24 January 1855.

Castieau's relations to journalism and the cultural life of the colony were complex and will be discussed later, but in a city with such a lively literary and journalistic culture it is not altogether surprising that his profile is almost invisible in later histories.¹⁸ Regardless of his cultural pretensions and engagements, it was precisely in his role as a prison governor that he was commonly obliged to nurture the press. His readiness to inform the public about the colony's penal system is evident from his early years in the Eastern Gaol when he regularly provided the *The Argus* with information on the state of the prison. By the 1870s, as one of the colony's senior penal administrators, he was in a position to shape public opinion more actively or else—as he saw it—to challenge complacency and cant.

From the eighteenth century, crime and punishment were major themes in the popular press, and in the journals of the intellectual and governing elites.¹⁹ In colonial cities, the local press, indispensable translator of ideas from 'Home' and cultivator of colonial idioms, kept matters of punishment before the public eye. The apparatus of punishment was already visible enough, whether in the form of gibbets on Pinchgut Island in Port Jackson, in the public stocks in 1840s Melbourne, or in the visibility of the gaols which, for much of the colonial period, were the largest public institutions in a town or city.²⁰ The media fed on stories of punishment with alacrity, so that no paper was complete without its formulaic accounts of amusements from the police court, the horrors of Norfolk Island, and grizzly details of a flogging.

For a senior prison administrator like Castieau, the attention of the media presented both dangers and opportunities. The dangers were well in mind when at the age of 26, early in his career as Governor of Beechworth Gaol, he heard from Melbourne of the fatal attack by convicts on the Inspector-General, John Price.²¹ Castieau's diary comment reflected a common anxiety of prisoners' keepers about the perceived double standards applying in the press in relation to crime and punishment. Price's murder was commonly

18 For example, in spite of Castieau's membership of both the Garrick and Yorick clubs, and his frequent associations with leading figures in those clubs, he is unmentioned in such contributions to the cultural history of the period as Harold Love, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1989) and Lurline Stuart, *James Smith: The Making of a Colonial Culture* (Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1989). His membership of the Yorick Club is registered, however, in Paul De Serville, *Pounds and Pedigrees: The Upper Class in Victoria 1850–80* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 381.

19 For the extensive coverage of crime and punishment in Victorian era periodicals see E.M. Palmegiano (comp.), *Crime in Victorian Britain: An Annotated Bibliography from Nineteenth-Century British Magazines*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).

20 James Semple Kerr, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind* (Sydney, 1988), pp. 19–20, 72. For the stocks in Melbourne see, W.F.E. Liardet, *Liardet's Water-Colours of Early Melbourne*, introduced by Susan Adams, ed. Weston Bate (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1972), p. 27.

21 John Price (1808–1857), formerly a commandant of Norfolk Island, appointed Inspector-General of Penal Establishments in Victoria in 1854, notorious for his harsh discipline (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

(and later) seen as the revenge of convicts on a brutal governor, whose Norfolk Island reputation had stained him forever. Castieau wondered, however, whether the press would always be so critical of violence in a man, especially where it was exercised by a convict:

The officers of the Hulks naturally consider their lives in danger and do their duty dispiritedly, feeling the irritating consciousness that if ever in resisting personal violence they give a prisoner an unlucky tap the wrath of the Press will be poured upon them and abominable cruelties, the invention of men who know not truth, laid to their charge. Should a poor 'Melville' brutally knock the Officer's brains out the persecution to which he has been subject will of course be sufficient excuse.²²

Subsequently in his career, Castieau sought out the press to watch over his own reputation and to protect that of his department. Clubland in Melbourne, as in Beechworth, provided the opportunity to meet the major players in the formation of colonial opinion. In Melbourne's Yorick Club or the Athenaeum, Castieau met numerous journalists on a daily basis. To them he offered stories and incidents from prison life; from them he got consideration and first call when a major prisons issue blew up.

In an official capacity, it was Castieau's duty not only to provide information to the press in response to their inquiries regarding crime and the condition of prisons, but to ensure that the punishment of flogging would receive the proper exemplary publicity. Castieau's day would frequently be occupied with attending the courts next to the gaol, where he would meet the press and pass on stories about current business. Here he would invite reporters to floggings when they were about to take place. How ready the journalists were to respond was a matter of competing stories on the day. Hence in March 1872, a major adultery suit involving a Melbourne doctor was enough to distract the reporters from news of a flogging, as Castieau records:

There was a Flogging this afternoon but owing I suppose to the superior attractions of Clarson V Blair there was not the usual crowd; only one reporter put in an appearance ... Altogether there were only three person besides the officials present & this I certainly think a decided improvement upon the crowd that usually assembles to see the flagellator do his degrading work.²³

Castieau may well have persuaded the government to restrict public access to floggings, for only a couple of months later the Chief Secretary ordered that

22 Diary, 29 March 1857.

23 Diary, 1 March 1872.

in future only gaol officials, the Chief Medical Officer and a single journalist from each newspaper would be admitted to witness these displays of punishment.²⁴ The importance of press reporting of such events was enhanced by such a restriction, and Castieau's role in gathering in the necessary witnesses thereby enlarged. It was not a duty he embraced with any enthusiasm; his distaste for the spectacle is evident in numerous comments in the diaries.²⁵

Castieau's office as a public servant required him to draw a fine line between public engagement and a more subtle shaping of public opinion. During the hearings of the Victorian Penal Commission in 1870, for example, he commonly discussed the direction of events with journalists and others close to the commission, drawing their attention to the realities of life in the gaols. But on occasion he was ready to go into print himself. On 3 February 1870, *The Argus* editorialised on the Melbourne 'roughs' who had been fined £20 for an assault on police and demanded a 'system of penal discipline' which would compel the 'Devil's Regiment' to support themselves through hard labour and plain diet in the colony's prisons. Castieau was incensed by the implications drawn from the paper's favourable view of the hard labour system at the Dunedin Gaol:

Interested myself this afternoon in writing a letter to *The Argus* in reply to a Leading Article they published last week with regard to Dunedin Gaol & the management thereof, showed it to Walford who considered I had a right to send it to the *The Argus* without infringing the Civil Service Regulations so after getting Polly's approval of the letter I forwarded it.²⁶

Thus fortified with approval from the Sheriff's Office, and from his wife, Polly, Castieau did not hold back. 'The luxurious living of the gaol inmates has become a hackneyed theme for public writers,' he jibed, before detailing the meagre diet of the Melbourne Gaol prisoners. Castieau's years spent reading Victorian fiction as well as the daily press enabled him to engage *The Argus* on equal terms. The paper's high opinion of the Governor of Dunedin Gaol was derided:

He is doubtless wise in his own generation, and has blown his own trumpet most sonorously; but beyond that, I humbly submit, he is most common-place. His report abounds in cribs and the stalest truisms, one of which made me laugh at its depth. 'Prisoners', he says, 'are an artful class'. Is not that a new idea?²⁷

24 *The Argus*, 6 May 1872, p. 5. For the circular see Public Record Office Victoria; VPRS 10849 Vol. 1, Inspector-General Circulars, Memo 72/37, folio 124, 29 April 1872 (VPRO).

25 For a more extended discussion see M. Finnane, *Punishment in Australian Society*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 108–113.

26 Diary, 10 February 1870.

27 J.B. Castieau, Letter to *The Argus*, 11 February 1870, p. 7.

Castieau's letter was published and brought a visitor to the gaol:

In the afternoon the Sub Editor of *The Argus*, evidently the writer of the article I answered, came to see me & I took him through the Gaol & expressed my views on prison matters, pointed out to him the want of employment for the women &c.²⁸

The result was a backhanded compliment, read with irony by Castieau.

In *The Argus* of this morning a Leading Article appeared in which 'my taking an erroneous view of the meaning of a previous article' was 'readily excused' 'in consideration of my evident desire to improve the system in vogue at the Establishment of which I was the Head'. I was called 'Zealous & intelligent' & then (without acknowledgement) my views as expressed to the sub-editor were put forth as the 'correct card'.²⁹

The cultivation of the press was thus part of the job, a priority indeed in a service which was vulnerable to as many-pronged assaults as the prison service. Prisons were always too abusive or too lenient; corporal punishment always too harsh or too absent; criminals too often undeterred by the prison or else too broken by the rigours of senseless incarceration. The nineteenth-century institution was at one and the same time a sign of government's service to the people, and a source of potential embarrassment. Hence the importance of one in Castieau's position steering the right course through these hazardous shoals.

There was also a personal investment in the cultivation of right relations with the media, an investment which paid dividends in 1873 when Castieau risked all in an embarrassing altercation with police and a prostitute. Friends in the media and in high political places conspired to limit the damage, and Castieau understandably dissembled to protect himself and his family. The government's notice was attracted when an anonymous letter to the Editor of the *Melbourne Morning Herald* was forwarded by the Editor to the Chief Secretary. It alleged that Castieau had been arrested for a breach of the peace and subsequently fined 10/- in the Magistrate's Court. 'Gaol Bird' asked: 'If this be so why should Bill Sykes be made very public with a big heading and Mr Castieau's escapade suppressed?'

Subsequent enquiries by the government managed to contain the potential damage, but Castieau was demoted in rank, a significant punishment for somebody of his office and tight financial circumstances, and one also on the verge of promotion. Castieau did not deny the substance of the case. He had been arrested at 1.45 am at the corner of Bourke and Stephen Streets after an altercation with a Constable Healy. Healy had noticed 'a respectable looking

28 Diary, 11 February 1870.

29 Diary, 12 February 1870.

man sitting on the door step of the Chemists Shop ... with a low prostitute'. He had told the woman to go home but Castieau had intervened and demanded that the constable bring the woman back. The constable refused and Castieau threatened him: 'I'll have you arrested in the morning you damn fellow', whereupon *he* was arrested. A crowd gathered and the Constable was told that this was the Governor of Melbourne Gaol. After that, Castieau went quietly to the watchhouse 'except that he called to the crowd and said "Men of England will you see me taken by a damn fellow like this?" Mr Castieau was in fact in the state which is best described as violently drunk.'³⁰

Castieau's account differed; he admitted an indiscretion, but not of a serious nature. But constructing an account of himself as a sober and respectable citizen he likely exceeded the bounds of credibility in the well-knit male community of Melbourne society:

I spent the evening with some friends & must have taken more liquor than I should, being unaccustomed to excess, I also smoked a cigar which I have since been told was a very strong one & upon my going into the air it had such an effect upon me that I hardly feel conscious of what took place ... The constable probably saw a woman following me with some evil intent & interfered, which interference I thought uncalled for & led to an altercation which resulted in my going to the Watch-house.³¹

Castieau's construction was disingenuous, at least in the context of his earlier life. Years before, in Melbourne and then in Beechworth, there had been other public incidents, a drunken brawl on Christmas Day 1855 leading to him being escorted back to the Eastern Gaol by a constable; and then five years later he broke the Post Office windows in Beechworth while in a drunken stupor.³² By the 1870s the threat of penury encouraged restraint—a middle-ranking civil servant with a family of eight was struggling to keep up appearances. The arrest and fine in 1873, together with a demotion and a subsequent lengthy period of rejected promotion applications (at least for another five years, to 1878) were significant blows, and there is a sense after this time of a determinedly sober and remorseful Castieau finally surrendering to the demands of public life and domestic responsibility, absenting himself from the Bohemian ways of the pubs and clubs of Melbourne. Castieau's cultivation of the press nevertheless had saved him on this occasion from a worse fate—major public exposure and ridicule.

30 Public Record Office Victoria; VPRS 3991/P, Box 1005, Report of Constable Healy, 2 May 1873. This file contains all material related to the incident including the anonymous letter from 'Gaol Bird'.

31 Public Record Office Victoria; VPRS 3991/P Box 1005/Item no. 78/05106, Castieau to Inspector-General of Penal Establishments, 5 May 1873.

32 Diary, 25 December 1855; unknown date, prior to entry for 26 March 1860.



Arthur J. Stopps (1833–1931)
Post Office, Beechworth c.1856
 lithograph, hand col.; sheet 14.4 x 19.6 cm
 Rex Nan Kivell Collection
 National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an8628791

A decade later he was less fortunate. *The Argus* had been on the warpath for some months in 1883, and the 'Vagabond' had been shown round Pentridge and published a piece decrying its leniency and the alleged association of young inmates with old lags. There was evidence that some of the agitation was prompted by an informant within Pentridge, the warder Henry White, whom Castieau knew was an occasional correspondent for *The Argus*. White denied that he breached regulations, but maintained his writing, later publishing his reminiscences, including his impressions of Castieau as kind-hearted but 'of unsteady habits'.³³ Castieau and his senior officers refuted the charges of maladministration but small cases mounted up to a larger impression of incompetence. Within another year, Castieau was eased out of office. His difficulties were compounded by the desire of a forceful premier and Chief Secretary, Graham Berry, to place his own stamp on the government of the colony's institutions.³⁴

Had an appointment with Mr Berry this morning. He sent for me to call at half past eleven & I was punctual. A Cabinet Meeting however prevented his being able to keep the appointment & I did not see him till the afternoon. He told me that I was to retire on compensation as

33 Public Record Office Victoria; VPRS 3991/P Box 1448, 83/Z10377.

34 The Chief Secretary had recently been involved in the dismissal of another senior public servant. See *The Argus*, 6 August 1884 for the Central Board of Health's letter to Berry objecting to his 'impulsive treatment of an old and valued public servant', the head of the board, who had been dismissed by Berry.

he believed was my wish. I replied that I had not said it was my wish but that I was willing to do so if the Government wished. Mr Berry had evidently fallen in with the wishes of intriguers & had listened & believed one side of the question without taking any trouble to hear the other. He said that Pentridge had been in a state of demoralisation & that the change that had been made had prevented a catastrophe. I emphatically denied there having been any demoralisation, but found it was useless my attempting to argue with the Chief Secretary.³⁵

So, at the relatively young age of 53, Castieau ended his service. It was a bitter blow, and preceded his death by only some months, for he had been in physical decline for some time, and two decades of financial worries and the burdens of work, not to speak of his earlier history of 'unsteady habits', had taken their toll. That story however was also one that belonged as much to another trajectory—of Castieau's passage from bachelorhood to *pater familias*. The diaries of the prison governor speak to much of that life.

FROM BACHELOR TO DOMESTIC MAN

When Castieau essayed into the public sphere, he was inclined to seek approval from others first. One of the most important sources of advice was his wife Polly, a constant presence in the diaries. Absent from the early diaries, Polly arrives on the scene only at Beechworth, where they were married in 1858. Sharing the gaol business during the 1860s as prison matron, she is rarely absent from the everyday record of the diaries in the subsequent decades, although not holding an office once they returned to Melbourne. In the declining years she becomes 'Mrs Castieau' or 'Mrs. C', with hints that her nervous illness and other debilities match Castieau's increasing hypochondria. This is a personal relationship of considerable interest, as evidence to put with other accounts of the social history of domesticity and gender relations in the colonial era.³⁶

In the earliest years, Castieau's struggle with his demons dominates his perception of the value of his life as a single man in a new land. His dissipation in drink and occasional whoring in 1855 leaves him in a profound melancholy.

Went to the Promenade Concert in the Evening. Saw numbers I know but am very dissatisfied with myself for being tempted there so often. It costs a great deal of money, although the admission is but a shilling, for Australian Politeness necessitates the asking of all

35 Diary, 11 November 1884.

36 Cf Penny Russell (ed.) *For Richer, for Poorer: Early Colonial Marriages*, (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1994); Stephen Garton, 'The Scales of Suffering: Love, Death and Victorian Masculinity,' *Social History*, vol. 27 no. 1, 2002, pp. 40–58.

speaking acquaintance to Nobblerise, and as Drinks cost each a shilling a Pound soon evaporates.

The Money however is not the principal cause of my disliking to be there. Tis the Publicity and the fear of being thought a fast fellow, for my temperament makes me conspicuous, as when with two or three companions, I generally become merry, talk loud and laugh noisily. I must turn over a new leaf or expect to go to the Dogs, and be left without a true friend.³⁷

At the same time his plight during this year of loneliness is not without its moments of reflective solitude occasionally relieved by achieving an ironic distance from too self-pitying an account of his life:

I stayed at home the whole of the evening & trust that it is the commencement of my doing so many nights.

Bye the Bye it rained very heavily and was extremely dirty under foot. This might to a prejudiced mind be some explanation of my reformation so I think it but right to my Diary to mention the circumstances.

I read aloud several pages of *Martin Chuzzlewit* & rather flattered myself I gave expression to the author's nicest sentiments. I was extremely pleased with myself & unanimously rewarded my exertions with a glass of gin & water and the Hardest manilla I could find in my cigar case, after which I tried on the smoking cap Emma gave me on my birthday, looked in the glass & wondered I was not more distinguished then went to bed.³⁸

These moments however contrast with the despondency of continuing social isolation as one lost in the numberless ranks of single men:

Went to the Theatre got drinking mixed liquors and felt very seedy. Saw the Farce of *Uncle John* which was very well played. Came home about 12 o'clock, disgusted with myself, my associates, situation & the world. I know I have much to be thankful for yet am far from feeling contented, nay as I ought, grateful. Circumstance has somehow throughout my life kept me a solitary individual. Confined all day I gladly go out in the evening, but where am I to go to, no families know me, no friends but single men no amusements but theirs drinking & wenching.³⁹

This was a plight that he could only hope would be relieved by marriage. As David Goodman has observed, citing Castieau's case among others, the ideology of domesticity was a powerful countervailing influence to the feared

37 Diary, 23 January 1855.

38 Diary, 14 June 1855.

39 Diary, 17 August 1855.

social disorder of the gold rush decade, and to the threatening isolation of the single man.⁴⁰ Castieau is one who experiences the alternatives self-consciously. His efforts to establish himself before and after marriage give us a glimpse of the social mechanisms by which masculinity was managed in nineteenth-century western societies. Central to this self-management, suggests French historian Alain Corbin, was 'the strict management of waste', a balancing alternately of debauchery and then, overcome with remorse, of the building up of personal resources again.⁴¹ In the diaries, Castieau's anxiety to achieve a domestic resolution to his felt debauchery is especially evident. Yet arranging a marriage outside the social contexts that might have facilitated it at 'Home' was for him a seemingly mountainous obstacle.

The difficulties emerged during a largely imaginary courtship with a prospective partner during 1855.

There is a young lady, a neat little body just my idea of a wife, sits very near my pew, but unfortunately in such a position that I have to turn round to look at her. We have exchanged glances for I really feel very interested in her, but she is such a little coquette, that I can never make out whether she thinks favorably or disdainfully of my attentions. I have often thought of writing, but then Prudence whispers dont lay yourself open without caution. I would speak to her but she is never alone & worse still is generally met by some demon in trousers as soon as she leaves the Church Doors.⁴²

A key issue in striking the right match was status, a fact brought home bluntly to Castieau. Fearing his occupation would not serve him well, he hesitated for some time before disclosing his feelings to the 'charmer' he saw at church every Sunday. At one stage he contemplates speaking to the young woman's father but fears that his status as a gaoler will disadvantage him.⁴³ When, after about six months delay, he finally writes to 'Emily' his worst fears are confirmed in her prompt refusal by return note:

The Galling part of the note was, that my occupation was the principal objection, so that the years I have spent in an arduous & unthankful employment have but made me a kind of Pariah or outcast, to the rest of the world, & yet I feel proudly that my position is one that requires probity, intelligence & determination

40 David Goodman, *Gold Seeking: Victoria and California in the 1850s*, (St Leonards, NSW, 1994), pp. 165–66.

41 Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850*, translated by Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. xv.

42 Diary, 10 June 1855.

43 Diary, 8 August 1855: 'Were I in any other situation than the one I hold I would call and see her father, but to me the name of Gaoler is abhorrent & I dread that he might despise me for having it.'

& that I have in some degree displayed these characteristics since I have been placed to control the poor wretches, that the law for the safety of the commonwealth confines.⁴⁴

Melodramatically, he imagines himself as someone who would be uplifted by someone like Emily:

I think mine is a most miserable & desponding disposition. I find in myself such a proneness to feel wretched & miserable my face frequently becomes overcast & bears as it were the index of deep sorrow, while if I asked myself the question of my cause of grief, I could affirm nothing beyond maudlin sensibility ... I love the Good, the expression of a face is what delights me, ah Emily, you have treated me perhaps as I deserved, but had you been kind you might yet have had cause to be proud of your choice, love for you would have ennobled my exertions.⁴⁵

On other occasions these platonic musings are contrasted with sensual experiences with more accessible women:

Came to Melbourne and went to church in the evening, saw hearts darling & felt more than ever in love. Should have tried to communicate with her but that I was surrounded by so many acquaintances on leaving the church.

Walked moodily down Collins Street & after walking past the house twice was about going home when as luck would have it I met a nymph of engaging appearance & who is acquainted with me. She was very gracious & I to dispel thought walked towards her home, when there she would insist on my going in & in I went & remained for an hour or more.

Emily I did not forget you, less blame to me if I could have done so. Came home at about eleven & went quietly to bed.⁴⁶

A few months later we discover that Emily is engaged to a storekeeper at Ballarat. Castieau, this son of a British major, found the experience demeaning, as he notes, perhaps especially so since the social ratings of colonial society were not entirely predictable. His occupation seems to have presented few obstacles to him establishing himself securely in the society of 'gentlemen' who made up the flourishing club life of Melbourne. As an early member of Melbourne's Garrick Club, Castieau records that one of the meetings of this association refused to admit another applicant because he

44 Diary, 28 October 1855.

45 Diary, 4 November 1855.

46 Diary, 30 December 1855.

had been 'a pastry cook & some of our aristocratic members were desirous of drawing the line somewhere'.⁴⁷

In the end perhaps it was Castieau's own struggle for self-esteem in the face of the demeaning occupation of gaoler that cost him this first serious courtship:

Heard that Emily was engaged & at that moment walking with her intended a Storekeeper at Bendigo. So there's an end to my romance. I am rightly served, my own bashfulness being the cause of my rival's success. What was the cause of this bashfulness, the dilemma I was in as to how I should lodge a wife. I could support one decently, but my mind revolts against the idea of bringing the woman I loved to a Gaol, for I am so sensitive, that though it tells against myself, I do not think I could love long one who would be satisfied to live in a prison, though mistress of it.⁴⁸

In contrast with the self-conscious and lengthy passages spent recording this failed courtship, Castieau's eventual contraction of a marriage was more economical. 'Thought of cutting my throat—and then of matrimony' Goodman cites from a despondent Castieau in the aftermath of a boozy night at the age of 25.⁴⁹ Castieau was never disposed to the first option and eventually chose matrimony. On 30 December 1858, at the age of 28 and now the Governor of Beechworth Gaol, Castieau married Mary Moore, four years younger and known to him as Polly. She was a migrant too, born in Whitehaven, Cumberland, one of the four daughters of James Moore, a printer, and Jane Moore née Ford. Perhaps she had preceded her family in its migration—her mother arrived in the colony in 1860 with another daughter.⁵⁰

The marriage was undertaken in haste and not widely advertised by Castieau:

Yesterday December 30th 1858, I took an important step in my life's journey, that step was getting married. I was attracted at the Church of England Bazaar held about six weeks since by the many charms and eminent business capabilities of Miss Moore. We kept a Lottery together, & flirted to an extent that brought us into notoriety. Polly got very much talked about & her name severely handled, however we continued to be very much together & when the Bazaar was over, took

47 Diary, 16 October 1855. The Garrick Club was formed in 1855, its principal interest being amateur drama: Harold Love, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso* (Carlton, Vic., 1989) pp. 32–35.

48 Diary, 3 February 1856.

49 David Goodman, *Gold Seeking: Victoria and California in the 1850s* (St Leonards, NSW, 1994), p. 165; Diary, 17 February 1855.

50 Marriage register, Christ Church (Church of England) Beechworth, 30 December 1858. Information about the family courtesy of Mrs Margaret Carlton, former manager of Burke Museum, Beechworth.

plenty of walks, had the usual sweets lovers indulge in & innumerable quarrels. At length however we made up our minds to be man & wife. This was on Sunday December 26th; that same night we agreed to be married on the 30th.

I told Polly of my debts & how small were my means she did not seem to care & so everything settled, we got married & rode away to Everton without telling the Beechworth Folk anything about it. At Everton we had a nice little place to ourselves & notwithstanding the heat was great & the flies numerous & troublesome managed to get on very well. Got home on Saturday. House much improved, commenced at once a domestic life. Wrote to my sister, told her of my wedding & sent to Neild for some cards for Mrs C.⁵¹

The entry is awkward but the event was decisive for Castieau's subsequent life and his view of himself. Polly became the imagined conscience, chiding Castieau for his failings even when she was far away. A year into the marriage, with Polly gone to Melbourne to get some relief from the summer heat of Beechworth, Castieau was back to his old ways:

Received a Telegram this morning from Polly, she had been quite well during the journey as far as Longwood. I suffered all day from a violent billious attack. Eat nothing and was repeatedly sick. Went down to the street after eight oclock. Got into Denton's Crofton asked me to play cards and I foolishly consented. Played all night, I went home at five o clock a loser of close upon £20.

Poor Polly how sad you would be to know of my folly.⁵²

On her return Polly is faced by more of Castieau's follies, one of which results in him smashing the Post Office windows after a night of heavy drinking and gambling. The angelic Polly again forgives him and Castieau's remorse leads to yet another resolution for personal reform, a determination arising not only from the need to re-establish domestic harmony but also perhaps to avoid future shame in the town:

I told Polly as much as I dared of my Evening's occupation & then firmly made a Resolution which if it pleases Heaven to give me strength I will rigorously observe 'Not to drink Spirits except if ordered them by a doctor or Gamble in any way whatever for twelve months'.

For more than a week I did not go down the street, I saw no one and it was only on Sunday the 25th I heard the particulars of my conduct.⁵³

51 Diary, 1 January 1859.

52 Diary, 16 January 1860.

53 Diary, no date but precedes entry for 26 March 1860.

Castieau refrains from recording the most intimate details of their life together, but their closeness is evident; during her absence of less than a month in Melbourne in 1860 Polly wrote at least 17 letters to Castieau back in Beechworth, he replying in kind.⁵⁴ The diarist is not averse to self-scrutiny in a way that suggests a consciousness of his own tendency to the pompous. Back in Melbourne a decade later he records details of a steamy night in January 1870, in the midst of a trying heat wave:

Had a little barney with Polly, owing to my reading some cutting remarks by 'a woman' 'on women' in the *Broadway Magazine*. I skipped all the hits at the men & read all the slaps the women got. Polly found me out & called me deceitful. The weather was so oppressive that it required a great deal of forbearance to keep good tempered.⁵⁵

Predictably they squabble ('about nothing as usual,' he adds) but not for too long, or at least not without Castieau wondering about his own predilection for irritability and melancholy.

When Polly came back she was very jolly & wanted to be friendly. I had however a fit of the blues & could be nothing but disagreeable. I did not go to bed for some time & when I did showed very bad temper. I certainly am getting very queer & at times am inclined to 'give up'. I ought to be as jolly as most men, with a good billet & a healthy wife & children; somehow or other what should be pleasant turns out dust & ashes & all I long for as soon as it is got proves a mistake & is soon considered valueless. 'I suppose it is liver.'⁵⁶

In this record there are recurrent moments of inter-personal discord that speak of the negotiability of the Victorian home: two people weighed down by the daily hum-drum, and seeking a way out without losing too much face. The self-deprecating Castieau is not beyond seeing the humorous side.

This evening I had a great row with Polly. We quarrelled about Mrs Smith. Polly takes her part altogether & I cannot do so. I said terrible things to Polly & upset her altogether. When the time came for my smoke I took my pipe into another room & did the sulky. Polly would'ent make it up when we got to bed but wanted to get up & go down stairs. I took the hint & instead of letting her do so went down stairs myself where wrapping myself up in my overcoat I laid down on the Sofa & was soon fast asleep. I had funny dreams & once woke

54 As recorded in the Diary, 14 January to 11 February 1860.

55 Diary, 23 January 1870.

56 Diary, 28 June 1870.

up in the night & forgetting the room I was in groped about a great deal until I remembered & found my way out of the room.⁵⁷

When it all seems to get too much—the endless debt above all—Victorian manliness can be invoked to save one from the temptations to put an end to duty to one's family:

Then the time when a man's affairs seem to himself hopeless and the world a burden, then the devil puts into his head how easy it would be to lie down & rest for ever. What shall it be, just a moment's pain. There's your choice of poison pistol razor or river. Thank God however that so many men though foolish enough to get into debt and then mope over their troubles have still if regardless of 'The Great Unknown' been gifted with sufficient manliness to save them from the sin of suicide for coward must he be who with wife or children or both dependent upon him will desert his post reckless of the misery he will occasion to those he leaves behind to fight the battle of life '& bear the whips & scorns of time' the most of which their natural protector could if he had done his duty saved them from.⁵⁸

In Castieau's record of familial life then we see a particularly reflective account of the way in which a Victorian male of the middle classes negotiated his path towards respectability and domesticity. Yet this did not entail an abandonment of the pleasures of society outside the home, especially in clubland.

CLUBMAN

As the capital of a fast-growing colony, Melbourne was the locus of a lively array of cultural institutions and associations. Colonial towns shared metropolitan enthusiasm for the advancement of knowledge and the sharing of cultural interests. Castieau's life, as we have observed earlier, was neatly divided into work, domesticity and the play of clubland, the theatre and journalism.

The Melbourne clubs have been extensively documented by Paul de Serville in his studies of the urban elite.⁵⁹ Castieau was active in a number of them. His interest in the theatre was at the heart of his earliest engagement with the Garrick Club, to which he acted as secretary. The Garrick was a meeting place but also a vehicle for the production of theatrical events. Its most prominent member was James Edward Neild, doctor, coroner and theatre critic whose opinion determined the fate of many plays and operas in the city.⁶⁰

57 Diary, 7 October 1872.

58 Diary, 8 October 1877 (page 34 of original; this volume has uncertain dating as it was kept over a period of at least three years). This reflection follows a creditors meeting.

59 Paul De Serville, *Pounds and Pedigrees: The Upper Class in Victoria 1850–80* (Melbourne, 1991).

60 See Harold Love, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso* (Melbourne, 1989).

His few months experience of the Garrick in Melbourne served Castieau well at Beechworth. There he became a key figure in the activities of the Athenaeum, a club that sought to make available to the locals the products of Victorian literate culture. Membership of such clubs not only enhanced one's circle of associates, it reflected an ethic of service that explains the overlapping roles of somebody like Castieau in many colonial institutions. His self-perception as leader among other 'able men' was recalled in 1873 as he sought to excuse his 'unfortunate slip' with the prostitute in May of that year:

To show the position I held, I was for a long time President of the Beechworth Athenaeum, and connected with the Beechworth Hospital from its erection, when I came away I had for two years been elected its President. In the Country able men take part in the management of such institutions, and the committee of the Beechworth Hospital was composed of the pick of the neighbourhood.⁶¹

The surviving diaries do not cover much of the period between Castieau's marriage to Polly and their return to Melbourne in 1869. In Beechworth however other remnants of his work remain. An attempt to organise a Beechworth Garrick Club may not have come to much,⁶² but the establishment of a local Athenaeum for cultural improvement provided firmer ground on which Castieau could make his mark in local society.⁶³ He was elected to the Management Committee in December 1859 and remained an influential figure there for the next decade. For a number of years he served as vice-president to a busy George Kerferd, then in the early stages of a political and legal career that would elevate him to the office of Premier of Victoria in 1874 and a Supreme Court judge later. In 1864, Castieau gained 27 votes against Kerferd's nine in the ballot for President; the contest was evidently friendly, for Kerferd remained a vital supporter of Castieau in later years.⁶⁴

The committee was Beechworth's link to metropolitan culture. Subscriptions to newspapers and journals, the purchase of books and encyclopedias (the *Britannica* was purchased in 1861, while Gould's *Australian Birds* and Palgrave's *Travels in Australia* were purchased in 1866) as well as a 'stereoscopic frame' and slides of landscapes, accompanied occasional poetry readings and dramatic performances. The Athenaeum was an arbiter of taste, and of the advancement of knowledge; in 1867 the subscription to the *London Journal* was cancelled when the committee determined that it was 'of a lower tone than should be encouraged in a literary Institution'. In 1868 Castieau moved that a large

61 Public Record Office Victoria; VPRS 3991/P Box 1005, Item no. 78/05106, Letter from Castieau.

62 See Diary, 11 December 1856 and 1 January 1859.

63 Carole Woods, *Beechworth: A Titan's Field* (North Melbourne: Hargreen in conjunction with United Shire of Beechworth, 1985), pp. 88–89.

64 See Diary, 17 January 1870 for Castieau's thanks to Kerferd for support in his promotion.



Jon Rhodes
The Burke Museum, Loch Street, Beechworth, Victoria 2001
 gelatin silver photograph; 17.4 x 26.1 cm
 Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an23386333

collection of 'specimens of natural History, native weapons, minerals, fossils, skulls &c' be purchased, a collection that survives to this day in the Beechworth Museum. The importance of maintaining these ties to the advancing civilisation of the colonies and Empire was emphasised in the committee's unanimous support for Castieau's motion in 1865 that it was 'desirable to inaugurate a local exhibition for the Ovens and Murray District in connection with the proposed Inter-Colonial Exhibition'.⁶⁵

The serious cultural business of the Athenaeum was something for which Castieau felt some enthusiasm. But the social distinctions that came with the cultivation of taste were not lost on him either. Anxiety over the kind of people one associated with was inevitably part of the life of the clubs. Back in Melbourne in the 1870s, as a member of both the Yorick Club, with its bohemian pretensions, and the more sober Athenaeum reading room, Castieau had cause by 1874 to ponder where best to spend his time:

This was another exceedingly hot day & particularly oppressive about the Gaol. I worked pretty well all day & then did my Muster. I was however very glad indeed to get from the place & to take even the hot walk to the Club. There was very little indeed going on there. Three inveterate cribbage players were hard at their game, Wheeler, Cox & Harrison; besides these men there were Duerdin & Bright. I read for

65 The surviving papers of the Beechworth Athenaeum are held at the Burke Museum, Beechworth. I am grateful to Iris Petrass for accessing them, and to the former manager of the museum, Mrs Margaret Carlton, for assistance with the same.

a while & came away home. I do not think the Club is progressing just now & it certainly is not getting more attractive. There is one funny thing that I observe about it & that is its being studiously avoided by any but hard up people; as a rule to be a 'Yorick' means to be out at elbows. Some of the fellows that belong to the Club I like very much but I begin to think that it would have been better for me to have been contented with The Athenaeum & not to have been tickled with the literary & scientific reputation of the Yorick for I fear much in grasping at the shadow I have lost the substance.⁶⁶

Six months later he abandoned the Yorick and took up the Athenaeum, a decision evidently prompted by Polly.⁶⁷ Yet after six months of almost daily attendance at the Athenaeum, reading the papers, and borrowing its books, he was drawn back to the Yorick, which moved its premises late in 1874, diminishing its seedy reputation:

As we passed the Yorick Club some of the members saw me from the window & beckoned to me to come to them. I went & was demonstratively received by McKinley, Keeley, Harrison, Duerdin, Short & others. The Club is now in much better premises than of old and I was somewhat taken aback with the number of rooms & the great accommodation. The place is not at all Bohemian in appearance & possesses a billiard room & a drawing room. I have long had an inclination to be again a member of The Yorick & to-night I was so heartily welcomed that I could not withstand the temptation of joining & so paid my subscription for the first half of 1875.⁶⁸

As this episode suggests, the conviviality of the clubs was quite as important to Castieau's use of them as the *entrée* it gave him to a world of culture and politics. The Beechworth Athenaeum may have eschewed 'Party Politics and Religious Controversy ... as subjects on which lectures shall be delivered',⁶⁹ but certainly there, and even more in the Melbourne clubs, there was little doubting the importance of their environs to the cultivation of political influence. It was in those places that one met the opinionated elite whose scribbling filled the daily papers that were avidly consumed by Castieau and his contemporaries. There one met Marcus Clarke, James Neild, James Smith, David Blair, Jardine Smith, George Kerferd, John Joseph Shillinglaw, and a host of other male friends and associates, all of whom find their place repeatedly in Castieau's record of his meetings and conversations in the 1850s and 1870s.

66 Diary, 16 January 1874.

67 Diary, 6 June 1874.

68 Diary, 30 December 1874.

69 See Minute Book No. 3, 3 Sept 1867, held at the Burke Museum, Beechworth.

THE DIARIES

As we have seen, the first of Castieau's surviving diaries is the one he purchased and began in January 1855. It is possible he had kept a diary before this; in a quiet moment he later reflects on some writing that he had undertaken while on board the emigrant boat that brought him with his sisters to Victoria in 1852. There are however just 12 diary volumes in the collection held by the National Library of Australia. The selection of the diaries published here represents about 125 000 words of the 700 000 words in the 12 volumes held by the Library.

The diaries were donated to the Library in two lots about 25 years ago. Eleven of the volumes are small format volumes ('Lett's Diary No. 8' for most years and the 'Australian Rough Diary No. 6' in the last two years, 1883 and 1884). One volume is a foolscap size ('Australian Rough Diary No. 4', costing 2s. 6d in 1877); this is the most carelessly kept of the diaries and contains entries at random dates between 1877 and 1879. Apart from these years, the remaining diaries contain the best part of a daily record for the years 1855–1857, 1870–72, 1874 and 1883–84. Castieau kept the diary intermittently between 1857 and 1861, but the volume for the last of these years contains extensive notes that appear to be part of a preparation for a lecture on the Crimean War, the kind of thing he would be doing during the 1860s as a leading figure in the Beechworth Athenaeum.

Were these the only years in which Castieau kept a diary? There is at least one volume still in private hands—the one he says he purchased at the end of 1874, and which does in fact cover about half the year of 1875 and extracts from which form part of the exhibition at Old Melbourne Gaol.⁷⁰ It is tempting to speculate that a diary might exist for the momentous year of 1880 in which Ned Kelly became the most famous inmate of Old Melbourne Gaol. Yet the erratic record of the single foolscap volume that includes entries from 1877–79 suggests Castieau had by that time wearied of the discipline required by his previous practice of daily entries. The diary for 1883 has only perfunctory entries, up to May, and in 1884 the diary was kept for just two periods, 1–23 January and 11 August to 31 December. Castieau purchased his final diary on the last day of 1884, together with some paper on which he promised to commence his reminiscences. Perhaps it is this project that explains the beginnings of an index of the contents of the 1855 diary, an index in a different hand to the original and highlighting not only names but events and observations such as 'R.C. respect for religion' and 'Superstition'. Certainly the diaries for the years they were kept would have made a rich sourcebook for the prospective author.

Apart from the potential of the Kelly period, the great absence in the diary record is for the 1860s. These were the Beechworth years, during which

70 Information from Ian McKellar, a descendant of one of Castieau's sisters-in-law. The diary is held by Mr Pat Gower of Melbourne.

Castieau attained some eminence in local society and became the father of six children (the seventh being born soon after the family's return to Melbourne). The birth of the first child, Harry, whose later years are so often featured in the diaries of the 1870s, is recorded only briefly. Indeed Castieau ceases his regular record of 1861 just a few days later and it seems more than likely that family life and duties as well as the demands of work and social life and institutions in Beechworth absorbed all the time of the once-conscientious diary keeper. Whatever the reason, there does not appear to be any evidence that Castieau maintained a diary during the remaining years in Beechworth.

The demands of editing the diaries into a single volume have required significant cuts to the original text. I have aimed, however, at giving the reader a sense of Castieau's writing of the daily record as well as the narrative of time that he captures. There is occasional evidence that Castieau kept spaces in the original record of a day's events in order to complete the narrative of a particular event. An example is his account of a famous libel case in which Marcus Clarke was involved, during the recording of which Castieau notes 'I shall leave space here to record the verdict of the Jury when the trial is over'.⁷¹ Respecting that sense of the constructed document I have frequently preserved intact the records of whole days, sometimes a succession of them, at the expense of being more comprehensive in the coverage of material related to a particular theme.

As befits a historical document, language that would today be regarded as offensive or racist has been retained as in the original. Castieau's spelling and capitalisation have also been transcribed as written but occasionally, especially in very long passages, punctuation has been added or altered to assist comprehension and improve readability. Ellipses have been added to indicate missing text, either within a paragraph or between paragraphs but, in keeping with National Library publishing style, have not been used to show truncated entries.

This introduction has already identified what I see as some of the more important thematic interests of Castieau's record of his life, but it may be useful, finally, to summarise the principles of selection in the editing. Indeed it would be possible to produce an edition of the diaries that had as its organising principles the themes that I argue are of particular importance. Possible, I suggest, but only by violating the very significance of the diary as the almost daily reflection that works through its immediacy. Nevertheless the themes that I have imagined different kinds of readers might find engaging are the ones that have helped select what is included in this volume. They include dimensions of Victorian life that make up a significant part of the experience of what it meant to be alive at that time. There is the public life of the towns and cities, vividly created in Castieau's daily record of what it was like to walk the streets of the city at day and night, constantly encountering one's associates, family and

71 Diary, 21 August 1874.

friends, calling into pubs or coffee shops or clubs, shopping daily in the markets or the new shopping arcades of 1870s Melbourne. We see how one negotiated loans and managed insurance as a means of sustaining a life beyond one's immediate means. The diaries capture the importance of the churches in a colonial culture that nevertheless is already flattening out religious experience. As a passionate theatregoer, Castieau reflects the importance of the many varieties of theatre in the colonial city—from Shakespeare through Italian opera to Victorian melodrama and on to variety theatre, the circus and pantomime.

As already signalled, much interest attaches to the portrait of domestic life captured in Castieau's diary. The diarist is not so much attached to intimate confession as to the detailed description of the incidents and dialogue of the household, revealing not simply the daily routine but those of the seasons and years. From Christmas Day and New Year's Eve to Valentine's Day and the serial birthdays of a large family, the rituals of Victorian-era bourgeois life included many of those important to the Castieau family.⁷²

Urban life is structured not alone by its entertainments but by its institutions, where the dialogue of politics, religion, learning and entertainment have their physical expression in the enduring architecture of the era. This, I would stress, is as much the case in Beechworth as in Melbourne. Though the scale is different, one has only to encounter the historical landscape of Beechworth today to recognise the enterprise of the mid-Victorians in replicating in thriving colonial towns (even a 'village' as Castieau describes Beechworth) the institutions of the cities, churches, hotels, government offices, banks, clubs, theatres, libraries and museums. All are institutions frequented by Castieau, his associates, and (depending on gender and age) his family.

As a key figure in the colonial criminal justice system, Castieau's daily commentary on living the life of a gaol governor is of more than passing interest. On the one hand we get vivid impressions of the mundane tensions of prison life, its occasional violence, its bureaucratic routines, its life as a focus of a prurient public, which accesses it principally through journalism. On the other, the diaries show us the life of a civil servant, battling the ceaseless torrent of central office circulars and other demands that bind the officers in the 'red tape' that Castieau speaks of more than once. Here, also, we see captured in the floodlight a middle-ranking civil servant who has to shift constantly for his entitlements and advancement. The tension between merit and patronage runs through Castieau's perception of the way Victorian bureaucracy works as he insists on his own superior qualifications for advancement, but in turn presses his ex-Beechworth friend turned

72 A rich account, with a focus on French sources but indicating many comparisons with the content of these diaries is provided by Anne Martin-Fugier, 'Bourgeois Rituals,' in *A History of Private Life, Vol. 4: From the Fires of Revolution to the Great War*, ed. Michelle Perrot (Cambridge Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990).

politician, George Kerferd, for support in promotion. The passions of envy and anger colour his responses to career disappointments but the diary appears to be one means of keeping their destructive effects in harness.

Beyond their immediate representation of public and domestic life, of performance and inner anxiety, the diaries we must remember, are also an account of a transition from one country to another. As one of the settlers of a land already largely dispossessed of its original owners, Castieau seems barely conscious of the life of the frontier, and especially of any kind of Aboriginal occupation, that preceded the establishment of both Melbourne and Beechworth—a frontier less than a generation old by the time he arrived in Melbourne.⁷³ What he is conscious of is the making of a new society, one very different from the old. Recording the procession of 2000 people at the opening of the Ovens Hospital in 1856, Castieau observed the absence of 'careworn countenances', 'No beggars, no silent Hollow cheeked misery famishing but not outwardly complaining, was there to meet the gaze. Thank God we have left all such in "Merry England"'.⁷⁴ The rapid creation of a colonial self-consciousness in the post-goldrush period is replicated in Castieau's comments at such a moment. So, too, we may see here the roots of a more assertive Australianness in the public careers of some of his children, notably his namesake John Buckley, the second youngest, who would write a prize winning essay on Australian literature for the Australian Natives Association in 1897 and help Bernard O'Dowd found *Tocsin*, the Victorian socialist journal of the turn of the century; and Godfrey Cass (Castieau), a founding figure in the Australian film industry, who would play Ned Kelly in some of Australia's earliest films to build that legend.⁷⁵

The diaries that follow record not an extraordinary life, nor an 'ordinary' one. The momentum that brings generations of one country to another lent a particular significance to Castieau's life. What he made of it is left in his diaries for us to discover.

73 A rare reference to Aborigines is found in the entry for 1 January 1856 (below); the denigratory comments on a theatrical performance of a corroboree in Beechworth summarise a common colonial view.

74 Diary, 1–2 September 1856.

75 John Buckley Castieau is described by Frank Bongiorno, historian of early Victorian Labor and socialist politics as 'less talented and not as gentle' as the better-remembered O'Dowd, and a 'wild fellow' in a discussion of the *Tocsin* group. These judgments lean on the witness of Lionel Lindsay, who also attributes the themes of some of Norman Lindsay's early cartoons to the influence of 'Jack' Castieau. See Lionel Lindsay, *Comedy of Life: An Autobiography 1874–1961* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1967), pp. 77–78; Frank Bongiorno, *The People's Party. Victorian Labor and the Radical Tradition, 1875–1914* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1996), p. 142. On the career of Godfrey in film, see Mary Bateman, 'The Lincoln–Cass Films,' *Cinema Papers*, no. 27 June–July 1980, pp. 170–175.



Supreme Court and Gaol, Melbourne c. 1850s
hand col. lithograph; 7.5 x 16.5 cm
pictures collection, nla.pic-8628834

CHAPTER 1: 1855—‘FALSE PLEASURE’

The early months of 1855 were dominated in Melbourne by the state trials of the Eureka rebels. These events attract Castieau's notice and the successive acquittals by sympathetic juries are recorded by him, not with alarm but as a matter of interest. Yet the public life of the colony and indeed the dramatic events in the Crimea (news of which was eagerly awaited when each mail boat arrived at the port) were only backdrops to Castieau's preoccupations in this year.

The diary of 1855 sets a high standard to which Castieau would only return in the 1870s. A record of about 70 000 words, it commences on the day Castieau bought the diary (16 January) and continues almost uninterrupted to the end of the year. In so far as a record of such regularity develops themes, then we can identify in this first year of the diaries a number of Castieau's preoccupations. The first is his easy command of the basic requirements of gaol administration. Though frequently irritated by the demands of red tape now and into the future we see the ease with which Castieau is able to complete a day's work in a manner that leaves him free to pursue his private interests. His work is competent but, as throughout his career, his mind is so commonly on other things that his ambition to make a name and career for himself is already being thwarted by the machinations of his competitors in the prisons service. No matter for Castieau, however; he has other interests.

The raucous male culture of Melbourne in the goldrush period is reflected in Castieau's regular consumption of its opportunities. There are in 1855 plenty of occasions when the diary-keeper records his feeling 'seedy' after indulging too freely in the drinking and brothel visiting of his time. His participation in these rituals of self-waste compete with his equally common commitments to self-reform and intellectual and moral improvement. Throughout this period his churchgoing remains constant, but even more frequent is his attendance on the vital Melbourne theatre scene, leading late in the year to his association with the establishment of the amateur dramatic society of the Garrick Club.

As the brother of two sisters who had accompanied him to Melbourne, Castieau was not isolated from familial routines, which form the counterpoint to his own personal struggle with the demons of drink and sexual debauchery. While he never reflects consciously on the significance of his constant contact with Emma and Harriette, the diary captures the importance of his regular visits to Emma and her husband Joe and his elevation to status of uncle by the arrival of their newborn Agnes, in June 1855.

This is the record, we have to remind ourselves, of a 24-year-old in charge of one of the colony's main penal establishments at a time of great political ferment and spectacular economic growth. Castieau's Melbourne in 1855 is a place that offers the great opportunities afforded to settlers in a new land, where institutions can be made anew from the materials furnished from the old. As well, new personal challenges can be entertained by those who have been dramatically displaced from their previous society.

JANUARY 16 TUESDAY 1855

Purchased this Diary for which I paid 10/- and considered reasonable, it being but 50 per cent over the Home cost.

Went to the Main Gaol to hear tidings of the State Prisoners, charged with Treason in taking up arms against the Government at Balaarat.⁷⁶ The Judge remanded them for 10 days, stating that being charged with High Treason, they were entitled to that term of clear notice with copies of their indictments from the opening of the Sessions. Mr Ireland the Counsel for the Defence, stated he was prepared to proceed at once, but the Chief Justice preferred granting the privilege allowed by the Law.

This conduct seems evidently to betray an inclination on the part of the Governmt. to let the matter gradually drop, and in my opinion the men will not be tried at all.

There is a great deal of excitement in the Town, and the Gaol Authorities fearing violence have barricaded and strengthened the Entrance, as well as made a door as close to the Court as possible by which to take the prisoners too and from Trial. I remarked that people might break doors to get out, but that I hardly thought they would break them to get into the prison.

The Visiting Magistrate inspected the Gaol today. I wrote a letter to my sister at Geelong, enclosing one from our Father to her.

JANUARY 17 WEDNESDAY 1855

Forwarded Letter to the Sheriff suggesting the propriety of getting William Biggen into the Benevolent Asylum.

A very heavy fall of rain attended with thunder and lighting.

It is no wonder that the Good men of this town should earnestly strive to conquer drunkenness when a moment's reflection makes the mischief caused by it so hideously palpable. Scarce a day passes but I have some poor wretch or other brought me suffering from the 'Horrors' or Delirium Tremens. The fancies of these men are sometimes Horrible, one to day (a wealthy Digger too for the Police have deposited with me value of more than a £100 Sterling) believes the whole town to be in conspiracy to poison him, and in consequence grew so frightened that he gave himself up to the Police for Protection.

76 The Eureka Stockade, an armed rebellion of goldminers in 1854, arose out of a number of grievances including a 30/- tax on miners, lack of political representation, difficulties with tenure and competition from the Chinese (*Macquarie Dictionary*, 2nd edn, 1991).

I called this evening to see Lotherington, and heard from him that Emma had been in town and caught in the rain had to stop 2 hours in the Arcade. It makes me happy to notice how proud of and how kind too Joe is to Emma. I met with Mr Herle, the Advertising Dentist of this town, at Black's Concert Room, and brought him home to smoke a cigar. He talks of teeth and pieces of teeth, new pieces and mended pieces, much after the fashion a grocer would discourse of so much tea and so many eggs.

JANUARY 21 SUNDAY 1855

Went to church this morning. Collection in aid of the Sunday Schools. Put a half Crown in the plate, almost think I grudged it, yet have thrown away at least a Couple of Pounds in trifles during the week. My only excuse is that there is a Collection for something or other regularly every Sunday.

Catholic Prayers to the Prisoners by a Youth in training for the Priesthood worthy of notice that the Roman Prisoners pay a great deal more attention to their Pastors than any of the Protestant Denomination whether Presbyterian Wesleyan or Episcopalian.

Called on Mr Read and prevailed on him to come and take tea with me. After tea left him to go for a walk while I went to church. I have heard of people being ashamed of not attending a Place of Worship, but I too might feel ashamed of going, and in my mind slunk to my pew, as if to a place of ill repute. I felt myself a hypocrite for I knew it was not religion brought me, but desire to see and be seen.

Another Collection. Harrison held the plate & I put in a shilling. After church Harrison and I met Interesting female from Arcade. Harrison decidedly the favorite so I left them to their stroll. I am to be I fear fated to solitude. I long for female Society, when out of my reach, and then cut it when in my power to obtain.

JANUARY 23 TUESDAY 1855

Went to the Promenade Concert in the Evening. Saw numbers I know but am very dissatisfied with myself for being tempted there so often. It costs a great deal of money, although the admission is but a shilling, for Australian Politeness necessitates the asking of all speaking acquaintance to Nobblerise, and as Drinks cost each a shilling a Pound soon evaporates.

The Money however is not the principal cause of my disliking to be there. 'Tis the Publicity and the fear of being thought a fast fellow, for my temperament makes me conspicuous, as when with two or three companions, I generally become merry, talk loud and laugh noisily. I must turn over a new leaf or expect to go to the Dogs, and be left without a true friend.

JANUARY 26 FRIDAY 1855

Paid Cabman 10 shillings for Cab to Benevolent Asylum, made him a present of a shilling to get a Nobbler, having caused him a great deal of unnecessary

trouble. Very unprofitable work for me these trifles. I have to pay them from my pocket and then fight hard to get my own again. The Order of the Government now is that for every demand Two Householders shall sign their belief in its reasonableness. Extremely hot all day. Mr McNee called after office hours and paid me £8.1.0, Eight Pounds One Shilling, on account of John Martin at present under my charge.

Dined with Mr Black and knocked about till the Fancy Dress Ball commenced. Comparatively few people present and these of the Genus Fast. Drank with numbers but did not dance. It is no use being a hypocrite with one's Diary, I cannot dance and every day find it more and more a drawback. False Pride alone prevents me taking lessons. I would not learn when a boy and now I have whiskers I am ashamed to be seen beginning.

John Edwards was dressed in character, or rather wore breeches, silk stockings, flashed Doublet and hat bound with cherry ribbon, and auburn wig with curls à la Cavalier.

Drink, smoke and chaffs, kept me till the musicians were tired. I got home at four o'clock A.M.

Improper persons will not be admitted to the Ball this Evening was an announcement extensively circulated, & to carry out the sanitary measure, a lynx eyed Detective was engaged to spot the naughty ones. Unfortunately he had but one eye, so the frail fair doubtless got on his blind side, for not a female was there in the room who was not notorious for selling her favors.

JANUARY 27 SATURDAY 1855

Rather seedy first thing this morning but contrived to attend to business. Mr Wintle inspected the Gaol, chatted very friendly. I believe he thinks I am very fast but yet cannot make out how the place is always correct.

Made up some newspapers for England & after four o'clock, went out to Post them. On the road to the office met Messrs McNee & Newby, accompanied them of course to get a Nobbler. Went to Coleman's, great crowd there assembled to see a race for 75 Yards between a man and a horse. All a humbug, and made up affair by the Publican.

Met Mr Haydn the Reporter of *The Herald* and our number thus increased walked on to the Cricket Ground where the Band of the 40th Regiment was playing.

On the way had a race with Newby, a pretty good match. I won.

I had Diarrhoea and thought it prudent to drink Brandy. Took a good deal to much. Dined with Newby at Richmond, and then went into town. Pulled up at Coleman's by a Gaol acquaintance and set to work drinking. Went into Gaol acquaintance's house when Coleman shut up. I shouted a couple of bottles of wine for which I threw down a sovereign. Got very late and eventually was left with the Reporter & McNee. Wanted to stop with a woman that was in the house, she however was too mercenary, and though at last willing to come to my terms, my inclination for her had fled. Got

home very late, but very thankful that I should be spared the mortification of coming home disgusted & dirty the next daylight.

JANUARY 30 TUESDAY 1855

My life is proceeding most unsatisfactory, each day more wearisome than the preceding. Each day commenced with the lassitude caused by the last night's debauch, Each day fresh resolutions of reformation made, each day such resolutions broken on the First temptation. I am not a Drunkard, I hate Blackguard Society. I long for genial friendship, and to find one woman, that I could love and respect. Wanting these, and also not having strength of mind to study, nor a refuge in my own thoughts, after the days confinement I am open to the calls of the First Idler, lounge about, Drink, look at the whores, fool away my money at their homes, by paying for drink which is neither wanted, nor drank, at prices four times as high as even the extravagant charges obtained by Publicans & all for what, to be called a Good natured fool; and upon reflection, to be disgusted with self & mankind.

Called upon Lotherington.⁷⁷ Emma Quite well. Invited to St Kilda but refused, weather appearing unfavourable.

Mr Matyr called in the Evening. I went out with him and into several disreputable Houses; Monk's, Big Maria's, Woman previously unknown but, possessing Trap for Grog, Babies, Absent Lodger and absent husband of mysterious pursuits.

FEBRUARY 22 THURSDAY 1855

The old man of whom I wrote yesterday expired during the night. I wrote the necessary official letters and carried the one to the Sheriff myself to Mr Wintle.⁷⁸ Found him in the Supreme Court extremely busy. The State Trials having commenced, there were 180 Jurymen summoned in three panels of 60 each. I saw the prisoners put in the Dock. They are in general a respectable looking body of men. One a Black man. The prisoners and the Crown each challenged a considerable number of the Jurymen, and when they had at last succeeded in getting a full Box, the Black man was put on his trial. The trial at night not having nearly come to an end, the Jury were locked up in the Supreme Court Hotel until the next morning.

The Inquest was held at half past eleven o'clock. My old doctor gave evidence and the verdict returned was Death caused by Delirium Tremens. In the evening I met a neat little damsel in Black with whom I made an

77 Joseph Lotherington (1832–1912), born Jersey Channel Islands, a chemist, married Emma Castieau (1831–1928) at St Stephen's Church of England, Richmond, 3 June 1854.

78 George Wintle (1808–1870), one of the earliest officials at Port Phillip, to where he was sent as Superintendent of Convicts in 1838; later appointed as Sheriff and appointed Castieau to the Melbourne Gaol in 1852. Wintle was forced to retire at age 60 with a grant of only £320; after his death the government granted his widow £500. James Smith (ed.), *The Cyclopaedia of Victoria, Vol. 1* (Melbourne: The Cyclopaedia Co., 1903), pp. 191–193.

appointment for the next day. Called and took Miss Swannell alias The Australian Nightingale to the scene of her achievements or more generally known as Black's Concert Room.

Met Mather and took a walk with him to Collingwood, had some oysters, returned home smoked a cigar and tumbled into bed.

FEBRUARY 23 FRIDAY 1855

Went to the Court in time to hear the verdict given in the case of the Black man Joseph for High Treason.

'Not Guilty' said the Foreman of the Jury, and immediately arose a shout of applause throughout the Court House. The Crown Solicitor Mr Gurner was extremely savage, and shouted to the Police to arrest so and so, and such a man whom he declared he saw assisting in the uproar.

Two men were immediately brought before the Judge who after a smart reproof committed them both to Gaol for a week for Contempt of Court. This is in my opinion a poor policy on the part of the Government as these men's punishment will be put down as spleen occasioned by the adverse verdict.

The Young lady did not keep her appointment.

Went to McEwen's in the evening and then came home to bed.

Ordered a coat, trousers and two vests for which I shall have to pay £9.10/. This is dear but if they are well made they will give double the satisfaction of shop Clothing.

FEBRUARY 26 MONDAY 1855

Very busy all day, made out Returns for the past week and forwarded them to the Sheriff. Dr Webster paid his usual visit. Went to the Supreme Court in the evening, saw Manning another of the State Prisoners acquitted. The Attorney General tried very hard for a verdict, and the Judge, though he summed up fairly, summed up dead against the prisoner. The Juries will not convict men when they know that the Sentence of Death would be passed even if not carried out.

Saw McNee and Newby walked with them a short distance.

Went to the Mechanics Reading Room⁷⁹ for a short time but could not compose my mind to profit much by the Books or Papers.

Wandered about in a most ridiculous mawkish sentimental manner. Met a woman of easy manners and went home with her, spent my money and came home disgusted with myself and certain of rising in the morning miserable and low spirited.

The Solitary life I lead seeing no one all day and having no one to converse with or think of if I stay at home causes me to be about so much and to play the fool so often. I make all manner of promises and resolutions in my mind but fear to give them positive utterance, as experience alas tells me what wind and vapour they in general are.

79 In Little Collins Street.

MARCH 5 MONDAY 1855

Made out returns for the past week.

Visited by Mr Newby and a friend of his named Packham. They induced me to promise to accompany them to the Theatre in the evening. It turned out a wet night but taking an Umbrella we braved the shower.

The Play was *Richard the Third*. The House was densely crowded and intensely hot. Mr G.V. Brooke⁸⁰ played Gloster and certainly is extremely talented. The Melbourne Company was however painfully incompetent to support him in so heavy a play.

...

The Farce of *Kiss in the Dark* made us all heartily laugh though the incident is most meagre and absurd. I forgot my Umbrella and Newby has I am afraid lost my stick. It is a rather dear amusement stirring away from home in this town. A Pound is a trifle or at any rate is soon spent in trifles.

MARCH 17 SATURDAY 1855

This was the last day of the Races, and I began early in the morning to feel much inclined to go. At length after preparing for contingencies, I tossed a Coin in the air declaring if it fell Head uppermost I would go if Tail I'd stay at home. It came down head so away I went to the Bull and Mouth, jumped into an omnibus that was about starting, and found myself on the course before the first advertised race came off. Mr Sub Inspector Smith kindly passed me on to the Grand Stand, where I of course got a good view, and although the horses were not the fastest, yet the riders evidently rode to win, and consequently made the matches somewhat exciting. Mr G.V. Brooke & Miss Cathcart with some of the Town Company were quietly starrng in a corner of the Stand. I bet a sovereign during the day, but fortune frowned and I had to pay it.

Coming home I met a girl who I saw once at Dr Stillman's. I made an appointment to go with her to the Concert Room in the evening. I met her at eight o'clock. To our disgust we met the doctor at the Concert. He had come into town along with Newby, though very much against his ordinary custom. Made the best of a bad job and eventually I saw the damsel part of the way home, made another appointment. Felt very excited last evening, and chatted away to several women till I believe the Doctor thought me a great rake. However I got him and Newby to come home with me and take a nobbler or two before they made way for Richmond.

MARCH 18 SUNDAY 1855

Got up rather tired. Went to Church came home had dinner and attended Catholic Prayers with the prisoners.

80 Gustavus Brooke (1818–1866), born in Dublin, was active on the London stage before a seven-year career in Australia after his arrival in Melbourne on tour in February 1855 (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

Mr Perrot called in the afternoon, stopped and took Tea.

I kept my appointment with Dr Stillman's late Domestic and had a long walk by the Banks of the Yarra. Extremely fond and anything but sentimental or Platonic. I made another engagement but am almost afraid to keep it.

I left my fair enslaver in time to meet the good folk returning home from St Pauls Church. Saw interesting damsel and walked with her till Harrison joined us. We laughed a good deal and at length of her own free will she made an arrangement to accompany Harrison to see me on Wednesday Evening next. Whether or not to spy out the nakedness of the Land I know not. I came home at length and after ruminating over a cigar and consuming a nobbler, retired quietly to bed.

MARCH 27 TUESDAY 1855

Very little work to do to day. Went to the Supreme Court after four o'clock. The remainder of the State Prisoners were found 'Not Guilty' & Discharged. A good deal of cheering took place outside the Court House when they were released.

The Old Court House has been recently newly fitted up. A large Cedar Canopy is placed above the Judge's chair, in the course of the proceedings this ominously cracked, and the Judge was obliged to sacrifice for the time his dignity, and ignominiously bolt.

The Papers who have laughed at the Thunder being called into the Summing up of the Judge on the other evening when it was made to represent a warning to the Jury, are asking how his honor interprets the giving way of the Cedar above his head.

Went to Black's and dined with him, visited the Concert afterwards. A young lady, rather 'beery', amused herself by accompanying Madame Carandini but not at all to the delight of the audience, who raised a great clamour until the offending fair one was forcibly expelled.



Unknown photographer
Mrs Palmer, Miss Carandini, June 1869
albumen photograph; 11.5 x 8.7 cm
Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an24649635
Mrs Palmer (left) was Marie Carandini's daughter and sang in her mother's company. Castieau attended a concert by Marie Carandini on 27 March 1855 at the Queen's Theatre Royal.

APRIL 9 MONDAY 1855

There has nothing of consequence occurred during the business hours of this day, but since accident has again driven me into expense and made more difficult my professed resolutions of reformation.

Going towards McEwen's after Muster I ran against the Girl that I accompanied home some days since. I had promised to make her a present, or in other words to pay her the wages her class expects. To night I had but a little silver in my pocket and consequently could not keep my promise. I however accompanied her and some similar cattle to a house in King Street. I paid there ten shillings for a bottle of wine and did not leave it until my honor had contracted a debt of £5, ah and I'll pay it too for to laugh at Conscience. Pride will not allow me to run the chance of being pointed at as a Defaulter.

Coming home I met Mather, that man unconscious himself under the garb of seeming friendship has done me great mischief. He has money and his business pays him to 'Knock about the town'. To give him his due he is most liberal and spends pounds freely, but for his pounds I sacrifice crowns and reputation. We went to Black's, the admission cost me half a crown, but I felt miserable and left early. I came home. At the Gate I met an unfortunate whom I had discharged this morning, a recovered Lunatic. Without money, friends or acquaintance he had learnt to consider even the cold welcome of a Gaol a home. I know the town and could feel that he had wandered all day & that he must be hungry cold and tired. I dispensed with the warrant that Gaolers require and gave him food and a night's lodgings.

Oh God help me, I have much to be thankful for and yet to-night I thought how blessed would be to be thoughtless and inanimate. I remembered I had loaded pistols and I thought of death. Lord help me or I am undone.

MAY 4 FRIDAY 1855

After four o'clock I went and had a look at the new theatre now building in Bourke Street.

...

Called upon McEwen heard a long tale of woes and troubles from him, he cannot manage the women, the officers giving him more trouble than the prisoners.

He walked as far as my house and we sat and smoked for some time together. Walking back a part of the way with him we encountered a crowd and on enquiring into the matter we found that some drunken fool had dropped his Pocket Book, which was quietly picked up by some Knowing customer who made free with its contents and then returned it to the owner. Unfortunately for Genius two detectives saw the transaction and stopped light fingers as he was walking contentedly away. Looked in at the Salle de



"The Salle de Valentino"

Reproduced from *The Australasian Sketcher*, 15 April 1876

Valentino.⁸¹ The audience there is of a most villainous and Profligate character. Dirty gents, Jew Boys, Grey headed reprobates, and repulsive prostitutes.

MAY 5 SATURDAY 1855

Did a great deal of business to day. First attended on the Colonial Surgeon who held a long investigation on the cases of several men Remanded for Medical Enquiry. Sent some men with certificates to the Police Office. Attended on the Doctor wrote several business letters and afterwards carried them to the Gaol. Talked with McNee he seems to be very uncomfortable inspecting the affair of the money. I may do him injustice but I think he feels he must have had the money, but yet has not the pluck or perhaps the means to say so boldly, and so save an innocent person from sharing in the expense of his mistake.

Gave the Reporter of *The Argus* my Returns for the Week. He happened to be here while the Doctor was examining some lunatics and from his remarks, I fear he may print something that will affront the magistrates. I hope not as their worships may probably think his censures are of my instigation. Went to see Joe, business has greatly improved at his Office, he paid me 25/- for

81 The Salle de Valentino, an entertainment venue at the corner of Bourke and Spring Street, subject of a number of engravings by S.T. Gill.

some Cigars I got for him some little time since. Spent my evening at the Concert Room & after it was over went home with one of the Miss Swannells. Miss Swannell has a very nice voice, in fact is called 'The Australian Nightingale' (but that's Bosh); she sang us at home some very pretty ditties.

MAY 27 SUNDAY 1855

After breakfast Newby & I went to church together. A Mr Roberts who has been for some years a missionary among the North American Indians, and who has come to Australia to tackle the Aborigines, preached an excellent sermon. We had a collection for defraying the expenses of clergyman on the Gold Fields, sending money to the Diggings seems or sounds very much like forwarding coals to Newcastle however we were taught that if they would not look out for their own souls it was our duty to look out for them.

Went to St Kilda. William Lotherington was in the same omnibus. Mr York Senior was a guest at Joe's when we arrived. Emma is better but still very weak. I regret I took umbrage at some sarcastic remarks of Harriette's⁸² and at Joe telling me not to talk so loud. I sulked all the afternoon, and for the first time left Emma's house with a cloud on my heart.

Went to church, it was a dirty wet night and I got home as fast as I could when the service was concluded.

MAY 28 MONDAY 1855

Dr James McCrea called this morning. He was very friendly & drank a glass of Sherry that he liked so much that I promised to get him a case of the same wine. Mr Wintle came afterwards & I am also to get a case for him.

Messrs McNee & Newby came for me to join them to go and see the funeral of Sir Robert Nickle.⁸³ It was a very pompous affair. The whole of the Military Principal Government officers & Town Council were present. Two field pieces were taken to the Cemetary and placed behind the grave. After the service 13 shots were fired from them, a minute's interval between each shot, then the whole of the troops discharged their pieces three times. The Affair made quite a holiday in the town, & folks seemed very jolly. 3 notorious prostitutes dressed in the most glaring finery with brazen impudence, were seated in an open carriage drawn up at the side of the road by which the procession marched. I should have liked to have seen them well pelted with mud the shameless Jezabels.

Newby came home with me & I knocked him up a dinner. We then went to Fox's but he was from home, we however played a game of whist with Mrs Fox & a friend of hers.

82 Harriette Buckley Castieau (1826–1886), his sister.

83 Sir Robert Nickle (1786–1855) arrived Australia 1853 as Commander-in-Chief of the Military Forces. He administered martial law at Ballarat for two weeks after the Eureka rebellion in December 1854 (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

JUNE 7 THURSDAY 1855

McEwen having told me yesterday that Mr Stoddart had borrowed money of him, I began to think the Reverend Gentleman to be a little artful so to day I forwarded him a sharp & short epistle desiring him to return the £10 he had of mine at once.

Packham called in the course of the day and was afterwards joined by Newby & Mr McNee.

Called upon Fox in the evening & walked with him to Collingwood to see home a young lady who had been stopping at his home. When we got to her residence I was surprised to find that the master of the house was a shipmate of my own. He appeared very glad to see me & hospitably pressed some cider upon us to which as it was rather sour Fox strongly objected. I with polite humbug professed it was the best I had ever tasted. Mr Smith our entertainer was a livery servant to a nobleman's family in England, he saved upwards of a £100 and then emigrated to this country, unfortunately on the passage he was robbed of all his money. It consisted entirely of sovereigns and he had incautiously exposed his wealth on one or two occasions of which some *Chevalier De Industrie* had taken advantage. The poor fellow cried like a child at his loss but plucked up his spirits before he landed; when he did so manfully set to work as a bricklayer's laborer, saved money till he got a horse & dray and has continued prosperous, possessing now a house of his own, three or four drays & horses, and a pretty round sum in the Bank. Bravo energy & perseverance, both however of little avail unless accompanied by economy.

Fox & I on our road home called in at the Brunswick Hotel & afterwards to a not over respectable House in Stephen Street where we both spent a good deal of money & I can answer for myself at any rate with very little satisfaction, & that little not at all likely to be increased by reflection.

JUNE 14 THURSDAY 1855

I stayed at home the whole of the evening & trust that it is the commencement of my doing so many nights.

Bye the Bye it rained very heavily and was extremely dirty under foot. This might to a prejudiced mind be some explanation of my reformation so I think it but right to my Diary to mention the circumstances.

I read aloud several pages of *Martin Chuzzlewit* & rather flattered myself I gave expression to the author's nicest sentiments. I was extremely pleased with myself & unanimously rewarded my exertions with a glass of gin & water and the Hardest manilla I could find in my cigar case, after which I tried on the smoking cap Emma gave me on my birthday, looked in the glass & wondered I was not more distinguished then went to bed.

JUNE 17 SUNDAY 1855

Did not get out of bed till nine o'clock, had breakfast, settled one or two disputes among the prisoners & went to Church. Read came in the same pew

and told me my sister had been taken ill, & that Joe was in town for the doctor. As I had been expecting this intelligence & knew that the illness was perfectly natural, I was rather pleased than otherwise.

Mr Rowe a shipmate of ours at present living in Geelong was at the same church. We shook hands together but as he was engaged we had to separate on leaving the Church.

There was a collection in aid of The Poor & Needy. A clergyman whose name is unknown to me delivered the sermon which was short & impressive.

Saw Joe as I was going home, he told me that he had been sent to fetch the Doctor & that he was already gone. Joe expected an addition to his family during the course of the day. Under the circumstances I persuaded him that he would be only in the way at home & that he had better stop with me. Having himself read of the Cruelties of Nurses to husbands on such occasion he coincided in my opinion. We took dinner at Gregory's came to my place & drank a bottle of wine, then walked to St Kilda, on the road meeting the doctor who informed us that he had been sent for unnecessarily & that there was nothing decisive at present.

This was a little bit of a Sell, however we made the best of it, got to St Kilda & had a cup of tea. Harriette gave me for a birthday present two tablecloths & a couple of very pretty bread cloths made by herself. Joe came into town with me, he came for the purpose of taking a horse to St Kilda in case he should have to come to Melbourne in the night. Mr Hearle called & went to Church with me. I wrote a note for my pretty little girl, had the opportunity but not the pluck to give it to her.

JUNE 18 MONDAY 1855

The Glorious eighteenth of June is now made more memorable in our family. For this day Emma was brought to bed of a little girl. Joe called with the intelligence that I was made an uncle, & that both mother & child were doing well.

JUNE 24 SUNDAY 1855

Went to Church this morning & in the afternoon started for a walk with Harrison & Read. Near the Punt at Richmond I fell in with Miss Cadden & her little brothers & sisters. I abandoned my former companions and accompanied my newly met friends.

Misses Cadden is about sixteen Years of Age, a native of the Colony. She has a fine complexion, Very good features & a neat figure. Cadden is worth too much money or I would try & win her for my ain little wife.

I walked to Cadden's House & after a little chat came away with Mr Cadden. We parted in town I going home & he to call on a friend.

Went to church in the evening. My watch stopped so that I made a mistake in the time & got to church about half an hour after the service had commenced.

Tried to slip a note into interesting young lady's (last one) hand but she either would not take it or did not understand what I meant by pushing rudely against her. I rather think that I shall leave off going to St Pauls Church⁸⁴ for the present at any rate.

JULY 12 THURSDAY 1855

Took my usual walk past 'Charmer's' House. On the impulse of a moment prompted by a sight of an Engraver's shop I fancied I required Cards & without more to do walked in & ordered a plate to be engraved and a hundred to be struck off. They will cost me twenty four shillings or just four times the Home Price, however vanity deserves to suffer.

Turned loose upon the world Mr Allen late surgeon of the Boomerang, he having now recovered from a violent attack of Delirium Tremens. With blasted reputation & empty pockets I fear alas he will but add another item to swell the 'The Destitute of Collingwood'.

The Sheriff, the Inspector General & Visiting Justice paid the Gaol a visit. They seemed very well satisfied.

The Visiting Justice sentenced a prisoner to four months labor in irons for striking one of the Turnkeys. This was a secondary punishment for the turnkey returned the blow with compound interest.

Called upon Joe, walked to the Omnibus with him, purchased a Bouquet, saw Poole who asked me to go to The Patriotic Ball. I declined and quite Huffed him. Went home, found my excursion the night previous had given me a severe cold, & so went early to bed. 'I must learn to dance.'

JULY 14 SATURDAY 1855

Took a little stroll in the morning. Went to the Main Gaol & asked a question respecting a prisoner's money; could get no instructions, the Sheriff not being at the office.

The Reporter of *The Argus* called upon me, and wished me to give him some idea of the number of really destitute persons I had in Gaol on an average.

I told him between 15 & 20 were generally confined who when their sentences expired, were liberated but were without friends and unfit from age or infirmity to get a living. These men endured privations for two or three days and were then picked up by the Police & brought as it were Home to Gaol.

Wrote out the Part I am to play with the Amateurs.

Amused myself with scribbling a good deal during the day, although we were very busy metalling the Yards & as the men were continually going in and out of the Gaol, I was obliged to be watchful.

84 St Paul's Church of England in Swanston Street, replaced in the 1880s by the cathedral.

Saw Joe off to St Kilda. Went to the New Theatre.⁸⁵ It will be opened on a Monday and is the handsomest building I have ever seen out of London. Mr Poole has taken two tickets for me in a good part of the house so Newby & I are going together.

Supped at Gregory's and then came home to bed, at about half past eleven.

AUGUST 6 MONDAY 1855

Mr Wintle & the Visiting Justice were here this morning. As we were mustering the prisoners for the Visiting Magistrate's inspection, one of them a notorious vagrant of the name of Thomas Jones came forward and struck me a blow. As may be supposed I immediately returned the compliment & partly from my blow and partly from what was, I believe an intentional slip my antagonist fell to the ground.

Dr Youl⁸⁶ immediately tried him for the Assault to which he pleaded guilty & put forward as his only excuse that when previously he had asked me for a pair of shoes I had told him to wear what he had got on. He was sentenced to six months labor in Irons. If I did not know this customer so well I should regret his receiving so heavy a punishment on my account, but he has since I have been connected with the Gaols been a continual nuisance to the authorities; on receiving his last sentence at the Police Court, he was told by the Magistrate that he would be sent to break stones for three months. It is very few stones I'll break was his impudent rejoinder. Dr Webster visited the Gaol & inspected the lunatics.

AUGUST 17 FRIDAY 1855

Dr Webster called and examined several lunatics.

Ordinary business transacted during the day. Called upon Joe after four o'clock and was pleased to find that he & Emma had enjoyed themselves much at the ball.

Saw William Lotherington and had a chat with Perrot.

Met Mr John Edwards and Dr Neil,⁸⁷ promised to meet them at William's at seven, to discuss matters concerning the Dramatic Club.

Met Poole and called on Gregory. Reached William's at eight o'clock, talked a long time and eventually agreed to meet on Tuesday next at Mr Henningham's house.

85 The Theatre Royal, built by John Black, in competition with the Queens and (just two weeks later) the Olympic, built by theatre entrepreneur George Coppin: Harold Love (ed.), *The Australian Stage: A Documentary History* (Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press with Australian Theatre Studies Centre School of Drama, 1984), pp. 52–53.

86 Richard Youl (1821–1897), medical practitioner and Melbourne coroner, a major figure in medical administration for four decades from the 1850s; known also as a disciplinarian (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

87 James Edward Neild (1824–1906), forensic pathologist, drama critic, medical editor and journalist—a close associate of Castieau during these years (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*); Harold Love (ed.), *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso* (Melbourne, 1989).

Went to the Theatre, got drinking mixed liquors and felt very seedy. Saw the Farce of *Uncle John* which was very well played. Came home about 12 o'clock, disgusted with myself, my associates, situation & the world. I know I have much to be thankful for yet am far from feeling contented, nay as I ought, grateful. Circumstance has somehow throughout my life kept me a solitary individual. Confined all day I gladly go out in the evening, but where am I to go to, no families know me, no friends but single men no amusements but theirs drinking & wenching.

AUGUST 20 MONDAY 1855

Had a considerable row with the old doctor this morning about the clothes worn by the prisoners on their admission. It seems that there has lately been much difficulty in finding their shirts for them to put on when leaving the Gaol. I am perfectly aware that generally they have but mere rags and those often filthy, yet as I tell the doctor if these were washed and labelled at once there would be no difficulty. Now if a prisoner has an idea that there is any doubt upon the matter he immediately boasts of having quite a new shirt &c &c though probably his real garment was not worth plucking from a dunghill.

Dr Webster paid the Gaol an ordinary visit. Mr McColley Dr McCrea's Friend is quite recovered.

Mr McNee returned me *Bleak House* this morning, he borrowed a pound before he left.

Went for a stroll after four o'clock, called upon Gregory and took a cup of tea, went on the stage with Mr Poole and shortly before the performance took a place in the Stalls. The Play was *The Corsican Brothers*. Mr Black took the part of the Shade of Louis.

Met Fox there and talked with him for some time. Left at the conclusion of the first Piece and got home before twelve o'clock.

AUGUST 23 THURSDAY 1855

The Deputy Sheriff, A member of the Legislative Council, The Secretary of the Benevolent Asylum & Mr Wintle came to the Gaol this morning, and inspected some old men that the Sheriff has applied to get admitted into the Benevolent Asylum.

The Presbyterian minister read prayers and delivered an Address to the Protestant prisoners.

Several acquaintances of Mr McColley called but he declined seeing them.

After Tea I took a stroll through the town and then went to Collingwood. On my return I looked in at the Reading Room of the Mechanics [Institute], amused myself by waiting a considerable time for the relinquishing of *The Argus* by one or other of two very slow old gentlemen who each had a copy and spite my impatience coolly kept turning over page after page as if they were not only deeply interested in the news but also wrapped in every advertisement.

I got it at last, not however from either of them for they were as busy as ever when I left, for all the world like two of Madame Tussaud's clever Wax Figures with a little internal machinery, that turned the paper over at certain intervals; in watching them I had overlooked a third copy which I now got hold of & then found 'there was nothing in it'.

AUGUST 28 TUESDAY 1855

Mr Wintle called this morning as did also the Visiting Justice.

Made out my Returns for the past week and sent them to the Sheriff. Mr Stoddart read prayers and delivered an address to the Protestant prisoners.

Went out with Newby and purchased a pair of trousers for which I paid 8/6. They will be very cheap if I can manage to wear them, of which I am rather doubtful.

Returning home I came against a man of the name of North, he had been previously with me on a charge of insanity. Shortly after his discharge a Detective called on me for his description so that when I saw him yesterday I considered it would be as well to take charge of him. I brought him home with me & then went to the Detective office, found the man was suspected of having murdered a woman at Alberton. An officer came back with me and I gave North into his charge.

Went to the Railway Station and at Fox's invitation took a trip by the train to Sandridge,⁸⁸ where Mrs Fox and the children had previously gone.

Came back with them took tea & went with Fox to the Olympic Theatre, saw the Play of the *Courier of Lyons* & the Farce of *Poor Pillicuddy*. Mr Wintle was in one part of the Theatre, his head Turnkey Harris in another.

SEPTEMBER 3 MONDAY 1855

Dr Webster called and examined several of the men.

Newby brought the pay. I paid the men. Florence returned £2. he had borrowed and Hurlily £5.

Called upon Fox in the evening, and took tea with him & family, eventually we proceeded together to the Theatre Royal, where the Opera of the *Daughter of the Regiment* was performed very creditably.

Met Simcock of the Detective Police and accompanied him to the Salle de Valentin's. Knocked about till nearly twelve & then returned home to bed.

SEPTEMBER 4 TUESDAY 1855

Visited the Main Gaol. Picked out two men for this establishment, one to act as my servant & the other to be constable in the Yard. Accompanied Rowley to the Labor Yard saw a few amongst the men that had been previously of my acquaintance.

88 The port of Melbourne in the 1870s, it boasted two long piers stretching to Hobson's Bay. It was a frequent destination for weekend outings, and so used by Castieau and his family.

Mr Wintle was very chatty & agreeable. He accompanied me back to my quarters.

Mr Stoddart called but did not address the prisoners.

The Visiting Justice made his usual weekly inspection.

To night we were to have the monthly meeting of the Garrick Club & were to dine together at seven o'clock. I called for Dr Neil and we went together to [i.e. with] Williams [to] the place of meeting.

Mr R.H. Horne⁸⁹ and about a dozen members were present, we got a very poor dinner and eventually found the attendance so bad that we threw down the reckoning and adjourned to the Argus Hotel. There after a very animated discussion a code of rules was passed and officers to manage the Society elected.

I proposed Mr Fox as a member, Mr. Akehurst *The Argus* Reporter seconded my motion, and the Chairman acknowledged the result of the ballot by declaring him elected.

SEPTEMBER 9 SUNDAY 1855

Made necessary arrangements & then proceeded to Mr Cadden's, found the family ready for Church & accompanied them. Returned to dinner after which Mr & Mrs Cadden, Miss Cadden & myself with a little girl and the baby started in the chaise for the Lunatic Asylum.

After a little difficulty in finding the road & one or two good natured disputes as to who should have the pleasure of taking 'baby' we arrived at our destination.

Cadden & I introduced ourselves and Dr Bowie received us very hospitably and showed our party great attention. We went all through the establishment. The bedding, rooms &c look very clean but there is a most disagreeable smell easily perceptible throughout the whole place. The men are mostly quiet. There were however one or two sad exceptions, or rather exceptions, for perhaps the Quiet miserable hopeless Patient is more an object of pity than even the roaring madman, who if terrible and horrible to a spectator, still can find in his wild imaginings food for mirth & though mad as a March hare still in fancied dignity, as proud in his straight waistcoat as the monarch on his throne.

Most of the men knew me & one poor fellow said he was detained for my safety.

Poor Dahl was in a frightful condition. The Keepers told me it was difficult to make him eat. He was in a straight waistcoat, was very filthy. The poor fellow had bitten a hole through the canvas sleeve of the waistcoat. Oh God preserve all from such a terrible fate. Handsome, accomplished & Esteemed poor Dahl was once. Woman who caused the change be happy if you can.

89 Richard Henry Horne (1802–1884), English writer and poet, lived and wrote in Victoria, 1852–1869 (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

The women were more violent than the men & were penned together like wild beasts. I mean about a dozen of the worst cases. One had her hands fastened behind and with demonic gestures jumped as close to us as she could and from lips bloody & foaming spat at the nearest. Went to church in the evening, returned home about ten.

SEPTEMBER 13 THURSDAY 1855

Made out a return for Dr McCrea of the number of lunatics & persons remanded for Medical Enquiry, who have passed through the Gaol during the present year.

The number altogether amounted to nearly one hundred & fifty, of these at least one hundred were occasioned by 'Drink'.

Wrote a long letter to Dr Bowie. It was forwarded with three lunatics whom I this day sent to the Asylum.

Dr McCrea called and completed two certificates of Insanity that Dr Webster had previously signed.

A great deal of curiosity was prevalent in the town to day concerning Lola Montes she being announced to appear at the Theatre this evening.⁹⁰ It is my creed that a

man of the world cannot afford to lose any novelty. I determined to be one of the audience. Called upon Mr Reed and found himself, cousin & a friend all Lola mad.

We took places in The Stalls for which we had to pay ten shillings each. The House was soon crowded in every part. *Lola Montes in Bavaria* is the designation of the Piece, which would be damned for all eternity as a Dramatic production but for Lola, taking what she declares to be her own part (in more senses than one).

I candidly confess my disgust at the affair, which to my mind is complete with the rankest Charlatanism & the bare-faced impertinence of introducing the Queen of Bavaria as an encourager of the Power of Lola over the weak minded King is an insult to morality & common sense.



Portrait of Lola Montes c.1855
hand-coloured photograph: oval image
6.1 x 5.0 cm. in frame 58.2 x 48.5 cm
Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an6552759

90 Lola Montez (1818–1861), Irish-born 'dancer and courtesan': her already notorious career on stage and in art and political circles preceded an Australian tour in 1855–1856 (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

Of course when the curtain fell there was a great cry for Lola. Some clap trap Liberty speeches *à la* Mooney having made great impression on The Gods she came forward & with a cat like smile through which the devil might easily be seen, asked people not to hiss till she had finished. Then raving of what she had done for liberty, and of what she had lost by her love of it, she with a clap trap gag left the stage.

Met Mr Reed, he came home & had a glass of ale with me.

OCTOBER 1 MONDAY 1855

Dr Youl and Mr Price visited the Gaol.

I went to the Main Gaol & got Mr Wintle to give me an old bed board of which I made a couple of shelves for the Store.

Called upon Fox at the Railway Station & apologised to him for not [keeping] my appointment yesterday.

Newby called with the Salaries for last month. I paid my men, stopping £1 [I] had advanced to Florence.

Called upon Mr Neild & went with him to the Queen's Theatre opened this evening with a new company on the low price system.

The Gallery was full of boys who made a great noise. The Theatre altogether had the appearance of the Old Victoria in London. It smelt vilely of Costermongers.⁹¹ The performance was most despicable & rendered worse by some almost obscene jests distributed at random.

Met Fox & John Edwards. The latter came home with me & I gave him the letter I had for him from Neild. Got to bed about twelve o'clock.

OCTOBER 9 TUESDAY 1855

Mr Wintle called & showed off a little by enquiring in the Yards if any of the prisoners had complaints to make to him. I can afford to laugh however at what I consider on his part harmless recreation.

Dr Webster called respecting Medical Returns. Employed myself during the day in making out Returns which I afterwards forwarded to the Sheriff.

Called after four o'clock upon Mr Reed, took tea with him & then went to North Melbourne to see a sick friend. Mr Reed is become a member of the Garrick Club and so in the evening we attended a meeting.

To my surprise the moment we entered the room it was proposed I should take the Chair & the motion seemed unanimously carried. I thought it would perhaps be better to say nothing so at once took my seat.

There was a great deal of unnecessary discussion & some little unpleasantness in balloting for new members, the plan of excluding by three Dissident votes evidently working very badly as it gives a small clique the power of mischievously exerting a personal animus.

91 Barrowmen.

One thing I must remember as most essential in a Chairman & that is equability of temper. I apparently got on very well this evening, though upon reflection I feel I ought to have done better.

OCTOBER 10 WEDNESDAY 1855

Dr Webster called & transacted ordinary business.

I went to the Main Gaol & chatted for a considerable time, during which I sold Newby a ticket for Richard Young's benefit.

Called upon Joe & got my umbrella which the girls had nicely mended. Saw Mr Reed at his office & went with him to see his sick friend at North Melbourne.

Took tea with him on our return. Reed & his cousin are but little better acquainted with dancing than myself & we all have long felt the bar to progress it is to be unable to take share in the amusements of the Ball Room. I am determined at once to begin & though it may look foolish shall take lessons of Mr Denning forthwith.

Reed and I called at a Mr Lloyd's dancing Rooms and found the professor to be a very dirty little man, who at our entrance was smoking a short pipe. There was nothing certainly of the poetry of motion in his appearance & yet he appeared very confident of his powers. He had 45 pupils, whom he taught two nights a week; on the other two he held a Ball, entrance to which was by a ticket valued at 4 shillings. Mr Lloyd showed us with great complacency, a dusty little room with a very questionable looking Sofa standing in it & which apparently serves the purpose of Bedstead after the revellers have departed & Mr & Mrs Lloyd are left to their domestic Bliss. The apartment however was introduced to us as the ladies retiring room. Another Room exactly similar & separated from it by a partition Mr Lloyd called the Gentlemen's Lounge. The little fellow apparently considered us dazzled & told us the class commenced tomorrow evening & that we must pay in advance.

Went to a Bazaar at the Mechanics in the evening, spent upwards of a pound & somehow or other happened to lose another from my pocket.

OCTOBER 11 THURSDAY 1855

Took early walk as usual.

After I had got through the usual routine I called upon Mr Neild & we agreed to go together & endeavour to dispose of some tickets for Young's benefit. We first called upon Dr Gilbee and Miss Gilbee. The lady agreed to accompany Mr Neild & the doctor said he would attend if he could comfortably dispose of a threatened midwifery case.

We then saw Mr Coates of the Bank of New South Wales & from him learnt of an article in this morning's *Argus* respecting the Garrick Club. In it I perceived my name starring as Chairman.

From Coates we proceeded to Henningham & agreed to take part of a private box he had engaged. He offered us seats & I hardly know as yet how to get rid of the obligation without hurting his feelings.

Saw Young & some of his companions afterwards at the Theatre & did a nobbler with them.

In the evening I called at Joe's office and from thence, called upon the Swannells and invited Louisa to accompany us, to which she consented.

Called for the lady and found myself comfortably seated about five minutes after the rising of the curtain. Dr & Miss Gilbee shortly after made their appearance with Neild and those with Messrs Henningham made up our party. The house was crammed & Mr Young met with a very enthusiastic reception. After the conclusion of the play the beneficiant being called before the audience made a pretty little speech in which due mention was made of the Garrick Club.

Our party got on altogether extremely well & after the performance was terminated Dr Gilbee invited us to his house, where we had some supper. Neild & I then saw Miss Swannell home & separated. I got wandering through the town, met a kind but well known damsel & had a chat with her before I returned to bed.

OCTOBER 17 WEDNESDAY 1855

Took early morning walk, saw the window where charmer sometimes peeps from. Heigho it did ent do me much good.

Harriette came to town & I went with her to have her likeness by Daguerreotype. She had to sit six times before the Artist as he styled himself was contented. I am glad however to say that she brought away a very good portrait & one that was considered second best came to my share.

Harriette dined with me & after four o'clock I accompanied her to St Kilda. Whilst there I practised the Polka with Emma and could get along rolerably well.

Returned and took tea, then went for a stroll, saw Poole at the Theatre Royal & waited while a portion of *Hamlet* was played.

Got home to bed at about a quarter to eleven.

One accustomed to the jealous protection afforded in the old country to the liberty of the subject, would be much astonished at the simple causes that here sometimes get men handcuffed as felons and locked up from a night, to a month or two. A sneer at & exaggerated by a Policeman into hindrance in the execution of his duty, may according to luck, be extenuated by a caution, a fine of 20/- or 1 Month's labor in Gaol. Old Colonists have no conception of the disgrace a New Chum considers Imprisonment but look upon it simply as a loss of time & opportunity.

OCTOBER 22 MONDAY 1855

Transacted ordinary business, & then went to the Main Gaol, to endeavour to procure two or three prisoners to act as wardsmen. Met Mr Neild & Mr Smith. Mr Neild showed me a leader on the Garrick Club that appeared in *The Age* of this morning. It made the Society look very important & as the Article principally spoke of what might be was not exaggerated.

This was a very hot disagreeable day the dust being very annoying. The evening was also very close, in fact so much so that many expected a thunder storm. Catherine Hayes appeared for the first time in Melbourne in Opera. The Theatre was I believe very crowded.

Miss Cathcart⁹² or rather Mrs Heir who seceded some time since from Mr Coppins company has returned to her allegiance & appeared last night with Mr Brooke in *The Hunchback*.

I met Mr Reed and accompanied him for a walk after which we went into a New Dancing Room called the Athanaeum, neither of us however took part in the amusement of the place.

Got home about ten o'clock. The lunatics were extremely troublesome. Felt disgusted sat down & employed myself in writing such an article as I would if I were connected with the Press & as well acquainted with the subject as I am at present.

OCTOBER 24 WEDNESDAY 1855

Again very warm, spent the day in transacting ordinary business, received Five prisoners from the Police Office.

Called upon Mr Fox in the evening & chatted for some time with him.

Came about a quarter to ten o'clock and visited the Wards. Saw that one man who had been received to day & who was suffering from a violent attack of Delirium Tremens, appeared very ill, had him brought out in the fresh air, and tried to rally him but without effect, for he Died in about ten minutes.

This poor fellow has left a wife and two children. He was a clerk and but for drink would have been a highly respectable man. He was in Gaol some twelve months since & was then attacked with Delirium Tremens. He was very stout, & doubtless the heat had an effect upon him & prevented in the diseased state of his lungs free respiration.

Sent for Dr Webster but quite uselessly as the man was dead before he could arrive.

Went to bed, but could not sleep for the heat, had to get up to quell a noise in one of the Wards. This hot weather makes it very difficult to manage lunatics particularly where they are crowded together in the manner in which they are in this place. Newby called. I went to Mr Bond & got the £12 I had lent him.

OCTOBER 25 THURSDAY 1855

Busy in preparing for Inquest, wrote usual official letters, and despatched them. The atmosphere relieved by a heavy rain attended with thunder.

Dr Milton brought an order to be present at Post Mortem examination of William Anderson. It was performed by Mr Florence & himself. The lungs

92 Fanny Cathcart (1833–1880), prominent actress on the colonial stage, especially Melbourne where she arrived in 1855 with G.V. Brooke's dramatic company from England (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

were much congested & the heart was in a very flabby & unhealthy condition. Dr Milton was delighted with the visible effects of intemperate habits & will no doubt illustrate future temperance lectures by reference to this case.

Inquest held at three o'clock. Verdict: Deceased Died from Delirium Tremens.

NOVEMBER 14 WEDNESDAY 1855

Went to the main Gaol with some ordinary business papers. Dr Youl called at my Gaol while I was absent. Went to the Railway Station to see Fox, arranged with him for rehearsal at the Station in the evening.

Received a lunatic from Sandhurst. Went with Neild to look over a collection of old books that had been purchased by one of his friends. Bought two volumes of *Elegant Extracts*, a French Dictionary, Bacon's *Essays* & two odd volumes for 7/6.

Attended Rehearsal in the evening made a great deal of noise, but read the Play throughout. Got home about a quarter to eleven o'clock.

Dr Webster paid ordinary visit to the Gaol. The lunatics have been very troublesome during the day.

NOVEMBER 16 FRIDAY 1855

Went as far as the Supreme Court & then to the Main Gaol, had however no particular business. The Supreme Court was just opening when I arrived.

Dr Webster called during the day & examined several persons remanded for medical enquiry.



Isometrical Plan of Melbourne and Suburbs in 1866
(Melbourne: De Gruchy and Leigh, 1866)
Ferguson Collection Map f855
National Library of Australia
(Detail showing the Melbourne Gaol, centre bottom)

Called upon Joe after four o'clock and had a glass of ale with him. Received notification of a Committee meeting of the Garrick Club & attended it in the evening; was made chairman. Went to the dancing class but could not remain in consequence of having to be at the Club.

Met Fox and walked with him to the Theatre Royal, paid half a crown and went in the Pit to see a portion of *The Bohemian Girl*. Pit so crowded & hot, that we were both glad to get out of it again after we had been a few minutes inside.

Had very little business to do to day and found the time pass very tediously. Tried to write but could not summon an idea, to read, but could not keep my eyes open. Tried gymnastics and exerted myself to touch my feet with my hands without bending my knees; could not do it.

NOVEMBER 19 MONDAY 1855

Spent nearly the whole of this day at the Supreme Court Listening to the Trial of Some Bushrangers. Condon Dixon & Jackson. They were found guilty of robbery with violence & sentenced to be hanged. Condon made a very effective speech after he was found guilty but neither he nor his mates seemed to feel their awful position. One of the men, Dixon, is married and has a family of children. They were all waiting about the Gaol and to a reflective mind formed a very melancholy picture. The unconscious little children only anxious to go home and knowing no other sorrow but hunger soon to be made orphans by the law of man. Their future career perhaps embittered by the taunts of the vulgar as to their father's fate. Their mother alone in the world left to her own resources and probably dependent for subsistence on scraps thrown from the spoils obtained by the crimes of men who had been her husband's associates and who would not while they were out of Gaol, allow the Moll of the Bloke who was scragged to starve.

Met Newby and went to Richmond, dined with him, had a game of cards and came home, got to bed about half past ten o'clock.

NOVEMBER 24 SATURDAY 1855

Mr McNee woke me about half past six this morning. He had come to town early in consequence of the execution of three men being fixed for to day at eight o'clock, & as it is under the private Execution Act,⁹³ a clerk was necessary to be in attendance with certificates &c.

Got to the Gaol about half past seven. The Deputy Sheriff & two or three other officials were present, at eight o'clock. Dixon one of the men to suffer, was called from his cell, & pinioned by the hangman; after him, Jackson was similarly treated & then Condon, the noted [last?] for hardihood of the three,

93 Some 15 years before public executions ended in England, the Australian colonies enacted the abolition of public hangings, with an 1853 Bill in New South Wales becoming law in January 1855, followed by Victoria and Tasmania later that year; John McGuire, 'Judicial Violence and the "Civilizing Process": Race and Transition from Public to Private Executions in Colonial Australia', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 29 no. 111, October 1998, pp. 187-209.

before the last was tied, he turned around and shook hands with the others who then shook hands together. The horrible white cap was then placed upon the poor wretches heads and, with the minister in front reading the Burial service the procession marched to the Scaffold. The men all walked firmly & neither made any remark. In a few minutes the ropes were adjusted round their necks the bolt drawn & their souls in eternity. May God have mercy on them.

Made some more arrangements with regard to the Garrick Club, called upon Joe after four o'clock, attended Rehearsal at Fox's in the evening, went behind the Scenes of the Theatre Royal. Saw part of *Bax & Cox*. Got home about twelve o'clock.

NOVEMBER 30 FRIDAY 1855

Hard at work all the past week in preparing for the Performance of the Garrick Club & have somehow or other quite forgotten my Diary.⁹⁴

Attended Rehearsal at the Theatre this morning & then called upon Fox, came home had a cup of tea & went to the Theatre.

The Club met with decided success every thing went off well, all the members played respectably and one or two took the house by surprise at the talent they displayed.

The Governor and Lady Hotham seemed very pleased & laughed heartily several times during the comedy.

After the entertainment had concluded most of the members who had played took supper together, and after spending a pleasant hour or so I retired & went home to bed.

DECEMBER 1 SATURDAY 1855

Called upon Neild, then went to the Theatre to learn the money realised in the house, found £85 cash & £139 in tickets, had the tickets sent to the Secretary and then after counting them saw them all destroyed.

Went with Edwards, had lunch, met Mather and went together to The Criterion.

Came home about seven o'clock, brought Edwards with me, had tea & then attended a Committee Meeting of the Garrick Club.

A very stormy gathering, much discussion about a *Jeu des prit* [*jeu d'esprit*]⁹⁵ published by Mr Horne in the name of the Garrick Club reflecting strongly on Mr Coppin & slightly touching on Mr G.V. Brooke.⁹⁶

94 On 30 November the Garrick Club performed *The Heir at Law* (by George Colman, the Younger) and other items; 30 years later Castieau still retained the white satin bill advertising the performance (see Diary, 22 December 1884).

95 A witticism.

96 This was originally to be performed at the Garrick Club, but was published instead. Coppin had already attempted to obstruct the success of the Garrick evening: Harold Love, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso* (Carlton, Vic., 1989), p. 34.

Mr Coppin is the Manager of The Olympic and certainly appeared to use every endeavour to prevent our first performance being successful, by depriving us of an audience. He announced the Farce of *The Garrick Fever*, had Mr Brooke's benefit advertised for the same evening, and practised other dodges perfectly well known in all probability to the profession, but with which of course we were unacquainted.

Mr Horne then wrote what purported to be a Dialogue between Brooke & Coppin in which they were represented scheming the downfall of the Club. In it Brooke was made appear rather commendable than otherwise, though his companion was certainly made utter most illiberal & selfish sentiments.

Both however professed strong indignation. Coppin wrote a letter to the Press & announced Mr Brooke's intention of speaking on the subject in the evening when he meant to take his farewell of a Melbourne Audience. In the evening, he denounced the poor Squib as being False and Malicious & quoted Shakespere to prove the value of his reputation.

DECEMBER 3 MONDAY 1855

Rose with the determination to proceed to work having wasted nearly all last week in the business of the Garrick Club.

Put my office to rights & soon got everything in good order.

Dr Webster called and transacted ordinary business.

Went to the Main Gaol & talked for a short time to Messrs McNee & Newby. Sent three lunatics to the Asylum. Received two prisoners, one apparently very mad.

Went with Newby and called upon Mr Fox. I stopped and took tea with him & then smoked a cigar till about eight o'clock.

Came home, went through the Gaol, saw all was correct and then took a stroll through the town, went into the Arcade & chatted with Miss Hopwood, was chaffed a little about the Girl I love and am rejected by, kept a smiling face & appeared unconscious.

Went to the Theatre saw a great many I knew, smoked a cigar, talked of the Garrick Club, and came home about half past ten calling in at the Atheneum Dancing Rooms on my way, or rather going a little out of my way to do so. Hodges is Master of the Ceremonies, and appears to be thought considerably 'The Cheese'. Poor fellow.

DECEMBER 25 TUESDAY 1855

Rose early, had a row with Mather as I refused to go out with him. When he called every person had disappointed him and I was sorry afterwards that I did not conquer the disinclination I had and gone with him.

Mr Cadden and most of his children called about eleven o'clock & I went with them to Sandridge by the Railway & afterwards returned to their house & took dinner. Mrs Cadden & Miss Cadden were ill in bed so there was not much to give enjoyment beyond a very capital dinner.

Went to St Kilda in the afternoon and drove nearly all the way; of course appeared very clumsy not knowing much about it. Improved however coming back. While at St Kilda called upon Joe & Emma, and drank some bottled beer. Drank a good deal of whisky at Cadden's and felt very excited when I left their house at about eleven o'clock, not exactly drunk but reckless and eager for mischief. Got into company with some excitable female, attempted to repeat a kiss and got a piece bitten out of my lip for my trouble, nothing daunted I travelled on, got into Spring Street, heard a merry party at a house, rapped at the door, was told to walk in. Did so, found about a dozen people at Supper, drew a chair to the table and joined the party. Every one apparently thought I was somebody else's friend and were very cordial. All doubtless would have gone on well had I not unluckily attempted a recitation and being too drunk to speak made a most complete failure. Then came enquiries who I was, no one knew me and I was told to retire, but however was too drunk to see the propriety of doing so. Got into the street, was pitched into by two or three. Got my coat pulled off[?] my back, received a black eye & a knock on the place where I was previously bitten & then had to walk to the Watch House with a Constable. However they would not take any charge against me & I was allowed to walk home and home I went, without hat, with only a piece of my coat, my face swollen, my shirt covered with blood & my trousers in rags.

The Astonishment of the Turnkey on opening the door would if successfully depicted have made a fortune for a painter.

DECEMBER 26 WEDNESDAY 1855

With head in agony, with conscience appalled & my whole face and manner plainly speaking 'Drunk' I had to get from bed & discharge some prisoners. How could I look officers in the face, how with my black eye & swollen lip, speak with authority to men mostly punished for the crime that my appearance showed I was myself guilty of committing. Oh Cursed Drink or rather oh 'little mind' how I abhor thee.

To add to my uncomfortableness Mr Wintle called; however with under the circumstances pardonable effrontery, I put a bold face on and appeared as if but enjoying the good spirits (there is no intention of a pun) that should be prevalent at Christmas time.

He took no notice. I went for a walk with him, but we parted as I saw Dr Webster going towards my Gaol. Underwent Dr Webster's puzzled look at my 'merry' appearance.

In the evening went to the Royal to see the Christmas Pantomime which proved a miserable & contemptible failure. Went from the Royal with Edwards & Henningham to Coppin's, saw there the party into whose house I had intruded, had a little row first & then became good friends. Stayed out till four o'clock not because I was impenitent but that I might kill time & thought.

DECEMBER 27 THURSDAY 1855

Went to the Main Gaol, idled there for an hour and then accompanied by Newby went into town & had some lunch. My black eye an object of interest to all my acquaintances & many strangers. Returned to Gaol in time to sign a receipt for a prisoner who had just been brought in.

Hardly liked to muster but thought if I did not the men would view [?] the matter worse than the reality, so mustered as usual.

Called upon Neild, then upon Joe & afterwards went to St Kilda, had dinner & returned to Melbourne. Went to Coppins saw the Pantomime which was very good & went home to bed.

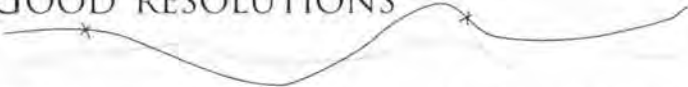
I have felt very miserable all day. My position is a very lonely one & any excess I fall into the error of committing is caused by my having none but young men acquaintances, no pleasures but public amusements. The ingratitude I feel I have shown in foolishly squandering means which if properly applied would have rendered efficient service to many at home who were the means of saving us all as it were from misery if not destitution. Ever since my refusal the world has been to me a blank & anything a refuge that prevented or delayed reflection.

DECEMBER 29 SATURDAY 1855

This is the last Saturday of the year, a year that has in a great measure been wasted by me, not even having gained fresh experience but rather doing what previous knowledge had made me acquainted was false pleasure & pregnant with future regret. I shall commence the new Year under difficulty. The Turnkey in whom I placed the utmost reliance is about to leave & I shall have to see that his successor performs, what this one always did whether he was looked after or left to himself. With the blessing of God I will throw away all foolish vanity & commence life as it were again afresh. If I get the appointment of Ballaarat Gaol I shall be in an independent position & I must sink or swim according to my exertions.

CHAPTER 2: 1856–61

‘GOOD RESOLUTIONS’



The early part of 1856 was dominated by signs of physical breakdown (with boils on his face and under the arm) of the kind that would punctuate Castieau's subsequent life. The symptoms were enough to drive him to apply for a week's leave. Then, quite unexpectedly, a new opportunity arose. The diary-keeper who had repeatedly recorded his agitation in the competition for a prison governor's position up country was suddenly in March offered the charge of Beechworth Gaol.

The change from Melbourne was dramatic. It is unlikely Castieau had ever travelled much further out of the city than St Kilda before his transfer to the new prison on the colony's northern goldfields. As his 1855 diary shows, Castieau was very much the urban man, enjoying to the full, and more than was good for him, the conviviality of the city with its pleasure houses of all kinds. In Beechworth, on the other hand, there was almost everything yet to be built. Entries such as 'can't find much to say' and 'spent the evening looking at the fire' accompany other signs of the quiet life in what Castieau describes at one point as 'a Village (what else is it?)'.

This very context however allowed someone of Castieau's interests and youthful energy to help shape a colonial culture. Beechworth was the centre of a major gold-rush area and was barely three years old when Castieau arrived. The establishment of a Young Men's Association in May 1856 was the work of moral improvers, in this case of Wesleyan persuasion, giving an ecumenical flavour and then secular accents to an institution that became the Beechworth Athenaeum in 1858. Castieau would be among its most ardent supporters, and eventually a president. His own confession was Anglican and within a few months he was on the Church of England Committee that would oversee the building of Christ Church, in which he would in turn be married soon after it opened in 1858.

Arriving in 1856, Castieau found that he was among those who helped shape the institutions and feel of a rural town that in the late 1850s looked set to become the major settlement of the north-east. The diaries show frustration with Beechworth's parochialism (probably accentuated in November 1856 by his return to Melbourne on escort duty). Some resolution to the personal isolation was found in his marriage to Polly in December 1858, though how far is unclear from the diaries, which fade away after this date until his return to Melbourne in 1869. What remains from the Beechworth years is primarily the record of a still-young man in one of the most prominent positions in this thriving colonial town, who nevertheless was in constant battle with his own felt inadequacy: 'I am getting lazier,

more careless, less zealous, less thoughtful, less considerate, less hopeful'. Beechworth turned out however to be a place where Castieau found he could give some shape to his 'good resolutions' of self-reform and his aspiration to domestic harmony.

JANUARY 1 TUESDAY 1856

Hurrah for 1856! A Happy Year to all! At five o'clock this morning Hurlily came to tell me that he had seen the Sheriff & that he had not allowed him to withdraw his resignation. Denny seemed very loth to go and we parted each with regret.

Had to do Turnkey's work and my own as well & was hard pressed all day, after four o'clock went for a stroll with Ralph Henningham whom I met with Neild. We called in at the Criterion and drank a couple of Sherry Cobblers each. Henningham paid & I was sorry to have had two, when I found they cost 18d each.

Henningham took tea with me & afterwards we went to the Queen's Theatre, nothing there remarkable excepting some grotesque antics made by some Natives who had been trained to represent in public something after the style of a Corrobirrie. Their so called singing & dancing was pitifully devoid of anything approaching to Music or graceful motion & most of the audience in consequence seemed little disposed to encourage Native Talent.

Came home at about half past ten & went to bed rather tired as I had had a long day's work.

JANUARY 3 THURSDAY 1856

Up at six o'clock & worked hard as a Turnkey throughout the day. Mr Wintle called in the morning & was very gracious.

McNee & Newby called upon me after four o'clock. Harriette was here & obligingly made me a piece of crape to put on my arm as mourning for the late Governor. Attended half yearly Meeting of the Garrick Club, great excitement in consequence of it's being the time appointed for the election of officers for the ensuing six months.

Was elected a member of the Committee and stood second on the list as far as regarded the number of Votes given for each.

Got rather excited & went heavily into beer again. Neild & I fraternised. Met Laurie of the Theatre Royal & had some supper, went home after putting Neild through the window at his residence.

JANUARY 20 SUNDAY 1856

Went to Church this morning, after service went to St Kilda by the Omnibus.

Dined with Joe & my sisters, then took a walk on the Beach.

The tide was very low & there was consequently a dry beach beyond even the so called ladies' Bathing Houses, notwithstanding there were however a

great many females bathing, some in gowns and more in nature's apparel. Their antics appeared to give great amusement to a crowd of lords of the creation who were gathered at the waters edge, looking on, some probably affected with weakness of vision for otherwise there was little necessity, had telescopes, Opera Glasses & other scientific accessories to sight. Ye Gods this is the Country where models of the Greek Statue are reckoned obscene 'productions'.

Had Tea & then came to Melbourne. Attended church, after service walked home with Emily's sisters. Little Lotty is an engaging child & coquetted with me very prettily.

Her elder sister was also very affable but Sweet Emily alas kept aloof, walking some distance from us with the old lady her mother.

I do really love this girl, but fear there is no chance of my affection being returned. I would make a bold push for conquest but that I think sometimes it would be cruel to her, for I have no means to support a wife, no home worthy of her.

JANUARY 28 MONDAY 1856

The day was very wet & cold & the atmosphere was in unison with my spirits, for I felt miserable when I thought of the foolish manner in which I now see I have played with my own happiness. I love Emily & shall be unhappy now that I have lost all hope of her ever being mine, & have, to increase my mortification, the disagreeable impression that if I had been more the man in manner & less of the monkey in behaviour I might have gained a Treasure without great difficulty.

Posted a Newspaper to Mr McEwen at Castlemaine.

Called upon Joe after four o'clock.

Attended a meeting of the Colonists called together for the purpose of discussing the Propriety of Petitioning the Home Government for the Privilege of choosing our own Governor.⁹⁷

A large number of persons assembled but the majority evidently cared little about the matter. The speakers could scarcely make themselves heard on either side of the question & although an attempt was made to take the opinion of the meeting the numbers seemed so equal that it was not till after much difficulty & delay, the chairman was able to say he thought the majority was in favour of the resolution & therefore wished the power of electing their Chief.

Neild was with me the greater part of the evening & after we left the meeting I accompanied him home. Mr Long invited us to his room where he regaled us on Kidney Pies & Brandy & water. Mr Neild sang a flash song, and exhibited one or two pretty pictures, & then I went home. Saw all was right & got to bed about half past eleven o'clock.

97 Castieau here refers to the (unsuccessful) republican agitation for an elected governor: Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria, 1851-1861* (Parkville, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1963), p. 211.

FEBRUARY 4 MONDAY 1856

Dr Webster called & examined lunatics. I went to the Main Gaol & held a consultation regarding the Blue Book Returns. Transacted ordinary business during the day & after four o'clock strolled as far as Fox's where I stopped & had some iced sherry.

Returned home to tea & then amused myself for an hour with the second volume of the *Noctes Ambrosianae* which I purchased to day.⁹⁸

Mr Reed called & I went for a short walk with him.

Called upon Neild & was soon after joined by Newby. We had made arrangements for commencing the Study of French & this evening we took our first lesson. Mr Lefarge is our Tutor. He is a Swiss by birth but evidently considers *La Belle France* as his country. We had our class at my quarters & made a tolerably fair beginning. Our master teaches upon somewhat the same principals as Ollendorff⁹⁹ & I think understands his work.

We had some sherry, but the old chap said it would do very well for John Bull but recommended me strongly to get some Claret to discuss during our French Exercises. My friends considered his proposal or rather his advice, sound & I told him to order me some from his own wine-merchant. Went to the Theatre Royal, took a stroll & came home to bed.

FEBRUARY 5 TUESDAY 1856

Remarkably hot weather, overpowering to man & all animals but of the Salamander Genus. Went to the Main Gaol & made arrangements to attend the Governor's Levee to be held to day.

Went with Newby but arrived too late to be presented to the Governor. Left however our cards which were promised us should be delivered to the Aid e Camp.

Lunched at Gregory's Restaurant, then went to the Bank with Newby who had the cheques for the payment of the Gaol Salaries. Received money due to my Establ^t. and paid the officers.

Three dozen of Claret came ordered by our French Tutor. Newby called after four o'clock & we discussed a glass or two & considered it very good.

Called upon Joe & chatted for some time with him, read a letter which Harriette had sent.

Attended Dancing Class at Denning's. There were however very few ladies which made the lesson a rather slow affair. Paid £2 for ensuing Quarter's tuition.

At Ten o'clock went to Hockin's Hotel & saw some of the members of the Garrick Club. They had elected Neild on the Committee in my place & made a proposal to elect me Secretary in his.

⁹⁸ The *Noctes Ambrosianae* were imaginary sketches on literature, criticism and politics of the day originally published in *Blackwood's Magazine*. Their character and impact are discussed in Mark Parker, *Literary Magazines and British Romanticism*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism no. 45 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁹⁹ H.G. Ollendorff devised a method of learning to read, write and speak a language in six months that was popular in America as well as Europe.

Came home, smoked a cigar & went to bed.

Woke disturbed by a horrid dream or nightmare; by some forgotten train of incident I imagined myself in company with Emily. I thought we had some dispute & that some other person then joined us. Emily not only told a deliberate lie but used language coarse & obscene. I cannot paint the horror I experienced at seeing her I thought so good so pure so modest, suddenly appear so coarse & base. I woke in a fright shaking in every limb, nor even when I was consciously awake could I refrain from shuddering, or dare to close my eyes again till I had breathed a prayer.

FEBRUARY 6 WEDNESDAY 1856

Transacted ordinary business, in the afternoon Neild called upon me & we went for a walk. In Swanston Street we met Smith & the three of us called upon Fox at the Railway Station, who regaled us with iced sherry, most acceptable from the overpowering heat of the weather.

As we were returning we passed the office of the Liverpool Insurance Company & saw Mr Buzzard a friend of us all standing at the window, we went in to speak with him & among other subjects conversed on Life Insurance & ended by making a proposal or signing an application insuring mine and Smith's Lives for a £1000 each.

This entails an expense of £20 a year & I really must now be careful or shall not be able to keep all things square.

Called upon Mr & Mrs Poole & walked as far as Coppin's Theatre with them.

Had another French lesson in the evening. Mr Sorby [?] joined the class. Fox called about ten o'clock, & after the Tutor had departed Sorby, Fox, Newby & myself sat down to a game at Whist. We drank a good deal of Claret & eventually got very merry. Fox sang, & I recited. Finally my guests took their departure & I got to bed about half past one o'clock.

MARCH 8 SATURDAY 1856

Verily we know not what a day may bring forth. Went to the Gaol to learn if any answer had been received to my application for Leave of Absence, saw Mr Wintle who to my surprise told me that the Sheriff had taken no notice of it, but that the Gaol at Beechworth was without a Gaoler & if I liked to go there I might.

Mr Foster was sent to Beechworth as Gaoler some few days since, but on arriving at the place refused to take charge in consequence of some disagreement with the Deputy Sheriff. This Deputy Sheriff from all account is a Tartar & worries the Gaoler with unnecessary interference. Said I would return an answer by Monday Morning.

The Question naturally arises as to whether I shall better my position by accepting this offer. Undoubtedly I shall be able with moderate prudence to

save money, a thing I find impossible with the connexions I have in town; then on the other hand, I throw myself among strangers, lose the associates I value, & have to encounter the petty tyrannies of probably a conceited coxcomb. I should however lose my Cranky, miserable mob & have a real charge. I'll try it. Received a letter from Harriette. Met Mather who tried very hard to persuade me not to go to Beechworth & gave the Deputy Sheriff a very bad name. Visited Mr & Mrs Poole in the evening, went for a walk with Mrs Poole. Came back to town, saw the Wizard Jacobs do a few tricks & then came home & went to bed.

APRIL 18 FRIDAY 1856 [covering period from 13 March to this day]
Left Melbourne on this day [i.e. 13 March], at six o'clock. Arrived at the Beechworth Hotel on the 15th at about ten o'clock.

Saw the Sheriff and got to business in a day or two.

Had one or two rows with the prisoners, but eventually succeeded in getting them under tolerable subjection.

Found the Deputy Sheriff a very agreeable young man & willing to behave very kindly to me.

Received much assistance from Nethercott whom I brought with me as Senior Turnkey.

Delivered a letter of introduction to Dr Crawford who has received me always with great kindness from that period.

Received my luggage on the 11th of April found two or three of my pictures had their glasses broken, but the rest of my traps in tolerable order though evidently well shaken. My mattress & pillow had evidently from its greasy state been used by the Drayman during the journey who doubtless thanked Providence for sending him so good a bed.

I am now tolerably settled, begin to know my neighbours & shall be able to travel on in the regular path, so pick up my Diary & intend to keep its page regularly filled. Last night or rather this Friday night, I spent with Dr Crawford, smoking & drinking. The rain was falling in a very angry determined manner which made a social chat by a bright fire rather pleasant to participate.

Prosecuted a man at the Police Court for endeavouring to hold communication with prisoners, he was however discharged.

Went for a stroll with Inspector Wilson and did some hot beer with him at the Eldorado Hotel which possesses a very agreeable landlady.

The weather is most miserably wet and cold and the wood from which the houses in the camp are built throws a most uncomfortable dampness which is uncomfortably perceptible in everything one touches or has to use. Articles of clothing hung up in my bedroom get quite wet in the night.

Spent the evening chatting with the Deputy Sheriff. He is very affable and we get on well together.

APRIL 24 THURSDAY 1856

Wrote a long letter to Neild or rather the rough draft of one. Occupied myself with business during the day.

Called upon Dr Crawford in the evening and afterwards went with him & Inspector Hare to Captain Murray's. Captain Murray is a most aristocratic looking individual, very tall & wearing a long Black beard & unapproachable moustache.

He received us in a very free & easy courteous manner & I soon found myself quite at home. We sat drinking sherry & chatting till nearly ten o'clock when Crawford went home & I accompanied Hare to the Eldorado Hotel where there were four [?] or five assembled. We sat talking over a solitary glass of grog till half past eleven o'clock & then I came home with Inspector Wilson.

All this company is very pleasant & agreeable & as yet I have met none but sober fellows, jolly & good hearted enough but content to drink in moderation.

There is however a system on the Diggings of one person 'Shouting' for all in the room & this becomes expensive to any person whose conscience will not allow him to sponge on any of the company, but who will return the compliment if asked by any person to drink.

MAY 8 THURSDAY 1856

Somehow or other either thoughtlessness Carelessness, laziness or lack of inclination has prevented me since I have been at Beechworth Keeping my Diary with regularity. I am very sorry however that I have not done so, as the trivial records of the present hour may probably at a future time be looked upon with interest & perhaps become valuable as determining Dates required & which without such refreshment to memory can not be recollected with the precision necessary.

This was a very cold wet day & such a day on the Ovens District is peculiarly unprepossessing. The Damp Cold that strikes a chill to the very marrow and which unlike the brazing atmosphere of a clear frosty day defies any amount of exertion to give warmth or exhilaration to the frame.

Nothing out of the ordinary course took place to-day excepting that I schemed to & succeeded in obtaining boards to complete the flooring of the Verandah to my house. I shall now have quite a Quarter Deck Promenade & look to much enjoyment from the convenience on hot summer nights.

Passed the evening at home in studying French & went to bed at a little after nine o'clock.

MAY 11 SUNDAY 1856

Received a letter from Neild, full of kind wishes & friendly gossip. Received also from him the third part of *Little Dorrit*.¹⁰⁰ Called upon the Deputy Sheriff & chatted for a short time. Went to Church.

100 Charles Dickens' *Little Dorrit* (1855-56) was originally published, like most of his work, in serial parts.

Tom Long who has been sent to a market Gardiner or Dairy-man, or a mixture of both to learn Farming dined with me. He complains of having to work hard, being principally employed in clearing the Land for Cultivation. I wish my frame had been inured to labor when I was his age. I should now be much more independent & certainly should decline serving the Government or as perhaps Dickens would say, being served by it.

Messrs Buller & Tyler, Clerks in the Resident Warden's Office, called after dinner when Tom & I joined them in a walk. We diverged from the Road and took a Stroll through the Bush, came to a Creek & some rather romantic though not very imposing Water-fall. Buller & I ran a race Up Hill & got both awfully winded. The Exercise however made us all cheerful & we got home in capital spirits.

Had Tea & then went to Dr Crawford's, smoked a cigar or two & then adjourned to the Eldorado Hotel where we passed a pleasant hour chatting with Mrs Langford & in drinking hot brandy & water. Came home, went round the Gaol & then to bed.

JUNE 10 TUESDAY 1856

My unfortunate Diary has again had another long spell but really there has been very little occur in my monotonous life that would pay for reading even if the trouble were taken to note it down.

I brought a poor devil before the Visiting Justice for Insubordination & got him four days additional sentence. I am not anxious or even desirous to punish those under my charge, but am occasionally compelled to do so in defence of discipline & the preservation of something approaching decency & order.



Station Homestead, Beechworth c.1855
oil painting on canvas; 31.6 x 38.2 cm
Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an2294047

Dr Crawford kindly lent me a horse & I accompanied him to see a patient who lives some fifteen miles from Beechworth. We passed through the Woolshed Diggings, the Centre of the mining population of the Ovens. I was quite surprised to find so many flourishing townships. Large Hotels, Busy looking Stores Bark Huts and extensive streets of Calico roofed buildings.

In one part of the Woolshed I observed a fruiterer's store & its contents which would have excited admiration even in Covent Garden, Monster Melons & Gigantic pumpkins being however the principal stock.

When we arrived at the place of our destination the 'Kangaroo Inn', the Doctor operated on the Landlord & I assisted him as well as I could. We had a glass of wine & then turned towards Melbourne.

The Doctor reminds me forcibly of Sir Roger De Coverly. He is a fine portly fellow with a jovial face & a kind word for every body. He is universally known on the Road & many a shout was made for him to stop; as it was we both had to drink a good many nobblers in the course of our journey.

We called at The Camp & partook of the hospitality of Mr Warden Gaunt. He is located in a Tent (which by the by experienced people make very comfortable) and from it dispenses justice & settles disputes for miles around. He has the character of a practical sensible man & gets on very well accordingly.

Got back to Beechworth shortly after Dark after enjoying my ride very much, had some dinner, smoked a cigar & then feeling a little stiff from my unusual exercise turned into bed.

JUNE 15 SUNDAY 1856

Received a letter from Mr Neild.

Read the newspapers at Mr Brett's House.¹⁰¹

Went for a walk in the afternoon with Mr Tyer.

Spent the evening with Doctor Crawford. The Doctor has been a Naval Surgeon & was stationed for some time at Monte Video. He amused me with many anecdotes of the Service & his own particular adventures, amongst them some hair breadth escapes from Spanish Bravos & Portuguese Foot-pads.

Came home a little after ten and went to bed.

Really man is never satisfied. When in Melbourne I was all anxiety to get away into the country & now I am Up the Bush I find that towns after all are not the least desirable places for young men to be in. If I spent money I certainly had something for it, either Pastime or Society but here the income is actually swallowed, for it takes very nearly all to supply bread & meat.

But for the lunatics I left behind, I should mope very much at my present position, but when I think of being free from the responsibility of being in charge of mad men I rally & console myself with the surety that man of a roving temperament will always be anxious to get to [a] place and always when there, desire to get away from it.

101 William Gore Brett, Deputy Sheriff and later Sheriff at Beechworth. He would become Inspector-General of Penal Establishments in December 1884, replacing Castieau.

JUNE 16 MONDAY 1856

Transacted ordinary business during the day, went for a stroll in the afternoon to look for some men whom I had sent into the Bush to split paling, could not however find where they were working not knowing which road they took when they left the Gaol.

Good timber is now getting scarce in the immediate vicinity of Beechworth, so much building & fencing being going on in all directions.

In the evening I called upon Mr Butler & met at his room Inspector Mason, Mr Walden, Clerk of the Peace & Mr Brett the Deputy Sheriff. Walden & I played several games at *Ecarté*.

Butler came over with me & had a glass of grog after which I turned into bed.

The weather is exceedingly cold & cheerless, & except when actively employed I feel very dull. Walden & I talk of studying French & I hope we shall carry out the idea. I can not study by myself but I think with a companion, or with an incentive to emulation, I should get on & study [&] once [it] became a habit would be undoubtedly a pleasure & help to chase *ennui* away more than any amusement, particularly those which occasionally in the morning produce lank pockets & Burning Heads to aid the stings of conscience or reflection.

JUNE 17 TUESDAY 1856

We had a tolerably fine day, something to be pleased at after a previous fortnight rendered miserable by almost continuous rain which besides the disadvantages of wet jackets & smoky chimneys rendered the streets almost impassable & in fact only allowed pedestrianism at the expense of muddy boots & muddy trousers.

I do not exactly understand why but accustomed as I have been lately to bad roads I cannot step into a soft place without a shudder & almost a curse.¹⁰²

Made out Returns & took them to the Deputy Sheriff.

Very dull & lazy during the evening, did nothing but yawn away the time & try to think. Not an idea however crossed my imagination & so I sat till my mind was softened & revelled in that last refuge of idleness, 'Building Castles in the Air'. If I only had so many hundred weight of Gold.

I was to pick it up I suppose, for I never once conceived working for it; how I would astonish every one at home, how comfortable I would make my sisters. I was supposing I had a £100,000 and contemplating at the moment whether £5000 a piece would not be too much for me to spare them as their share of my prosperity. I went on picturing for my senses every gratification they could glory in till the Bubble broke & I found I had one evening more to lament in the future having thrown away.

102 Castieau has scrawled what appears to read 'Bosh. JBC' across this section.

JUNE 27 FRIDAY 1856

Boast not of to morrow. I have been of late too puffed up with the idea of my own cleverness & efficiency for the Post which I occupy. This morning my pride got rather a severe blow. The morning was very dark & when the Senior Turnkey came to me for the keys it was indolence alone that prevented me from telling him not to let the men out of their cells. I was in the Yard at quarter to eight o'clock & everything seemed all correct but when the Bell rang for breakfast & the men were mustered one of them was missing. No one saw him go & no one knew when he went excepting that it must have been between seven & eight o'clock.

Of course I gave information immediately to the Police & equally of course it has as yet done no good. One Constable was sent by his superior officer to report the escape at the Woolshed about five miles from Beechworth. When he arrived there he was asked for the man's description, could not however tell. Knew nothing about it except that 'Ginger' had got away. Nothing but luck will of course enable such men as these to do any good.

I am very much annoyed. I had flattered myself that I had made the little establishment I am in charge of almost a model country one. All my Castles in the Air are however now burst & I stand as the responsible cause of one

JUNE 28 SATURDAY 1856 [I.E. FRIDAY CONTD]

of the biggest blackguards in the Colony being free again to riot upon the community.

My plans were still I believe as good as the miserable construction of the Gaol would allow but then I may perhaps say without vanity they require constantly my own eye to keep them in order & regularity.

Mistaken Zeal on the part of the Senior Turnkey caused the accident. Knowing my wish to get work done by the sentenced men he allowed them to leave their cells on a morning when judgment should have told him was unfit for their being trusted in so insecure a Stockade as he had to keep them in.

The Deputy Sheriff enquired into the matter & I could easily have thrown the blame from off my own shoulders. I scorned however any such meanness & held myself responsible. What is the most annoying circumstance is that I have to accept the advice & cautions of persons entirely ignorant of Gaols and prisoners & have to be told by them that I should have done so & so or that I was very rash to do such a thing.

In the evening I romantically set out in the hope of making a re-capture. I got over the Creek & the One Mile. The night was Dark the Roads inexpressibly dirty & I had no knowledge of the neighbourhood. In imminent danger of being smothered in one of the many holes that were

JUNE 29 SUNDAY 1856 [I.E. FRIDAY CONTD]

around me I wandered for some time mid-leg in mud & then seeing the folly of my attempt endeavoured to get back to my quarters. I missed the track &

was rather afraid of being bushed until the owner of a Tent somewhat more civil & charitable than the generality of Diggers got from his couch & with his hand pointed the way to Beechworth.

I got home about eleven o'clock in rather a pickle, thankful however to God that I got home at all.

SATURDAY. Wrote a letter to Joe complaining of my bad luck, but however was obliged before I finished to turn the subject somewhat into ridicule for fear that Dear Emma might fancy things were going worse with me than the reality.

I do not get on well at Beechworth. I am too independent for my place & the petty magnates of the Village (what else is it?)¹⁰³ look upon my proceedings with suspicion. I have endeavoured strictly to carry out my duty & have offended grievously the Superintendent of Police because I have prevented him employing prisoners when & how he pleased. Dont let any Officer imagine he is likely to benefit himself by leaving Town for Country Quarters; he is quite out of the Road for promotion, has to get his orders & instructions second hand instead of receiving them from the Head of the Department, has to wait longer for his pay, is entirely without female society & at greater expense for necessaries than in any other part of the world.

JULY 3 THURSDAY 1856

Attended a meeting held in the township for the purpose of petitioning the Legislature to proclaim Beechworth a Municipality.

Considerable gas was evaporated & Mr Mooney of Melbourne notoriety and who appears to be considered somewhat of an oracle on the Ovens delivered a rather pompous Harrangue on the advantages which in his travels through the world he had seen developed by municipal institutions.

He considered (of course) that Beechworth would eventually become a Great City. From its geographical position it appeared to him likely to be one of the Greatest & most prosperous of the cities springing up in this rising empire. With a few utopian ideas of feeding the digger with flour at five pounds a ton Mr Mooney gracefully concluded & after a little senseless chat the meeting agreed to certain boundaries for the Township & then one gentleman proposed that the gentlemen who had been accommodated with chairs during the evening should shout for those who had been obliged to stand which however though carried unanimously was not acted on, for the meeting at once dissolved & took nobblers according to fancy or friendship at the Bar of the Hotel.

JULY 5 SATURDAY 1856

Had a little unpleasantness although not an open rupture with the Deputy Sheriff. There evidently requires a line of distinction to be drawn between his

103 The population of the township in 1857 was over 3000. See Carole Woods, *Beechworth: A Titan's Field* (Beechworth, Vic., 1985) p. 73.

duties & mine, where his responsibility commences & where mine ends. At present all the real responsibility is mine while he ogre like sits in his office & takes the credit & with Duffy like letters to the Sheriff swallows up my individuality with his own I. I. I.

Wrote a letter to Mather & also one to my sister.

Weather is very wet & miserable. I have little or no society & sit at home by myself evening after evening. I try to study French but have not yet been able to bring my mind thoroughly to the work. I find however that it requires work & that little is done by yawning over Ollendorff or the Grammar for half an hour.¹⁰⁴

Mine seems doomed to be a life of solitude. Even at school I was alone & alas from that cause attribute most of the bad traits of my character & disposition. After school, thrown again alone into lodgings at Portsmouth & after that again alone in London & now alone in Australia

Well after all mine though a chequered [one] has been a fortunate existence for there have been many times when nothing but the goodness of God has saved me from being plunged into wretchedness.

JULY 12 SATURDAY 1856

Brought the prisoner who escaped & was retaken before the Magistrate & Committed him for Trial for the Escape. Rather a cowardly proceeding I am afraid as I really think better of a man who plucks up his energies and takes an opportunity if opened to him of getting away from bondage.

This Gaol is however so extremely insecure that every advantage must be laid hold of that will at all help to keep the prisoners & punishing this man for the Escape will I hope render future attempts of the kind less numerous than they have been of late.

Wrote to McEwen & also to Hurlily now Sergeant at Albury but who was with me as a Turnkey for a long time in Melbourne.

Took a short walk with Tyrer, came home & spent a very lazy evening rendered however somewhat interesting by my glancing at an old Diary kept by me on the Voyage from England, as also a letter written a few days after I had landed in Australia. What a strange world it then seemed, what a tale I could have told had I but merely stopped a month in Melbourne & then returned to England. Now habit has made what appeared at first remarkable, commonplace & I fear there is now little that I should think strange enough to amuse friends of the old Country if ever I am happy enough to be again among them.

JULY 28 MONDAY 1856

This was the day set apart for the Election of Members of the Local Court of Beechworth, the Court at which all disputes with regard to miners work are decided by men chosen by the Diggers to represent them.

104 Castieau is referring to Ollendorff's French language instruction manual, already into its 9th edition in 1861.

There have lately been many opinions expressed coinciding in the unfairness of rules made by the Court in existence for the last six months & it has even been openly stated that the members being nearly all 'Bosses' or Large Claim Holders employing men had passed laws beneficial to themselves but highly injurious to the individual Digger.

It was therefore thought that the possessors of Miners Rights who alone are qualified to vote would muster in force at the election to day & endeavour to instil some new blood in the Court then to be formed.

A barricade was erected & arrangements made to divide in the event of a contest the Ayes from the Noes. This was in front of the Star Hotel the Balcony of which formed a very convenient Hustings on which none but the Candidates, their proposers & seconders and the private friends of a Constable in Charge were allowed to assemble.

Captain Price was of course as perpetual president of the Court in the Chair & Captain Murray on being loudly called for to form one of the umpires to decide upon majority or minority took his place alongside of the worthy Resident Warden.

JULY 29 TUESDAY 1856

MONDAY [contd]. Several members were elected almost unanimously excepting on the part of a well known head agitator, a blacksmith of the name of Hodgson who vociferated what looked at a distance like bitter curses but which were merely questions to the different candidates; however he was told to 'Dry up' and business proceeded tolerably briskly until Mr Kentish was proposed, against whom there appeared an evident disinclination from a large body of the crowd. When his name was put to the vote there appeared to me to be an equal number of Miners Rights for and against, however the Chairman decided Mr Kentish to be elected. The miners opposed to him were at this very indignant and loudly protested such was not the case and refused to allow the business of the day to proceed unless Kentish resigned or the Miners Rights were counted for and against him. Their demands were however not complied with & the rest of the business of the day was consequently got through amidst great confusion, but what was done very few, & I am not one of the number, knew or I fear cared.

In the evening some Tippetary boys assaulted three or four mounted men who were returning home & a general scrimmage ensued. Mr Price the Resident Warden went himself to the field of battle and exerted himself in swearing in to the service of her Majesty

JULY 30 WEDNESDAY 1856

(Monday) all he could see on the road or on the spot not implicated in the riot; little mischief was done & the Lock Up was soon full of the drunken & riotous. In the meantime the Town was in a state of alarm. The Treasurer's

wife received information that a large sum of money had been taken away from the Treasury, a friend of mine heard a detailed account of the escape of all the prisoners under my charge & the wife of a constable was condoled with on the murder of three police officers (names unknown) who had been sacrificed on the road to the Woolshed by an infuriated mob.

On leaving the place of Election in the afternoon I went in company with Tyrer & Mr Martin the Surveyor to the Post Office where Mr Froste the Postmaster regaled us with Bread & Cheese & Old Tom.

Mr Froste told us also he had sent in his resignation but I suppose as a gentle hint to me wished me to understand he had done so but yesterday. He is about to become a publican & seems very sanguine of making a speedy fortune. I hope he may, but think he throws high. A Salary of £450 per annum and a good House is no poor Stake against a Trade for which in my opinion he is unsuited & which is of late days frequently the reverse of remunerative.

In the evening I went through the town for I was sick of the dullness of my quarters.

JULY 31 THURSDAY 1856 [still Monday]

alas the streets were nearly as gloomy.

Went to the Freemason's Hotel and was invited by the landlord to take a seat in the parlor. Dr Murphy was there and a Mr Rao. I chatted with them & shouted glasses for the three which evidently opened their hearts for they began to tell me of certain intentions Murphy had of offering himself to the Electors of Beechworth as their Representative in the Parliament about to be formed. Now Dr Lee in the Woolshed is also a Candidate & as the latter gentleman has not been in the district many months & Murphy is comparatively an old hand the latter would of course think it infra dig for his contemporary to step into a position of importance over his head as it were, & hence the contest. (As for the rest) neither of them it is said (has a long purse) and how they mean to live while serving their constituents in Melbourne, this deponent knoweth not.

Went with Murphy to the Star Casino, saw a number of men dancing together and one or two heroes exulting in the importance of a female partner. They were great men however let it be understood. Smoke noise and confusion made up the fun of the Casino so I soon cut it & made a call upon Mrs Tyrer and her son, stayed a short time with them & then went home & got to bed, not much exhilarated by my evening out of doors.

AUGUST 19 TUESDAY 1856

After Dinner I accompanied Mr Brett to the Wesleyan School Room where a Tea Meeting or as it was called *Soiree* was being held.

The Room was very crowded & Mr Price the Resident Warden occupied the chair.

It was a very quiet affair altogether, speech, & then chorus, then speech again. All was very well until the Rev. Mr Symons the President of the Young Men's Association began to talk about Books & among other remarks uncomplimentary to Fiction, held Bulwer & Dickens up as deserving reprobation. This was coming it rather too strong & I felt rather disgusted. Dickens had however painted a Stiggins & a Chadbrand¹⁰⁵ & the president of the Young Men's Association found the Cap rather too much his size & hence I suppose the indignation. After a few more speeches & choruses the meeting broke up. I went home and took a glass of beer with Mr Brett.

AUGUST 20 WEDNESDAY 1856

Received a letter from Mather & from it learned that my private letter to the Sheriff had been made public by him and that in consequence my friends in Melbourne believe I am about to be married. (I wish I was.)

The day's proceedings somewhat varied by Mr Bennett's visiting the Gaol & preaching to the prisoners. After the Service as it was raining heavily the Rev. Gentlemen walked into my quarters and remained till the Storm abated. Willing to know what sort of disciplinarian our new Minister is, in speaking of last night's *Soiree*, I intimated that I was very well pleased with everything at it excepting the terms of reprobation which were used to Dickens works of Fiction. 'Mr Bennett had (he said) never read Dickens' & this statement far from tended to exalt him in my estimation.

Went for a walk after Muster with Tyrer & in the evening was visited by him. We sat talking together till past midnight. Having got tired of a hairy face I have shaved off my beard but have felt rather ill effects in consequence being troubled with a violent rheumatic pain in my head.

I wish I could get satisfactory tidings from Melbourne. The state of suspense in which I am in renders me uneasy & restless.

News reached Beechworth this morning of a decided 'sticking up' case at the Yackandandah. Three men entered the Home of a squatter, fired at him, ill used a person who was a visitor at the time, ransacked the House and went their way. A Baker who lived adjacent was afterwards robbed in the same fashion.

AUGUST 30 SATURDAY 1856

There was a great manifestation this morning in the Gaol Yard. All the persons (about ten) who had been arrested on suspicion of being concerned in the Robbery at Osborn's Station were placed in a line & the inmates of the House when it was robbed were brought one by one to endeavour to pick out the real Simon Pures.¹⁰⁶

105 Mr Chadband, a hypocritical parson in *Bleak House*, who had 'an oily smile' and a 'flabby paw' (ch. 25). The Rev. Stiggins in *Pickwick Papers* was a hypocritical Deputy Shepherd of the Ebenezer Temperance Association.

106 A colloquialism for the 'real or authentic person', based on an eighteenth-century play in which Simon Pure, a Quaker, is impersonated by another character.

But one at all satisfactory identification was made. The others were but I think, & he is very like & so on. I firmly believe that had I taken ten ordinary prisoners whom I knew to be locked up at the time the Robbery took place, some of them would have been as nearly sworn to as the men paraded to day. The one that as I said, was satisfactorily identified was sworn too by a most respectable person & one who evidently took every opportunity during the outrage to note the faces of the robbers on his memory.

Eventually all the others were discharged from the Police Court rather to the disgust of one or two zealous officers who had captured men & longed for the £80 reward offered by Mr Osborn for the conviction of each of the men who attacked his house.

Attended a meeting of the Church committee in the afternoon, in the evening paid a visit to Dr Pontin, then purchased some ... clothing & a Hat at the total expense of £5.12.6, I expect about £3 over the value.

AUGUST 31 SUNDAY 1856

Up by times had a jolly good bath & enjoyed my breakfast all the more for it.

Went to Church in the morning sporting for the first time at Beechworth a 'Bell Topper'.

Spent the evening at home reading *Night & Morning*. Received this day a letter from Mr Morrison, Manager of the Branch Bank of N.S. Wales in this town, on Church Committee Business.

SEPTEMBER 1 MONDAY 1856

A great day in the annals of Beechworth. General Holiday applied for to the Government on the plea of celebrating the Peace but in reality for the purpose of collecting a crowd to see the Foundation Stone laid of the Beechworth Hospital.¹⁰⁷

Last night the District was visited by what may be (without exaggeration) termed a fearful Storm. From about one o'clock until five it thundered Lightened & Rained incessantly. The Thunder too was extra loud, the lightning particularly forked & the rain in deluge poured. The Holiday wishers of course were in the dumps & despaired of their procession turning out a credit to the District. However at daylight the clouds had cleared away, the Sun shone out warm & bright and the Roads from the very heavy rain were washed clean & were better for walking than even before the wet.

107 The Ovens and District Hospital, the earliest hospital in this region (Albury followed in 1861, Wangaratta not until 1871), a philanthropic initiative but heavily subsidised by government grant (Woods, *Beechworth: A Titan's Field*, pp. 85–86). Only its façade survives, restored after the hospital's demolition in 1946, as a memorial to the town's pioneers. See Tom Griffiths, *Beechworth: An Australian Country Town and Its Past* (Richmond, Vic.: Greenhouse Publications, 1987), p. 71. Castieau was for two years the President of the Hospital Committee, testament (he claimed later) to his being one of the 'able men' of the country. See Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS 3991/P Box 1005 Item no. 78/05106, Castieau to Chief Secretary, 1878.

I dressed myself in Sunday Togs & at about half past eleven joined in the Procession that was to march to the Hospital Building. There were in that procession assembled all the town, Merchants & Storekeepers, Coroner & Doctors, Barristers & Attorney, Government Officers, Members of the Local Courts, Young Men's Association & Miners &c &c. The whole of the people had a most prosperous appearance and all seemed in health & spirits though by far the most promising feature of the whole was the Children, about 60 or 70 of whom belonging to the Wesleyan

SEPTEMBER 2 TUESDAY 1856 [i.e. September 1 Monday 1856 contd]
School had a place in the procession. The little things all looked plump & rosy were without exception well dressed & showed from their appearance that they must necessarily all be possessed of the Comforts of Home. About Two thousand people of all classes were gathered around the procession & not a careworn countenance was discernible among the number. No beggars, no silent Hollow cheeked misery famishing but not outwardly complaining, was there to meet the gaze. Thank God we have left all such in 'Merry England'.

SEPTEMBER 6 SATURDAY 1856

This morning on reading *The Ovens and Murray Advertiser* with the usual listlessness which that not over bright piecemeal Organ general[ly] induces I was surprised into emotion by the sudden sight of my own name & on reading the Paragraph in which the phenomenon occurred I found myself abused most royally. I was charged with rushing out of my Hole one night & violently siezing some respectable well dressed individual then ferociously dragging him to the Lock Up, having him confined all night & then failing to produce any charge before the Magistrate the next morning.

This all arose from an act of charity. I saw a poor fellow wandering about who upon being questioned accused himself of having committed Embezzlement & stated he had no Home & was hungry & tired. I took him to the Lock Up as I thought he was suffering from Delirium Tremens. There he got something to eat & then turned into his blankets like a tired dog, quite worn out.

I was late at the Police Court in the morning and as the Stipendiary had a down upon me for not giving him some prisoners for some work he wanted done, as soon as he heard my name mentioned in the Case, he took the opportunity of my absence to dismiss it

SEPTEMBER 7 SUNDAY 1856 [i.e. SATURDAY CONTD]

rather contemptuously. A word from a Sneak who envies me my independence to the Reporter caused *The Ovens and Murray* to thunder condemnation of my gross tyranny.

In the heat of resentment on first reading the Slander, I wrote a letter to the Editor of the Newspaper & spoke my mind pretty freely not only of the article itself but of the causes that led to it & among them I reckoned Captain Price's discourtesy in so hastily dismissing the charge.¹⁰⁸

SEPTEMBER 8 MONDAY 1856

The man whom I was accused of unlawfully arresting was brought before the police court this morning and remanded for Medical Treatment for Delirium Tremens. The poor fellow's misfortune was a great triumph for me as it proved me wrongfully vituperated.

SEPTEMBER 13 SATURDAY 1856

Mr Mason the Inspector of Police called to get some Cabbage Plants from the Garden. I was in bed having been up rather late over night.

Dr Crawford came about half past nine, he transacted his business & then told me he was going to the Quartz Reef. I hired a Horse & accompanied him.

We had a beautiful ride, having to pass across a fine plain called Boman's Forest. It must I should say be very fertile, at any rate the Cattle running upon it are very fat. The Wattle trees are in full bloom & look exceedingly handsome. The perfume from them is extremely agreeable & reminded me of something between the English Hawthorn & Heliotrope. The Blossom is Yellow & as it grows in heavy bunches, the Trees at a distance have something [of] the appearance of Laburnums. The Flower consists of a succession of little balls something like Flax in appearance.

We had to pass also between two High Ranges. The Road is called the Gap & is what its name implies. The Road is very bad & from its steepness even horsemen are obliged to dismount; how Loaded Drays can get up & down I can not conceive. The Ruts however plainly showed that they did do it in some way or other. It must however be hard work. We passed one Drayman with his loading all on the Ground, he had been obliged to empty his Dray twice within a

SEPTEMBER 14 SUNDAY 1856 [I.E. SATURDAY CONTD]

Mile. While on the Gap and in the plain we got a good view of the Snow on the Buckland mountain. It appeared very deep & looked like a heavy white cloud when shining in the sun.

The Doctor is well known along the road & stopped to have a chat & necessarily a Nobbler at all the Refreshment Houses. Nice tidy English wives in general belong to the happy dogs who keep these little rural Restaurants, and every one of the said wives has a baby & generally speaking a young one. The Doctor had generally attended the said babies advent into the world & consequently knew all about the mothers.

108 Subsequently, Castieau received an apology from the newspaper.

We arrived at Mr Oliver's Hut about two o'clock. The Doctor had come to visit him having heard of his being ill, indeed having been sent for. Mrs Oliver made us have some lunch & then her brother kindly consented to show me the Reef. This was very kind of him as he evidently objected to climbing up the Hill. The doctor would not himself venture.

The Reef is situated at the top of a very steep hill, down which a tramway is being constructed for the purpose of running trucks containing the Quartz from the top to the bottom.

The plan intended is for the Full Truck going down to run the empty one up the top. I almost think the incline is too great for the scheme to answer well.

I found the men very busy in their Claims and got a specimen or two of the auriferous Quartz.

SEPTEMBER 15 MONDAY 1856 [i.e. September 13 Saturday contd]

The Labor of getting it out is immense, & as until the Quartz is crushed there can be no return, a large claim involves a considerable outlay.

Messrs Johnson & Oliver I believe have already spent £2000 pounds & will have to spend much more before they will even if fortunate reap any benefit. A tunnelt from the claim to the top of the Range of 98 feet in length is being cut through the solid rock in order to convey the Quartz to the tunnelt I before spoke of. It is done principally by blasting.

We rode home in good style & I certainly did not begrudge the 30/- I had to pay for the Horse Hire, although riding would be an expensive luxury if often-times indulged in. The Price of a Horse for the day seems high but with Hay at £60 a ton as it is at present I think it can but be expected.

I took Tea at the Doctor's and found Pontin gloriously 'Sprung'. After much difficulty the Doctor & myself managed to get the stupid fellow to bed, although much against his inclination.

The Candidates for the Eastern Province or rather four of them, Williams, Hervey, Highett & Stewart addressed the electors of the Upper House this evening. Twas but a poor display of Oratorial powers & as one Candidate acknowledged, in his opinion the Upper House was bound to bow to the wish of the lower, & another of them thought there was no necessity of men sitting in it having any particular Talent. I am afraid our House of Lords will be a slow Place to spend an evening at.

SEPTEMBER 28 SUNDAY 1856

Went to Church this morning. Contributed to the Collection, and also lent Mr Brett a Pinch of silver to put in the Plate or rather Box used for handing amongst the congregation.

Pontin called in the afternoon & had a cup of tea with me.

Went to Tyrer's in the evening and afterwards brought him over to my place, talked a long time & then said good night & went to bed.

Have little pleasure in a retrospect of my life for the last month or two. I am getting lazier, more careless, less zealous, less thoughtful, less considerate, less Hopeful.

My way of life is too solitary for my disposition. My mind has not been sufficiently cultivated to enable me to take pleasure in my own society & there is none other open to my entrance but leads to dissipation & sotting. My Salary is spent as soon as it is earned, & all I can do or have succeeded in doing, is to keep clear of debt & obtain a name for honorable regularity in the settlement or conduct of all money transactions.

God has been very merciful to me or the many times that I have tempted His Mercy would have long since overthrown and trampled me in the Dust.

The weather was wet again to day & the Roads as soft as ever. From the camp to the Township in soft weather there are as many difficulties to encounter as a ship has in the English Channel.

OCTOBER 3 FRIDAY 1856

Received Pay for the month of September. Settled with the Turnkeys & returned the Abstract signed to the Deputy Sheriff.

This was Nomination Day for Beechworth Candidates. I went into the Township. Mr Cameron late Member for the District, Mr Smyth a Digger, Dr Lee, and the renowned Thomas Mooney were nominated and successively addressed the electors. The show of hands was decidedly in favour of Cameron, a Poll was demanded & the Election is fixed to take place on the 14th of October. It augurs well for the discrimination of Beechworth that Mr Thomas Mooney's Humbug was not given much scope. He was soon shut up & then said he'd retire from the Contest. Some Elector in the crowd thanked him for his consideration. Professor Carey, a Black Barber then advertised himself and was violently gesticulating, when his discretion called him away as a Brickbat flew very close to his head & of course no one could tell how many were winging their way in its track. Niggers heads are thick but their contact with brickbats is not exactly pleasant to their owners, & so Professor Carey sloped.

Saw a Woman I had known in Melbourne. She was cutting a Dash and said she was married on the Woolshed. Went to the Casino in the evening. Played a Rubber of Whist with Messrs Goodsman, Beasley & Jamieson.

OCTOBER 14 TUESDAY 1856

The Great Polling day for the District of Beechworth. Messrs Cameron & Smith with Dr Lee were the Candidates.

Not much excitement. Thanks to the Ballot the town indeed was duller than usual & but for the Public Houses being decorated with Leaves & Wattle Flower a stranger would almost have thought that some revered inhabitant had gone dead, so silent and solemn was the District.

I voted for Cameron & induced three of my officers to do the same.

In the evening I dined with Messrs Morrison & Styles of the Bank of N.S. Wales. We were very merry during the afternoon and did as much mischief as we could with safety, the Police being tremendously severe. We therefore confined our idle tricks to pelting the Returning Officer and Scrutineers with nut-shells & other harmless missiles. As Styles was Electoral auditor this playfulness on his part was most appropriate and produced a pleasing effect.

Got home early & turned into bed after seeing all was right in the Gaol & mustering the prisoners.

OCTOBER 15 WEDNESDAY 1856

The *Ovens and Murray Advertiser* in its impression of this day announced Mr Cameron to be the successful candidate by a majority of upwards of 200 over his opponents.

Busy all day making out the Calendars for the Sessions which commence to-morrow.

In the evening went for a short time to Froste's place. It is a most rowdy house. There is a violin and an apology for a Drum to these instruments, Two or three girls dressed in Ball Costume figure away to the delight of their partners and fifty or sixty others of the sterner sex. The latter however dance many of them in pairs which certainly does not in my eyes increase the gaiety of the festive scene.

Called at the Constitution Office and gave Nixon a copy of the Calendar. Came home & went to bed.

Received a visit from a lady now living on the Woolshed (mum).

OCTOBER 16 THURSDAY 1856

The first day of the General Sessions. Sported my old uniform & astonished the Beechworth officials with my gorgeous array.

Nothing particular occurred through the day. In the evening I called in for a short time at Dr Crawford's and had a chat with Butler and Mr King.

Afterwards went to Tyrer's and had a glass of Whiskey with him. Such a dry lump of official suspicion as Tyrer I never before encountered. On entering his house I playfully remarked that I was come to see Mrs Tyrer. My Red Tape abortion said he understood me & asked me why I was offended & would not come to see him. I had not patience scarcely to tell him how I hated to have such simple words as I had used pondered over & scrutinised. I had not seen Mrs Tyrer for a fortnight & had met him several times during that period and so in playful politeness I had remarked when I came in that I called to see his mother Mrs Tyrer. The deluded ninny up to his neck in 'Camp' diplomacy shook his head and scarcely appeared satisfied so to show my friendliness I helped myself out of the bottle without waiting to be asked and smoked a cigar I saw lying on the table (Puff).

DECEMBER 8 MONDAY 1856

Nethercott my Head Turnkey complained to me of having been annoyed by an ex-prisoner on Sunday. Nethercott had been to the Woolshed & was returning home when he called at the Alliance Hotel for a drink. Healey a man who some time since was in Gaol for 14 days, there accused him of tyranny & bullied him before several other people, inviting him to fight & daring him to come again down the Creek.

Nethercott is a very respectable man and one who simply complies with the Orders he receives from me. He is very sober & would not I am sure molest or say a disrespectful word to any person unless first insulted. I therefore advised him to summon Healey & he accordingly did so.

Tis a most annoying thing for a Government Officer to have to receive insult when he knows he has merely performed his duty. The cry of 'Joe' seems puerile and beyond being cared for by a man of sense but yet as it is intended to insult & annoy, none but the most callous can hear it without getting out of temper or feeling humiliated.

DECEMBER 9 TUESDAY 1856

Very little to do in the office and very little inclination on my part to get through even that as it was of an uninteresting routine description.

Nethercott appeared against the man who had insulted him on Sunday & gained the Case. The Defendant was fined £3 & 12/6 Costs.

DECEMBER 11 THURSDAY 1856

Received a letter and Portion of a newspaper containing the news of the arrival of the Royal Charter. Received it from Joe who told me all was going on well at his house.

*The Constitution*¹⁰⁹ of this day contained a paragraph representing the desirability of a Beechworth Garrick Club being formed.

In the evening I was visited by eight or nine gentlemen, among them was the Editor of *The Constitution* who stated he had come with the intention of talking to me about the practicability of getting up an institution of the kind, we however had little talk on the subject as every one of my guests seemed rather rowdily inclined.

Martin, Morrison & Beasley looked in arrayed in Fancy Garbs & with the intention of assuring me as the proprietor Mr Beasley observed, 'That the dresses had arrived'.

Went down the street had a good laugh at the dresses & then went & inspected a number of others that Beasley & Co have imported.

Came home to bed to which I retired as soon as I had satisfied myself all was correct in the Gaol.

109 *The Constitution and Ovens Mining Intelligencer*, a Beechworth paper (1856–1868).

DECEMBER 13 SATURDAY 1856

Felt rather Seedy all day, got however through my business without difficulty. Received an invitation to attend a meeting for the purpose of forming a Garrick Club. Went and met Twelve Gentlemen who were desirous to establish such a club.

I was voted to Chair and we discussed the subject for more than an hour. Every one seemed very well pleased with the rational manner in which all conducted themselves as of late anything like sensible recreation has never been attempted.

We established ourselves into the Club and then appointed a Committee to draw up Rules for the guidance of the members. I am on the Committee and shall certainly try to make our association successful.

After the meeting we all adjourned to the Rooms of Mr Rocklitz, this gentleman plays well and has a fine piano in capital tune, we had several songs.

After this I am sorry to say, I and two or three others began carrying on our old tricks & I found myself at last with Messrs Telford & Nixon doing supper at the Star Hotel at two o'clock in the morning. After that we had a game of cards at which we played till three when we left to go home to bed.

This has been an exceedingly dissipated week. I must certainly turn over a new leaf or else sacrifice Health & Sobriety.

DECEMBER 19 FRIDAY 1856

My diary has again got several days in arrears. I have however been leading the same fast and unprofitable life as I have previously reported.

Forget how I spent the evening although I believe I was knocking about as usual.

Now I remember I received an invitation to take Supper at Winter's Hotel, and when I got there I found fifty or sixty persons assembled together with most of whom I was acquainted.

Morrison & Beasley accompanied me and we three with Dr Hopkins & Mr Sheils played Loo until supper time. I lost a few shillings at the end of the evening.

The supper was a very excellent one but the guests were not very amusing. I tried to sing 'The Steam Arm', but made a lamentable failure. Got away with Keefer, Beasley, Parry & Hopkins. We all went to Keefer's where we played the devil to the best of our ability. Pulled poor Birch out of bed, shrieked, Stormed, Howled & sang until nearly four o'clock in the morning.

Pandemonium broke loose was in my estimation nearer typified this night than at any period that ever came under my notice. Got home in a borrowed hat with a black Face, Buttonless Shirt & Waistcoat open from top to bottom.

DECEMBER 25 THURSDAY 1856

Wrote a few lines for Wilson.¹¹⁰ Wretched or rather 'Common Place'.

110 Probably Edward Wilson, editor of *The Argus*.

Went to find out what time Morrison dined. Found him busily writing. Le Mair, anxious to provoke excitement proposed a drink & we polished off, without trouble a bottle of stunning Champagne.

The Contractors to the Government sent plums & other requisites for a plum pudding for the prisoners. They got it and I gave them some bottled beer to help wash it down.

Dined at Morrison's, drank pretty heavily of champagne. Went for a stroll with Keefer and Morrison. Called on Mr Clarke and had some tea with him. Fired off on all sides volumes of Chaff principally directed against Keefer, who had advertised for a Housekeeper.

Went from Clarke's to the Eldorado intending to do a quiet glass of 'Schweppes'. Found a party who had been dining together. Got pulled into the Room, and were invited to join their festivity. Had some capital singing & I thundered forth a recitation which was listened to with becoming gravity (more I expect than it deserved). I mean to try and get hold of a good Comic Recitation. I cannot sing and it is awkward to do nothing.

Got home at Two o'clock.

DECEMBER 26 FRIDAY 1856

Really this day has been distressingly hot. News arrived that the Governor Sir Henry Barkly had reached Melbourne. Don't care much about it though, feeling tolerably careless about politics of any description.

Forwarded a Return asked for in Parliament in reference to the employment of prisoners. By this Return the enquiring mind of the Honorable Member who called for it will get about as much information as if he had put a question in Greek to an Australian aboriginal. However I have done my duty and followed the instructions I received with the Return.

Went for a stroll in the afternoon after Muster. There was a Greasy Pole erected in High Street on which at a short distance from the top was placed a Cabbage Tree Hat with a Five Pound note attached to the Crown; this was to be the property of any person who could reach it by climbing.

Saw a good many unsuccessful competitors and left one enterprising lad trying hard to reach the prize. At this place the Police interfered with some violently drunken man, a squabble ensued in which the Police got rather the worst of it, and their prisoner escaped for the time but was afterwards captured.

DECEMBER 31 WEDNESDAY 1856

This turned out a wretchedly wet & cold day.

There was to be this evening a *Bal Masque* at the Eldorado Hotel and I made up my mind to go.

Beasley called on me in the evening & I accompanied him to Fisher's Hotel where a Panorama of the Siege of Sebastopol was exhibited. The Price of Admission was 5/- rather a lot although I went principally because it had been got up by Wilson.

The Weather was still gloomy and the streets very muddy, we went however to the Eldorado had a nobbler and a look at the Fancy Dresses. I then was obliged to go home as my Lunatics wanted looking too. I dressed and was going to the *Bal Masque* when the rain again fell heavily. It was now midnight. I threw open the doors and let in the New Year, sat for a while and then turned into bed. And so ends 1856. What will 1857 produce? 1856 has made me perhaps a wiser, alas I fear not a better man. Am I not more selfish, less careful of the feelings of others? I fear I am. Let me reflect and God make me spend 1857 more creditably.

FEBRUARY 3 TUESDAY 1857

Awoke feeling far from well. The weather is very hot & oppressive & I am afraid I drank last evening rather more brandy & water than was prudent.

Sent Joe *The Owens and Murray Advertiser*, very little however in it, shows however I do not quite forget his existence. In the evening at Mr Clark's invitation I went to his house; on the road Mr Banks the Inspector of Police called us into his quarters and we smoked a pipe with him after which we all proceeded to Clark's house.

Clarke, I and Butler afterwards adjourned to the Eldorado and the Concert; while there I went into a room in which was Le Mair, Miss O'Donovan & some other of her friends, sat here longer than I ought, Miss O'Donovan is so kind and bewitching I had great difficulty in keeping my ugly paws from clawing her pretty bust; am afraid I did flirt sufficiently to annoy Le Mair, 'Wont do it in future'.

Came home after saying good bye to Martin & Butler.

FEBRUARY 6 FRIDAY 1857

Called at Beasley's this morning and accompanied him to the Eldorado where I met Coulen & received an invitation to dine with him & his Company.

Went in the afternoon. Got very spoony upon a young lady who is stopping in the house. Gave her a brooch and made myself very hot and uncomfortable by indulging in unsatisfactory though exciting caresses.

FEBRUARY 8 SUNDAY 1857

A letter from McEwen. The Weather still oppressively hot. Went to church in the morning, afterwards lunched at Dr Crawford's. Butler spent a portion of the afternoon at my place, and Mr Wackerow [?] also called. After Muster went to the Eldorado Hotel and had a chat with Miss Hamilton, Coulen & Pierce. Then a talk with Miss O'Donovan & her lover Le Mair.

Miss O'Donovan and her beau accompanied me home & had tea at my place. A heavy thunder storm accompanied by much rain detained the happy couple till nine o'clock, at which hour I wrapped the young lady well in coat and boots of mine. Lent Le Mair a Great Coat and cap, and then lighted them home.

Miss O'Donovan is a very nice lively girl and one that I should like a week or two with amazingly well, and should not begrud[ge] any expense to make her happy during her visit. I hope she will make Le Mair a good wife; that she will make him jealous is certain, but that she will give him cause is to be hoped improbable.

Really I should like the Puss for a charming plaything but it is such a very very serious affair getting spliced.

Two Glasses of Claret 3/-

MARCH 19 THURSDAY 1857

Engaged during the morning in the office.

In the afternoon was out with Beasley. In the evening went to the Bank, from the Bank to Ickerson's where I played Cards (*Vingt Un* for very trifling stakes). Stewart was with me. We remained late and did not come away till nearly two o'clock in the morning.

Mrs Ickerson and I were partners in *Vingt Un*. I made in addressing her a very awkward but quite unintentional mistake. Calling her 'My dear' I blushed up to the eyes but do not believe Ickerson noticed the faux pas and Mrs Ickerson if she did, gave me credit for having made a mistake and took no notice of it.

Stewart noticed it however & chaffed me very much after we left, though at the time he did not change a muscle of his countenance.

MARCH 22 SUNDAY 1857

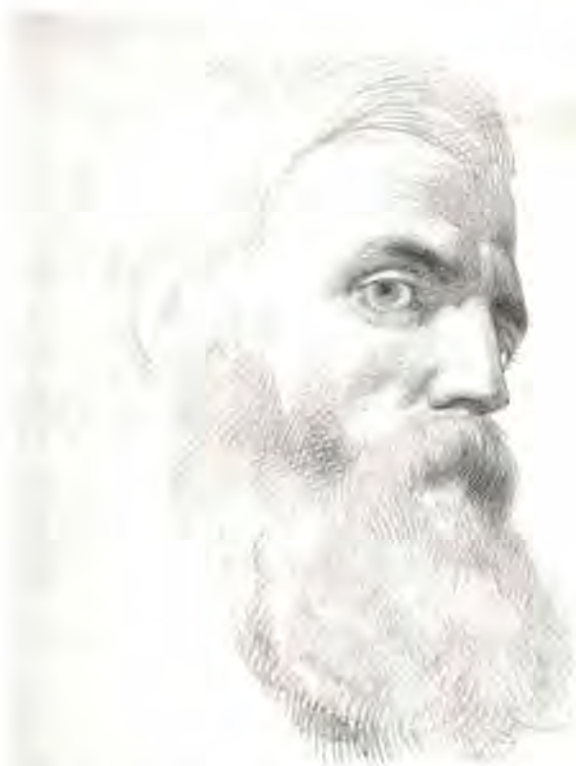
Intended going to Church but was prevented by Burke¹¹¹ who offered to lend me his horse to ride to the Woolshed. Unfortunately it came on wet and so I did not take the trip.

The evening was remarkably wet and there was no alternative but to stay at home. I read a little, smoked a little, drank a little, thought a little, and then saw all was right in the Gaol and went to bed.

My position sometimes causes me considerable uneasiness. The fact cannot be disguised that during this last two months I have lived beyond my income. Unfortunate in several instances, foolish in others. I lent £10 and now see no chance of recovering it, another time I purchased at Auction unnecessary articles at several pounds expense, and a few days since I had to lend Dr Murphy £3.5 though I was very short of Cash at the time.

I must certainly pull in and intend now to be a great deal more careful and to see if possible instead of getting into debt. If I do not of course I can expect nothing but difficulties and dangers. I cannot compete on my salary with those who have double the amount coming in and there's the whole secret.

111 Robert O'Hara Burke (1821–1861), one time member of the Irish Constabulary, at this time the senior police officer in Beechworth. He was later superintendent, before he embarked in 1860 on the ill-fated Burke and Wills expedition to cross Australia from south to north. Castieau was a regular associate of Burke's during 1857 and 1858.



William Strutt (1825–1915)
Portrait of Robert O'Hara Burke c.1855
pencil and wash drawing; 27.5 x 21.4 cm
Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an3211987

MAY 10 SUNDAY 1857

My Diary has not been opened from this Date until the Second of June.¹¹² I have little to look back at that gives me satisfaction to remember & it will not therefore occupy long for me to detail what has happened of importance.

I have been a constant visitor at Le Mare's house, too constant a one in fact for I have neglected my business to fritter my hours away in talking nonsense or worse to Mrs Le Mare.

I have been passing the evenings generally in Card Playing. Have lost at least seven or eight Pounds and have embarrassed my circumstances in consequence.

I have given away to drink and Tobacco and taken more of each than is beneficial to my Constitution or Pocket.

My business from these excesses is become irksome to me & I do no more than is actually necessary to prevent myself getting into disgrace. How different from the Zeal I felt and showed some twelve months since.

112 Castieau is writing about the events of May in June, possible with a calendar to prompt his memory.

I feel in fact going fast down Hill & unless it pleases God to give me strength to pull up again, the future is black & gloomy.

There is a chance yet left I am I hope generally respected, am not helplessly involved and with resolution can make myself all right again. So cheer up & pray Heaven help me.

MAY 20 WEDNESDAY 1857

Somewhere about this time I dined at the Star with Martin, Hall, one or two others and Truwhitt a solicitor.

An argument arose relative to the power of constables & the necessity of individuals yielding themselves without resistance to their Authority when acting upon Warrant.

Truwhitt maintained that if a man were innocent he need not yield to any Warrant and that if in resisting being taken into custody such person were to Kill the Constable the law would hold him not accountable for the Constable's death.

I said under such circumstances the person resisting a Warrant would if he killed the Constable be guilty of Murder as every man is bound to yield himself to the laws of his Country and that if a Warrant were granted the Constable would be simply performing his duty when executing it and therefore his person would be protected by the law, the question of Innocence or Guilt of the Crime charged in the Warrant having nothing to do with the Case.

The Argument produced a Bet. Truwhitt backed his opinion by betting £5 he was right. I accepted the Bet and the subject was to be decided by Mr Mayne the Barrister. I won and after considerable quibbling was paid.

JUNE 28 SUNDAY 1857

Had a little row this morning with a prisoner. He was very aggravating but I regret to chronicle that I lost my temper and spoke of him to the other prisoners as a 'Scoundrel'; this is language unbecoming an officer to a prisoner & it served me right, that the fellow took advantage of my indiscretion and pretended to feel very much injured. This prisoner is a man of very bad disposition and has tried his utmost to annoy all the officers of the Gaol but I ought to have shown more coolness.

JUNE 30 TUESDAY 1857

Another very miserable wet day.

Remained at home in the evening amused myself with Reading. Butler was with me a portion of the day.

We agreed to study French together and I hope the pair of us will show sufficient perseverance to get some benefit from the plan.

The Visiting Justice was at the Gaol in the morning and tried the prisoner that I spoke about on Sunday for misconduct. The fellow escaped in

consequence of the irritation he professed to have received at my hands, and because the Senior Turnkey in giving his evidence made use of a threat stating that had this prisoner kicked him as he tried to do, He the Senior Turnkey would have knocked his teeth down his throat. I was very much annoyed at this as the Magistrate would probably leave the Gaol under an impression that the prisoners were improperly treated and that they were subject to be bullied or knocked about. I told the Magistrate that if he had any such idea I must request him to make a full inquiry into the whole system with which the Gaol is conducted.

JULY 1 WEDNESDAY 1857

By Jove eight days gone and no entry in my Diary. This inattention will doubtless be much deplored when in future Ages this valuable Work is rescued from dust and obscurity to illuminate and instruct the world. Ahem.

Do not remember anything particularly about his day, think I stayed at home in the evening am not however quite certain.

SEPTEMBER 27 SUNDAY 1857

Went to Church this morning. As the weather was remarkably warm I put on White Trousers & White Vest. This change astonished the Beechworth Folk a little and I was chaffed at being a great Swell.

Went to Keefer's in the afternoon, had a long walk with Keefer & Morrison. Dined with Keefer & talked Canada during the evening.¹¹³ Came home about eleven o'clock. Much annoyed this morning at not being able to find a Ring which I had received some time since belonging to a prisoner, and who was discharged to-day. I could not find the ring anywhere & so I suppose shall have to give compensation. The ring is not worth much but the idea of losing anything of the Kind belonging to the prisoners has made me feel very uncomfortable.

NOVEMBER 19 THURSDAY 1857

The Diary has sickened me to think about [how] I have felt so wretched & weary these many days, without heart & without content.

Since I made my last Entry in this Journal I have purchased some land at Yackandandah and have to pay for it with Bills at Six & Three Months Date. The Three Months Bill is for £90 & I shall have a difficulty in meeting it. Whether I have made a good Spec or not time will show. I bought the Land of a Friend & so of course had to pay more than the usual price.

I have had a Row with the Chinese Protector and with Dr Dempster, because I refused allowing the China-men to be vaccinated. The Protector

113 Alexander Keefer, a young barrister who had named the site of his log cabin house Little Canada, 'because the native pines and ravine reminded him of his homeland': Carole Woods, *Beechworth: A Titan's Field* (Beechworth, 1985), p. 85.

reported me for being uncourteous. I was disgusted with Dempster, but do not care two pins about the opinion of all the Chinese Protectors or (Persecutors as they should be termed) in the world.¹¹⁴

The other day before a very large audience I played Box in Box & Cox & got through very well, much better than ever I anticipated. It was for the benefit of the Mechanics Institute.

Began playing Loo the night before Last, or rather the night before that, lost nearly Five Pounds.

JANUARY 1 1859

This diary was not received by me till the end of the month [of December 1958]. It was forwarded by Neild in a parcel directed to Mr Long of Scrutton's Farm.

There is little worthy of communicating. My Sister presented her husband with another little girl & the letters I have had from Melbourne acquaint me that 'Mother and child are doing well'.

The Beechworth Races took place. I attended two of the days and made several bets all of which I lost; one evening I played at Loo and with that Game and the Races together expended eleven pounds.

Patrick Hamilton, Coulen and a Comic Singer of the name of Pierce have been giving Concerts at the Eldorado. I went to several of them.

The Wesleyans gave a Fancy Bazaar in aid of the funds for building their chapel. I went and met a rather nice girl who was acting as Post-Mistress. She is now engaged to Le Mair and I have been introduced to her by him.

I get along very well with most people but find it a very difficult matter to save any money. I however intend to try in future to do so.

The Beechworth Garrick Club is established. I am Vice President, we find however great difficulty in getting the Members to take sufficient personal interest to keep it together.

Yesterday December 30th 1858, I took an important step in my life's journey, that step was getting married. I was attracted at the Church of England Bazaar held about six weeks since by the many charms and eminent business capabilities of Miss Moore. We kept a Lottery together, & flirted to an extent that brought us into notoriety. Polly got very much talked about & her name severely handled, however we continued to be very much together & when the Bazaar was over, took plenty of walks, had the usual sweets lovers indulge in & innumerable quarrels. At length however we made up our minds to be man & wife. This was on Sunday December 26th; that same night we agreed to be married on the 30th.

114 The role of the Chinese Protector included regulation of health. There was a large protectorate established at Beechworth, with more than 5000 Chinese miners in the region at the time. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

I told Polly of my debts & how small were my means she did not seem to care & so everything settled, we got married & rode away to Everton without telling the Beechworth Folk anything about it. At Everton we had a nice little place to ourselves & notwithstanding the heat was great & the flies numerous & troublesome managed to get on very well. Got home on Saturday. House much improved, commenced at once a domestic life. Wrote to my sister, told her of my wedding & sent to Neild for some cards for Mrs C.

JANUARY 1 SUNDAY 1860

Ushered the New Year in by adding the Report of my pistols to the General noise in the Town. Had a Polka with Polly on the Verandah, a Glass of Wine & then to bed.

Went through the Accounts found. We commenced the Year with a Debt of £200. Polly and I both determined to try & clear it all off during the twelvemonth. Settled the manner in which we would dispose of the largest of the Bills.

Went to Church in the evening. Heard Mr Booth preach; he is new to Beechworth. Liked his sermon though it had two faults, it being unnecessarily long & having too much repetition.

Walked to Darvall's found Hall & his family there, returned with them.¹¹⁵ Ushered the New Year in very pleasantly, made good resolutions & hope to be enabled to keep them.



Polly Castieau (née Moore)
Photograph courtesy of
Ian McKellar and
Brian Castieau

115 John Hall married Polly's sister, Dora (Dotty in later diaries), at St Kilda in April 1859. William Darvall (the first town clerk at Beechworth, from 1856 to about 1870 when he started a legal practice) married another sister, Jenny, in Melbourne in 1857.

CHAPTER 3: 1870

'TWO GLASSES OF GROG INSTEAD OF ONE'

Having left Melbourne as a single man in 1856, Castieau returned in 1869 with his wife Polly and their six children, soon to become seven. In the prominent position of Governor of the Melbourne Gaol, Castieau was soon known to the city's inhabitants. Walking with a friend near Richmond one day early in 1870 he passed some boys bathing in the river and 'heard them call after us "Mr Castyao"'. The prison was so firmly identified with its governor that within a few years his son would report hearing references on the Melbourne stage to 'Castieau's hotel'.¹¹⁶

On the Victoria Street frontage of the gaol was the governor's residence, home to this large family and their occasional servants, some of them selected from among the prisoners. The diary captures life in these busy rooms, and the movement back and forth between the residence and the prison. There is no sense of anxiety about contamination or safety conveyed in Castieau's account of the life of the family in the prison environs. The only concern is whether some of the prisoner servants might abuse the trust placed in them, to escape. The ready supply of generally trusted servants was a privilege in a city where the 'servant problem' constituted a constant source of domestic irritation for the middle classes who employed them.

In spite of the entitlement to cost-free accommodation, the pressing problem of Castieau's existence in the 1870s was money. During 1870 he faced the anxiety of seeing his shares in a mining speculation placed at risk in legal battles, while the daily account keeping that occupied the end-pages of the diaries kept him all too aware of the family's perilous position. One resort was to borrow against one's life insurance policy, an exercise described at some length later in the year. There would be no relief in the next decade from this pressing concern for financial security, a pressure which one senses from the diaries was responsible for the chronic ill-health that seems to dog Castieau and Polly from this time.

Such personal anxieties were compounded by the constant pressure of accountability for the prisoners and the prison. The danger of prison suicides, the caring for lunatics until they can be transferred to the asylum, the ever-present deaths of inmates in a state of delirium tremens from the effects of drink—all emerge frequently in diary comments.

There are other external threats: this was the year in which the government appointed a commission to inquire into all the penal establishments in Victoria. The daily exercise of a prison governor's duty entailed staying on watch for threatening outcomes, in this case the pressure to take more

¹¹⁶ Diary, 14 June 1874.



Charles Blanchard

Bourke Street, Melbourne 1881

painting, oil on canvas; 46.6 x 91.8 cm

Rex Nan Kivell Collection; National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an2310691

prisoners into an already crowded institution, or to secure more remuneration from prison labour.

The daily life of the city was a source of relief. Melbourne in 1870 offered an even richer cultural environment than in Castieau's first years in the city. With a population of around 200 000 people the city and its environs hosted the kinds of institutions which helped define urban living in the Victorian age: newspapers, magazines, theatres, hotels, libraries, museums, churches, and shopping arcades; a university, cemeteries, railway stations and a major shipping port. Young friends of the 1850s had become key figures in the circles of artists and journalists with whom Castieau associated; from Neild, especially, he would get support for election to the Yorick Club and his introduction to Clarke, Shillinglaw, Telo and numerous other writers and journalists. At the same time, as an influential former denizen of Beechworth, he had some means of access to the world of politics, chiefly through the constant Sunday visits to his friend, the member for Ovens, George Kerferd, whose star would rise while Castieau struggled to keep his visible.

JANUARY 20 THURSDAY 1870

Pleasant Summer's day.

Jenny¹¹⁷ spent the day at Mrs Kerferd's. In the afternoon felt lazily inclined & went to bed for an hour. Polly followed suit & we remained as long as we were allowed. I was wanted & had to get up sooner than was intended. Katey came over in the evening; poor girl she is nearly worn out taking her turn in watching a dying baby of Mrs Parkyns. The child has been very ill for several days & lingers on yet though the doctor has no hope of its recovery. I volunteered to take Katey & Fanny out for a walk & we went into Bourke

117 Polly's sister, married to William Darvall.



S.T. Gill (1818–1880)

Collins Street Looking West from Russell St. 1853

lithograph; sheet 31.7 x 47.0 cm

Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an7566621

Street, after a promenade of that popular locality we went into the Waxworks. The Exhibition is much improved since my last visit. Some miniature wax figures were very good, one of the Queen I thought particularly well of. Went into a fruiterers & bought some fruit for the girls; talking of fruit, Lynch brought us some very fine plums. He put them very nicely arranged in a box with vine leaves between them. There was a nice bloom on the fruit & when the box was put before Cowderoy, who lunched with us, as a case of wax fruit, he had a good look & then pronounced them to be pretty good.

JANUARY 22 SATURDAY 1870

In the evening took Lucy & Katey Morphy¹¹⁸ for a walk through Bourke Street, the poor girls have been kept in close attendance on their sister's baby which has appeared to be dying for some days. Lucy & Katey both looked weary & worn out. There was a great crowd in Bourke Street but nothing particularly worth seeing. There was not a breath of air & the illuminated signs at the Places of Amusement burnt as calmly as if they were under cover.

Met Mr Young, Assistant to Gammon the Chemist at Beechworth. He was at our house in the morning but I was from home. Tried to read, smoked, took some toddy then went to bed & tumbled for an hour or two before going to sleep.

This was Doty's birthday. She is Six Years old this very day. I gave her a half a crown & she presided at dessert.

JANUARY 23 SUNDAY 1870

A very hot day wind blowing from the north without change all day.

¹¹⁸ The Morphys resided opposite the gaol. Mrs Morphy ran a boarding house.

Had a little barney with Polly, owing to my reading some cutting remarks by 'a woman' 'on women' in the *Broadway Magazine*. I skipped all the hits at the men & read all the slaps the women got. Polly found me out & called me deceitful. The weather was so oppressive that it required a great deal of forbearance to keep good tempered.

Got through the day. Eating, Drinking, sleeping & reading. In the evening went for a walk. Met Reed¹¹⁹ of Collins Street & walked with him to Richmond along the banks of the river, saw some boys bathing & heard them call after us Mr 'Castyao'. I suppose my appearance will soon be tolerably well known. At Richmond Reed & I had a glass of beer & then came back by another route. When I got home I found Emma & Agnes were at our house. They had no news & did not stop very long.

Seemed to dread going to bed, everything smelling hot & stuffy, laid down for a time on the sofa, then got up & read till I was tired then went to bed.

JANUARY 24 MONDAY 1870

The weather still if possible hotter, every one nearly worn out. The rooms are like ovens & opening the windows makes things worse instead of better.

Rose at half past five & went through the Gaol. Went to the Sheriff's office in the morning & spoke to the Sheriff about Mrs Gee, he agreed to recommend her for an increase of salary. Received a Telegram from Darvall which I took to Kerferd's office. Kerferd was gone so I put the Telegram through the letter box. Met Hyland, Governor of Castlemaine Gaol, he was with a friend, we went & had some shandy gaff.¹²⁰

In the evening I strolled down to the Mechanics & had a glance at the pictures in the English comic periodicals. The Reading Room was very hot & I could not bring my mind to read. Came home had a pipe & some beer & then Polly & I had a bath & went to bed. Last night we found the mosquitoes very troublesome so to-day Polly made some curtains. Our bedroom is a fine room but is much exposed to the sun & has very large windows; to-night it was terribly close. Bed clothes or even other clothes were almost out of the question. I tried to sleep but could not, then rolled on to the floor & stayed there till the mosquitoes drove me back to bed again. No change of wind.

Harry went to school, the holidays being over.

FEBRUARY 2 WEDNESDAY 1870

Very hot to-day.

Did not do much good, knocked about a good deal & drank several noblers. Had to attend an Inquest this afternoon, another man Died from Delirium Tremens. The poor fellow was only 26 years of age & appeared strong when

119 Thomas Reed, who ran a small business described as 'a fancy repository', in Collins Street.

120 A mixture of beer and ginger beer.

he was received. He underwent the usual treatment prescribed by Dr McCrea, that is he was placed under the tap then being restless he was sewn up in blankets & afterwards 24 leeches were applied to his head. The blankets must be a terrible punishment in this hot weather; it was pitiful to see the perspiration in which this poor fellow was in & to hear him ask to be released. Dr McCrea held a Post mortem in the afternoon at which I was present. The state of the brain satisfied the doctor as to the cause of death being Delirium Tremens. I must say however that I have seen a great many apparently worse cases recover in a very short time & under very simple treatment. The Jury were rather inquisitive as to the treatment as they said it was rumoured outside, every body when received in Gaol was put under the tap.

FEBRUARY 3 THURSDAY 1870

A hot wind to-day, it changed however in the afternoon.

A leading article appeared in *The Argus* of this morning lauding the management of Dunedin Gaol & calling attention to a report of the Governor that the Gaol was more than self supporting, the prisoners having earned in 1868 more than a thousand pounds over the whole cost of the Gaol. I thought of making application to be sent to report on the system adopted at Dunedin as I think I could if allowed do as much with prisoners as Mr Caldwell the Gaoler at Dunedin. I went down & saw Kerferd & spoke to him on the subject, he said he would read the article to night & have a chat if he could with the Chief Secretary to-morrow.

Met a Mr Isod clerk & bailiff at Geelong, he was in company of Lynch & we had a glass of wine together. Saw Drury, met Crawford. Called upon Mrs Telford found her looking very well. Mr Sheppard was there & so was Dr & Mrs Brough.

In the evening went into town & read the papers, there was very little new & the town seemed quiet, Bourke Street being I thought remarkably so.

FEBRUARY 9 WEDNESDAY 1870

A fine day though muggy as if the Bush in the neighbourhood was on fire.

Still troubled very much with dyspepsia & in consequence lowness of spirits.

Dr Dempster called to see us in the course of the day; his eye seemed very bad though he appeared in tolerable good spirits. I was not able to talk much with him as the Visiting Justice came & interrupted us, some reporter accompanied Mr Panton & a fuller inspection was made than usual. I was very well satisfied with the Gaol except at the idleness of the greater part of the women. This I cannot help, nor more can Mrs Gee the Matron. There is no work for them to do & after the washing for the whole of the Gaol is done & the Gaol itself cleaned, there is little or no more work & consequently only comparatively few of the women are at work. To be sure many of the remainder are sick or weak & others have children to look after, some with one at the breast, yet it is terrible to

see a number of women sitting in the Yards the whole of the day & with no better thing to do than pick their fingers, when they have devoured the scanty meals allowed them. These meals now are scanty enough in all conscience & the poor idle creatures are hungry & ready to fight for an extra potatoe or piece of bread. Went as usual for a walk as far as the Mechanics this evening.¹²¹ Came home & went early to bed.

FEBRUARY 10 THURSDAY 1870

A very hot close day.

Rose at half past five. Read the Rules to the Turnkeys on Parade went through the Gaol, afterwards visited the Turnkeys Quarters where I had sent a party of men to try & make them look a little more decent in front, they are now far from reputable.

Went into town this morning & purchased some articles for Law.

Dempster called in the afternoon & said he intended leaving to-morrow. His eye I was glad to see was much better.

Interested myself this afternoon in writing a letter to *The Argus* in reply to a Leading Article they published last week with regard to Dunedin Gaol & the management thereof, showed it to Walford who considered I had a right to send it to *The Argus* without infringing the Civil Service Regulations so after getting Polly's approval of the letter I forwarded it.

Went into town in the evening, looked in at the Mechanics, saw Barclay there. Jenny was at our house today, she was at Cowderoy's last night & intends going to Geelong on Saturday.

FEBRUARY 11 FRIDAY 1870

A nice day, the wind changed to the South early this morning.

My letter appeared in *The Argus* this morning & created quite a flutter. When I went to the Sheriff's office I found Mr Farie quite excited because I had mentioned his name in the letter, he was sure however I had not intentionally annoyed him & I of course declared I had no intention of so doing. He thought the letter very injudicious. I said I was sorry that was his opinion, after a little more growling he said, well there's an end of it so far as I am concerned & I said I will not annoy you in like manner again.

In the afternoon the Sub Editor of *The Argus*, evidently the writer of the article I answered, came to see me & I took him through the Gaol & expressed my views on prison matters, pointed out to him the want of employment for the women &c.

Neild wrote to me praising my letter & stating he wanted to write some articles on Gaols in Victoria. Harriette came to see us in the afternoon; she had been in Town since Monday. In the evening went with Polly to Cowderoy's, they were not at home so we went farther & called upon Joe & Emma.

121 The Mechanics-Institute was at 81 Collins Street.

FEBRUARY 12 SATURDAY 1870

A nice summer's day.

In *The Argus* of this morning a Leading Article appeared in which 'my taking an erroneous view of the meaning of a previous article' was 'readily excused' 'in consideration of my evident desire to improve the system in vogue at the Establishment of which I was the Head'. I was called 'Zealous & intelligent' & then (without acknowledgement) my views as expressed to the sub-editor were put forth as the 'correct card'.

In the morning I went to Carter's & ordered a case of porter. In the afternoon mustered. Harriette & Emma came after tea, & I walked with them to the Station saw Harriette into the train & then started Emma by a car to Richmond. Looked in at the Mechanics & read a little in *Punch* & the papers, then came back to the Gaol & took Polly into town, had a walk through Bourke Street & then home, some toddy & a smoke & bed.

FEBRUARY 19 SATURDAY 1870

A warm summer's day.

Attended Court, a very nasty case was tried. A child of about nine years of age charged her father with committing a rape upon her. It was terrible to see the little girl standing in the Witness Box opposite to her father in the Dock & hear her give her evidence in the coolest & most deliberate manner possible. The prisoner was defended by the Crown; as he was charged with a Capital offence his counsel was Myles Garrett Byrne.¹²²

The Jury brought the prisoner in Guilty of Attempt to commit the offence & the Judge remanded him for sentence.

This morning while I was in Court Gill sent me a note saying the meeting of the Shareholders in the Claim was postponed till Monday & two o'clock.¹²³ I went out of Court & walked down the street with him for the sake of getting some information. Gill seemed open & fair enough & said I could transfer my miner's right if I pleased, he also professed to be confident there was nothing to be feared from the Jumpers as they had not the shadow of a case & Berrigan was only doing it to get an interest if possible in the Ground. I stated I had no money to spend & Gill seemed to imply no money would be wanted. The meeting was for the purpose of forming a Limited Liability Company.

Jenny returned from Geelong & does not appear to have enjoyed herself at the Pivot. Godfrey Lotherington¹²⁴ came in to stop the night with Harry. Harry had been with him all day. Went to the Mechanics in the evening.

Took Polly out after I returned from the Mechanics. Bourke Street very crowded.

122 Myles Garrett Byrne was a prominent Melbourne barrister.

123 Castieau was an investor in a mining speculation, the Porria Gold Mining Company.

124 Castieau's nephew, son of his sister Emma, about 11 years old at this time (Harry Castieau was nine).

FEBRUARY 20 SUNDAY 1870

A nice cool day.

Went to Church this morning with Polly & the Youngsters. Godfrey Lotherington accompanied us.

After Muster I took the train to Hawthorn & went on to Kew to see Kerferd,¹²⁵ found Mr Anderson Dalziel & Morrison, stopped to tea & had a long chat about Beechworth people & prospects. Mr & Mrs Kerferd walked with us to the Car & on the way Kerferd told me he was patiently waiting his time for office, he wished to gain a reputation as a Barrister before being made a law officer, he stated also that the present Ministry could not hold together long & that McCulloch¹²⁶ would be likely to make overtures to the old opposition or constitutional party & if those overtures were accepted the present Ministry would be beaten & a coalition one formed in its place.

Got to the station in time for the 20 minutes past nine o'clock Train. Said good bye to Morrison & Dalziel when we arrived in Melbourne, got home by ten o'clock.

Polly told me Joe & Emma had been at our house & stopped to tea. Godfrey went home with his father & mother.

FEBRUARY 21 MONDAY 1870

A hot wind day, very dusty & most oppressively hot.

Busy in the office in the morning, went into the Gaol & tried a woman for Impertinence to one of the female officers. I sentenced the prisoner to three days solitary confinement. She had a child & as soon as she received her sentence, she sat it down on the floor & walked away. I ordered her to be placed in the dark cell till she could behave herself, she screamed & refused to go. I got a turnkey to help the female officers & after a deal of howling & screaming they dragged her down stairs & into the dark cell. She resisted most desperately but soon got cool after she was in the cell, so in the afternoon she was allowed to return to her own cell & take the baby.

Jenny, Dotty, Fanny, Teddy & the baby were at our house, in the evening or rather afternoon. Polly & her crowd accompanied them to the University; they rode 13 in a cab.

Attended a meeting of Shareholders in the Portia Mining Company, it was postponed till to-morrow at four o'clock.

Went to the Mechanics in the evening. Purchased four nice pine apples for a shilling.

125 George Briscoe Kerferd (1831–1889), later Premier of Victoria. Like Castieau, he was born in England and migrated during the gold rushes. He was a successful brewer and businessman in Beechworth, his political base, from his election in 1864 for the next 22 years (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

126 Sir James McCulloch (1819–1893), politician and businessman, who was Premier of Victoria for most of the period 1864 to 1871. He was a liberal, known for policies of land reform, protection and secular education (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

MARCH 18 FRIDAY 1870

Great anxiety among the Civil Servants with regard to the proposed reductions; every officer seems & is no doubt in blissful ignorance as to his future Screw or position. For my part if they Reduce me still further it will be almost impossible for me to get on at all, as my expenses are quite up to my income. The Chief Secretary will however stultify himself if he reduces me after having just recently approved of my being raised in Class. Mine is a very hard case as the salary for the office I hold has been so very much reduced while very few others have been troubled at all & certainly none in the Gaol Department. My responsibilities have been & are heavy & my pay is not equal to what I should receive if I were employed in the same capacity in the Old Country. I feel then very sore on the bare idea of being made any worse off.

MARCH 19 SATURDAY 1870

A cloudy day, very dusty in the morning. Up at Five o'clock as the Military prisoners were to be removed as the 14th Regt. was proceeding to England by the *Walmer Castle*.

At six o'clock an officer, 50 men under arms & a drummer arrived at the Gaol. I handed over 48 men. The officer was about to give the order to March when I reminded him I must have a receipt for the prisoners. He said he had no orders to give me one. I told him in reply that the men were in my custody & I should not let them go without. He looked at his fifty men under arms & then at me, & wisely at once gave in & signed the receipt like a lamb; we shook hands & away marched as bad a lot as have left the Gaol for some time.

Attended at the Court a great portion of the day. The Trentham Murder case continued. The Jury brought in a verdict of Manslaughter & the prisoner was sentenced to Ten years on the Roads. In the evening after the Court was over I took Polly down town & purchased *The Australasian*. I forgot to mention that in the morning we went to the Eastern Market where I purchased four Spanish fowls for ten shillings, when we got back found a fine cock drowned in the Tank in the fowl yard.

MARCH 20 SUNDAY 1870

A cloudy day, looked very much like rain about lunch time, when we came out however it had again become fine. There was a collection for the Sunday School. I gave each of the children a shilling to put in the plate. Harry however tried to stick to his & the Collector was kept waiting at the pew door while Polly had a struggle with the young vagabond to get the money away from him.

After Muster I went by the five o'clock train to Kew, & found Kerferd at home & Morison with him; we had tea, a long chat & glass of colonial wine, then started for Melbourne, left Hawthorn by the Quarter past nine train & got home before ten. Kerferd evidently imagines the present Ministry will

not be long in office, he looks forward to a coalition Ministry with McCulloch at the head, with himself & such men as McMahon members. I do not see myself how such an alliance can be honestly formed, it is evident however that the present Ministry will not be allowed to hold the reins long unless they can manage to dissolve the House. Came home, had some toddy went to bed 'no good'; disgusted got up had a pipe & glass of grog took some pills & went to bed.

MARCH 26 SATURDAY 1870

A fine day rain appearing to have passed away.

In *The Australasian* of this morning, there appeared a rub at me for my letter about Dunedin, this was not so bad however as what happened when I went to the Sheriff's Office. There was a letter from the Chief Secretary or rather Under Secretary calling for an explanation of my conduct in writing letters to *The Argus* without leave, in direct contravention of the Civil Service Regulations.

Went into town with Walford & like a fool took some dark brandy & water at the Railway Station, came however home in time for Muster. After muster Walford came again with the Sheriff's authority for the release of Patrick Niall, for Father Niall he is called or rather is unless he has been unfrocked.

I went into town with Walford & we nobblerised a good deal, he went home & I looked in at the Mechanics, came home, took a smoke & a big drop of gin & was quite screwed. Polly was in a great way. I laid on the sofa & she went to bed. There was a heavy shower of rain fell between twelve & one o'clock to-day & in the evening it appeared as if there would be a heavy fall of wet; it did not however come.

Polly I am sorry to say is still very weak. I have not behaved well to her & that I fear has something to do with it. I have not told her about the letter from the Chief Secretary's Office.

MARCH 27 SUNDAY 1870

Woke up about three o'clock on the Sofa this morning quite sober but with a splitting headache, took some pills, got up not at all comfortable or amiable. Went out in the morning to get some more medicine for Polly, got it at Wragge's & had a chat with him, came home. Polly was evidently very weak & unhappy, a good dinner was brought in but neither of us enjoyed it.

Mustered in the afternoon & after it was over I went into town & got some tobacco, in the evening I took Harry to church, came home had a smoke & a small glass of grog & went to bed.

I have seriously made up my mind from this time forth not to drink any spirits in the day time & I will try to give up as much as possible drinking spirits at all. It is evident I cannot stand their effects & I am getting in that way now, that I have no recollection whatever of anything that takes place when I have got stupid over a pipe. I must alter & with God's aid will do so from this time forth.

The children are a serious responsibility & it is sad to reflect what would become of them if anything happened to me. It makes me a coward when I think about them & I hope I may yet turn over a new leaf & think of little else than their future welfare.

APRIL 1 FRIDAY 1870

Weather still fine. General Sessions commenced. I was at the Court portion of the day but was waiting about at the Sheriff's office for the Pay. Mr Farie however did not come to town so I did'ent get it. Dotty dined with us, we had rabbit pie, it was very nice & bunny evidently rose in the estimation of us all. This was the second time we have had rabbits since we came to Melbourne.

In the evening I went into town & read the Papers at the Mechanics, nothing yet done about the formation of a new Ministry, all sorts of rumours however & very various combinations. The Evening Paper states that nothing yet is known & I suppose that is most likely. In Bourke Street I met Joe White & we commenced as usual chatting on different subjects. I asked what sort of a place the 'Oriental Saloon' was as an article had appeared in *The Age* which made it out to be a terribly dissipated place & one that ought to be put down. It seemed that at first the waitresses had been dressed as [i.e. in] Bloomers. Their costume was then altered & instead of trousers, they wore short skirts & spangled dresses. White said it was all humbug so far as the description of *The Age* went & asked me to go in for a moment & have a look. *The Age* article had evidently excited a good deal of curiosity for numbers were evidently judging for themselves, among others was the Editor of *The Australasian* & several friends. The place is a common Free & Easy, some girls are strangely but by no means indecently dressed, these act as waiters & that is all. We did not stop many minutes.

APRIL 3 SUNDAY 1870

A cloudy day, a little rain in the evening. Took Harry, Sissy & Dotty to Church in the morning. After muster Polly & I started for Sandridge but before we reached the Cab Stand big drops of rain began to fall so Polly got frightened for her velvet cloak & we returned home.

I did not go out again but passed the time away in reading, amused the youngsters with some stories from *Grimms Goblins*,¹²⁷ a book I brought a few nights since. Had a smoke & glass of grog then went off to bed.

This was a very long day. I spent a short time in the Gaol making up my Diary & it took me an hour to muster. The rest of the day I was mostly reading or playing with the children. I did think of going to see Kerferd but I fancied he might be engaged as he is one mentioned as likely to be in the new Ministry.

Yesterday it was stated that he would be Attorney & Wrixon Solicitor General, there were however no end of rumours & possibly the coming men

127 It is likely that he meant *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.

have not yet been hinted at. A great many Gaol Servants myself among the number dread the return of McCulloch to power. Sir James may however be a little more considerate than was Mr McCulloch.¹²⁸

APRIL 6 WEDNESDAY 1870

Another fine day, though in the afternoon it was cloudy. Last night the papers state there was a glorious display in the heavens of the 'Southern Lights'. Polly & I were however in bed & missed what appears to have been a glorious spectacle.

Received a letter from Edwin Smith, he has not yet got his money from the Board of Education. Went to the Police office saw Drury & had a chat with Mr Sturt who has recently returned from England. Mr Sturt was Visiting Justice previous to his going home & will be again now he has returned.

This afternoon at three o'clock Adolph Rudolph received 25 lashes. Bamford flogged & the prisoner got very severe thrashing which he bore almost without flinching & without a groan, most of the Reporters were present & several members of the legal profession. I expect the next time the Judges have to sentence a prisoner to be whipped they will give 50 instead of 25 lashes.

Went with C. Smyth Crown Prosecutor & Moore the Chief Justice's Associate to the Supreme Court Hotel & had some brandy & water, went afterwards into town with Ellis & returning met C. Smyth again & went to his office & got a book Plummer made for me some seven years since & which Smyth borrowed & took to Melbourne. Polly went for Dotty & Sissy who had spent the day at Mrs Elliotts. I followed but missed them & returned by myself. Went into Bourke Street for a stroll & met Dr Taylor, returned by nine o'clock.¹²⁹

APRIL 18 MONDAY 1870

Easter Monday. A very fine day & taken advantage of by the good folk of Melbourne who seemed determined to have an Easter Outing. Picnics were the order of the day amongst the School children especially. Our youngsters joined the Sunday School children of St John's & went off to the Royal Park. Nurse took the little ones to the same place & so Polly was left all alone with the baby. Kerferd came with Madoline and stayed to lunch. He afterwards went with us to the Royal Park to look after the children. Flory Morphy went as a companion for Madoline. When we got to the Park we had a good look

128 McCulloch was knighted just prior to the formation of his new ministry. The 'dread' of McCulloch may have dated from the government's suspension of Civil Service pay during the constitutional crisis of 1865; Stuart Macintyre, *A Colonial Liberalism: The Lost World of Three Victorian Visionaries* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 43.

129 Indicating the way the diary was sometimes written days after the event, Castieau has written and then crossed out before this last sentence, the words 'Went to the Mechanics Institute in the evening, read the pap'.

at the birds & animals & then essayed to find the children. The whole Park seemed full of schools & we visited St Jude's, St James' & St Mary's & some others without finding St John's so we had much to Madoline & Flory's disgust to return without a romp with the little ones. Got home in time for Kerferd & Madoline to leave by the five o'clock Train.

The children made their appearance soon after six o'clock, very jolly but very hungry. They only had such a little for their tea & made up for it with a good-feed as soon as they got their caps & bonnets off. Sissy had won a race & brought home as a trophy of her prowess a purse of lollies of which she seemed very much proud. Polly & I started for the Theatre as we had made up our minds to see Charles Mathews.¹³⁰ There was a great rush for tickets & I had hard work to get them, however we managed to get into the Stalls & though rather close to the Bands, our seats were in front & very good ones. However when we were comfortably settled a cool customer accompanied by a young woman pushed to the front squeezed her into a seat behind & then popped himself down on two or three inches of space there was left of my seat which was an outside one. I did not like to make a row particularly as he had a female with him, & so his impudence answered his purpose & he remained.

Used Up & *The Critic* were the pieces played. Mathews is wonderful; it seems almost impossible he can be the age he states himself to be. It was a real treat to see him play in either of the pieces. His Sir Fretful Plagiary was however to my thinking the cleverest piece of acting. The old man's rage at the remarks Sneer told him were made in the papers could not be excelled.

APRIL 30 SATURDAY 1870

The morning very fine indeed, the weather however changed in the afternoon & a good deal of rain fell. It cleared up again however towards evening. By *The Argus* of this morning I saw that Mr Wintle died last evening. Mrs Castieau left the house at about seven o'clock & he must have breathed his last about three hours after she had gone. I sent for Mrs Gee who is of course well acquainted with Mrs Wintle & asked her to go down & see if she could be of any service, she went & returned in the afternoon. Mrs Wintle had nothing she wished me to do as her son in Law was at the house & could do everything that was necessary. The funeral is fixed for two o'clock on Monday afternoon. Made up my mind not to muster this afternoon but to take Polly to Sandridge; it came on however to rain about the time we started so we had to return back & I went into the Gaol & attended to muster as usual. In the evening took Polly into Bourke Street & through the Eastern Market, came home had a smoke & went to bed.

130 Charles Mathews, the actor who toured the colonies in 1870. Castieau had seen him in England, recalling in 1855 the superior standard of his performances compared to those on the Melbourne stage (Diary, 10 December 1855). This was an opinion shared in 1870 by the critic Neild for whom Mathews possessed the 'seemingly instinctive faculty of doing everything at the right time' (Love, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso*, footnote 14, p. 347).



J. Tingle

Gr. [i.e. Great] Bourke St. Looking East from Queen St., Melbourne 1857

engraving; 17.6 x 25.5 cm

A plate in: *Victoria Illustrated*, by S.T. Gill (Melbourne: Sands and Kenny, 1857)

Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an7535972

MAY 1 SUNDAY 1870

A very nice day. Went to Church with Polly, Harry, Sissy & Dotty. After dinner went into the Gaol & saw all was correct, then I took Polly & five of the youngsters to the Cemetary. Godfrey & Walter looked very nice in their Scotch costume & were very jolly. At the Cemetary we met a Mr Longland a Clerk at Pentridge, he told us Mr McCulloch had visited Pentridge the day before but had only occupied an hour in going through the Establishment & did not seem to care about looking into the working of the place at all. He was accompanied by Mr Duncan & seemed to want part of Pentridge for an Industrial School or Reformatory.

Coming home from the Cemetary we met Emma, Agnes & a Miss Parsons a friend of Agnes. They came to our house & had tea after which I walked to Emma's with them, then had a little chat with Joe, took a cab & came to town & got home about nine o'clock. At the Cemetary there was in front of one of the enclosed Tomb-stones a large marble vase full of very beautiful flowers. Mr Longland told me they were placed there by a Mr Lazarus in memory of his wife who has been dead about three years. From the date of her death till now he has once a week brought fresh flowers to fill the vase.

MAY 2 MONDAY 1870

A very fine day. The General Sessions commenced. Not however many Cases. Received Pay for April. Arranged for Lynch to take a Bill at three months in payment of his account. In a fuss all day as the Chief Secretary had expressed

his intention of visiting the Gaol & Mr Wintle was to be buried in the afternoon & I wished to attend his funeral & allow some of the Officers to do so also. At two o'clock as there was no sign of Mr McCulloch I told some of the old Turnkeys they could go to the funeral & then I took a hansom & went to meet the procession on the way from Balaklava. Met it on the St Kilda Road some way past the Turnpike & took my place behind the other vehicles, went to St Paul's Church where the coffin was taken out of the hearse & carried into the Church & then Mr Chase read a psalm & a chapter of the bible after which the Coffin was carried back to the Hearse. The procession again formed & proceeded to the Cemetery. On the way I was asked to be one of the pall-bearers & so of course performed that duty. Mr Farie walked on the opposite side, Mr Reed, Barnes, Mr G Walsh, Jenkins & Singleton were the other pall bearers. Came home very cold, had a nobbler for which Polly bullied me, went out called at Reed's he asked me to dine with him at Garton's [&] I did so. After dinner Reed went to a Council Meeting & I went & had a look at the new arcade in Bourke Street opened today, brought some vases for which I paid 17/- & for which I was well sneered at by Polly when I got home.

MAY 7 SATURDAY 1870

A fine day. An Inquest was held upon the body of a child whose mother when drunk let it fall into the fire. A verdict of Manslaughter against the mother was returned. Mr Sturt visited the Gaol as Visiting Justice & saw the whole of the prisoners. In the afternoon after a little pressing by Polly I consented to take her & the little girls to see Mrs Kerferd. We tried hard to catch the three o'clock train for Hawthorn & arrived at the Station just in time to take the tickets & to see the train go-away. Mr Wyburn was at the Station & laughed at our disappointment, however as I was furious over the 1/6 the Railway tickets had cost Wyburn said they would give the money back at the office. Polly jumped at the idea & returned with the 1/6 triumphant. I did not however have much to boast about as in a very practical manner she pocketed the money instead of returning it to me, its lawful proprietor. We now determined upon taking a Car to Kew & did so, had a very nice drive & were put down at Kerferd's door. The Fare was 3 shillings & very cheap as Kerferd lives nearly five miles from Melbourne. The Kerferds seemed glad to see us & the youngsters had a great romp with Madoline. Anderson was at Kerferd's when we got there & shortly afterwards Mr Archer the Registrar General made a call. Archer had a grievance; some paltry reductions having been made in his department & a hundred struck off his annual income, he appeared intensely disgusted. Kerferd would insist upon our stopping to tea & we had to do so consoling ourselves with a capital lobster boiled at home & which we eagerly devoured. Took a Car for Melbourne at the same charge as that we paid in the afternoon. Took Sissy & Dotty through the Royal Arcade & then up & down Bourke Street. Met Miles Garrett Byrne, introduced him to Polly.



S.T. Gill
(1818–1880)
*Royal Arcade,
Melbourne c.1854*
watercolour;
62.0 x 81.0 cm
Rex Nan Kivell
Collection;
National Library
of Australia.
nla.pic-an2377132

Byrne was a little fresh & Polly did'ent like him. Quarrelled with her for not showing a little more tact. She would'ent acknowledge her being wrong & so I got sulky. Took Polly & the youngsters home, then went to the Mechanics. Came home shortly after nine o'clock.

MAY 15 SUNDAY 1870

Weather fine this morning though wet under foot. This is my Birthday I am forty years old now¹³¹ & must begin to think myself fast sliding into the middle aged man & losing the right to be considered a young one. As soon as I awoke Polly wished me many Happy Returns & sealed her wish with what I am sure was a good honest kiss, as soon as I got down stairs the youngsters all rushed & overpowered me with their congratulations. Took Harry Sissy & Dotty to church. In the afternoon Polly was about taking the children to see Mrs Smith, the girls however insisted on my taking them out as it was my Birthday so thinking to give them a treat I consented to go with Polly & Five of the youngsters to Sandridge. Godfrey was very rowdy & it was with difficulty he could be kept at all right, he shouted the whole way to Sandridge. When we got there, the Fare was 2/3. The Cabman rather a cheeky fellow said 'I'll toss you 2/6 or 2/-'. I laughing said 'all right'. This raised the dander of Mrs C & she got very much out of temper & the pleasure of the afternoon was lost. I got sulky & so we dragged along disgusted with ourselves & everything around. With a good deal of climbing got the youngsters on board one of the ships on the pier & with even more difficulty got them on shore again. Then we saw Fisher, McKinlay & Maggie Fisher. Maggie looked very charming & I do not wonder at her being a favorite. Butler will do very well if he gets her consent to be Mrs B & then

131 The birth date (1831) on his marriage certificate must therefore have been incorrect by a year.

does not back away from his offer. Godfrey wanted an awful deal of looking after & it was quite a relief to get him off the pier safely & the whole party packed again in a cab for home. Met Harold Stephen & his wife. Harold wanted some paper for a Plan, had none of the sort he wanted. Went out for a stroll in the evening. Came back Polly & I both disagreeable, went to bed cross.

Joe & Emma called to-day while we were out.

MAY 17 TUESDAY 1870

Weather fine. In attendance at the Supreme Court. Gave evidence in the afternoon in the Case of Maria Cox charged with letting her child fall into the fire. The woman was found guilty of Manslaughter.

Polly went to St Kilda & spent the day at Littlewood's. Dr McGauran came from the Court with me when it adjourned in the middle of the day & we had lunch together. Harry came home this afternoon in a state of great excitement; he had heard three shots fired, & was asked by a constable where the shooting was, then he saw a man very excited being taken off in custody. I thought nothing of it but afterwards learnt that Mr G.P. Smith when going home from the Supreme Court after defending Maria Cox was shot at by a barrister named Supple, a writer for the Press.¹³² Supple is very near sighted & missed, he however used a revolver & fired again, running after Smith he again missed, but fired once more & shot Smith in the elbow. He was about again to fire when he was rushed by a publican named Walshe who however fell a victim for Supple fired & shot him in the belly. The case created a great sensation. Godfrey brought me a carpet bag full of cuttings from Mr Ray's garden. If half of them strike I shall have a nice collection. Polly came home at half past eight with the news that Mrs Telford had only arrived at Wahgunyah to-day & went across to tell Mrs Morphy. Mr Du Verden accompanied Polly back & stopped for a time. Went to bed feeling very seedy. Took fluid magnesia but without any good effect.

Met Neild & Hadden this afternoon. Neild wished me to send some papers I had written to show as my qualification for my being elected a member of the Yorick Club as he intended to propose me.¹³³

JUNE 3 FRIDAY 1870

A fine day, received pay for May & went to the Bank & cashed the cheque. The turnkeys got their money in the afternoon. Nothing new in the papers. Counted expenses & found I am spending a great deal more than I can afford, a lot of money somehow gets dribbled away every month & it seems hardly possible to be able to save anything with my family & position.

132 George Paton Smith, one-time editor of *The Age*, later barrister, MLA and Attorney-General; Gerald Supple (1823–1898), Irish-born writer, journalist and barrister, who was almost blind (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

133 See Introduction above, pp. xx.

I intended to be strictly economical this month but was tempted by the Bill for this Evening at the Theatre Royal. Mrs Mathews has been very highly spoken of & was to take her Benefit this evening. The comedy of *London Assurance* with Mrs M as Lady Gay & Mathews as Dazzle, & then Planche's Burlesque of *Medea* with of course Mrs Mathews in the principal character. Polly was as eager to go as I was & got ready in a very short time, we were at the theatre shortly after the doors were opened, there was a great rush & it



Samuel Calvert (1828–1913)
Sunday Services, Old Theatre Royal, Melbourne c.1873
 wood engraving; 22.5 x 22.6 cm
 Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an10322885

was hard work to get tickets, however I managed at last & we found our way into the Stalls; every seat seemed filled but at length Polly squeezed into a place & I made up my mind to stand during the evening, however two or three chairs were brought in & I managed to secure one & place it by the side of my wife & as things went got on very comfortably. The play was most enjoyable. Lady Gay was grand & delighted the audience. Old Charley of course is excellent as Dazzle but he is a little too old for the Part & to my fancy it is getting beyond him, there is'ent 'Dazzle' enough about the character as Mathews now (I suppose) has to play it. Rogers played Sir Harcourt & Greville, Meddle. Ireland was very fair as Young Courtly & altogether the Piece went smoothly & to the satisfaction of the audience. Mathews made a speech & said goodbye or rather *au revoir* to Melbourne. *Medea* shows Mrs Mathews powers to great advantage & she liberally gives the public something more than a glimpse of her natural charms; her dress was very classic & no doubt appropriate to the character she represented, had it however been worn on the Stage of the Varieties I guess the Committee of the Morality Society would have gone & had a look & then groaned over the depravity of the city which could tolerate such an exhibition.

JUNE 7 TUESDAY 1870

Weather dry though cloudy. Received a letter from the Bank this morning telling me the Draft I paid in yesterday had been dishonoured, it seems it was sent to John Castieau & I endorsed it J.B. Castieau. Went to the bank & wrote 'John' so I suppose it will now be all right. Met Steel while I was out.

Joe came to lunch & after him Dotty & Miss Sturgess. Polly went with Dotty & Miss Sturgess to see Mrs Dickson. After Muster I went into town met Mr Nolan the Solicitor along with Aspinall & a friend, went with them to the Port Philip. In the evening had a game of romps with the little girls, then Polly went over to Mrs Morphy's & I smoked the time away till just before she came in. When she arrived I was on the sofa asleep. Polly came home this afternoon with a fresh grievance of Harriette's; it appears that Harriette has been talking to Dotty about the impropriety of Polly sitting in the Stalls when she goes to the Theatre & also has been surprised that she should go with Lodging House Keepers. She went one evening with Mrs Morphy & her daughters. Dotty told Harriette that Mrs Morphy was a lady & received into the best company Melbourne could produce but Harriette repeated, still you know she is a lodging house keeper. Poor Harriette, I think she must be getting a little daft, she is evidently very cross with me & consequently with Polly.

JUNE 8 WEDNESDAY 1870

The weather tolerably fine. Went to the Sheriff's office in the morning & did a very foolish thing; I wanted a good lock for the Armoury & sent for one. The contractor charged £2.5. It certainly was a very good one but too expensive, however instead of sending it back I kept it & the Sheriff very properly remonstrated with me for ordering anything without first ascertaining the cost. Dotty called this morning & left little Nelly who stayed the night with the youngsters. After muster went into town, felt very seedy & I went into an hotel opposite the *Argus* [office] for a little brandy, this will cause Polly to 'swear' but I beg to add tis not my custom. Went to the Mechanics & read the papers, saw in *The Ovens and Murray* that Kerferd in his letter stated every one connected with the Beechworth Gaol was more or less censured in the Report excepting Gibson & that there would probably be dismissals & removals. Brett would be awfully wild, as the writer went on to say, 'what a pity it was the management had deteriorated since the removal of Mr Castieau as the Gaol had then the reputation of being a model one'.

I am sorry my name was mentioned. It will make Brett nasty & Stewart spiteful however I do not know why I should need to care about them.

JUNE 12 SUNDAY 1870

The weather still inclined to be very changeable. Had a little barney with Polly about church, I being inclined to attend the Gaol Service & Polly wishing me to go with her & Harry to St Johns. I got cross but however though I had the best of the argument. I went to St Johns. It was Sacrament Sunday. Mr Barlow preached an eloquent sermon & most affectionately pressed his congregation to attend the Sacrament, very few however responded to the invitation & I for one felt ashamed at leaving the church without doing so. There seems very little real sincerity in Christians of the present day & most of us must be in a bad way if what we are taught & profess to believe is the Truth. Polly & the youngsters went

to Auntie Emmas this afternoon & there had their tea, between six & seven they returned bringing Uncle & Aunt with them, nothing new with Joe & Emma, they seem getting along very comfortable & will I hope know yet many happy days together. After our visitors had left I went into town for a walk, took a solitary stroll through Bourke & Collins Streets & then returned about nine o'clock; by the by I forgot to mention just before I went out all the Gas was suddenly extinguished & the House was left in darkness. Upon going to enquire the cause I found that Turnkey Magree had muffishly turned a wrong tap & so shut the gas off which caused the sensation. In *The Australasian* of yesterday 'The Peripatetic' announced his last article, having as he said sold his office of Free Speech for a mess of official Porridge; in other words Marcus Clarke the Peripatetic has been appointed Secretary to the Library Commissioners. *The Australasian* will miss the P.P.s column.¹³⁴

JUNE 24 FRIDAY 1870

Weather tolerably fine though at times threatening. Attended at the Sheriff's office & talked to him about the sentence of Taylor. When Judge Barry¹³⁵ was sentencing Taylor he made the remark that he should consider a sentence of two years imprisonment was equivalent to one of eight years on the Roads, it is hard to arrive at any conclusion as to [crossed out] the manner in which Judge Barry reached this conclusion, but as I said to the Sheriff I fancy if the Judge had to undergo either of the sentences he would take the two years imprisonment in preference.

As far as my experience teaches, a sentence of imprisonment is practically far less severe than one of Labor on the Roads. A prisoner sentenced to Imprisonment only, can not be put to severe labor or to any labor at all if he is allowed to supply himself with food which he can do at the discretion of the Gaol authorities. The same amount of remission is granted whether a man works or is kept in idleness so long as he does not get into any trouble with the officers & be punished in consequence by the V Justice or Governor of the Gaol.



Frank Goldstraw
In His Habit As He Lived
(Sir Redmond Barry on
Horseback Near Public Library,
Melbourne) c.1880
sepia-toned albumen photograph
of painting, 16.7 x 10.9 cm
Pictures Collection,
nla.pic-an23621420

134 Marcus Clarke's column as 'The Peripatetic Philosopher' had run since November 1867. See Marcus Clarke, *A Colonial City: High and Low Life: Selected Journalism of Marcus Clarke*, ed. Laurie Hergenhan. (St. Lucia, Qld.: UQP 1972), pp. xxvi-xxvii.

135 Redmond Barry (1813-1880), the judge famous for his harsh sentencing. On another occasion Castieati notes: 'The prisoner was sentenced to Death by Judge Barry in a long winded pompous & strained address.' (Diary, 15 August 1870).

JUNE 25 SATURDAY 1870

Weather fine. Felt rather seedy this morning, however was not very bad, saw Mr Smyth the Crown Prosecutor & took a walk with him as far as Menzies hotel. Went in with him & had a nobbler then walked home in time for lunch. After lunch was rather so so & said I should lie down for a time when to my astonishment Polly wanted to lie down as well so we all made up our minds to be lazy & went to-bed. I managed to get up just late enough to escape the Muster, however I went in & enquired if all was right & so felt tolerably satisfied.

Went to the Mechanics in the evening & read the papers. Mr Gordon a well known sporting man & a poet of some pretensions blew his brains out yesterday.¹³⁶ This suicide has created much sensation. Mr Walstab brother of the novelist of that name was also found drowned; it is not known how he got into the water. To day a clerk in the Education office, a Mr Nicholls, was killed while following the Melbourne hounds. There has been certainly plenty of sensation since it was commenced by the attempt at murder of G.P. Smith. Polly took Maggie over to Morphys & they were not home when I got back however they came before nine o'clock with Mr Seddon & then Polly & Maggie went with Seddon & myself into Bourke Street. We did Paddy's Market at one end of the street & the Arcade at the other, the evening was pleasant & the walk I think did us all good. When we got home Seddon would not venture in & so we soon all got to bed women as well as myself being tolerably well tired out.

Felt billious so to be safe took some cockles.¹³⁷

JUNE 28 TUESDAY 1870

The weather was fine to day & I had two parties of men busy engaged weeding & carting away from the plots in front of the Gaol. Did very little myself all day. Dotty & Miss Skinner a friend of her[s] had dinner with us & so had Joe Lotherington. After Muster I went to the Mechanics & read the Papers. After tea I spent an hour or two with the children & when they went to bed settled down to my pipe & grog. Polly & I were squabbling about nothing as usual when Mr Seddon called & said he came for her to give Mr Duerdin a dancing lesson. Polly pressed me to go with her but I would not & she went but was back before eleven o'clock. While she was away Mr Stark called for the Calendar, it was however too soon & he did not get it.

When Polly came back she was very jolly & wanted to be friendly. I had however a fit of the blues & could be nothing but disagreeable. I did not go to bed for some time & when I did showed very bad temper. I certainly am

136 Adam Lindsay Gordon (1833–1870) was a celebrity horseman, poet and good friend of Marcus Clarke. After a severe head injury and the death of his infant daughter, he became acutely depressed and the day after the publication of his famous *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes* he committed suicide on Brighton Beach.

137 Cockle's pills, a patent remedy for an upset stomach.



Harry Stockdale
A.L. Gordon on Outlaw 1863
 photoprint from lithograph; 26.1 x 31.2 cm
 Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an9653868

getting very queer & at times am inclined to 'give up'. I ought to be as jolly as most men, with a good billet & a healthy wife & children; somehow or other what should be pleasant turns out dust & ashes & all I long for as soon as it is got proves a mistake & is soon considered valueless. 'I suppose it is liver.'

JULY 11 MONDAY 1870

The weather dry but very cold. Transplanted some cypresses that were in front of the House & gave it rather a funereal appearance. Polly was very busy superintending their departure. Had a party of prisoners employed in colouring the nursery. Went into town this morning & met Gill of 'The Portia'. He assured me my Shares would be all right & that there should be no Calls made upon them, he promised at the next meeting of the Directors to get a Minute to that effect entered upon the Books of the Company. Mr Avent the Resident Surgeon of the Lying In Hospital called in the afternoon & I introduced him to Polly. Avent is a member of the Yorick Club. After Muster I went to the Yorick Club & said 'how do you do' to a few of the members who were present. Ogier was playing Bezique with Mr McKinlay the Law Reporter of *The Argus* & four or five other men were reading the Papers.

Rawlings showed me through the Place which is comfortable but certainly not pretentious, it is open from nine A.M till 2 A.M so that the members have always got a comfortable place to go to & read, write or chat as disposition or opportunity invites them.

After tea Polly went over the way to Morphy's. It being Mrs Tetley's Birthday a little dancing was going on, she stayed away till a little after ten o'clock. I stayed at Home. Read a little, drank a little & smoked a good deal.

JULY 15 FRIDAY 1870

Weather still fine though looking likely to change. The Supreme Court Sittings commenced this morning & I was very busy at the Court & elsewhere all the day. Went to the Yorick Club in the evening & skimmed the papers. Parliament was prorogued to-day. Mr Swallow came up to take Maggie, he very kindly invited the whole family to come to Sandridge & visit his manufactory.¹³⁸ He stated he had between eighty & ninety people employed in making biscuits by machinery & I found he had learnt his business at Huntley & Palmer's the great Reading House & that all the biscuits at one time so largely imported into the Colony are now made by himself & other local men. He is protected by a duty of a penny a pound which is charged on the imported article but said he did not wish it as he could compete with free trade. I expressed the pleasure I should feel in visiting his works & he asked me to bring all the children. Mrs Castieau said they will eat all your biscuits at which he laughed & said 'let them, I always fill people's pockets & sometimes their umbrellas'. In the evening Mr Seddon came across & invited us to go to the opera with him; we agreed that he should accompany us to the Princesses to-morrow night & that we should go with him to the Royal on Monday. Lucy Morphy and Miss McDermott were at our house in the evening. After they were gone I laid down on the sofa & slept till past midnight, then I went into the Gaol & caught one of the Turnkeys napping, after that I joined Polly who had been in bed for some time.

JULY 20 WEDNESDAY 1870

Weather fine again. Got up with rather a headache, however made the best of it & got into Court in good time. The case of Supple was tried to day & occupied the whole of it. Mr Higinbotham assisted by Mr Dobson appeared for the prisoner & Mr Dunn the Crown Prosecutor was assisted by Mr Williams the son of Judge Williams. Mr Higinbotham spoke for two hours & made a most effective address endeavouring to convince the Jury Supple was insane & quite unaccountable for his actions. A large number of Witnesses were called for the Defence & proved the prisoner had been very eccentric in his conduct. The Judge summed up & laid down the Law, that if the prisoner knew when he attacked Smith he was offending against the law he was accountable for his acts. He requested the Jury if they found the prisoner guilty to state whether the pistol went off by accident or not.

138 Thomas Swallow (1827–1890), founder of the Swallow and Ariell biscuit company (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

A verdict of Guilty was returned & the Jury added that in their opinion the pistol was discharged by accident. The Chief Justice who presided then reserved the Point for the consideration of the full bench as to whether the offence amounted to Murder or Manslaughter.

The Jury retired about ten o'clock & did not bring in their verdict till past midnight. I was very unwell during the day & was very tired before it was over. I was in the Court for more than fourteen hours. Told to-day that the reason Mr Aspinall did not assist in the defence of Supple was that he had just become Insolvent & filed his Schedule.

JULY 21 THURSDAY 1870

A tolerably fine day. Maggie Fisher went back to Sandridge this afternoon. I was in Court the whole of the morning & got away about three o'clock. Draper was brought up for Sentence & received three years in addition to previous sentence. Patrick Smith for Murder was sentenced to Death without hope of mercy & a number of other minor offenders received hot sentences from the Chief Justice who was particularly caustic in his remarks to a fraudulent Insolvent to whom he gave three years on the Roads. Received a letter from Harriette asking me if I could get her a Ticket for the Concert at the opening of the Town Hall. I must reply in the negative; I would not ask for myself & should not like to do so for anyone else. After Muster went to the Yorick Club & peeped at the papers, came home to dinner, Polly had got some jugged hare which was reported to her to be particularly nice but which was I am inclined to believe uncommonly nasty. After tea Polly who is full of the Fancy Dress Ball started away to consult her friend Mrs Smith & came back fully impressed with the belief that she had an 'idea' & would come out strong at little expense. I am to be made into something operatic, 'Elvino'. I believe particularly appropriate as I do not know a note of music & could'nt sing Pop goes the Weasel in tune if twere to save my life, however who'll care if I dont (& my legs dont look ridiculous in Trick [?] hose).

JULY 22 FRIDAY 1870

A wet disagreeable day, hardly remember how I was engaged during the day. Was at the Sheriff's Office but was told he was not coming to town to day. Went to the Mechanics after muster & got a book. Mr Sturt the Visiting Justice kept me engaged till close upon Muster time, received a Ticket of Invitation for Saturday to attend the Laying the Foundation Stone of The Australian Wine & Distillery Company. Joe Thompson the betting man & the Proprietor of the Continental Café came up this afternoon to see a woman who in revenge for not being allowed inside the Café took up a stone & smashed one of the large plate glass windows of the establishment; it seems that females are not allowed inside the café but that the waitresses who are dressed in fancy costumes are not any better than they should be & consequently the outsiders have a down upon them & their place of business

which of course is frequented by most of the loose fish of Melbourne. Thompson is afraid the woman I spoke about will smash his windows again if she is released from prison & he visited her in the hope of inducing her to go to New Zealand where she has friends. Polly went to have a chat at Mrs Morphy's, Lucy was here this morning, of course there is nothing talked of or thought about but the Fancy Dress Ball which is creating a sensation somewhat terrific in its character.

JULY 29 FRIDAY 1870

A tolerably fine day, though the evening was cloudy. Saw the Sheriff who told me the Chief Secretary was wild because Draper was employed as a clerk instead of breaking stones or [doing] even more degrading work. On the same principal I imagine Tradesmen should not be allowed to work at their trades but should be used as ordinary laborers. A funny theory this just at this time when the Press of the Colony is crying out about the necessity of making prison labor remunerative. Draper as a stone-breaker would be of little service as a clerk. He can & has already well earned his subsistence in Gaol.

JULY 30 SATURDAY 1870

It was a wet disagreeable day, as might be expected. After a time this morning I felt rather seedy & not much inclined for work, however I went cheerfully at it & had to begin with a long interview with the Sheriff & considerable talk about my requisitions. The Sheriff is getting very particular & 'screws' wherever he sees, or fancies he sees, an opportunity. Was told the Chief Secretary was very indignant that Draper should be employed as a Clerk & not set to work to break stones like the general run of prisoners set to hard labor. Robbing a Bank, in the eyes of the Bank Director, was one of the most audacious of crimes & deserving of even exceptional punishment. After dinner when I had seen all was correct I went to bed with Polly & there we remained for a couple of hours & arose much refreshed. Mr Brown & Miss Morphy came over & I paid Brown 5/6 for my share of the cab to St Kilda. Brown wanted Polly to go to the Opera this evening but she felt too tired & did not venture. It was a wet night so I purchased the three weeklys & stayed at home & read them. Lucy Morphy brought some camelia cuttings & I intend to stick them into the ground & let them take their chance of striking. Amateur florists seem divided in opinion as to whether camelias can be raised from cuttings, most of them are however against the chance of them being so grown. I can however but try.

AUGUST 15 MONDAY 1870

The weather fine to-day. Polly started to look for a Nurse in place of ours who has made up her mind it is necessary for her to give up working for a time, we are sorry for she has behaved well to us. I am sure the youngsters & all of us will be very sorry to lose her. Was shocked to see by *The Argus* this morning that Mr Farie was dangerously ill & on enquiring at the office I found it was

too true. The officers in the Department seem really grieved & I am sure I feel very very sorry & if we lose Mr Farie shall feel I have lost my best friend.

AUGUST 17 WEDNESDAY 1870

The morning was fine though bitterly cold. The news from Pentridge was very bad indeed. Mr Farie was not expected to live & given over it was said by the medical men. There was much putting of heads together & many ominous shakes of the head amongst the officers of the Department all of whom are very much attached to the Sheriff & dislike the idea of having another Chief. This evening about eight o'clock a change came over Mr Farie & I am glad to hear there is still a chance of his recovery.

...

Got into a bad temper this afternoon with Polly. I had got a little out of sorts with hearing the bad news about Mr Farie & took a nobbler at dinner instead of beer, consequently I wanted another at tea time. This Polly objected to & would'ent give me the keys till I got into a bad temper & insisted on having them. It was very foolish of me because Polly was only doing what she believed was for my good. Did Harry's sums for him.

AUGUST 22 MONDAY 1870

Weather fine, woke up this morning with my foot very troublesome indeed, about ten o'clock heard that poor Mr Farie had died this morning a little after eight o'clock. Went to the Sheriff's office, much sorrow among the officers, not unmixed with some speculation as to who would be the new Sheriff. Ellis is to act till the appointment is made. Edwards & Whiteman came this afternoon. Edwards sent for Mrs Edwards. Began drinking Brandy in the middle of the day & found it did me no good. In the evening had a skirmish with Polly & got very bad tempered. The Messenger from the Chief Secretary's office called with a letter announcing the time fixed for the Execution of James Cusack; went to the prisoner & read him the letter. Sent a telegram to Brett to tell him of Mr Farie's death, received one from him in return marked 'Confidential' asking me to advise him how best to use his interest in Melbourne, told him in answer Mr Michie was Head of Department & held his own. I suppose Brett thinks there is a chance of his being appointed Sheriff of Victoria. I am sure however he is much mistaken, the late affair at Beechworth Gaol has not done him any good & it is not at all likely he will receive any promotion for some time.

AUGUST 23 TUESDAY 1870

Very unwell indeed this morning, head bad, foot worse & altogether out of sorts, did not get up till late but took some pills the first thing in the morning & an emetic an hour or two afterwards. Went to the Sheriff's office. Ellis informed me he was Sheriff for the time being. The time for the Funeral of Mr Farie has not yet been fixed. In the afternoon The Penal Commissioners

visited the Gaol.¹³⁹ The Chief Justice was at their head. The Commissioners went through the Gaol & seemed struck with the extent of it. I pointed out the absence of any work excepting Stone-breaking & that a number of men sentenced to Imprisonment were idle in consequence. The Commissioners then came into the House to see the pictures Law copied; they seemed much struck with the ability shown by him.¹⁴⁰ After tea went into town & called at the Yorick & also at the Mechanics where I changed book for Polly. Got home by eight o'clock, Polly away, she returned at ten o'clock & had been to see Mrs Smith at North Melbourne. Joe called this afternoon, did'nt get a chance of speaking to him as he hooked it as soon as I came in with the Chief Justice & the rest. Polly very busy designing a Yard for the rearing of poultry; last year during a long season she managed to obtain very few chickens in comparison with the number of eggs she sat, she hopes to do better this time.

AUGUST 29TH MONDAY 1870

My foot still troubling me, went on taking the Rheumatic Mixture as directed. A fine day, went to the Sheriff's Office. A Return called for by the Penal Commission sent to the Sheriff, but which of course I am expected to fill up, at the bottom are some questions calling for answers from practical experience. These Ellis wishes me to fill up so that he may suck my brains I suppose for his own benefit, do not feel at all inclined to give him the chance however if I can help it.

Much excitement about the War,¹⁴¹ many people being afraid England may be dragged into it & consequently the tranquility of the Colony be disturbed. I mustered this evening & saw Cusick who is to die to-morrow. His children were brought to see him from the Industrial School & took their last look in this world of their wretched father. Lucy Morphy came over to see us, she was talking to Mrs Castieau about Whyburn but does not seem at all in a hurry to become Mrs W. She says she does not yet know enough of her beau & then you see he is 'old'. Forty, I should think. Why says Polly, I thought he was about the same age as Castieau, by the by, Castieau was 40 in May last, however to a good wife I suppose a husband always appears youthful.

This evening I went to the Mechanics & then looked in at the Yorick Club. War talk bought some tobacco, more War Talk, came home & talked War again till time to go to bed.

AUGUST 30 TUESDAY 1870

A fine day. My foot rather better though still troublesome. Received a letter from my father, also one for Edwin Smith from his mother which I at once

139 The Royal Commission on Penal and Prison Discipline, whose three reports (1871–72) mapped out the influence of mid-century ideas about crime, delinquency and prison reform. See Mark Finnane, *Punishment in Australian Society* (Melbourne, 1997), pp. 48–49.

140 Castieau had supplied materials for a prisoner, Law, whose drawings are referred to here.

141 The Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

forwarded. My father wrote very strongly with regard to the Acts of the English Government; he takes a very gloomy view of Home matters & predicts the fall of the Empire. I suppose however he was a little bilious at the time he wrote his letter.

The old gentleman gave me some capital advice particularly with regard to what is called 'keeping up appearances'; he stated very truly that if we lived beyond our means we should only be able to do so for a short time & should afterwards be sneered at for having been so foolish. This was the morning fixed for the Execution of James Cusick, sentenced to Death for the Murder of his wife at Gooley's Creek. At Ten o'clock I accompanied Mr Ellis to the Cell & handed over Cusick to the tender charge of Bamford. When the Drop fell Cusick hung motionless for a moment but then his breast began to heave & he appeared to live for two or three minutes; he held all the time a handkerchief which he had in his hand when the bolt was drawn. When the body was cut down I examined the neck as I could not understand why there was so much muscular movement & I found that part of Cusick's flannel shirt had been between the rope & the neck. This I imagine must have prevented the rope from getting quite close to the other portion of the neck & perhaps delayed immediate strangulation. I have no doubt the fall dislocated the neck. Cusick was a powerfully built man of about fourteen stone weight. An Inquest was afterwards held by Dr Youl & the usual verdict returned. After muster this evening I went into Melbourne & called at the Yorick Club. There I met McKinley & Wheeler & was induced to play a game of three handed cribbage with them. I managed to lose four shillings. This however is the first money I have lost at cards since I have been in Melbourne & I do not think I shall make a practice of playing & if so, I have not done much harm. Stayed at home all the evening.

SEPTEMBER 5 MONDAY 1870

The dust was very disagreeable to-day, went into town in the morning, met Gill & talked to him about 'The Portia', do not like the appearance of things in connection with the Company. Gill stated, the Jumping Case was not heard at the last Court but was postponed till October; he said the Jumpers & the Portia men were working in a shaft together & that a Receiver had been appointed to take the gold if any was obtained. Gill persisted there was no liability on my Shares & promised to get it marked on the Scrip after Wednesday. I wanted to go to the office, but he said the new manager had not yet got the Books but would have them on Wednesday. I again pointed out, that the name of the Company ought to be painted up at the office & Gill said he spoke to the manager about it & he promised to get it done.

I do not believe a penny piece in the genuineness of this company. In the afternoon Seddon sent me a note & a Loan Proposal from the Alliance Company. It will cost me between eight & ten pounds a year to insure my

life for £250 a year. The Company would lend me £125 which I could pay back in 12 quarterly Instalments. The Cost the first year would be £63.4 if my Life was taken at Par. To borrow the money I must however have three Sureties & the question is who to ask to become them. Polly went for a walk with me & I did not muster, went to the Mechanics & Polly went to Mrs Smith's in the evening. Sent in my answers to the Penal Commission; Ellis said he would send them as they were given to him.

SEPTEMBER 7 WEDNESDAY 1870

Steady rain the whole of the day. No work doing & nothing but dullness indoors & out. Went to the Sheriff's office after I had got through ordinary morning business & scribbled the usual page in my Diary, still wondering how I shall get the money I require, have not asked any one to become Surety for me & would in fact rather pay heavy Interest than do so. Received some time since a Circular from one Waxman a money lender offering accommodation. Thought of writing to him & did so but unfortunately the Circular has been destroyed & I do not know the address so I could not send the letter. I wrote a letter to Gibson yesterday & asked him to send Thompson back his revolver. Brown a Detective who was reported by me for giving a prisoner tobacco & who was suspended in consequence was I was glad to see reinstated to-day as he bears an excellent character in the Force. I should not have liked him to have been dismissed but was glad he has had a severe caution.

Had a few words with Polly which arose out of some talk about money. I told Polly she had better go away for a month or so till I had arranged my difficulties. She fired up at this & I foolishly said 'she was a fair-weather wife' though I did'ent mean it & have no cause for saying so, it however made her very cross & we were not very loving for the rest of the evening. After tea helped Harry to do his sums then went to the Mechanics & looked in at the Yorick the latter place was however deserted, came home & went to bed early.

SEPTEMBER 8 THURSDAY 1870

A terribly wet day, the rain fell in sheets & the whole country is more or less flooded. Great disasters Up Country. The trains on the Echu line could not run & there is at the present time much fear that the Malmsbury Reservoir will not stand the heavy pressure of water; if it bursts great damage will be occasioned.

Attended the Supreme Court & heard the Argument before the Judges with regard to Supple's Case, whether he was guilty of 'Murder' or 'Manslaughter'. Messrs Higinbotham & Dobson appeared for Supple, Messrs Dunn & Williams for the Crown. Judgement was reserved. Harry came home from school in the middle of the day drenched, he had waded through

some deep water & thought it fine fun at first no doubt, he got tired of it however & was crying when he got home. I was savage & growled like an old fool as I suppose I am.

Mustered & as the weather had taken up intended going out for a stroll, found Cuthbert however at my Quarters so purchased a lobster & stayed at home that he might get his tea. Went to the Mechanics & then to The Yorick in the evening. Paid 2/6 for a chance in a raffle for a Portfolio of Lithographs of Guérard's Australian Scenery,¹⁴² they belong to Shillinglaw¹⁴³ who wants to dispose of it before he leaves Melbourne. I expect he is rather hard up just now.

Heard this evening that Croydon won the Sydney Metropolitan so there's an end of my chance in Ellis's double & I must cash up my £2.10 to settle. Heard Rawlings had been called to account by the Royal Society whose Treasurer he was for some time.

SEPTEMBER 9 FRIDAY 1870

The weather was reasonably dry to-day though it did not pass without a heavy squall with rain a little after one o'clock, was busy in the Gaol this morning having a good deal of one thing & another to do. Dr Youl came & corrected a warrant which he had given for Elton charged last week with Murder. Went to the Sheriff's Office & told Ellis he could have my half of the double when he wanted to settle with the book-maker. Polly went to St Kilda in the afternoon & had tea with Mrs Littlewood.

Wrote a letter to my father this afternoon & after tea Harry got his pencil & wrote a letter on his slate for his Grandfather, afterwards he copied it on a sheet of paper. For a nine year old Harry did very well, he spells wonderfully well for so young a lad & has got a little idea of composition, he writes however a fearful scrawl principally because he will not take time, but writes or rather scribbles away as if he had exhausted the art years ago & could now afford to be careless or rather reckless.

After Harry had finished his letter I went into Melbourne & called at the Yorick Club, there I had a long chat & did not get away till past ten o'clock. Shillinglaw, Semple, a reporter late from *The Argus* & one or two others were there & we chatted away in very friendly style. There is a nasty scandal about Rawlings who has for a long time regularly sat on the City Bench as a Magistrate & whose constant attendance has been more than once commented upon. I always thought Rawlings was waiting in expectation of being made a P.M. While the grass grows the steed starves & Rawlings has

142 Eugène von Guérard (1812–1901) joined the gold rush from London in 1852. He painted widely in Victoria and New South Wales, particularly in the Southern Alps, and was Curator and Master of the National Gallery of Victoria's Art School from 1870 to 1882.

143 John Joseph Shillinglaw (1831–1905), public servant, writer, historian, a member of the Yorick Club; he was in continual financial difficulty after being retrenched from the Civil Service (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

been hard up. He was & is Hon. Treasurer to the Royal Society & lately there has been a cry out from the members for him to settle. This he has not done & the circumstance appeared in one of the papers. Rawlings sat on the Bench as usual & *The Argus* commented on the bad taste he displayed in so doing.

Yesterday the poor fellow was picked up in the Botanical Gardens apparently suffering from strychnine, he was conveyed to the Hospital where he lies dangerously ill. He denies having taken the poison but says he had some strychnine in his pocket which he had purchased to destroy vermin & some of which might have got mixed up with some biscuits which he had eaten, poor fellow. This story does not seem one that can easily be credited.

SEPTEMBER 15 THURSDAY 1870

A very windy dusty day. This morning a prisoner got through the rubble shoot of the Labor Yard into the Road where however he was captured by the Turnkey there in charge of prisoners. I had the prisoner brought before the Visiting Justice & he was sentenced to two months additional labor in Irons. The Supreme Court Sittings commenced this morning; Supple was brought up for Sentence. Supple made a very telling Speech & gave a little homily on the prevalence of slander in this Colony & the evils arising from it. He spoke very calmly & collectedly & expressed his anxiety to leave this Country & that he should be glad to do so even through the Gate of Death. In the course of his address Supple hit very hard at George Paton Smith & at the Press. The Chief Justice sentenced Supple to Death in the usual manner. In consideration of Supple's blindness I led him out of Court, then he was taken to the Gaol. Dressed in Prison clothing & Ironed, all through he seemed to display the exultation of a martyr glorious in suffering for a good cause.

Received a sheet of Queries for myself & all the officers to fill for the Civil Service Commissioners information. After Muster went into town & had a look in at the Yorick Club then came home to tea. After tea, smoked for a time then went into the office & amused myself in writing answers to the Queries, wrote however a great deal too much & suppose my amusement will not prove profitable employment. Polly went over to Mrs Robertson's.

Supple's address this morning made a great impression on many who heard it; his remarks with regard to his quarrel with G.P. Smith will have weight with the Irish Party who will believe Supple's statement that Smith pertinaciously slandered his countrymen. I do not think G.P. will receive many Irish votes at the next election.

SEPTEMBER 20 TUESDAY 1870

A very fine day. Got up very unrefreshed, not having passed by any means a good night. Nathan came up this morning. I asked him for the money. I wanted £120, he without hesitation agreed to let me have it but charged me £30 for it. I am to pay the £150 in six bills of £25 each payable one each three

months. I handed over my Life Policy to Nathan as Security. Went into Town & paid all the Accounts I could manage. Paid Milton the Tailor, Robertson & Moffatt, Drapers, Cameron Baker, Allford Butcher, Alston & Brown Drapers, Carter, Wine Merchant, Smythers Ditto, Martin Milk-man & Gemmell Auctioneer. Made out cheques for the other Tradesmen I owe anything to & find my £120 will only just make me free from the risk of being dunned.

The Californian Mail arrived at Sydney this day & brought four days later news from Europe. The excitement was very great in town & when *The Argus Extraordinary* came out it was rushed. The boys selling it reaped a fine harvest easily getting a shilling each for the copies they had secured from the office. The Prussians were jubilant as the news brought was to the effect that the French had met with fearful reverses & that the Emperor was being called upon to abdicate. The French profess not to believe the news to be true. They say, wait till the English Mail comes in then we shall see. Certainly the news brought professes to be only four days later than the last received & if it is true events must have followed upon each other in very rapid succession. Two gentlemen from Western Australia visited the Gaol this afternoon. I went through with them. Did not muster this afternoon, called at the Yorick, nothing talked of but the news of the War. In the evening went to the Mechanics & to the Yorick, at the latter place had a long chat with Drs Colbee & Black. Mrs Robertson spent most of the day at our house helping Polly to make marmalade.

SEPTEMBER 29 THURSDAY 1870

To day the Executive decided the Case of Supple, he is to be hanged on the 10th of October. Supple was very cool when I told him of the decision of the Executive & seemed glad the suspense was over. I went to see him at Ten o'clock this evening, he was cheerful & expressed himself satisfied with the result. He thanked God though not given much to protest, he had always felt as a Christian. He was about to die an honorable death & the gallows would bring no disgrace upon him or his. He acknowledged such deeds as his would not be right as a rule but he considered his case to be a most exceptional one & would not for a moment consider but that he had acted for the best, he had considered the matter well & was prepared for the consequences. Supple ridiculed the theory of Dr Wooldridge, that he Supple was morally insane & told me all his knowledge of the doctor which certainly if Supple's statement be correct is not much to the credit of the doctor. I was at the Yorick Club this afternoon & played several games of Cribbage with McKinlay & Wheeler. In the evening I went to the Mechanics & to the Yorick. Polly spent the evening at Mrs Morphy's. Butler was there & came home with Polly had a chat & then he went away & we went to bed.

OCTOBER 2 SUNDAY 1870

A very fine day. My cold was very much worse & seems likely to give me a good deal of trouble. It is more like influenza to-day & I find my head aches & I am altogether unwell.

Polly took Walter & Godfrey to church. Harry did not go & I did not either as I was unwell. After Muster in the afternoon I went to Sandridge & had a walk on the Pier. There were some very fine ships at the Pier & a goodly crowd of people looking at them as the weather was fine. Got home to tea at a little past six o'clock. Emma had tea with us & after tea Joe came to take her home, was sorry to hear Agnes was suffering from a bad foot. During the day I read the War Supplement of *The Australasian* & made myself tolerably conversant with the particulars of the war so far as it has proceeded. Read also another portion of *Lothair*⁴⁴ must confess with less pleasure than I felt in perusing some of the previous chapters. The part I read to-day related exclusively to the Wiles of the Roman Catholic Clergy in their strenuous efforts to ensnare Lothair in their toils & win him & his money over to the Church. It did not seem natural to me [that] High Dignitaries of the Church within a step of the Pope himself would have condescended to plot as they are represented to Plot, nor that any one in his senses could have been imposed upon & made act so foolishly as Lothair is represented to have acted.

OCTOBER 7 FRIDAY 1870

A very wet day, did not clear up at all till the evening. Still very quiet in the house & particularly uncommunicative. Polly likewise. Much excitement about Supple's Case. The efforts of his friends proved successful in obtaining a reprieve on the ground that an appeal might be made to the Privy Council as to the legality of his conviction.

Mr Ellis the acting Sheriff informed Supple of the reprieve & he (Supple) seemed very pleased & expressed himself thankful for the sake of his sisters & for himself also, for, said he 'as a matter of taste, I prefer not being hanged'.

In the evening I went to The Yorick & had a chat with Mr Semple about Supple. I like Semple very much & he appears to take to me very well. He has worked very hard for Supple & is of course highly pleased with the result.

Paid a butter bill to-day, cannot escape from great expense & shall find it very hard to manage with the salary I shall have left after paying the Quarterly Bills which I have undertaken to meet. There is always something wanting & money has to be found for necessities or things which if not necessities have come to be considered as such by persons in our position.

OCTOBER 8 SATURDAY 1870

The weather very fine indeed to day. Purchased four lbs of Grass Seed & sowed bare patches in the Croquet Ground. Went into Melbourne this

144 *Lothair*, a novel by Benjamin Disraeli (1870).

morning but did not meet any one I cared about sufficiently to stop & talk to. Met Nathan who on the strength of being my creditor stopped me & held out his hand while making some enquiry regarding Supple. Mrs Zipak's mother called upon Polly this afternoon; a gentleman was with her. Mr & Mrs Eaton also made a Call upon Polly. Heard this afternoon that 'The Portia' Mining Company gained the Case against the Jumpers with £52 costs, word was sent by Gill not to part with any shares. 'Just my luck' as Graves would say for a few days ago, as I have entered in my Diary, I gave over my interest to Gill for an I.O.U. of £10.5/. It is at any rate better for the Company to have won as I suppose now I ought to be safe from any chance of having to pay Costs. The only thing is that I am afraid I parted with my Shares without saving myself from risk & that I might just as well have kept them & waited the result. I suppose Gill will at any rate now give me the amount of the I.O.U & that will be more than I ever expected to see again from my shares in the Company. I shall be curious to see if the Shares become valuable how Cuthbert will act. He kept aloof & would not pay any expenses or have anything to do with the Company, however I suppose now he will urge his claim for the Shares that were gazetted in his name.

Did not muster this afternoon, went to the Yorick & stayed there for some time, made a stupid mistake in pronouncing the word cynicism, pronounced it Cynick-ism & saw the mistake was taken particular notice of. Supple pronounced it in this manner & I took it for granted he was correct & followed his expression.

Went to the Mechanics in the evening & changed some books, came home & read. Polly & Harry went into Bourke Street together. I came home in the Dumps & remained in them till I went to bed which I did between ten & eleven.

OCTOBER 26 WEDNESDAY 1870

Weather fine to-day quite cold however & with every appearance of change. Attended at the Criminal Court to-day; some bail cases were being tried. Received English newspapers for Edwin Smith, forwarded his letters to him. Read a great deal of the War news & was truly disgusted at the horrible things that have been enacted. It is beyond my powers to conceive the originators of the Wholesale murders coolly watching through glasses at a distance, where their own carcasses were in safety, the slaughter of the thousands of their victims who fell in obedience to their commands. The pictures drawn of the appearance of the wounded & dead were vivid & sufficient to cause the most callous to shudder, yet the Crown Prince of Prussia, Bismarck, General Sheridan & a favored few watched the battle most complacently & looked for something to drink after the bloody work was over with as much complacency as if they had been viewing a Play or an Opera. The sight of the Emperor of France a prisoner overwhelmed the king of Prussia (though the

Emperor took things tolerably coolly) & making him comfortable seems to have been considered of far more importance than the looking after the wounded or the protecting the Peasants of the neighbourhood from murder or robbery. Went to the Yorick in the evening & stayed there for some time reading the last number of *Edwin Drood*¹⁴⁵ & some English Papers.

OCTOBER 27 THURSDAY 1870

Wet nearly the whole of the day. Attended at the Court. This was the day fixed for the trial of Supple for shooting at G.P. Smith; the Court was crowded with professional men & others anxious to hear the prisoner defend himself.¹⁴⁶ Supple was very cool, challenged several of the panel & wisely refrained from cross-examining any of the witnesses. In his address to the Jury he complained of being tried again for what he said was the same offence for which he had been sentenced. He described graphically the terrors of the condemned cell & the punishment he had already undergone & considered it was not fair play if even it were legal to put him [repeated] again on his trial. He justified the Shooting at Smith as there was no other way of dealing with such a crafty slanderer, said every true man woman or child in the Colony was equally concerned with him & appealed to the jury to show their detestation of slander & slanderers by returning a verdict of not guilty. Supple's speech was well delivered & very much to the point. The jury were locked up for six hours & then discharged as they could not agree, it seems some wished to reduce the crime to 'shooting with intent to do grievous bodily harm' instead of 'with intent to murder'. A funny idea that a man who fires barrel after barrel at another & afterwards acknowledges he wanted to kill him, should be considered only inclined to wound & not to destroy. It shows however public opinion to be against hanging Supple & so the government had better wait patiently for the result of the Appeal & leave him alone till then.

Went to the Yorick Club in the afternoon & read for some time. Had a little chat there with Neild. Parliament opened to-day, the new Local Force made their first appearance in public & marched very well. Sent Edwin Smith his newspapers which arrived by the Mail.

OCTOBER 29 SATURDAY 1870

Weather wet nearly the whole of the day. Account in the papers of great floods at Ballarat & other places, at Coleraine nine persons are said to have been drowned & much damage has been caused at other parts of the Colony. Went to Melbourne after twelve o'clock & looked in at the Yorick before I went home to lunch. Took Polly in the evening to a Bazaar at the Town Hall in aid of the Catholic Refuge, meant to spend a pound or there about as I believe the Institution is very deserving. There was however really nothing

145 By Charles Dickens.

146 Having previously been tried for the killing of the bystander Walsh.

to buy worth having except some Fancy work made up into chairs & some of the work was very beautiful but the price of the articles was far beyond our slender purse. Chatted a little while with Mrs Testar who as usual had a stall, should have liked to have spent our mite with her but really could'ent. Paid a shilling for a letter that was brought me & that besides the admission money was all I spent, felt shabby but must make it up to the Refuge in some other way. There seemed very little life at the Bazaar & for fun & business it was not to be compared with even the poorest of the Beechworth Bazaars; it might certainly have got better after we went away & it is true we did not stay very long. Went into the Arcade & saw very good large photographs of Mr & Mrs Wintle, could not help thinking how much better the Fancy Shops in the Arcade looked than the Stalls at the Bazaar. After a turn through Paddy's Market we bought *The Australasian* & then came home & soon went to bed. Harry's Desk was changed to day for a better & more expensive one. The new purchase cost 12/6.

OCTOBER 30 SUNDAY 1870

The weather was dry though the sky had a very unsettled appearance. Went to church with Polly & four of the youngsters, came home. Polly very hungry & quite ready to enjoy her dinner which with confidence she anticipated would be very good. Nice fat quarter of lamb & all the adjuncts to make it particularly palatable. Alas for the vanity of human calculations, the meat had gone bad & when before the fire sent out a perfume not of 'Araby the blest' for that was not to be expected, but one far from suitable to give a tone to the stomach. Polly cried but made a tolerable meal after all on vegetables & pudding. Went to Hawthorn by the five o'clock train & got to Kerferd's in time for tea, when I did ample justice to some boiled mutton tinned by the Echuca meat preserving company. Morrison was at Kerferd's, remained chatting till it was time to leave for the Train, got home before ten o'clock. Met Mr Neubar in the Railway Carriage; he has come to town to reside & has given up Beechworth for the present. As usual there was something to prevent his Vineyard from yielding a glorious Return from the last Vintage but as usual also it is sure to be all right next one. Katey Morphy came across to see Polly & the youngsters. Dr Robertson took Walter out with Mrs Robertson for a drive, the youngster enjoyed himself & when asked how far he had been said 'Oh about 300 miles'. Good long drive for Sunday afternoon.

OCTOBER 31 MONDAY 1870

The weather was again fine & if it continues so trade will doubtless revive & the Colony get into a better state. At present every one & everything seems laboring under great depression. The floods have done immense mischief & it will doubtless be some time before the mischief caused by them can be repaired. This was baby's birthday & he was presented with five shillings

which he at once presented to Jane who certainly by the care she has taken of him deserved well some recognition of her services.¹⁴⁷ There was a report current in the Sheriff's office that the Executive intended dealing with the appointment of Sheriff & that their decision would probably be arrived at this evening. Walford was somewhat excited about it. I shall be very glad when the appointment is really made.

Met Wheeler this afternoon, to-day was also his baby's birthday so we fraternised at the Yorick & I drank some claret with him. Telo¹⁴⁸ came in so the three of us played cribbage together. I was remarkably unlucky & only won one game, put my name down in a sweep at the Yorick for the Melbourne Cup 10/- tickets.¹⁴⁹ First horse £12, second £4 third £1. Came home about eight, Polly went to see Mrs Edwards this afternoon. We are to have bells hung in the house. Polly went to McEwan's to choose the pulls &c.

NOVEMBER 2 WEDNESDAY 1870

The weather dry & pleasant. Went into town this morning & called at the Bank. The house in confusion, the Paper Hangers have not yet finished & the bell-hangers have just commenced, shall not be clear of them for more than a week. Polly troubled very much with neuralgia.

Paid nurse wages to this date & advanced £1.6.6 to pay butcher. Mr Sturt visited the Gaol & sentenced Mary Kelly to two months imprisonment for destroying her bedding. At Muster time this young lady amused herself with threatening to destroy her bedding again & complimented the officers by calling them cows. I ordered her bedding to be taken from her & as she would not undertake not to tear it, it was kept from her. I punished myself for I was very nervous all night under the dread the girl might attempt suicide; she has been in the Asylum though Dr McCrea pronounces her to be quite sane. As I am writing this on Thursday I am glad to say my dread was only a night-mare & that Miss Mary Kelly was quite well in the morning.

This (Wednesday) morning my first report was to the effect that a man had died in the Hospital. This was a man I had not seen as he was received while I was at the Court, & as I was detained till seven o'clock I did not muster last evening. Went into Melbourne in the evening, took a book to the Mechanics & read for a time at the Yorick.

NOVEMBER 3 THURSDAY 1870

A fine day to-day. Polly suffering I am sorry to say very much from neuralgia, getting out of temper with having the workmen about the house. The bell-

147 The baby was their last, Ernest Buckley (1869–1909). Jane was a prisoner employed by Polly as an occasional nurse.

148 Alfred Telo, writer, member of the Yorick Club, close friend of Marcus Clarke: Brian Elliott, *Marcus Clarke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 96–97.

149 A great Australian tradition, the first Melbourne Cup was run in 1861. It was won by Archer, a horse that had been walked from Wollongong in New South Wales, more than 600 miles away.

hanging will be a bigger job than was at first anticipated. There was an Inquest this morning & a jury-man on it who had the audacity to ask questions & 'want to know, you know'. He was promptly bullied by Dr McCrea & then soaped & wiped over by Dr Youl, after which of course he subsided & allowed things to come comfortably to a conclusion.

Dr Youl told me the female prisoners were to be brought to this Gaol & that it was not intended to keep any sentenced men here at all. I can hardly see how this is to be carried out at any rate for some considerable time first & neither can I see what advantage will be gained; the sentenced men must be kept somewhere & as there is room in Melbourne Gaol for them why should they be taken away?

NOVEMBER 8 TUESDAY 1870

Weather dry but changeable looking. Was at the Sheriff's office this morning, had a chat with some of the Court officials. *The Argus* after giving a description of the 'flogging' yesterday wound up with saying it was a farce & blaming the Gaol Authorities for employing an old & decrepit man like Bamford.

Wrote to Alderdice.

Not very well in the afternoon, quite tired of having the workmen in the house. Polly has not been very well for some days.

Went to the Mechanics in the evening & changed a book, then went over to the Yorick, did not stay very long, looked through all the Country papers, their correspondents all described the flogging yesterday as having been very severe. I took Major Ratcliffe this morning & showed him the back of the man who was flogged. The Major was quite satisfied the man had been severely punished.

NOVEMBER 9 WEDNESDAY 1870

Weather fine. Great number of people about Melbourne from all parts of the Colony on account of the attraction of the Races. Went into town this morning, met Emma with Joe & Wm. Lotherington, they agreed to come up & lunch with us. Mustered in the afternoon & then went to the Yorick where I did a little reading. This was the anniversary of the Prince of Wales Birthday & was kept as a Public Holiday. Most of the shopkeepers however kept open & announced they would close to-morrow for the Cup Day. Went to the Club in the evening & drew 'Mischief' in a Sweep, made a bet also with Levey, taking 9 to one on Croydon for the Cup.

Came home soon & after a read & a smoke went to bed. Polly very unwell, she could not get to sleep for some time. Polly met Mrs Dempster while she was shopping to-day. The Lotheringtons had lunch with us as they promised. Emma is losing some of her pupils at Xmas. Polly is thinking whether we can help her at all. Emma would like to teach Sissy & Dotty & so would I like her to do if we could afford to pay for it. If it is to be done to suit both parties however I see that it will be managed as Polly has her heart set upon doing something of the kind.

NOVEMBER 10 THURSDAY 1870

A very fine day, just the one for a holiday & so all Melbourne seemed to think for thousands cast away business & got the best way they could to the Race Course to see the 'Cup' contest. I went to the Albion in the morning & saw several Beechworth men, among others George Graham & Fisher. They wanted me badly to go to the Course but I declined & went back to the Gaol where I stayed till after muster. Nimblefoot won the Cup, considered almost an outsider until Saturday last when he rose in estimation from winning the Hotham Stakes, he did not however go up very much in the betting & started at 12 to 1. Lapdog ran a good race & came in only a head behind the winner. Valentine an Ovens horse & almost an outsider, got third place. I lost £2.18 with Sweeps & a bet I made. Gibson came from Geelong; he was most anxious to take Dotty back with him to cheer up Mrs Gibson who it seems is sick & very dull. Polly let Dotty go & Gibson took her away by the seven o'clock train. Was at the Yorick club after Muster & played some cribbage with Wheeler; lost every game.

In the evening met George Graham & some Beechworth men & walked about with them, went into an hotel & sat down for a time. I drank some claret & kept very sober in consequence. Came home a little after eleven o'clock. Polly very unreasonable & I went to bed in a bad temper after taking two glasses of grog instead of one as I should have done had I not been annoyed.

NOVEMBER 14 MONDAY 1870

A fine day. Got up at half past five & went into the Gaol, where I gave directions with regard to Seery who was Executed this morning at ten o'clock. Seery was a strange kind of man & I was in some fear of a scene at the last & felt in consequence very glad when all was over. The Inquest was held in the Gaol at twelve o'clock. After the Inquest I walked a part of the way with Dr Youl who told me the Penal Commission intended to recommend the removal of all the female prisoners to Pentridge & in fact to empty the Gaol of sentenced prisoners male & female. I imagine there has been some influence at work in behalf of the officers at Pentridge & that the Penal Commission have been induced to change their views in consequence. It is however idle to calculate upon what changes will really be made nor can I judge whether the intended ones would work until I have had the opportunity of conning the Report.

Drank more grog than I should have done for I got nervous about Seery & then was excited with the talk I had with Dr Youl. Cuthbert came up & had tea with us, after tea I went with him to the Railway Station. There was a great crowd as it was the last day of the Excursionists who were all returning to Ballarat Sandhurst &c. Edwards was at the station. I went to town in his cab & afterwards went to the Theatre. Got home very late.

NOVEMBER 15 TUESDAY 1870

A fine day, was very unwell this morning, took an emetic early in the morning which upset me very much. Went into the Court about eleven o'clock. The Criminal Sittings commenced, the Chief Justice presiding. Was at the Court till nearly seven o'clock a capital case being on which lasted till that hour. The Case was a very peculiar one. A man of the name of Forbes was charged with committing a Rape on a woman in a boat between Sandridge & St Kilda. The woman was proven to be a very loose character & gave as a reason she did not cry out, that prisoner had his tongue in her mouth & so she was prevented. It never struck the innocent that under the circumstances she had the man in her power & that a vigorous bite would have effectively dampened his ardour. A witness for the defence swore she had been in the same room with the prosecutorix when the prisoner was with the prosecutorix in bed. A Sergeant of Police swore the prosecutorix kept a brothel & was a bad character, notwithstanding this the Chief Justice summed up against the prisoner. The jury convicted & death was recorded against him. Went to the Parliament House this evening, heard a portion of the Financial Speech, went with Witt into the Strangers room where I renewed acquaintance with Mr & Mrs Gregory with whom I had been acquainted before I went to Beechworth.

NOVEMBER 25 FRIDAY 1870

Made arrangements with Dr McCrea for the flogging of four larrikins on Monday next. The young vagabonds of Melbourne require suppressing, one named Dunavan repeatedly convicted, receive a day or two since a sentence of twelve months Imprt. & at once informed the Magistrate 'he could do it on his head'. To night at muster time I found him in one of the ordinary cells. The young vagabond stepped forward & with a hypocritical whine asked to be put along with the boys as (with a cunning leer) he did not like to be with the men. There is no doubt he was dreadfully afraid of contamination & I took effectual means for seeing he did not suffer from bad example for instead of putting him with 'the boys' as he termed it I gave him a cell to himself. Instead of being thankful however he seemed disgusted.

NOVEMBER 27 SUNDAY 1870

Weather cloudy but without much rain. Was in bad temper & feeling unwell. Polly took youngsters to church. The Bishop preached in aid of the Sunday Schools attached to St John's Church, according to Polly it was a most effective sermon addressed most wisely to parents instead of their youngsters. In the afternoon Polly took Sissy, Dotty & the baby to see Mrs Smith; while they were away some heavy rain fell, they however found shelter & so escaped getting wet. Emma & Agnes came to tea & before they went away I gathered

a bag of vegetables for Emma & a nosegay for Agnes. Harry & I went through Fitzroy Gardens with Emma & Agnes, we got back sometime before ten. Then I had to go into town & inform the Newspapers of the proposed whipping of four larrikins to-morrow; called at the Yorick & wrote notes for *Argus* & *Telegraph*. Came back & felt sorry Polly & I were not so good friends as we ought to be so tried & made things pleasant, then went to bed far happier than either of us would have been had we remained at variance. A constable in plain clothes arrested a man outside the Gaol this morning trying to communicate with the prisoners in the Labor Yard, he saw him throw something over the wall which was seen come into the Yard & obtained by one of Turnkeys.

NOVEMBER 28 MONDAY 1870

A tolerably fine day. Sissy's Birthday, started her with half a crown to spend for her Party.¹⁵⁰ Attended at the Police Court this morning. A young fellow received a sentence of two months for throwing tobacco over the gaol wall. Went to Smythers & ordered some spirits, went with him to a bonding store to taste some Carlisle ale, met there Mr Tyson who knew Polly & her family. The ale was very good indeed but I was afraid to purchase any as the smallest sized cask held eighteen gallons & that perhaps would not when spiked keep sound till it was all gone. Met Mr Ramsay who has given up business in Beechworth & commenced at Melbourne. Four larrikins were flogged in the Gaol this afternoon. Mr Ellis the Acting Sheriff brought in a number of quasi gentlemen to see the Exhibition & they with the Reporters made almost a crowd. The young fellows came to the 'Triangle' with their minds evidently made up not to 'squeal'; they endured their punishment with simply a groan or two though Jack¹⁵¹ laid on heavily & they doubtless suffered considerably. The crowd's anxiety seemed to be that they should get it hot & not a sign of compassion or disgust was shown by any of the lookers on. We read with horror of the brutal exhibitions of the Romans with their Gladiators pitted against one another or opposed to wild beasts & wonder how the populace could delight in such cruel amusement. I do not however think the men of the modern age are much different & I feel confident if a scene of the kind was to take place in Melbourne to-morrow there would be any number of applications for admission & some very severe criticisms on the deportment of the Gladiators when dying or of the want of pluck shewn by the hyenas in not taking their gruel quietly.

150 Castieau's daughter, Mary Louise (1862–1936), affectionately known as Sissy.

151 John Bamford, hangman and flagellator. An occasional prisoner, he was the subject of observations by Marcus Clarke in his series of sketches on Melbourne 'low-life'. See Marcus Clarke, *A Colonial City: High and Low Life: Selected Journalism of Marcus Clarke* (St. Lucia, Qld, 1972), pp. 173, 434–435.

DECEMBER 4 SUNDAY 1870

A beautiful day though warm in the afternoon. Took three of the youngsters to Church Polly not being at all strong or able to get much about. Had an awfully tough cock for dinner & it was as much as ever I could do to saw off his legs & wings; so much for your 'grand cock' said little Dotty, so much for your 'grand-pa' said I.

Mr Semple & Mr Kane came up this afternoon to see Supple. They came to the private entrance so I asked them in to the dining room & took the opportunity of speaking to Kane about Edwin Smith. He took away Edwin's letter & promised to send me an answer the next day. After Muster I wrote a page in my diary & then started off to catch the five o'clock train for Hawthorn, reached the Railway in every good time & got all right to Kerferd's house. Elliot & Mrs Elliot were there. I left in time to get home by the quarter past eight o'clock train. Went to the Yorick. There was a little Party assembled, McKinlay, Purvis, Kane & Tracey. The Doctor was discoursing on the evils of stimulants & in his remarks attributed most of the illnesses of ladies to the habit of taking a glass of wine or something of the kind on feeling faint. He said a calculation had been made & a lady during 'The Season' takes daily, just to keep herself up & without the slightest idea of being anything else than moderate, as much alcohol in her system as Hodge the labourer who takes during a debauch his four or five glasses of ale & reels away muddled to bed.

Tracey urged the non-necessity of stimulants & said that they cannot be used in this colony without causing suffering sooner or later. He was asked how the 'old ones' used to manage who were notorious for drinking heavily & living to good old ages. He said as a rule they had plenty of fresh air & did not drink till after dinner. I reminded him of the strong ale formerly used at breakfast. This he could not deny was used by our ancestors but he maintained their system of drinking, though it often led them into excess, was a better one for the constitution than the odious one of 'nipping' which is the modern fashion.

DECEMBER 7 WEDNESDAY 1870

A fine day, a little rain fell before daylight but not enough to do more than lay the dust. The air was however nice & cool even in the afternoon. Polly still very weak. Engaged in the Gaol at one thing or another, made up my accounts & could not make them balance satisfactorily. It is rather disheartening to find the money goes away so persistently; it leaves my pocket in a continual dropping & I am quite unable to stop the stream or even check it for very long together. This is bad enough but it is very disgusting after keeping careful accounts to prove yourself by actual counting worse off than even the figures show.

Went to the Mechanics in the evening & changed a book for Polly, looked in at The Yorick & had a yarn with Levey & Pickersgill, came home, got some medicine for Polly on the way, had a smoke & went to bed a little after ten o'clock.

The Penal Commission's Progress Report was published in this morning's *Argus*, it contained nothing but what I expected, except it proposes the appointment of a Governor of the Penitentiary at Pentridge instead of that prison being under the control of an Inspector General as at present. The Inspector General states the Commission should inspect all prisons constantly but be independent of any of them. The women are to come to Melbourne till a prison can be got ready for them at Pentridge.

This morning an old man was being discharged from Gaol who had over £90 cash; he was in a great way for fear he should be robbed by some of the prisoners who had been discharged & who knew he had the money. I sent a Turnkey down with him with directions to deposit most of the money in one of the banks & then to give the man the receipt. The pair were followed by some one evidently looking after the old man.

DECEMBER 9 FRIDAY 1870

A fine day. Polly not very well still feeling weak. Ellis sent for me this morning & told me he had a letter from the Chief Secretary requesting him to make arrangements with Mr Duncan for the removal from Pentridge of the female prisoners to Melbourne Gaol. I consulted with Mrs Gee & found I could manage well enough in the present Wing & so I told Ellis. The only anxiety I have is about the female staff for fear some of my own officers will have to go to make room for some of the Pentridge ones, however Mrs Gee is the one I care most about & Ellis declared she should be safe.

Sullivan who gave so much trouble some little time since & who has since been doing a little Bushranging, was captured to-day & brought to the Gaol. He states all the stories about him are false & made up by the detectives but this of course is about the only defence he can have as the evidence is direct & straightforward against him.

After Tea I went into Melbourne & called in at the Yorick, then I took a walk up Bourke Street & went into Parliament House, sent up my card to Kerferd & gained admittance. The Insolvency Bill was before the House & was not very interesting to me. Whiteman beckoned as he passed out & I went into the refreshment room with him. Gill was there talking to McLellan. Gill said he would call & see me before Christmas & said he had my scrip. I told him I should be glad to see him but if I can get my ten pound it will be more than I expect.

DECEMBER 10 SATURDAY 1870

A beautiful day, got up at half past five o'clock & induced Polly to get up shortly afterwards, went into the Gaol then took Polly & the two little girls

to the Eastern Market. Met Mrs Robertson & family who were on the way to the Market also; the weather was jolly & every one very cheerful. The market was crowded both with sellers & buyers. Polly bought a lot of chicks & I speculated on a couple of pigs, then I got some cherries, cakes and figs for the youngsters, then frightened at my extravagance I had to shut up my pocket & make with Polly & youngsters for home & breakfast; much excitement amongst the youngsters when the pigs arrived, Dotty disgusted at their persisting in putting their feet into the trough while they were getting their breakfast. The Police were desirous of having the photographs of Sullivan & Leigh, the young fellows who after being discharged from Gaol went in for a little Bushranging. I agreed that Mr Nettleton should come & take the pictures. Leigh cut up rough & would'ent have his likeness taken on any account & did not till two turnkeys by my orders siezed him & forced him to sit down on a stool opposite the camera. He threatened a bit but eventually the turnkeys let him loose & he sat still though he looked awfully sulky. Sullivan was delighted at having his picture taken, wanted it badly to be done with his cap on but agreed to take his cap off if the Photographer would promise to take one afterwards with the cap on. This was agreed to.

Went into Melbourne after twelve o'clock walked down with Ellis. Met while I was out Howard who used to be connected with the Beechworth Coaches & who lived at Wangaratta. He had been home to the Old Country & returned to the Colony about a fortnight since. Met Neuber & went with him to his wine seller, bought a dozen of colonial wine from him.

Went to the Yorick Club in the afternoon. In the evening took Polly & Harry into Bourke Street, purchased some lollies at the Eastern Market & then after buying *The Australasian* came home & went to bed. Felt very bilious so took some pills.

DECEMBER 18 SUNDAY 1870

A dull day close & disagreeable as well. Hardly thought it safe to take the youngsters to church or to risk Polly's new bonnet, however we went & got back with out wet enough to do any harm. Mrs Wardell the Nursery Governess almost downhearted about the children; they have been allowed to get so wild, that it is almost more than the Governess can do to make them behave decently at the table or to one another. They are all so strong & lusty that the management of them is a serious business. Mrs Wardell says they have all good dispositions & that there is no vice in any of them but they fight hard with her for the mastery. Polly gave Mrs Wardell full authority to act as she thought right & to punish the youngsters if they did'ent turn over a new leaf & be more obedient.

At dinner time the youngsters were so quiet that Mr Stoddart was quite alarmed as he did'ent hear them when he was passing through the Front Yard

& asked Polly if they were ill. Felt lazy this afternoon & as Polly also we went upstairs & laid down for nearly an hour. I did not Muster either but made an excuse of being unwell the cause of my not doing so. Mrs Morphy & Mr De Verdon came over to our house in the afternoon. After tea I went into town & called at the Yorick. Had a pleasant hour's chat with Wheeler, Brown, Purvis, Stark, Ogier & one or two others, got home at half past nine. Polly took the baby to ensure Mrs Wardell a good night's rest, the young vagabond was kicking & crowing till midnight & it must be very hard for Mrs Wardell after her long day with the children to be kept awake by even a laughing baby.

DECEMBER 24 SATURDAY 1870

Another dull day, the weather is not at all like the traditional Christmas weather of Australia. Part of the officers were allowed leave. I stopped about the Gaol & mustered as usual. Between five & six o'clock I was at the Yorick where I played some games of cribbage with Purvis & McKinlay. Came home to tea & had a stir at the Xmas pudding which was in preparation, dropped a sixpence into the mixture which is exciting much interest among the youngsters as to its eventual ownership. After the younger brats were put to bed, Polly & myself went into town with Harry, Sissy, Dotty & Eddy & were squeezed through Bourke Street, The Arcade & Paddy's Market. For most of the time I did *Pater-familias* with a basket rather heavy with cake which we purchased at Hosie's pie shop in Bourke Street. The proprietor informed me that a cake he had made weighing 404 lbs was sold in 4 1/2 hours; it was advertised to contain a number of gold rings, hence the run after it. There were some bright Scotch lasses engaged in the shop, one of them said she believed they could have sold half a dozen cakes of the size. Harry had a four-penny piece which he soon expended in a noted weakness of his, buns. Dotty was captivated with some apricots & her Joey went for eight of them. Eddy bought a basket & Sissy being of still more frugal mind kept hers for another day. Sissy however had five shillings of her own which she said she should spend in something useful & the little old woman in consequence carefully expended three shillings in a market basket which would be handy for her when her mamma sent her out to buy trifles for the house. Took the youngsters home then went out again with Polly & purchased the Fairy's Gifts which on our return Mamma duly placed in the various stockings hung up in expectation of the visit of Father Klaus. Got to bed by twelve o'clock, Polly was however restless & it was some time before we got to sleep.

DECEMBER 25 SUNDAY 1870

A rather cloudy day but most comfortable weather & not at all like the traditional Christmas as there was very little heat & very few flies. Woke this morning unrefreshed & with a bilious head ache. The baby kept us awake a good deal during the night & woke us very early indeed this morning. After

breakfast went into the garden & picked some 'green stuff' to hang about the house & give it some little appearance of holiday time. Polly took some of the youngsters to church & I passed the morning reading *The Australasian*. Soon after the Missus & the youngsters got back from church, Aunt Emma, Uncle Joe, Godfrey & [blank space] made their appearance & dinner was soon on the table; the goose was a great success & the pudding turned out remarkably well. Dinner was served nicely altogether & we all made a hearty meal as well as a sociable & jolly one. The sixpence I stirred into the pudding ingloriously was cut into by Mrs Wardell on the first stroke of her knife, so all the mystery & expectation was put an end to, perhaps it was just as well as some of the boys had vowed they would keep on eating pudding until the sixpence was got by some one or other. Sent some mulberries over to Mrs Robertson & had a few as well for our own table. Joe had his pipe & I stole away & got a sleep for an hour on the sofa in the Drawing Room.

Had a quiet cosy tea & a chat till Joe & Emma thought it was time to go home, they left Godfrey to be company for Harry. Polly & I took a stroll round the garden & then as soon as Mrs Wardell came home we went to bed. This day was a strange one. It being Sunday Christmas Day could not be made the boisterous one it generally is while the quiet of the Sabbath was a good deal disturbed by the plum pudding, toys & other seasonable adjuncts. I am at any rate glad to say that there was peace & good will in our house & that assures me there was not very much wickedness in the manner the day was passed.

DECEMBER 28 WEDNESDAY 1870

A hot day, still one that it was very lucky to get at this time of the year. Rose tolerably early & was employed in the Gaol Offices for nearly all the day. Cannot push on, find everything against any alteration & a dread of incurring any responsibility, a terror of getting a snub or a surly answer stops many a great reformer in the Civil Service even in little or trifling matters. Those who receive good 'screws', honorable men though they may be still see nothing to win & some from experience have been bitterly taught that zeal in the Government Service is out of place & that the model Civil Servant is one who does the least he can, takes all the leave he can get & has a claim or a grievance ready whenever there is an opening for a spec in the Department or elsewhere so long as it be in the Service, for mark you this officer is verily & truly a 'Barnacle' & though he can fill sheets of Demi with astonishing proofs of his own ability, energy & self denial & his important services to the State, yet left him with a kick out of his position & who so helpless, who so poor as wants his service. P'sha this is bile perhaps. The thought arose of Ellis, with his £1000 a year & his little ways has stirred up the enemy.¹⁵² Upon my

152 Ellis had been appointed Sheriff; Castieau's salary at this time was £375 p.a.

soul liver you are unkind to him for if all things to all men deserve success, then Ellis should be even far more astonished at his position than he is at present for he should have a much higher one.

What shall I do with the little space left me to-day? Bother business, I was going to add bother detail but this is a Diary & so it is necessary for me to observe that Hall & Wife, Cuthbert & Wife & some stray kids of both families had tea with us.¹⁵³ Like my luck, Cuthbert walked off with my new hat & left me in its place a very greasy & disreputable looking one. Took tickets for the Pantomime & went to the Upper Boxes this evening. Took Harry, Sissy & Dotty, Harry Lotherington & Edith Cuthbert. Got very good places though we had to go very early to secure them. There was a very good house but not a crowded one for the third night of the Pantomime. This was the first production of Marcus Clarke in the Dramatic Line & was looked forward to with a great deal of interest. The idea was good, the opening readable but the effect when represented, slow. It was rather too long & there was nothing striking throughout; some puerile local verses sung by Harwood was the only feature that created anything like general applause.

The Duvallis danced wonderfully, the elder sister represented the girl 'with nothing on' & well she did it showing very carefully & determinedly the character she was representing. It is a nuisance my paper is run out. I had'ent nearly done, got home, big glass of toddy & Bed. Baby. No sleep. Fun. Row. Sofa. Stiff next morning.

DECEMBER 31 SATURDAY 1870

The last day of 1870; growled considerably and put on a very gloomy & sulky appearance. There was a great deal of wind but only about as much rain as was required to make people afraid to venture out for the holiday. There were Races but I imagine they were poorly attended & I heard there were not more than a dozen ladies on the Course. I went into Melbourne in the morning & had a look at the people moving about. The Banks were closed but with that exception the City wore a very every day appearance. Mustered in the afternoon, afterwards went to the Yorick & played a few games of Cribbage with McKinlay. After tea induced Edwin Smith to go to the Opera, then took Polly out for a stroll, there was a fine healthy breeze blowing & the walk did us both good, we got home by ten o'clock & I should have liked to have gone to bed but Polly was determined to see 'The Old Year Out' & 'The New Year In' so we sat up. Polly went over to Mrs Morphy's & at about half past eleven I called at Dr Robertson's where I thought Polly had gone, sat & chatted till De Verdon came & asked us to go into Mrs Morphy's but the doctor made him stop & have a glass of toddy. Katey Morphy came & she had to stop & have a glass of wine, & still the doctor did not budge; however

153 The Halls and Cuthberts, i.e. the families of Polly's sisters, Dotty (Dora) and Nellie (Eleanor).

we all went in to wish a Happy New Year though it had got rather late. Mrs Hare & Mrs Snodgrass & daughter were at Morphy's as was also Mr Cameron Lucy's last beau. We laughed, then we tried 'Auld Lang Syne' but failed, then a Country Dance with no more success & then succeeded in the first set. There was the usual amount of good wishes a little romping & then every one felt it was time to go & so the Party broke up. There was a light in Dr Robertson's room so Polly & I went in & wished him a good night then after a glass of wine came away home. Edwin Smith was sitting up. More compliments of the Season & then to bed & so farewell for ever 1870.




(left)
 Marcus Clarke's briefcase,
 now part of the Ephemera Collection
 at the National Library of Australia

(below)
 Unknown Photographer
Marcus Clarke Aged 20
 Ferguson Collection
 National Library of Australia



CHAPTER 4: 1871

'TRYING TO SWIM TO AMERICA'



'A diary to be useful must be truthful,' Castieau reminded himself while writing up his entry for 20 August 1871. In 1871 there was much demanding a frank facing up to facts, money worries above all. Such was the plight of the Castieaus that late in this year Polly would take on herself the task of resolving their debts, visiting creditors, and pressing Castieau's case for support through the family friendship with the Kerferds. Being 'truthful', Castieau did not shrink from recording his continuing reckless expenditure on betting, drinking and occasionally more purposeful consumption. An example of the last was the £9.0.0 (more than a week's salary) spent at an auction of books of a former Victorian premier.

The world around J.B. and Polly pressed down in its own way. This was the year of the suppression of the Paris Commune, a bloody event whose echoes were registered regularly in Melbourne. Closer to life's fortunes were the plays of colonial politics. Castieau's anxiety about his working future so soon after returning to Melbourne was heightened by the drawn-out process of a royal commission inquiring into the colony's prisons. The close associations of the Melbourne political world encouraged rumour and alarm and when Castieau heard directly from the commission secretary, the journalist David Blair, that the gaol was to be demolished and replaced by a comprehensive 'house of correction' his worst fears were confirmed. In the end the gaol survived this and other attempts to bring it to an early demise, but its governor would be left constantly defensive of its role and agitated by the indifference of the world about him to the worth and frustrations of his work. No wonder then that by the middle of the year Castieau was sleeping uneasily, his rest disturbed by repeated dreaming that 'I was trying to swim to America', a vain effort that left him 'weary and exhausted'.

The ambivalence of the earnest public servant was highlighted in 1871 by an incident that might have brought more recognition, had that been truly sought. Penal matters were issues of the day—this was after all the period during which Marcus Clarke was producing the serial version of *For the Term of His Natural Life*, the novel that became the most enduring reference point for Australian memories of the convict era. Friendship with Marcus Clarke, initially through the Yorick Club, brought some promise of notice for Castieau's ideas about prisons and punishment, such as he had developed them. Yet Clarke's invitation to Castieau to supply copy on the subject for the literary magazine *The Australian Journal* turned somewhat sour through what Castieau characteristically saw as a careless lack of attention to the protocols seemingly necessary when public servants commented on public policy.

Not all was gloom. The edited journal can convey only part of the sense of a regular domestic routine in which Casticau was daily engaged in attending to the education of his many children—reading to and with them, doing their sums, playing cards, and increasingly as they grew older walking them to the city, shopping, church-going and taking Sunday excursions to visit other family members or friends at St Kilda or Kew. And of course there is life with Polly, whose opinion must be sought on letters of promotion or letters to the papers, with whom there are ‘barnies’, but quite as often times when she is ‘very good tempered’. The almost unimaginable possibility of life without her was brought home to Casticau late in 1871 by Polly’s decision to take a break of some weeks to visit her family and friends in Beechworth and the north-east. The experience highlighted the choices before Casticau, if melodramatically: ‘This week were it not for the cowardice of leaving the children to the mercy of the world I should have “leaped the bridge”. Thank God there was still manliness left in me to make me ashamed of the thought & save me from the Devil whispering oblivion in my ear.’¹⁵⁴

JANUARY 2 MONDAY 1871

Woke this morning with great inclination to go somewhere away from home which inclination was well fostered by my affectionate spouse. I began taking *The Argus* this morning & we looked to see what there was to be seen & where there was to go. The *Aldinga* a fine boat which usually trades between Melbourne & Adelaide was advertised for Queenscliff, fare 7/6, all profits to be devoted to the Orphans of Emerald Hill. Four hours & a half on shore was the great inducement held out & eagerly the public took the bait. The crowd on board was very great, between six hundred & seven hundred paying passengers. There is’ent room here to describe the crushing, the sickness or the feeding & drinking, suffice it [to say] on the whole the voyage was a very pleasant one & we arrived in the neighbourhood or off Queenscliff in capital spirits & tolerable condition. Now came the rub, the *Aldinga* could’ent get to the Pier & the small boats would’ent take us on shore. As may be imagined there was a row on board & any amount of obloquy heaped on the Committee of Management prominent among whom was Mr Whiteman the Member for Emerald Hill. However it was no use making a fuss & so after a time things quieted down & the Captain ordered the anchor up & brought us away home where we arrived shortly after seven o’clock. Came up by the train & arrived at home before eight o’clock ... wrote an account of my trip & sent it to *The Argus*, nay I took it and saw the Sub Editor who said he would give it to the Editor when he came in.

JANUARY 9 MONDAY 1871

A very fine day. Got up in time to see the officers on Parade, went about the Gaol until it was nearly breakfast time. Edwin Smith not at all in a hurry &

had not made his appearance at half past nine o'clock. He seems studying with a vengeance. Went into Melbourne & called at the office of the Inspector Genl. of Penal Establishments, saw Mr Duncan & chatted with him about materials for the women. Called upon Drury. There was a great crowd gathered about the Police Court the Watch House being filled with men & women who had been taken out of houses in Romeo Lane & charged by the Police with being rogues & vagabonds. About 80 were arrested out of which 22 men & 22 women were sent to Gaol. As may be imagined the Gaol was very busy also in the afternoon. The Chief Justice brought Mrs Lloyd Jones of Avenel & a party of youngsters to see the Gaol. Mrs Jones & the children thought hominy was delicious food & the children actually scrambled for their share in a small dish that was sent up from the Kitchen. One of the girls asked her sister if she should'ent like to have it always! 'Well—not always,' was the very sensible reply. Mr William & his Party then came into the Quarters & duly admired Law's pen & ink sketches. Mustered 528 prisoners, about 200 over the average number. When I went into the house to tea found Joe, Emma, Harry & brother Bill all assembled. Mrs Gibson had sent a letter inviting Harry to go down to Geelong to stay for the Holidays so Polly left the table & took him down to meet Cuthbert at the Train. While she was away my guests amused themselves gathering mulberries some of which are very fine this year. Edwin Smith went out & on his return at a little after eleven told us he had been to the Opera & that it had pleased him very much. Heard a man passing the house singing out 'oysters', hailed him & ordered a couple of dozen which were duly polished off in a workman like manner by Polly & myself, share & share alike. Bought a new pipe to-night which I smoked oftener than was good for me.

JANUARY 22 SUNDAY 1871

Another hot day. Our bed-room grows more & more like a heated oven. Took Sissy, Dotty, Harry & Nelly Hall to church. Our usual clergyman did not preside. I think however he was a Barlow, probably the brother of our 'Barlow'. We generally on Sundays dine in the middle of the day, to-day however we breakfasted late, had to kill a goose & dinner was not ordered till four o'clock. I was sitting between one & two o'clock quietly enjoying a chapter in *Vanity Fair*¹⁵⁵ when there was a bustling noise close to the Gaol. Polly looked out of the window & immediately called out 'run Castieau there is some prisoners escaping!' I lost no time in getting into the street & soon saw a Constable & Quin bringing back Sullivan, a notorious prisoner waiting trial for Bushranging. I asked if there was anyone else away & Quin said 'Yes'. I ran on & at the end of a Right of Way saw Baker a prisoner waiting trial for Burglary taken out of a closet where he had taken refuge. On getting back to the Gaol I found that the above prisoners with another named Leigh alias Smith,

155 William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*, originally published serially in 1847–1848.



F.A. Sleaf
Evening at St Kilda Pier
After a Hot Day
 wood engraving
 Reproduced from
The Illustrated Australian
News, 5 February 1887

a mate of Sullivan, had rushed from the Radiating Yards where they were taking Exercise into the Porch leading to the New Wing, closing the door behind them. Sullivan & Baker managed to get to the top & to burst through a skilight on to the Wall of the Gaol. Leigh was captured not having been able to get up. Sullivan & Baker ran along the Wall which communicates with the outer Wall of the Gaol & on getting to the outer Wall dropped on my fowl-house, reached the ground and were captured as I have described.

JANUARY 24 TUESDAY 1871

The weather changed & it was a great deal cooler to-day. Busy this morning in the office with the Sheriff. Ranking was charged with talking to a prisoner at his cell window. He admitted the offence & acknowledged having done wrong. Mr Ellis however on account of his previous character did not punish him. When the case was over I told Ranking in the presence of the Sheriff how surprised I had been to learn that Mrs Ranking had been to my house & had threatened to see the Chief Secretary with regard to my servants & the things I had made for me. I said if you or your wife have any complaints to make or charges to bring against me do so at once. Ellis said he wished he had known of this before the Case was decided. Ranking denied knowing of what his wife had done & said he would'ent have encouraged her in anything of the kind. I let the matter drop observing that threats would not prevent me doing what I considered to be my duty. In the afternoon Mr Blair & Mr Strutt, two of the Penal Commissioners, visited the Gaol to see where Sullivan went up the Wall. I showed them the place & they were astonished. I then brought Sullivan and asked him to show us how he got up. He did so willingly. The Porch is six feet wide, Straight Walls of plain ashlar twenty feet high. Sullivan put his feet against one wall & his hands against the other & though he was encumbered with leg irons went up the Wall almost as easy as

though he were walking on the ground. I was astonished as well as Messrs Blair & Strutt. In the afternoon before this time I went to the Bank & afterwards looked in at the Yorick Club. In the evening I went to see the Gregorys. The performing dogs are exceedingly well trained & act very willingly as well as cleverly.

I went of course to see the 'Female Gymnast'. Her performance is very daring & she seems at perfect ease while performing on the trapeze or trusting herself to the nerve & strength of Brother John.

JANUARY 28 SATURDAY 1871

A rather pleasant day, the weather being cool & refreshing after the great heat. Mr McCall my Chief Clerk came to the Gaol this morning but was not able to remain as his nose commenced bleeding & he found it impossible to stop it. This being Saturday the other clerk was away as a matter of course & consequently I was left without any one in the office. I stayed in the Gaol the whole of the day & found there was a great deal of work in the office & that it was all the worse for me to do, as it was differently done from the way in which I did mine at Beechworth. Went to the Yorick after four o'clock but did not stop long. Came home & finished *Vanity Fair* before tea-time. What a wonderful book is that *Vanity Fair* & yet rather muddled at the end. The Author apparently tiring of his work & in haste to pack up his puppets & to be off to some other Fair before the Stands were all taken & the Only Sight would have the chance of a show. Becky, that little glimpse of your love of brandy and water towards the end of your career militates against the hypocritical respectable end of your story; had the bottle of Cognac been your comfort in your perplexities it would have been your ruin & there would have been no charitable old lady attending Fancy Fairs but a Harridan wandering from bad to worse till the Gaol, after repeated vomits, could through you out no longer & held an Inquest as in duty bound on you instead. Went into Melbourne with Polly in the evening, came home & got to bed.

JANUARY 29 SUNDAY 1871

Cloudy, inclined to rain in the morning but did not. Went to Church in the Gaol. There was an anthem & the singing was quite satisfactory to the Rev. Mr Studdert who was of course the principal person to whom satisfaction was required to be given.

Was up very early in the morning & saw a rope that was found by Turnkey Long hidden away in the Radiating Yard. Grumbled & growled a good deal, then looked about a little & eventually gave instructions which I hope may be attended to. Mustered this afternoon, then sat & read till tea time. After tea had more than an hour with the youngsters reading to them from *Grimm's Goblins*. After that I went into Melbourne & visited the Yorick. Had a chat & then came away home where I got at a very little after nine o'clock.

We were talking at the Yorick about the Larrikins & the cause of their infliction on the community.¹⁵⁶ Dr Gilbee who was present attributed the nuisance to the fact that the children of the Colony were turned into the street to get rid of them, the climate being so good that they could be there without injury to their health if that was cared about more than their being out of the way, where in the street they picked up street acquaintances and street ways & not being content with being in the street by day, they remained at night & so, though perhaps belonging to careless more than vicious parents, degenerated into veritable street Arabs.

FEBRUARY 8 WEDNESDAY 1871

The weather was fine to-day. I was at the General Sessions Court some time & did not get away from it until between seven & eight o'clock. An old man was being tried for an indecent assault upon a child. The wretch was no doubt guilty but he was defended by Mr Ireland who managed to make something of a defence & created a great deal of laughter in the Court by the manner in which he endeavoured to ridicule away the evidence of the analytical chemist Mr Johnson. Analytical chemistry certainly is sometimes very dangerous for Juries to rely upon the differences between entirely distinct objects being frequently so infinitesimal that it is most difficult to be quite satisfied the chemist may not have made a mistake in naming something that would hang a man for what if properly called he would not be obliged to account for at all.

Dotty came in to dinner. While she was with us Brett called. He would not stop long. After Brett was gone of course the conversation turned to Marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Dotty & I chaffed about it but Polly was disgusted & I have been in her bad books ever since. Went in the evening to the Yorick Club where I met Levey & Harrison. Had a chat & then home.

FEBRUARY 13 MONDAY 1871

A pleasant day, very warm though in the evening. Folks are on the *qui vive* for the mail which will be due to-morrow & which is hourly expected as the Steamers have kept such good time for so many months. Busy in the office in the morning & was making up my Diary when Polly came into the office & interrupted me while so occupied. She looked at what I had been writing & noticed when I had entered, the fact that I found my Cash did not tally with the accounts I had kept. This she did not like & talked very unreasonably, in consequence we had a very unpleasant matrimonial tiff & were as disagreeable one to the other as we could manage.

156 Larrikins were a preoccupation of public comment at this time. Marcus Clarke had published an article on the Melbourne larrikins in *The Australasian*, 19 March 1870, a type he characterised as irredeemably violent and egocentric: 'he doesn't care a fig for you or anybody else'; see also Marcus Clarke, *A Colonial City: High and Low Life: Selected Journalism of Marcus Clarke* (St. Lucia, Qld, 1972), pp. 78-79.

There was a man flogged this afternoon. The Members of the Press & the usual loafers were present in addition to the officials. The prisoner was an old hand with a face that would bring in a verdict of Guilty from most Juries. He displayed most stolid endurance without the slightest bravado or flashness & took his fifty lashes without a groan & scarcely a movement except a horrible twitching & trembling in the muscles of his arms which he kept strained to the utmost. This was the most severe flogging I have yet seen administered. Marcus Clarke, 'The Peripatetic Philosopher' met me in the street this morning & came to the Gaol to see the Punishment this afternoon.¹⁵⁷ I was glad to see he did not believe much in its efficacy as a rule though he believed flogging could occasionally be resorted to with advantage. Went into Melbourne in the evening & called at the Yorick. Something very mysterious going on among the youngsters, relative to Valentines I believe.

FEBRUARY 14 TUESDAY 1871

Pleasant weather. I have allowed three days to pass without touching my Diary & have had some excuse as I have been particularly busy & have had many things to think about.

This was Valentine's Day¹⁵⁸ & the youngsters were all a-gog anxiously looking out for the Postman who was unusually late owing to the extra burthen he had to carry in consequence of the numerous offerings to the Saint.

I received a very pretty Valentine & all the youngsters got one each. It was of course a great study for me to think out correctly the Party who sent my Valentine & I am sure I never could have guessed unless Doty at dinner time who was evidently swelling with a big secret disclosed the mystery. Sissy said dont you see it is 'from your sweetheart' so I looked & saw it was so written; the[n] Doty could contain herself no longer & said 'I sent it' & Sissy said 'of course, could ent you see it was from your Sweetheart?' I confessed my stupidity & went on with my dinner. Went into Melbourne in the evening & called at the Yorick. There I met Marcus Clarke & chummed a little with him. We walked home together. Polly & I not such good friends as we should be to-day. Got however a little nearer the mark at bed time. Mr Sturt the Visiting Justice was at the Gaol to-day & it took me some time to accompany him through the Gaol as there were so many prisoners who wished to speak with him.

FEBRUARY 17 FRIDAY 1871

Another fine day & cool for the time of year. Received a letter from my father with one enclosed for Harry. The boy was delighted at hearing from his Grandfather & showed the letter as a matter of course to Jemmy Robertson & his other immediate friends. This morning there was another horrible death

157 This appears to be the first meeting with Marcus Clarke.

158 Valentine's Day was widely celebrated. The custom of sending Valentine cards had been accelerated to a popular pastime by the advent of the postal service, as suggested by numerous sketches of the time.

in the Gaol from Delirium Tremens. A man named Scott alias Dickens was brought to the Gaol on Wednesday last charged with Wife desertion. He was suffering very much from delirium tremens & was placed at once under treatment. Scott was a powerfully built man & struggled hard for existence. Great care was taken of him & unless Dr McCrea's system is a mistake it was not possible to save his life. He was apparently well to do, had valuable rings on his fingers & had recently returned from England where he had been to receive some property. I saw him when dying this morning. He was unconscious but struggled terribly & seemed to die a very hard death. Drink then Crime, then Destruction, then Damnation. Go a head bully boys! Who'll shout!

MARCH 3 FRIDAY 1871

A fine day though cold for the time of year. This was the Election Day for the second Batch as it is called of Representatives for the Lower House. Polly went with Darvall to Elsternwick & returned with Darvall about eight o'clock. We sat talking till nearly eleven & then I went down the street to see how things had fared with Witt for the Murray Boroughs. Went into Gartons' to enquire for Forman. Met there Pitman & was very much disgusted at his taking me to one side & saying he should like to see the next Flogging. I answered him very sharply that if he wanted to talk to me about business he was to come to my place of business to do so. Went to the Age office & heard that Witt had been returned & that Mr Kean & Bowman were both defeated. Walked up Bourke Street & went into the Oriental Concert Room to see what it was like. It was extremely properly conducted. There was some singing on the stage & a number of men sitting at tables taking Coffee or stronger stimulants & waited upon by demure & ugly girls mostly dressed in black wearing their dresses buttoned close up to their throats & looking more like Nuns than gay young ladies. Our curiosity being satisfied Darvall & I left. Then we went & had some oysters & then separated. This afternoon after four o'clock I went to the Yorick & played several games of Cribbage with Wheeler, Mackinlay, Telo & Harrison. The Club was crowded with members & I had a very good hour's change.

MARCH 11 SATURDAY 1871

A fine day. This morning Darvall came up to breakfast & to see if I would accompany him to Queenscliff. I declined, not being able to get away without some difficulty & Darvall who went into the Gaol & saw what I had to do & the number of people who were waiting for me did not press the matter any further. Mustered in the afternoon then went to the Yorick where I played a couple of Games of Cribbage, had a little chat & then came home to tea. In the evening I was tempted to go to the theatre to see a new Tragedian Mr Howe in *Hamlet*. This was Mr Howe's first appearance & I think he made a mistake in appearing as Hamlet as Montgomery made that character very difficult for any one else to play after him. One thing satisfactory

to me was that there was certainly no doubt in the mind of Mr Howe that Hamlet was mad. He played him mad throughout, scarcely giving him a sane interval. Howe is a little man & grimaces a great deal. His voice is not unpleasing & he possesses a certain amount of power & ability which however would in my opinion serve him better in other parts than they do in Hamlet.¹⁵⁹

MARCH 16 THURSDAY 1871

Another fine day though I awoke feeling very sick & little disposed to enjoy it. This was the day fixed for the last batch of elections, among which was that of East Melbourne for which Division I have a vote. Took a turn through the town after going to the Gaol & seeing the business fairly started there, just to note what was going on. There seemed a good many people about but all very quiet & orderly. I took care all the turnkeys had the chance of voting & in the afternoon after three o'clock went myself to exercise my right of manhood suffrage. Even when I got into the box with the voting paper in my hand I was puzzled how to register. First there was Fred Walsh whom I know personally and rather like, then there was Cohen who I know nothing at all about but who was running with Walsh & working with him, then there was Bright a promising literary man & likely if returned to be of service to the Colony. (There were two other candidates but they were outsiders & not worth mentioning in the little space I have for my remarks). Now the question was with me, should I vote as friendship prompted me for Walsh and give Bright a vote with him or should I vote as asked for Walsh & Cohen, or should I plump for Bright? To do the first would have been to dummy my vote. The second I felt was not in accordance with my convictions & so I did the third. It was of no consequence however. Cohen went in a long way at the head of the Poll & Walsh was two hundred ahead of Bright so that Cohen & Walsh were triumphantly returned. At five o'clock went into town with Polly to see what was going on. Came home to tea. In the evening I went to the Yorick & had a chat there about the result of the elections. Higinbotham was turned out at Ballarat by Bent, a Market Gardener. Cope at Pentridge by Colonel Champ. Clark a subordinate in the Customs at Williamstown who resigned his post to contest the election was triumphantly returned for that place. The noted C.E. Jones or Rogue Jones was beaten at Ballarat.¹⁶⁰

159 J.B. Howe, a visiting English actor whose performances are here contrasted with those of a famous Shakespearean actor, Walter Montgomery. The latter's Hamlet had been the centre of major critical controversy in Melbourne in 1867: Harold Love, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso* (Carlton, Vic., 1989), pp. 210–224ff.

160 George Higinbotham (1826–1892) was an outstanding Victorian liberal, one-time Attorney-General and later Chief Justice of Victoria. Thomas Bent (1828–1909) combined politics with land speculation and was Premier of Victoria 1904–09. Colonel William Champ (1808–1892) was a one-time Premier of Tasmania (1856–57) and later Inspector-General of Penal Establishments in Victoria during Castieau's years at Beechworth. Charles Edwin Jones (1828–1903) was a notorious politician, at one time expelled from the parliament for corruption, hence the nickname 'Rogue' (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

MARCH 17 FRIDAY 1871

A very fine day indeed. The Court still continued. I did not however sit in it long as there was a Bail Case on which lasted the whole of the day. St Patrick's Day. Polly took the youngsters into town to see the Procession.¹⁶¹ They came home very jolly between two & three o'clock. Mustered an hour earlier than usual in honor of the Saint. When I came in from Muster I found Mrs Littlewood with Polly. Littlewood & the youngsters were outside in charge of the one horse dray in which they had ridden from St Kilda. In the evening I took it into my head to write a letter to *The Ovens and Murray* as I began to think I owed them something for continuing to send me the paper. I wrote a lot of scribble not of much account I am afraid. However Polly passed it & I shall send it in due course. Went into town & bought some tobacco, then came home. Polly had been to see Mrs Smith & had just returned. This evening I was summoned to the door & informed that a woman had just died in the hospital. A very simple case as the Coroner would say, a broken down constitution debilitated by drink & dissipation. Sent to Gaol because the magistrates must find shelter for such unfortunates or allow them to die houseless & homeless. There is another woman of just the same stamp dying in the room in which this woman was living. She was taken out of a house in which she was lying without friends & unable to take care of herself. She is sent to Gaol until she can be received into the Benevolent Asylum. Yet they say there is no necessity for a poor law.¹⁶²

MARCH 25 SATURDAY 1871

A fine day though cloudy. Busy in the Gaol with one thing & another. Went to The Sheriff's office but soon made my way to my own desk again. Mr Sturt the Visiting Justice came to the Gaol a little after twelve o'clock & heard several Charges against the women. He then went up to the Female Wing where there were several termagants most anxious to make complaints about their food & the treatment they received from the officers. I was very firm & would not yield an inch but told the Visiting Justice the women were not speaking the truth. As usual odious comparisons were drawn between the comforts of Pentridge & the Hulks & the discomforts of Melbourne Gaol. Indirectly also allusions were made to the difference between the Visiting Justices. The one at Pentridge & the Hulk was a thorough gentleman & so by the bye were the Superintendents I was told a few days ago. Miss Davidson

161 St Patrick's Day by this time was celebrated in Melbourne with more equanimity than in earlier days when it was marred by sectarianism: K.S. Inglis, *The Australian Colonists: An Exploration of Social History, 1788-1870* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1974), pp. 86-104.

162 After visiting Australia at this time, the English novelist Anthony Trollope commented on the absence of a poor law in the colonies, but noting that none were left to fend for themselves on the streets, a view here contested by Castieau. See Anthony Trollope, *Australia*, edited by P.D. Edwards, and R.B. Joyce (St. Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 1967), p. 383; and on the issue in colonial politics and identity see pp. 85-104.

again convinced the Visiting Justice by her tongue & manner that she was a most unsuitable prison officer & he made a memo. respecting her in his book. The female prisoners give me a great deal of trouble but after all, considering the number we have & the limited space, we get on wonderfully well & quietly.

Mustered this afternoon. Joe, Emma, Godfrey & Harry Lotherington had tea with us. Joe does not know yet what will be done about Burke's business. I was sorry however to hear that the Estate was not nearly in so favorable a condition as was expected it would prove to be. What mushrooms our wealthy merchants, as they are called, turn out as a rule to be when anything else than fair weather meets their circumstances. Went into town & read the Newspapers at the Club. Polly was over at Dr Robertson's house & stayed there till past eleven o'clock. The doctor then brought her home. Drank some toddy, smoked two or three pipes & then went off to bed. Was pleased with Harry. This evening he read a scene with me from the *School for Scandal*¹⁶³ & showed a good deal [of] understanding.

Baby had his likeness taken & made a really pretty picture. Polly was taken holding him on her knee. Her picture is not so good but somehow Photographers fail with her & make her appear quite unlike what she is in reality. Having blue eyes must have a good deal to do with it. I would rather have a colored one of her, though even then I am afraid a Photograph of her would not satisfy me.

APRIL 6 THURSDAY 1871

A fine day. Went into Court House in the morning & saw the Sheriff. Busy in the Gaol among the women, a number being brought before me for different offences. Walford had a quantity of jewellery for sale which he said had been pledged & that he had found the money to redeem it in hope of selling it to advantage for the owner. I bought a chain for £2 as it rather took my fancy. If it is what it appears it is cheap. I wanted a watch chain & do not think I have been guilty of any very great extravagance in purchasing this one to-day though of course I could have done without it & would have shown more wisdom if I had kept my money in my pocket & been contented with my old chain until money was more plentiful & I better able to spare it. Mustered in the afternoon. In the evening went to Melbourne & called at the Club where I had a look at *Punch* & the other papers & a chat with Telo & Kane & afterwards another with Carrington of *The Illustrated Melbourne News*.



'Richard Warren, Owner of *The Ovens and Murray Advertiser* from 1855'
Reproduced from *The Cyclopaedia of Victoria*, Vol. 3 (Melbourne: The Cyclopaedia Company, 1905)

¹⁶³ The play by Richard Brinsley Sheridan, first performed in 1777.

Came home a little after nine o'clock. Polly was away at Dr Robertson's & did not come home till eleven o'clock. Mrs Robertson then came over to the house with her & stayed chatting for some little time. So what with toddy & smoke after they were gone it was pretty late before we went upstairs to bed. Dotty & Sissy went to-day to Elsternwick for a holiday & are to stay during Easter. In conversing with Rider of the *Daily Telegraph* I happened to speak about a lecture I had delivered at Beechworth upon Gaol matters in which I had expressed ideas that were now being expressed by other people as something new. I said if I could get some notice taken of the Lecture now the Penal Commission was sitting it might do me good. Ryder said get the lecture & I'll notice it. I wrote to Warren asking him to send down the paper which contains it & if he does I shall avail myself of Ryder's offer & give it to him to make any extracts he pleases.

APRIL 15 SATURDAY 1871

A fine day. 'Alas how fair & foul a day'. Received by Post from Beechworth an *Ovens and Murray* containing my lecture, also a letter from Warren telling me I could keep it as long as I pleased. Mr Sturt visited the Gaol & tried several Cases. He then went through the Gaol & on leaving entered a highly complimentary minute of his satisfaction with the appearance & state of the prison. I felt very pleased & thought myself all was right. Went into the Playground to look after the geese & then went into dinner. Scarcely had I helped myself when there was an alarm. I went out & found two men had escaped over the wall. They must have been on the Wall at the time I was in the Playground. One was caught by the turnkeys, the other could not be heard of. I felt broken hearted & shed tears of bitter mortification after I had taken the necessary steps to cause a pursuit. I felt disgusted & prostrate. The Escape seems to me to have been a most disgraceful one. There was a turnkey on the Tower, a Post that I had made because of the danger of the Yard. There was another in the Yard who however had his dinner & was eating it at the time. Neither man on Platform or Turnkey in the Yard knew anything of the Escape until their attention was called to it by a prisoner. The men had a rope made of blankets with an iron hook at the end of it. This they had thrown over the wall & got fastened in some manner I have not yet been able to discover & then two of them managed to get on to the wall & over. The rope broke or more of them would have escaped in the same way. Mustered in the afternoon. In the evening went to the Club & stayed talking till nearly midnight with Harrison & Mr Jardine Smith.¹⁶⁴ Polly very good tempered when I got home.

I drank & smoked & went to bed feeling as 'miserable as a Bandicoot'.¹⁶⁵

164 Jardine Smith, one time owner and editor of Melbourne *Punch*, and also with *The Argus*. He appears frequently in Castieau's Diary.

165 This is an early occurrence of this popular colloquialism, though it had appeared in print at least as early as 1845: W.S. Ramson (ed.), *The Australian National Dictionary: A Dictionary of Australianisms on Historical Principles* (Melbourne, 1988), p. 33.

APRIL 17 MONDAY 1871

A fine morning. Had plenty to do as my Report of the Escape had to be written & I had to attend The Supreme Court as the Criminal Sittings were on. Ellis attended in the afternoon. Heard a preliminary examination of those who knew anything about the Case & ended in suspending both Asgrove & McCabe. In the evening I went to the Club & had a long talk with Levey leaving with him the lecture I delivered some time ago at Beechworth. He did'ent say he would but I believe he will take notice of it in *The Age* or some other paper with which he is connected.

When I came home I found that Polly was away at Dr Robertson's so I smoked my pipe & drank my toddy all alone until a ring came at my particular bell & then on going to answer it I found that two detectives wished to see me to report the capture of Nixon the man who had got away. It seems Nixon had hurt his ankle very much on getting down from the wall but had scarcely felt the pain until he had walked to Sandridge. The Detectives heard of him in the usual manner. They obtain information by paying for it directly or indirectly & so Nixon was taken lying under a heap of bags half starved & with a foot he was unable to put to the ground. Polly came home about ten o'clock & we went to bed, I having had an extra glass on the strength of Nixon's capture.

APRIL 23 SUNDAY 1871

Got up at usual time. Weather apparently fine. Went to Church in the Gaol & Polly took the Girls, Harry & Walter to Church. When Polly came home it was early so we went for a little walk before dinner. On our way we met Dr & Mrs Robertson. Lucy Morphy came over to our house in the afternoon & stayed chatting for some considerable time. Mustered & saw all was right in the Gaol. After tea went into Melbourne & called at the Club. Met a good many members, among others Gilbee, Semple, Levey & others. Got home by nine o'clock. Went into the Gaol & stayed for some time with the turnkeys on duty. When I got back Polly had gone to bed so I sat & read for an hour & then followed her up stairs. The book I was reading or skimming was called *Blueskin, or the Aventures of Jonathan Wild*¹⁶⁶ the great thief taker. It was taken away from a prisoner in the Gaol & is certainly as mischievous a work as could possibly gain access to a place of confinement. It describes fully all sorts of different plans & attempts at Escape made by Jack Sheppard & others & is just such a book as would fire the imagination of the larrikin class who evidently consider breaking prison a most heroic exploit & who would as a rule put up with extra loss of liberty for the glory of appearing in the papers & being thought 'lads of spirit' by their contemporaries. A report has come in that Roland Leigh who attempted to escape from the Melbourne Gaol has

166 It is unlikely that this was the correct title of the work, although several books have been written about this character.

made an attempt also at Pentridge. Leigh is a man who has taken his present romantic name instead of his known which is Smith. He is anxious for notoriety & as far as I have learnt his attempt at Pentridge was a hopeless one, that he knew it & only wanted to do something to be talked about.

APRIL 29 SATURDAY 1871

Was up very early this morning. Saw the Turnkeys on Parade & then went through the Gaol to note for myself what was going on. Was busy in the Gaol with some of the women who were charged with different offences. Dealt with them & Miss Davidson who as usual was in trouble. Was sent for to the Sheriff's office & told that the Chief Secretary was coming to the Gaol at twelve o'clock. Went back & waited for him. About half past twelve he came accompanied by Mr Duncan. At Sir James' request I sent for the Sheriff who soon arrived accompanied by Mr Ellis & we then went altogether to the scene of the escape. Sir James evidently was inclined to blame all round & let me have it because I had ordered the closet to be cut down & then had not seen my orders were carried out. Quin too will evidently get pepper in the Minute of the Chief Secretary for not having cut the closet down when ordered. I tried to show the height of the closet had nothing to do with the Escape but soon found it was advisable to hold my tongue. When I spoke about the previous escapes in which McCabe figured as the officer on duty at the time Sir James got very indignant as he had not heard anything about them & insisted he ought to have been informed so that he might have known better how to act. Ellis said the Board would not take cognisance of anything outside of what they had to enquire into. The Chief Secretary said the Board & the Government were two different things & that the Government should have been informed. There was then a discussion as to whether McCabe should be allowed to remain on duty & it was after some time decided that he should do so until Monday when his case is to be settled. Did not Muster this afternoon. Went to the Club & walked with Marcus Clarke so far as our ways went the same. Went into town again in the evening & purchased the Weekly Papers.

APRIL 30 SUNDAY 1871

Got up tolerably early. Did not feel very well but managed a pretty good breakfast. Notwithstanding went into the Gaol & attended Service. There were a great many prisoners at Service, some two hundred or more. They were very orderly & well behaved. Went to meet Polly & the youngsters coming out of Church. Took Godfrey with me. The Church was over rather sooner than usual so we went for a walk as far as the bridge & then got home in good time for dinner. Mustered in the afternoon though I did not feel well. After muster however I was right down seedy & so screwing up my courage I sent for an emetic & what is more—took it. I was not very jolly for an hour

or two you may depend upon it but towards bed time I began to pluck up & finally wound up the evening with the wing of a chicken & a glass of brandy & water. I did not go out all the evening & let Polly go first to bed as Miss Tait was not at home. As soon as she came back I toddled off to bed & soon was in my wife's company. There is a great deal of good in an emetic but it requires some pluck to take one. The wear & tear to the system must I should think be very great. To-day at times I thought how natural it would be for a blood vessel to give way or for some other derangement of the organs of the body to take place while I was straining & striving with the effects of the nasty smelling little powder that looked so simple but proved so all powerful.

MAY 1 MONDAY 1871

The weather during the night was wet & there was some fog & misty rain during the day. The General Sessions commenced but I only showed myself there for a short time leaving Quin to do the necessary work while I attended to more important matters. Received a notice that I was to go to the Chief Secretary's office with Ellis to hear the decision of the Government with regard to McCabe. Saw the Chief Secretary outside the Treasury & he said Mr Odgers will inform you Mr Castieau, so we went up & Mr Odgers told us that McCabe was dismissed. Came back to the Gaol & told the turnkey of the Government's decision. Went into town & called at the Club, saw Marcus Clarke who had he said been reading my lecture & which if I liked he would publish. I said I should have no objection so he invited me to dress it up a bit & then give it him. Mr Clarke thought I might add some fresh matter but I declined to do this for fear of the Civil Service Regulations, the lecture was published before these Regulations came into force & therefore that I could be careless about, but if I wrote anything fresh I might be called to account, as I was, about Dunedin & the prisoners work at that place. Walked part of the way home with Jardon [i.e. Jardine] Smith & Marcus Clarke. In the evening went into the Gaol & wrote up my Diary. There was a little hubbub in the Gaol, some of the long sentenced men being inclined to play up. I punished one & the others were then quiet. Cuthbert came up & stayed the evening. Polly went to Mrs Smith's but returned before Cuthbert went away.

MAY 2 TUESDAY 1871

A very fine day indeed. The General Sessions continued. Was employed at ordinary work during the day. Went in the morning to call upon Mr Anderson who has succeeded Drury at the Police Court. On the way met Drury with a gentleman & said Ah I was going to abuse your successor, 'hush' said Drury & then introduced me to his companion who proved to be the veritable Anderson himself. Anderson & I however soon squared matters & settled the business I had in hand very comfortably. Mustered in the afternoon &

then went to the Club. While there met Marcus Clarke & came away home. On the road Clarke asked me to dine with him & I accepted his invitation. On the road home we were attracted by some bon bons at a shilling a box. They were the new kind lately introduced, each containing a piece of wearing apparel. Clarke & I both purchased a box. Called in at my house & told Polly I was going home with Clarke. Clarke lives very near the University. Mrs Clarke was Marion Dunn a great favorite with the theatre going public.¹⁶⁷ She has settled down from the favorite actress into the domesticated wife & mother & is apparently very quiet. Clarke & I saw very little of her except at dinner & at the end of the evening. I spent a pleasant evening with my host & left about eleven o'clock. Got home & found Polly had had a visitor, Mrs Robertson who had not long gone away.

MAY 6 SATURDAY 1871

Weather looked cloudy in the morning & in the evening there was a heavy shower. Went to the Sheriff's office in the morning & had a talk to Mr Wright about my own position. Have serious intentions of applying for more pay in consequence of my increased duties but have to think which will be the best way to set to work to ensure success. Hardly know whether it would be best to apply to the Government or to get my Case put forward in parliament.

Mustered & then went into Melbourne & called at the Club where I met Marcus Clarke. He came home with me as he wanted to get a cheque cashed & I offered to do it for him. Harry asked him to write him a pantomime & he agreed to do so as soon as Harry determined on the subject. Clarke seems a nice fellow & Polly likes his manner very much indeed.

In the evening Polly & I went into town & had a stroll through Bourke Street. *The Leader* of to-day publishes as a supplement the portraits of all the Members of the Lower House. As a whole the likenesses are good. Kerferd for one however is not flattered but is given a much harder expression than he has & so made to look anything but an agreeable character. I purchased *Australasian* & *Leader*, some little books for the youngsters & some apples to make sauce for a goose which Polly caused to be killed for to-morrow's dinner. Little things mount up & these kind of expenses show very well how our money goes. 1/-Papers 1/-Books 1/-Apples & Matches make 3/-; 2/6 for Polly this morning 5/6 & yet it does not appear to be anything for the money.

MAY 7 SUNDAY 1871

Weather very wet. No Church of England Service held in the Gaol in consequence, went into the Gaol & wrote up my Diary, also a letter to the Chief Secretary asking for an allowance in consequence of the increased duties devolving upon me from the Pentridge women being kept in the Gaol. Was very unwell from a cough & cold. Harry unwell also from a similar cause.

167 Marian Dunn, actress on the Melbourne and colonial stage, daughter of John Dunn, the Irish comic actor; Brian Elliott, *Marcus Clarke* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 131-137.

Had a goose for dinner which proved a great success. Mustered in the afternoon. After Muster went to Kew & saw Kerferd. Mrs Kerferd in a little trouble for want of a servant, the one Polly had engaged for her not having put in an appearance. Had a long chat. Kerferd thought it inadvisable for me at present to apply to the Government as he doubted much its stability & thought if McCulloch chose to be nasty he would put such a minute on my application as would injure me with any future ministry who would be inclined to do me service. I said I should act on his opinion unless Duncan & McCrea to whom I would speak thought it advisable for me to persist in my application.

In the train returning to Melbourne I met Levey & occupied a seat in the same carriage. At Melbourne I ran across Hall & walked with him to the Railway Station. His wife is to come home on Saturday next. Went to the Club where I saw Dr Maloney who was then the only occupant of the Club rooms. Did not stop long but came home & soon after went to bed.

MAY 20 SATURDAY 1871

A fine morning. Got up early & went on Parade, then took the little girls to the market. Saw there Mrs Edwards, bought some onions & herbs & had a good look at all the things else for sale & then came home to breakfast.

Went to the Court, there were some prisoners for sentence & as soon as Judge Barry had got through that duty the Court came to an end. One woman who was asked if she had anything to say began to cry & said she really was not guilty. The learned & courteous Judge remarked 'Dry your eyes Madam & go to Gaol for 18 months with hard labor'. This created a little titter in the Court but the unfortunate woman did'ent appear to see the fun of the observation.

Was busy transacting ordinary business but in the afternoon considered I had done enough for the week so instead of Mustering I went into town & played cribbage at the Yorick with Mr Wyatt, McKinlay & Armsinck. Had some very good games & came away neither better nor worse in pocket. Got home in time for tea. In the evening sat till nearly nine reading then took Polly into town to buy some buttons. Got them, purchased *The Australasian* & came home, then soon after went to bed. Polly has been all day very busy making a new silk dress for herself & some waterproofs for the little girls. Posted my English letters & newspapers. Dr McCrea's little girl came into the house while her father paid his Gaol visit. Harry, Sissy & Dotty commenced learning dancing at Hockings. Polly took them to school.

MAY 21 SUNDAY 1871

A fine morning. Bother the first thing this morning in the women's Gaol, the hominy being complained about. Complaint apparently made for the sake of complaining as the meal was sweet & good though a little thin. Guessed the reason of the grumble to be spite of Kate Laurence & a few other would be

leaders, because yesterday a prisoner on the male side who has been trafficking with the women, sending them letters &c was caught & punished.

Took Polly, Harry, Sissy & Dotty to church. After Muster stayed at home till tea time talking with Mrs Dr Robertson who came across to see Mrs Castieau & the children. In the evening went to the Yorick where I read some of the papers & had a chat with Telo & a friend concerning the Opera & the management. Came home by nine o'clock & chatted with Polly till Miss Tait came home after which we did not stay long before we went to bed.

Harry & baby very much better & my cold also greatly improved. Weather no doubt has a good deal to do with the health of folk just now. Polly went away very grandly to Church to-day having a new silk dress & a velvet mantle. She evidently was very proud of her attire & with some reason as both garments fitted well & were of home manufacture. The little girls also were clad in new waterproofs & made a very creditable appearance. Where is the money to come from that must be expended if they and their brothers are to make a decent appearance for the future? They have a good mother which is half the battle, long may she be spared for her labor of love.

MAY 25 THURSDAY 1871

Weather cloudy but not wet. Had rather a fishy feeling this morning & not at all a pleasant one to have while doing business. Had some men in the Garden this morning & after putting in some cauliflowers & cabbage plants sent them into the Playground to sow the blank places in the Croquet Ground. Went to the Sheriff's office & while there met Mr Blair the Secretary of the Penal Commission. He took me on one side & said he had something sensational to communicate & would I walk with him a little way? I did so & he told me the Penal Commission had sent in their Report & that they had recommended great changes, in fact some changes that would effect quite a Revolution in the present Gaol system. The Melbourne Gaol, Present Court house &c to be razed to the ground & the site sold. The only Gaol to be in Melbourne they propose to erect in the vicinity of the Law Courts. It is however intended to be only a very small affair & for prisoners on remand & waiting trial mostly. At Pentridge there is to be the Penitentiary & a new building to be called The House of Correction. To this House of Correction all sentenced prisoners under three years are to be sent, not only from Melbourne but from all parts of the Colony, the present Gaol being reduced to small establishments of little more importance than Lock Ups. Mr Blair said he told me all this in friendship & that my plan would be to look out for the appointment of Governor of the House of Correction. I said I was much obliged to him but that I thought the Penal Commission had not treated me fairly in not examining me. Some excuse was made. Mr Blair & I by this time had got to his office & he showed me some of the Report, but just as we were getting into it, the Chief Secretary sent for Mr Blair & he had to leave asking me to call again to-morrow. I saw the suggestions I made &

which Ellis promised should be sent in as mine, were carefully put away & credited as the personal experiences of Mr Ellis the Acting Sheriff. I told Blair they were written by me. Met McLeod, a man who had been a lucky digger at one time at Beechworth. He told me he was starting for the diamond fields. I wished him luck. Met Mr Sturt & was very glad to see he was about again. Did not Muster but went to the Yorick & played cribbage with McKinlay & Telo. Came home, felt unwell & went early to bed.

MAY 31 WEDNESDAY 1871

Have neglected my Diary for four days & am now trying to make it up on Sunday instead of Thursday as I properly should. Was in the Gaol but hardly know how I was occupied. Played cards with McKinlay this afternoon & won two games of Cribbage. Marcus Clarke showed me the article that he had inserted in *The Australian Journal* & which was taken from the Lecture I delivered at Beechworth some years ago. I was annoyed to find that Mr Clarke had not stated this was the case & that consequently the article appeared as if it was something new & original. This is very awkward because the Penal Commission have just issued their Report & it would appear as if I was striving to rival them in the remarks they make upon Penal Discipline. The Penal Report proposes tremendous changes, the clearing away the present Melbourne Gaol, the Building a House of Correction at Pentridge & the doing away with Up Country Gaols as Establishments for anything beyond keeping prisoners waiting trial or under very short sentences. There is a great deal in the Report that will not be carried into effect without a great deal of Argument & I fancy it will be some time before the public will see the advisability of destroying what has cost so much money unless the results aimed at are more certain of being realised than appears to be made certain by the Report.

JUNE 15 THURSDAY 1871

Weather fine, my cough certainly not so bad, though of course it is even yet far from well. Received a letter from Edwin Smith acknowledging receipt of the cheque but not saying anything with regard to the remarks I made concerning his own income. This was the first day of the Criminal Sittings & I went therefore into Court, did not however stop very long but after coming to the Gaol went into town where I went to Gemmell & Tuckett's¹⁶⁸ to pay for the things Polly & I purchased the other day at Hawthorn. The Account was not ready so I did not settle it but went to the Mart where a lot of Japanese goods were being sold.¹⁶⁹ They were apparently of a useless description & not particularly of an ornamental character either. However be

168 Gemmell, Tuckett & Co., Auctioneers at 49 Collins Street.

169 An aspect of the Western phenomenon of *japonisme*. Japanese decorative items were popular in the colonies at this time. See Alison Broinowski, *The Yellow Lady: Australian Impressions of Asia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 16–17.

that as it may I found myself the possessor of two little tea-pots & three small cups. After this there were some books disposed of. There was Professor Owen's Work on Dentology in two volumes, very well bound & said to have been published at five guineas. I thought it would do for Dr Robertson or Townsend & so bought it as it only fetched 10/-. Then there was a little book nicely bound called a translation of Japanese Odes,¹⁷⁰ this was knocked down to me at 3/6. I came away feeling like a fool & that I ought not to be trusted alone at an Auction. A muzzle would be of no use for a nod or a wink suits Gemmell just as well as a spoken bid. I shall not let Polly know at present of my purchases to-day but bring them out by degrees & when the soreness of their expense is somewhat healed. Polly went to Elsternwick to-day. Nelly has come from Geelong & has taken a house near to Dotty. Johnny went with Polly. Did not go out after I came from the auction. Played Bezique in the evening.

JUNE 17 SATURDAY 1871

Weather tolerably fine. Cold better but still very troublesome. It is now more sore nose & dirty handkerchief than anything else & those nasty & disagreeable as they are seem preferable to cough & painful chest. Dr Robertson came over to see Polly about the meat & gladly took the book on teeth I purchased at Gemmell's rooms the other day. Found enough to occupy me in the Gaol office till dinner time. After dinner Polly took the youngsters to Dancing School & I stayed at home till Muster time. At Muster had a little disturbance with a woman I had been obliged to punish. Received a fair quantum of abuse & bore it philosophically. Stayed at home till Polly came back to tea. Began talking about the prison servants who are a constant source of anxiety to us although they behave remarkably well. I was unjust to Polly accusing her of being careless with regard to them. She fired up in return & each showed the obstinacy of their disposition. Consequently there was no more peace for this day. I had promised to take the Youngsters to the Market this evening & they all looked forward to it very eagerly. As it was, their mother would'ent ask me to go & took them by herself. I waited at home till the plaguy servants were locked up then went into town. Tried there to meet Polly & the youngsters & having failed to do so went to the Club. There I glanced over the Weeklies & then came home. Smoked in sullen silence till Polly went to bed. Puffed away for an hour after she had gone & then could do nothing better I found out than follow her & take my place at her side.

JUNE 18 SUNDAY 1871

Weather tolerably fine till the evening when it clouded over & rained a little. Got up bad tempered & was sulky with Polly all day. Polly took the youngsters to Church. I stayed at home, wrote a page in my Diary &

170 The first translation of Japanese poetry into English. *Hyak nin isshiu, or Stanzas by a Century of Poets ... translated ...* by E.V. Dickins (London: Smith, Elder, 1866).

dispatched a number of prisoners letters. In the afternoon mustered, after tea went to St John's Church. Came out a little after eight o'clock & went to the Club where I met Dr Avent & had a chat, then walked with him as far as Dr Tracey's House. Avent went into the doctor's & I came home, had a pipe & when Miss Tait came home at ten o'clock went to bed. Was very unkind all day to Polly & feel ashamed of being so for she is truly a good wife & mother. The only thing is in our difficulties we both are much to blame in persisting to irritate the sore instead of one or other of us trying to heal by saying a kind word instead of a cross one & so magnifying the mischief & verily making a mountain out [of] what in nine cases out of ten is really a molehill.

JUNE 27 TUESDAY 1871

Tuesday weather very fine till the evening when it came on windy & was very boisterous. Was busy in the Gaol with one thing & another. Went however into the Sheriff's office & had a chat with Walford who seems in good form & expectant of something good as he has friends who have friends in the Ministry. Mustered in the afternoon & then went to the Yorick where I played cribbage till tea time. In the evening I amused myself with reading while Polly amused or instructed herself at the piano. Towards the end of the evening spouted a little for Harry's amusement & then let him off to bed. Baby is a great nuisance of nights now. He wakes up inclined to play & will not go to sleep however much he may be coaxed or threatened. I should think we were awake some hours from this unreasonable conduct of 'the dear little pet' to-night. Miss Tait was away again to-day.

Have been feeling queer again, troubled mostly with a disagreeable watery taste in my mouth & inability to taste anything else but water. My palate seems entirely to have lost its cunning & everything I eat seems to have but one flavour & that a watery one. I have also been troubled with something that must be very like itch as far as feeling goes for I have been inclined to scratch myself continually for these two or three days past. I suppose the fact is I want a change.

JULY 1 SATURDAY 1871

Weather tolerably fine. This was Separation day & was of course kept as a holiday in the Sheriff's office. The Visiting Justice attended at the Gaol & spent some considerable time in trying prisoners & hearing requests. In the afternoon as I had been all through the Gaol with the Visiting Justice I did not Muster but went to the Yorick where I played some cribbage with Semple & Duerdin.¹⁷¹ In the evening attended the Annual Meeting of the Yorick. There was a great deal of talk & comparatively speaking very little business transacted. It was proposed to have a President & Vice President but

171 James Duerdin, solicitor at 105 Collins Street, a frequent associate of Castieau.

this proposal met with a great deal of opposition & the motion proposing the officers was negatived. I voted against it not because I objected to having a President or Vice President but because I saw there were a large number of the members who did object & I thought the election if it came off would only breed ill-feeling in the Club. After this motion was lost there were some others of less interest carried & then came the balloting for the Committee. A good deal of interest was taken in this & a good deal of noisy fun while the ballot was progressing. Eventually a very good Committee was elected. The Rev. Dr Bleasdale was in a most anxious state for supper & made a few remarks which were not very intelligible nor yet much to the point. He was annoyed at the phrase Democracy being used towards the Club & said The Yorick should fly high & consider themselves 'The Aristocracy of talent'. The Doctor's observations fell flat & we saw little more of him during the evening though he had with much liberality covered the table with Colonial Wine & for which I regret to say no one who partook of it was grateful enough to express any thanks.¹⁷² We made a great noise but had very little real fun. Did not get home till tolerably late in the morning [evening?].

JULY 2 SUNDAY 1871

Felt rather otherwise than bright this morning & had the unhappy consciousness of having taken more wine last night than was good for me. Did not go to Church. Polly however took the youngsters & Madeline Kerferd who came yesterday to stay a few days with Sissy & Dotty. After dinner I proposed we should all go out & thought of Brighton. Polly was very glad of an outing & made arrangements for the servants to go inside & for the female officers to look after the young children. We all started for the Railway Station. On the Road bought an *Extraordinary* which was published this morning, the English Mail having arrived in the night. There was terrible news of the Civil War in Paris, of the murder of the Archbishop, two other clergymen & 64 hostages by the Insurgents & of the fearful retaliation of the troops, 30,000 of the Reds being said to be killed or wounded in the Streets. Some of the finest buildings in Paris were wilfully set fire to by the insurgents & women were shot by the infuriated soldiers while they (the women) were like fiends rushing about endeavouring to set light to anything that could be consumed. Only the Telegraphic Message has yet been received but it would appear Marshal McMahon¹⁷³ has put an end to the rebellion for a time at any rate & that

172 John Ignatius Bleasdale (1822–1884), an English-born Catholic priest who had begun his clerical studies in Lisbon, was a well-known advocate of colonial science and industry, including wine (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

173 Marshal MacMahon, the French military leader originally appointed Governor of Algeria by Napoleon III; he suppressed the revolutionary Commune of Paris in 1871, following French defeat in the Franco–Prussian war. The war was the subject of numerous entries in Castieau's diary during this year.

the 'Red' Party is morally extinct. A good effect but purchased with frightful carnage. What the Government of the French will be like until the next Revolution it is at present difficult to say.

Arrived at Brighton & went to Bell's house. He was not at home. The housekeeper however gave us some biscuits & wine & we made ourselves comfortable till it was time to see about getting home. Then we had a run upon the Beach & then a walk to the Railway Station. When we got to Melbourne we took the Bus & got home in good time for tea. Went early to bed as I had a head ache & felt knocked up.

JULY 3 MONDAY 1871

A fine morning & a tolerably fine day though cloudy at times. Went to the Sheriff's office where I learnt that Miss Davidson was to Resign or be dismissed.¹⁷⁴ The Sheriff afterwards came to the Gaol & told her of the decision of the Government. Miss Davidson could not of course understand what was meant for a long time but eventually she decided upon sending her Resignation which I duly received. After Muster went to the Yorick where I saw Mr Walsh who it is said is to be the Attorney General. He is a barrister at Ballarat & is a Country Member of our Club. At Polly's request I took her to the Theatre Royal this evening to see the new Play by Boucicault of *Elfie* or *The Cherry Tree Inn*.¹⁷⁵ Master George Coppin has been guilty of a little dodge in bringing out this Piece for he leads people by his advertisements to believe the Piece is quite original as he makes the Author dedicate it to Australia & express his gratification at having a Play of his brought out in Melbourne before London. The fact is *Elfie* was produced at Edinburgh or Glasgow & why not in London I cannot tell unless it did'ent prove a success in Scotland. The House to-night was miserably cold. We sat in the Stalls & there is evidently a great draught there from the back of the Stage as when a deep scene was set we always felt the air more chilly than when the scene only occupied the front part of the Stage. *Elfie* is a slow Play. There are two or three good positions in it but they do not compensate for the endurance of a great lot of twaddle that is introduced between them. A Mr Shafto Robinson made his bow in *Elfie* to a Melbourne Public. He is gentlemanly looking but does not appear to have done much Professional work. I should imagine him as a favorite among Amateurs. When he has had a little more experience of the Stage I fancy he will do very well.

JULY 6 THURSDAY 1871

Got up this morning at half past six & went through the Gaol & saw that all was apparently going on well. The Inquest on James Dow was held to-day

174 Following a disciplinary hearing, Davidson had many times been the subject of complaint by prisoners and staff for her abusive behaviour.

175 Dion Boucicault (1822–1890) was a celebrated Irish-born dramatist.

by Dr Candler.¹⁷⁶ The Jury was very much inclined to be troublesome & to find fault with Dr McCrea's treatment of Delirium Tremens & would if they could have managed it implied grave censure on the doctor in their verdict. As it was however they simply brought in a verdict 'That death was caused from the effects of drink'. There is certain to be a bother some day about Dr McCrea's treatment of Delirium Tremens. It seems to me really killing treatment for emetics, cold effusions & leeches bring the men so low that it is impossible to rally their systems again sufficiently to cause their recovery. Dow when he was brought to the Gaol was a strong able bodied man full of life & very violent. He had an emetic, then cold effusion, then two dozen leeches, then two dozen more & then two dozen again. To keep him quiet he was sewn up in a blanket which is itself terribly reducing as it creates profuse perspiration. After this no wonder Dow was quiet & got so alarmingly weak that the doctor had to order him injections of essence of beef & to dose him with brandy every two or three hours & this till he died. The last few days the doctor was evidently trying to undo all he had done when the patient first came under his charge.

JULY 7 FRIDAY 1871

A rather raw & gloomy morning. Polly was very unwell during the night suffering severely from windy spasms. I sent away Edwin Smith's Chain in a Registered letter & hope he will get it safe. Attended at a Sale of Books advertised to belong to the Late Hon W.C. Haines.¹⁷⁷ There were however some books that evidently had come from another place. These were more modern & I purchased a number of lots which cost me altogether £9.0.6.¹⁷⁸ Polly who is generally disposed to be critical of my Auction purchases was pleased with the Books. She went to Gemmell's where I bought them & brought them away home. They made our Book Case look quite respectable. Amongst other books I got a nice Edition of the *Lady of the Lake*, Moore's Poems, Wordsworth's, Scott's, Hood's, Byron's & Southey & Coleridge's. Then the original edition of Macaulay's *History of England*. Seven volumes of *Good Words*, *Many Thoughts of Many Minds*, *Arabian Nights*, *Gil Blas*, *Don Quixote* & in fact between sixty & seventy volumes altogether & at prices that averaged the whole at 3/- per Volume.

Mrs Kerferd had her lunch with us to-day & wanted Polly to go out with her but Polly would not do that as she wished to stop at home & take her Music Lesson as Miss Masters her teacher put in an appearance just as Mrs Kerferd was ready to go away.

176 Curtis Candler (1827–1911), one of the two Melbourne coroners. Although Castieau refers to him as doctor, Candler only had an apothecary's licence which led to him withdrawing from medical practice in 1863. Simon Cooke, 'Secret Sorrows: A Social History of Suicide in Victoria, 1841–1921' (PhD, University of Melbourne, 1998), pp. 58–60.

177 William Clarke Haines (1810–1866), the first premier of Victoria.

178 More than a week's salary, which at this time was £32 per month.

Mustered in the afternoon, then went to the Club & read the Evening Paper. I left my cane at the Club some three nights since & was annoyed to-day at not being able to find it. I do not feel quite certain but that some one belonging to the Club has put it away in joke and so shall wait a while. If I find it has been stolen I shall make a little bother about it. Came home to tea & had a good look at the books I purchased to-day. Afterwards played Bezique with Polly until the Spasms got too much for her. Then she went to bed & after I had smoked a pipe or two I went likewise. In the middle of the night was called up, an old woman having died in Hospital.

JULY 9 SUNDAY 1871

Weather tolerably fine though inclined to be showery. Polly passed a bad night & was not disposed to get up this morning so I took the little girls & Sissy to Church. Harry was barking away so we left him at home. A Minister officiated this morning with whom I am unacquainted. He was not a very pleasing reader but preached an excellent sermon. Felt very unequal to any kind of exertion & troubled with a general fit of despondency. All things seemed to me to look very blue & my debts & difficulties stretched themselves into monstrous proportions. I do not know what is the matter with me but the cloud that hangs over my existence is darker & gloomier every day & if not dispersed by some lucky breeze will ere long enshroud me altogether. Funny dreams have made any sleep uneasy for some time back. For the last two nights I have dreamt I was trying to swim to America & each time have started to perform the arduous feat though all the while I felt a weariness & loss of energy which assured me I must fail in my enterprise. Each night I have seemed to struggle my best & each night I have had to give in beaten & exhausted. My dream went no further so what became of my body tossing on the waves I cannot relate, but on each occasion I have woken as weary & exhausted as if in reality I had been battling with the elements instead of simpling dreaming such to be the case. Mustered in the afternoon & spent the evening reading & disagreeing. Polly was unwell & out of temper & I was snappish so we growled. I said very hard & disagreeable things & then the pair of us amused ourselves & not one another. Very stupid work too. Wrote a page in my Diary & commenced a letter to *The Ovens and Murray*. Smoked a pipe & got to bed by about eleven o'clock.

JULY 10 MONDAY 1871

Weather fine. Busy in the Gaol during the morning & attending the County Court to which I was subpoenaed as a witness. My temper was not improved by the receipt of a Bill of Costs from Kidston for what he did in the Portia business.¹⁷⁹ It seems he consulted Dr McKay whose Fee & Clerks amounted to £29.6, to this Kidston added 30/- which made £40.6. I am called upon to pay, 'Oh beware of law'.

179 Litigation involving the Portia Mining Company in which Castieau had invested.

A very sensational story might have been made out of an incident that occurred in the Gaol. It might have been written in this style. 'A Woman immured in the dungeons of the Melbourne Gaol for four years without warrant & for no offence.' Our readers will be startled by this announcement but it is no less true than startling. Jessie Walker was arrested in April 1867 for Having no visible means of Support. She was remanded for a week & then again for another week. After that there is no record of her having been dealt with by the authorities; notwithstanding she remained incarcerated until her death, which took place at two am on Saturday. A searching investigation is required into this case & if blame is attached to any one whatever his position may be, we trust nothing will be allowed to interfere with the certainty or rapidity of his punishment. Our Reporter viewed the body & found it to be little more than a bag of bones. Until after the Inquest however it would not be fair to express an opinion as to whether this was caused by long & rigorous imprisonment or natural decay.

Yes that is all quite correct but very easily explained. A poor old woman nearly eighty years of age was found destitute in the Bush & brought to Melbourne by the Police. The Magistrates to give her shelter remanded her to the Melbourne Gaol & efforts were then made without success to obtain her admission into the Benevolent Asylum. Thoroughly childish & helpless old Granny as she was called had to remain in the Gaol. She was put in the Hospital & was most kindly looked after, after a time becoming a sort of Institution in the place. When I took charge I tried to get her removed to the Benevolent Asylum but failed & so Jessie stayed with us till she died. She was very thin but as she was over eighty years of age that is not much to be wondered at. The Jury evidently were perfectly satisfied justice had been done to her & brought in a verdict of 'Death from Old Age'.

Mustered this afternoon & then went to the Yorick where I had a chat with Telo & others & then came home to tea. In the evening took the youngsters to see the Torch light procession which had been advertised to walk to the Eastern Market as a protestation of the people's joy at the advent of the Duffy Ministry.¹⁸⁰ It was a very poor affair, not above fifty torches altogether & these carried by noisy larrikins who capered about led by a band nearly all drums & followed by a crowd not of the procession but simply in the street to see what was the 'davarshun' [diversion?]. Did'ent go far enough to know whether there were any speeches made at the Market but took the children home & then after some toddy & a pipe went to bed.

JULY 11 TUESDAY 1871

Weather fine & pleasant. Attended in the female gaol & had the usual bother with some of the women I had to punish. One excitable little witch attempted or pretended to attempt to throw herself down a flight of stairs. She was easily managed however & I ordered her to be restrained by a strait waistcoat until she could be seen by the doctor. The next Case was

180 Charles Gavan Duffy (1816–1903), a Young Irelander, Premier of Victoria.

however a more serious one for the woman was a strapping virago big enough to swallow a little fellow like me & to knock the delicate damsels I have as attendants about like ninepins. As soon as I gave her her sentence 'two days solitary confinement' she commenced abusing me & to look very threatening. From this she got spiteful & would'nt go into a cell. I thought there would be mischief so sent up for a couple of turnkeys from the Male Wing. They did not come however & the female officers managed the woman themselves. I was very savage at the men not coming & when I made enquiry 'Buck' who was on duty in the Corridor & the only officer there excused himself for having no one to send & for being a cripple. I roared at him & told him I wanted no cripples about the Place. Then I spoke savagely to Quin & after all the officers were not to blame. There are two absent & it was true Buck was the only man in the Corridor, Quin being away on reasonable business. Buck too had hurt his leg in the Labor Yard while rushing to secure a parcel of tobacco that had been thrown over the Wall to the prisoners. Cooling down I sent for Quin & Buck, heard their explanations & exonerated them from all blame in the matter.

AUGUST 20 SUNDAY 1871

Polly in a very low way. She certainly is not well & seems most anxious for a change. I told her she could go & it would be better for her to go quickly. The money question then of course had to be gone into & very blue our circumstances appear when financially looked into. Polly began to preach at my wickedness & extravagance & I got tired & cowardly, tried to hook it to bed. She followed me however & gave me one or two last words which made me kick & use abusive language. I am sorry to record this but a Diary to be useful must be truthful. Thought of Insuring my Life & borrowing money upon the Policy. Hinted to Polly that Bell might be a surety for me were he asked to be so. Polly did not seem to like the idea of troubling Bell.

AUGUST 21 MONDAY 1871

Weather tolerably fine to-day. Had some men doing up the garden. Polly not very well & seems to have fully made up her mind it is necessary she should go away & have a change. Was busy writing in the Gaol Office all the morning. In the afternoon the Visiting Justice paid a visit & tried some women for various offences. Two charges I brought against women for endeavouring to communicate with the male prisoners were very leniently treated, one woman who pleaded guilty being simply cautioned & the case against the other being dismissed as Mr Sturt considered the evidence insufficient. Of course I do not carp at the Magistrate's decisions though I certainly thought the Case was a good one. It is hard to get even visiting Justices to understand Gaol offences. The charges brought against prisoners frequently appear trumpetry, as no doubt they would be out of doors, though

they are grave infractions of discipline in Gaol & if allowed would soon put an end to the good government of the prison. Two young fellows were flogged this afternoon, there was the usual little knot of connoisseurs gathered together to see the sport.

AUGUST 22 TUESDAY 1871

Weather cloudy. Julia¹⁸¹ taken very unwell & hysterical. Polly in a bad way herself & every thing as a rule most uncomfortable. Received a notification that Mr Duffy intended visiting the Gaol to-day. Stopped at the Gaol to be in readiness to receive him. He came at about half past twelve accompanied by a seedy looking old coon who I afterwards found out was Judge Bindon. Mr Wright, the Sheriff, went with us through the Gaol. Mr Duffy was very pleasant in his manner & seemed most anxious to say everything that was fair. He undertook to take notice of any suggestions I might choose to make in writing & promised to adopt them if he considered it would be advisable to do so. He said I must have a great deal of experience & if I proposed any changes in the Gaol management that would tend to make the establishment self-supporting I should receive substantial advantage.

After the Chief Secretary's visit I was not much inclined for work & foolishly went in for brandy & no dinner. This did not benefit me very much. In the afternoon went to the Yorick where I met Poole, sub-editor of *The Age*, who took me into the House with him. Met Judge Cope who was sitting in the Council's seats when I was shown in by Poole. Kerferd saw us & asked Cope & I to have some tea with him which we accordingly did. After tea went again into the House & heard McCulloch pitch into Berry for the Speech he had made at Geelong in which he said the McCulloch Ministry had borrowed two millions of money at 5 per cent & lent it to the Banks at 2 per cent. Saw Witt with whom I chummed for the rest of the evening. Got home very late. Saw Mr & Mrs Gregory at the House. They invited me to bring the children to see them.

AUGUST 23 WEDNESDAY 1871

Was at the Treasury where I met Hall.

Weather tolerably fine. Got up feeling rather seedy, went into the Gaol Office. Seven fellows were brought before me for idleness. I punished them all. One of them immediately sprang at the Overseer of Labor & gave him a crack in the nose. I jumped up & knocked the fellow down. The others remained passive. Went to the Sheriff's Office & had a long chat with the Sheriff about the Chief Secretary & his remarks during the visit of yesterday. Felt queer & unsettled & was hanging about all the afternoon till Muster time. Talking of hanging about, there was a man to-day went in for hanging

181 Their house servant.

himself or else made a very good pretence at so doing; he had tied his neck tie on to the iron gate of his cell & then put his head into a noose he had made at the end of the handkerchief. This took his feet a little off] the ground in which condition he was found by turnkey Capper on a visit that officer made to his cell. Capper & Rowley both say the fellow was nearly gone when fortunately he was so discovered. I think he meant to gammon¹⁸² but made a mistake & went a little further than he expected or anticipated.

After Muster went to The Yorick & remained there chatting with Telo, Marcus Clarke, Levey, Wyatt & one or two others. Came home about half past seven with Marcus Clarke. Julia was said to be a little better. She had had a composing draught & it had done her good. Polly very unwell. She hardly knows yet whether she will be able to go away as she proposes. The Littlewoods are to start on Friday so if she does go she will accompany them. Was at the Police Court this morning to give evidence against a young fellow charged with endeavouring to introduce tobacco into the Gaol.

AUGUST 24 THURSDAY 1871

Weather windy & consequently dusty, not at all agreeable or suitable for Polly who was out in the morning getting things for her proposed trip up country on Friday. With regard to this trip I am very much afraid it will not turn out well. The children are so much responsibility & take so much looking after, the prison servants who require some one to be looking after them always, the awkwardness of the accommodation in many respects all help to make taking charge of the house a difficult task & I question very much whether Julia however willing she may prove will be equal to it. Of course if she is ill the thing will be settled at once, however there is no doubt Polly is very unwell & that her illness is getting serious. The change will I trust benefit her. If it does, any worry, bother or anxiety there may be at home will be amply compensated when she returns again able to go in heartily & perform without trouble her duties to the children & myself. I have not been in good spirits to-day. Polly's miserable face seems to reproach & make me irritable while the noise or even the sight of the children is a nuisance.

This morning a young woman was brought to the Gaol for deserting her child. It appears that yesterday feeling her trouble coming she went away from the house where she was at service, laid down in a stable & shortly after the baby was born got up & left it & returned to her work. The constable found her at her place & at her work this morning. The baby has since died.

Mustered in the afternoon. After Muster went to the Club where I had a talk with Duerdin about a Quartz Company that Witt wished me to join. Duerdin thought well of the Prospectus & I left it with him to make some enquiries concerning the subject of it. When I came home to tea I found Lucy & Katey Morphy who had come over to say good bye to Polly. Polly was out so Lucy promised to call again in the morning.

182 Used here in the sense 'to pretend'.

Played Bezique in the evening. Polly overcome before bed-time, got a low fit & cried, which as usual, for I hate to see her crying, made me vicious.

AUGUST 25 FRIDAY 1871

Weather much the same as yesterday. House in a great state of bustle as Polly was preparing for going away. The poor woman looked very ill & miserable & I felt anything but comfortable at her appearance. It seemed to reproach me & yet perhaps I have been as much sinned against as sinning. I hope most earnestly the change will do Polly good & bring her home to me all right again. Took a cab & went with Polly to the Railway Station where we soon found Mr & Mrs Littlewood. Got a very nice compartment in one of the carriages which the three had all to themselves when they left Melbourne.

AUGUST 30 WEDNESDAY 1871

Begin to feel a blank in the house now Polly is away & was right glad to receive a letter from her. She got to Beechworth all right & enjoyed the passage by the boat very much. She complained of being tired but expected great things from the rest she was getting & which she expected to get. Mrs Newson was very kind to her & at Echuca she slept at Mrs Shackel's house. She found the journey to Beechworth by the River rather more expensive than by the Road but preferred the former way of travelling very much. I hope she will soon be strong & back again. I feel how much I should miss her were she away all together & am wretched at the very idea.

AUGUST 31 THURSDAY 1871

Well to-day I did settle down to my Report with a will & had it all ready for the sheriff in the afternoon. I spoke very plainly & wound up by offering to inspect the Country Gaols if the Honorable the Chief Secretary would allow me as my health was not good & I wanted a change of work to set me up. The Sheriff seemed pleased with the Report altogether but was doubtful about the latter part of it & I suppose Ellis will not like my proposing such a thing, however I cannot help that & only hope it may be favorably entertained. Brought my Report back to the Gaol & sat down to copy it. As usual I found this was a hard task for me as I kept altering as I went along. It took me about six hours to write eighteen pages of foolscap & I did not finish till late in the evening. However on the whole I think I did very well & was tolerably satisfied with my work. I must have written to-day for at least ten hours & when I left off my wrist ached & so did my back. Did not go out at all to-day but got out my pipe & some grog & ruminated over them till it was time to go to bed. Harry full of promises to write a long letter to his mamma. He seems however very lazily inclined just now caring for little but sitting with a book over the fire.

SEPTEMBER 7 THURSDAY 1871

Weather cloudy & changeable. Woke this morning with a nasty sore throat & cough, expected as it was very hot last night in the theatre. I caught cold going home as the night was chilly & I had no overcoat. The children looked out most anxiously for the postman who came at last & brought a letter for me & one each for Harry, Sissy & Dotty. After I had read the children's letters to them I turned to my own expecting some pleasure from it as it was a long epistle. I was disappointed, Polly evidently was out of sorts when she wrote it & wrote nastily saying she dreaded coming home &c. I wrote her a letter in which I told her how much I regretted she should have sent such a letter & that I was disappointed at her dreading to come home as the children & myself longed for her return & were always thinking of her. Ran about this morning at my wits end to get money. Offered Lynch my pay for next month at a pound discount; he gave me £12 & said he would see about getting £10 tomorrow so that I may pay Mrs Jones' little bill. I went to the Assurance Office & paid my premium, then came back to the Gaol. In the evening I wrote to Nathan enclosing the Assurance Receipt & asking him to come up & see me.

Did not muster but went to the Club after five o'clock & came away at six with Marcus Clarke. Walked with him till he purchased so huge a lobster that he was obliged to take a cab to get it home, then went home myself to tea.

In the evening I went across to Dr Robertson's. There I met the Rev. Mr Lowes & his wife & spent a quiet chatty evening. Came home & got to bed about eleven o'clock.

This was Quarterly Visiting Day at the Gaol & a crowd of people was assembled outside the gate the whole of the day. It was pitiful to see many respectable looking people among the number; 205 visitors were admitted.

SEPTEMBER 15 FRIDAY 1871

Fancied I felt better in general health this morning though my chest was still very sore & my cough oppressive. However I had a better appetite & hoped things were on the turn for the better. Wrote to Polly & sent one to her for Julia. The Criminal Sittings commenced. The Calendar was a very heavy one, there being 33 prisoners in Gaol besides several persons charged with offences who were out on bail. In the afternoon went into town with McKinley, met Willie Moore who was formerly Associate to the Chief Justice. He pressed us to have a beer & so went to an hotel & hob nobbed. I called at Smyther's the wine merchant & got an assorted dozen of liquor from him just to enable me to offer any one who came in a glass of wine or brandy. Came back in time for Muster, stayed at home till after tea and then crawled into town so far as the club. Did not however stay there very long but soon found myself at home again. Got Julia to make me a mustard plaister which when I went to bed I put on my chest & kept it on for an hour or more. Really my illness is obstinate in the extreme for I have all sorts of specifics. To-night I tried the

inhaler, a vessel which when used is filled with hot water & the steam sucked from it through an attached tube. I sucked away & took in I suppose a considerable quantity of vapour. Cant say however it appeared to benefit me very much. My constitution must be a particularly obstinate one just now.

SEPTEMBER 17 SUNDAY 1871

Was very unwell this morning & in fact felt as if I must give up & have done with the world. To my other ailments Diarrhoea has been added & I am becoming weak & powerless. Sent the elder children to church with Julia & employed myself while they were away in writing a letter to Polly. Had for dinner to-day lamb & green peas, the first for us of the season. Enjoyed my dinner & the company of Sissy, Dotty & Harry who had seats at the table. In the afternoon I went into the Gaol & saw I was not wanted & then went to St Kilda & had a stroll on the Beach. This did me good & I returned home in much better trim. In the evening Julia went out & I took Harry, Sissy & Dotty to task & saw they wrote letters to their mamma. Sissy & Dotty wrote from my dictation. Harry however managed his letter by himself. As soon as Julia came home I went to bed. This is the end of a very unsatisfactory week & is I fear the beginning of the end. My constitution has evidently received a shock strong enough to send it over the hill & it now will, as may be the force of circumstances Rapidly or steadily take the downward course until the valley of oblivion is reached.

SEPTEMBER 22 FRIDAY 1871

Got up this morning fancying myself better, the wind however came on to blow coldly & I found the atmosphere very chilly & disagreeable. Was at the Court the greater portion of the day but attended to Muster in the afternoon. After Muster went to the Club. In the evening Julia wanted to go out so I stayed at home & let her go between eight & nine o'clock. Miss Phair when giving in the keys reported that there was a great fire in the town & the light from it could easily be seen even in the Gaol Yard. Although I was left in charge of the children I could not stay quietly in doors but ran out to learn if possible where was the scene of the disaster. Soon I was told it was at the Haymarket Theatre in Bourke Street so I ran down Russell Street & at the corner of it & Bourke Street stopped to have a good look at the blaze. It was a fine sight & enjoyed by an enormous crowd, being just at the time when Bourke Street is the most crowded. I shall not attempt any description to show how dense the flames must have been. I need only say that the inside of the theatre was entirely consumed & that it burned with the rapidity of a box of matches set on fire, there being such a quantity of frippery & combustible material about the place.

Ran away home but not until Dotty had missed me & got in to a bad state from fear something had happened to me & that I was hurt or lost. Soon

quieted her & made her all right. Julia came home at about a quarter to ten. I talked to her for a time & then went to bed. Find myself still very unwell. Shall be very glad when Polly gets home again. Do not feel very well & fancy I should be all the better were I again under her care & treatment.

SEPTEMBER 23 SATURDAY 1871

Got up this morning at half past six & called Harry, Sissy & Dotty. I had half promised to take them to the Eastern Market where I had to go to buy some pigs. The morning was a fine one & the children were in excellent spirits at the Outing. We went to look where the fire had been & saw a great heap of ruins inside the theatre, though the exterior walls with the exception of the windows looked much the same as usual. The fire was still burning & the ceiling of Weather-board in Allens Bar was blazing. The constable sent for the firemen to return & put it out as it was evident if not stopped the fire would yet do further mischief. Went along the Market, [saw] some pigs & bought two at 14/- each. They were better ones than those I got last time but still they are not the kind of pigs I want, as I want some big gaunt ones ready to eat a great deal at once & with big frames to hang meat upon.

I bought oranges, Dates & Honey for the children & some celery & rhubarb for the general table, then we all were coming home to breakfast when we saw poor Mrs Morphy in a great state of mind as she had lost her purse containing about 10 or 12 shillings. I gave her a few shillings, all I had with me, to enable her to complete her purchases & this she returned to me in the course of the day. Attended to Gaol duties all the morning & between twelve & one o'clock went to the club. There I met with Marcus Clarke. He has adapted a piece of Moliere's, *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and called it *Peacock's Feathers*. It was to be produced this evening & Marcus was I fancy rather fidgetty about it. We chummed together & agreed to take a Turkish bath. I had never had one but Clarke was an old hand & agreed to show me the ropes. We went to the Baths in Russell Street.¹⁸³ The first thing is to pay your money,¹⁸⁴ this being done you are shown into a narrow passage on each side of which are a number of small rooms. You enter one & strip, fastening around your loins a piece of calico about the size of the figurative fig-leaf. An attendant meets you when you are ready, locks the door of the room you have left & takes away the key. You are then marshalled to the end of the passage & admitted through a door opened for the purpose into a room which is most uncomfortably hot & even oven like. Here you find a number of individuals clad as simply as yourself standing or sitting about the room & in different degrees of perspiration. There is a little fountain in the middle of the room around which are placed glasses for water which is freely imbibed

183 The Turkish and Sulphur Baths at 127 Russell Street evidently opened in 1871. See *Sands & McDougall Melbourne and Suburban Directory*, 1870, 1871.

184 Recorded as 2/- in the accounts at the back of the diary for 1871.

as an inducement to cause a copious sweat. You place your towel on a wooden bench & sit down. Even with the towel next your skin it is uncomfortably warm & it would be almost beyond human endurance to sit on the Bench itself unless it was covered with something. Clarke & I stayed in this room till we were supposed to have sweated sufficiently then we went into an inner & still hotter room where we stayed till the attendants, naked sprites, invited us into an inner room where we were made to lie down on Benches fixed for the purpose & where we were rubbed &

SEPTEMBER 24 SUNDAY 1871 [I.E. SATURDAY CONTD]

pummelled, soaped & scraped at the discretion of those who for the time being had the charge of us. Then we were passed under a shower bath & deluged at first with luke warm & afterwards with quite cold water. Then we were partially dried, given a small sheet to wrap around our shoulders & a towel to gird around our loins & passed into a comfortable room where there were couches & sofas & where we reposed until we were dried & felt inclined to dress. I hardly know what to say about the success of the Bath. I certainly did not feel the exhilaration after it that I have heard is felt & raved about, but then I was not well & could not rightly judge how much jollier I should have been had I taken the Bath when in good health. One thing is certain, there is a pleasant feeling of being intensely clean & a lightness in consequence that is agreeable. I shall certainly have one or two more Turkish Baths before I shall think of condemning or finding fault with them. While with Clarke to-day I got talking of Cousens an Engineer whom I knew at Beechworth & who is down here very hard up. I said I would let him have a pound. Clarke sent him to me after I got home & Cousens asked for £2 to help pay his landlord. I gave it him telling him at the same time I could ill spare the money. Cousens has some grand ideas of a new motive Power & has written a Paper on the subject which he has intrusted to Ellery. He is very sanguine of being on the road to fortune. I trust his ideas may prove practical & valuable. A man stuck up in the street to-day & borrowed five shillings to take him to Kyneton. I gave it him & he is to send it back to me out of the first wages he earns. Received a letter from Polly this morning & sent her a cheque for £7 to bring her home again. She seems getting fidgetty & will I hope be glad when the time comes for her to return home. In the evening I went to the theatre. *Peacock's Feathers* went very well & was amusing enough though it was made up of very slender materials. It had a decided success & the house was crowded. Clarke was called but did not show. John Dunne who played the principal part in the comedy came before the Curtain & thanked the audience on behalf of the Adaptor. He said the Author had been dead about 150 years so that was very good reason why he could not personally return thanks for the favor with which the Piece had been received. I stayed for the Burlesque & then got home before eleven o'clock.

OCTOBER 7 SATURDAY 1871

Felt very much better this morning & believe I am getting the better of my cough & shall cheat the Devil this time after all. Enjoyed my breakfast & went into the office in tolerably good time & transacted the ordinary morning's business. Began to look over my account Books & they made me very far from happy. I had to pay Mrs Jones £10 so I wrote a cheque for her & took it to Walford telling him I hoped there was money enough left in the bank to meet it. Came back to the gaol & had a chat with Polly about money matters, showed her as well as I could how we stood with the world & what I had done with the money borrowed from Nathan, agreed with Polly not to buy any more wine or spirits but to be content with a little Colonial beer for dinner & for supper. I do not know whether either of us will stand strictly to this but believe we shall both be more careful than we have been for the future.

After dinner Polly & I agreed to go out together. First of all however she got weighed on the Scales in the Yard & to her disgust found that instead of weighing 9 stone 9 as she said she did at Beechworth she only weighed 9 stone 3 or about the same as she was said to have done when she first got to Beechworth. There must have been some difference in the weights as Polly certainly has got heavier since she has been away. Taylor then weighed me & reported me to be 9.7 which is a lb heavier than I was two days ago. If this is correct there is no doubt the iron is doing me good & that I am beginning to pick up again. Polly & I went by the train to Elsternwick & called upon Dotty. We found Hall & Dotty busy in the Garden. They were surprised to see Polly as they had not heard of her return home. We stayed at Hall's till after tea & left for Melbourne by the 7.20 train. At the Elsternwick Station we saw Cowderoy & he went in the same carriage with us as far as Richmond. When we got to town we took a walk through Bourke Street & looked in at the Eastern Market. The vegetables in the Market were very fine & plentiful. Oranges & lemons were in abundance & very cheap. There was besides the ordinary 'Cheap Jack' a china-man in that line of business. John was busy & had around him rather more people than his European contemporary. Bought *The Australasian* & returned home. The walk had done Polly good & she pitched with much satisfaction into a pig's trotter for her supper.

Soon went to bed, everyone being up stairs by ten o'clock.

Began thinking to-day it was very foolish that Harriette & I should keep away so much from one another. I do not know how it is, this however I feel, that I am somewhat to blame for I have taken too much notice of things she has said & done. She would have patronized me when I came down only instead of inwardly laughing at her as I should have done I foolishly resented it & would not even go to nice people she knew because she would have had the chance of boasting of her introduction. Something must be done to make us more brotherly & sisterly.

OCTOBER 21 SATURDAY 1871

Was very unwell this morning feeling extremely bilious, consequently was cross & unmanageable, spoke unkindly to Polly, had breakfast & went into the Gaol in a temper. The day was very fine. Polly wanted me to go to Elsternwick to spend the afternoon at the Cowderoys. I could not however very well manage to do so without feeling uncomfortable as we had new servants. The worry of prison servants in our house is a constant blister to my temper & prevents me ever feeling comfortable away from home as I cannot throw off the remembrance of being entirely at their mercy so far as their staying is concerned, for if they chose to run away they have abundant chances of doing so which as the house is situated cannot be avoided. Mary, a woman who was sentenced to be hanged & afterwards reprieved & her sentence commuted to ten years imprisonment, has been one of our servants for some time past & behaved remarkably well. Her former Mistress, Mrs George Watson, fitted her well out with clothes & Mr George Watson promised to meet her on her discharge this morning & take her to a Registry office & procure her a situation up country. I gave her a sovereign Government money¹⁸⁵ so she has every chance if she means well. She was guilty of infanticide but had a high character before she committed the crime. Mustered in the afternoon. In the evening went to The Yorick. Our rooms are taken away while alterations are being made & another room given us which is awkward to get at as the entrance to it is through the Bar of the Hotel & then up-stairs.

OCTOBER 22 SUNDAY 1871

Got up this morning in the tantrums & did not get down stairs till nine o'clock, then I found the women had refused their hominy for breakfast & there was trouble in the Gaol in consequence. Growled because I had not been told when Mrs Nixon the officer in charge brought some of the hominy for me to look at & then went into the Gaol, having first fortified myself with the knowledge that the men had eaten their breakfast without murmuring. I went into the women's Yard & abused them soundly, telling them that they had only refused the hominy because it was Sunday morning & to give trouble & that if they did'ent like Gaol fare they should stop outside. There was some grumbling & then I went to the kitchen. Here I found I had been hasty for the men's hominy had been served much later than the women's & that in reality the women's hominy though eatable had not been properly cooked & there were some grounds for complaining of it. The boilers in the kitchen are out of order & a new set is being erected. This has upset the arrangements & a great waste of steam from a defective pipe prevented the hominy being cooked in time for the breakfast at the usual hour & the cook

185 Note this was not out of Casticau's pocket, in contrast to many other instances in the diaries when he loans or gives money to friends or associates.

foolishly dished it instead of serving it later. I made the *amend*¹⁸⁶ as far as I could by seeing about the dinner & directing that the women should be allowed extra hominy in the afternoon.

OCTOBER 25 WEDNESDAY 1871

Jane, a prisoner woman whom Polly has employed as a Nurse for a number of times came to-day to say she had tried very hard indeed since she was last discharged to get something to do but had failed. She was hungry & eat ravenously the food that was given to her. Polly told her she would see if there was any place of Refuge for her to take shelter in & promised to see the Rev. George Mackie to-day about her. It is idle talking of Prison reform unless there is some place provided for prisoners on their discharge from Gaol where they can have an opportunity of showing by their conduct their desire to lead honest lives.

OCTOBER 26 THURSDAY 1871

This morning Polly went to see Dr Singleton to find out whether he could procure Jane a place of Refuge. The Doctor sent her to the temporary home for fallen women at Collingwood & Polly was very much pleased with her visit to this place & with the Matron or conductress. There were a number of women industriously employed remaining at the Home quite of their own accord. No uniform, no bolts or bars & nothing but self restriction. Arrangements were made for Jane's going there this evening, so when she came Polly took her & left her grateful for the shelter & hopeful of the future. Polly took some lettuces out of the garden for the women for which the Matron said they would be thankful.

NOVEMBER 5 SUNDAY 1871

Before I went to bed last night I took a couple of Cockle's pills & so had an excuse for not going to church this morning. Polly went & took some of the youngsters. In the garden I pulled or rather cut a large number of fine lettuces & sent them in to the women. When Polly came home & we had had dinner, she asked me to take her out & I consented to go where she liked. Just then Walter began to play up with Julia & the whole house was in confusion for some hour or more, the young vagabond exercising a powerful pair of lungs in the most determined manner. Julia had given him a slap in the face & knocked his head against the wall & nothing would satisfy him apparently as he fancied he had a grievance. I gave him half a dozen heavy cuts with my cane & that seemed to quiet him. A little after three Polly came down ready for an Outing. She decided to go to see Mr & Mrs Littlewood so we took a car for St Kilda & when we got there had a little blow on the Beach & then went off to the Littlewoods. We found Mr & Mrs Littlewood at home & had

186 Fr. 'reparation'.

a chat with them for an hour or more then resisting an hospitable invitation from them to stay to tea we came away for home. In the cab we took was Barclay & a friend. Polly had a long chat with Barclay about Beechworth & the Beechworth people. Found that Walter was inclined to be a good boy, he had been sent to bed so I let him get up for a while. I think his punishment will probably be of benefit to him. There certainly is a necessity for curbing the tempers of our youngsters, some of them want breaking in badly. Stayed at home in the evening & went to bed about ten o'clock. Julia's beau came to visit her but I do not think he took her out.

Had a piece of ham at dinner to-day of our own curing, it was very good.

NOVEMBER 13 MONDAY 1871

Felt very worried when I got up this morning for during the whole of the night I was uneasily lying half asleep & half awake thinking & sweating over my liabilities without seeing any prospect of successfully dealing with them. Went to the Bank & found there was only a trifle to my Credit. When I got back I went to the Sheriff's Office & talked money with Walford. He was very anxious to help me & at my suggestion I accepted a Bill for £50 which he sent to his Account at the Bank for Discount. If the Bill is Approved I shall get a cheque for the Amount from Walford. Stayed about the Gaol the whole afternoon but did not Muster. Went into town & called at Goyders where I paid a Book-maker named Bradbury £3 & left with him £2.10 to pay another named John Thompson. Met at Goyder's Mr Allingham, Mr Hayes & Mr Whiteman, we all had a glass of sherry & a chat when we were joined by Mr Smyth who is Crown Prosecutor & was for a short time a Judge. Did not go out in the evening. Polly far from well & still suffering from neuralgia. Went to the Club for a few minutes before tea time to look for Cane to whom I am indebted £2. He did not happen to be at the Club though Marcus Clarke had seen him there but a short time before.

Have had a good deal of bother in the Gaol with some female lunatics. Shall I am glad to say get rid of two of the worst of them to-morrow.

NOVEMBER 14 TUESDAY 1871

Fussing & worrying about money matters all the day. Had long conferences with Polly who was not very well & dull & miserable in consequence of the pecuniary difficulties we have to encounter. We counted up & found we owe altogether close upon £350 & with little or no means of paying any part of it just at present. Polly went off City-ward quite prepared to do something desperate & when I came home she met me with a tearful face & let me know she had been to consult with Wyburn & that he had given her no encouragement at all. He advised borrowing money on Life Assurance & got the tables of the Alliance Assurance Compy. to show how it could be done. He however evidently did'ent understand the figures & made out twelve quarterly payments to mean twelve monthly ones. I explained this to Polly & went into town & got the papers myself to show what I stated was correct.

Polly cheered up a good deal at this & I hoped she would get better, she was however taken very bad towards the evening & had to go to bed. Dr Robertson came over to see her in the evening & she came down stairs to him. He wrote a prescription & I sent & got the medicine. The doctor would not stop long but after a little kind chat went away. I sat up & smoked for a time then went off to bed. By the way I tried to get a Bill discounted through Walford's Bank. They smelt however Accommodation & would not have anything to do with it.

NOVEMBER 15 WEDNESDAY 1871

Polly rather better this morning & full of good intentions. The Court commenced this morning & I was at the Court House the greater portion of the day. When I came home to lunch I found Polly again despondent. She had been to see Bell with whom she was formerly very friendly. He sympathised to the extent of saying he was sorry he could not become one of the Sureties as the Rules of his Partnership prohibited it.

Polly & I had another chat & I resolved to write a letter to Moton Moss the well known money lender & see what terms I could make with him. I knew Dr & Mrs Robertson were sincere people & that they would help Polly if they could so I got her to take the letter over to the doctor & ask him to give it to Moton Moss as a sort of introduction as the doctor is acquainted with Moss & I do not know him. When I saw Polly she told me the doctor would not hear of my going to Moss but offered to be one of the Sureties & to give me his cheque for mine to make up the money which is most pressingly needed. The doctor was most kind & my heart bounded into my throat when I heard of his kindness! Oh the humiliation of debt! Oh the worry the trouble & the anxiety one little fit of extravagance occasions. What a sacrifice of independence does the man make who gets into debt, what weakness he displays in living just for the present moment & by his thoughtlessness storing up future troubles for himself & family. Wrote to Lynch & asked him to renew a Bill I had given him. Went to the Club in the evening, saw Jardine Smith. He gave me 5/- I won from him at the Races.

NOVEMBER 16 THURSDAY 1871

Attended at the Court this morning.

Saw William Lynch who very kindly brought me Cash to take up his Bill due on Saturday. I gave him another Acceptance for £39.15.5 which is the amount I owe him altogether. Polly went to St Kilda to-day & came back delighted with the kindness she had received from Mr & Mrs Littlewood. Littlewood consented without any hesitation to be a surety to the Insurance Company so that now I have two good names & only require one more to be able to make my proposal for a loan. If my Life is considered good I am confident I shall have no trouble as I have such good security to offer. Went to the Club between five & six o'clock this evening but came home to tea.

Polly did not come home till later in the evening. Began to night to read again *The Vicar of Wakefield* & was delighted with its quaint easy style, read two or three chapters to Harry who was very attentive & in a sad state when I had to send him away to his lessons. Harry is very fond of reading & has picked up a good deal of information on one subject or another by the practice he has got of conning well every Newspaper that comes in his way. Met Joe in town to-day & was glad to hear from him Bill was getting on all right.

NOVEMBER 17 FRIDAY 1871

Got up this morning much lighter hearted. Polly still eager for further execution & started off to see Kerferd. She came back at dinner time having been well received. Kerferd promised to see Mr O'Grady the Secretary to the Alliance Compy. & also Commissioner of Public Works & Polly was to call on him again in the afternoon. When she went back Kerferd told her that he had a long talk with O'Grady about me & that my paper was gone before the Board to expedite it though it would be necessary I should get a third Surety. Kerferd said he would not be Surety as if he should be in power to do me good some time from his parliamentary position, it would interfere with his doing so if he was responsible on my account. Polly & Kerferd talked the matter over & eventually Joe White was fixed upon as the right man to ask.

NOVEMBER 19 SUNDAY 1871

Got up this morning at the usual time & went to Church with Polly, Harry, Sissy & Dotty. In the afternoon mustered & after that took Sissy, Walter & Godfrey to meet their mamma who had gone with Harry & Dotty to see Aunt Emma. Had to go all the way & found Polly & her charge chatting with Joe & Emma & the family. William Lotherington was there & according to his own account liked his life on board of the *Dandenong*.¹⁸⁷ I gave Agnes my bouquet & holder. Got home by tea time & in the evening went into town with the intention of calling at the Club. There was however no sign of light about the place & as I didn't care to knock at the Public house door I came away without going in. Walked through Spring Street towards home & could not help remarking how little the Sabbath seemed to be observed save as a holiday in some of the houses. Outside one residence a crowd was collected listening to some operatic singing that was going on within. I stopped a moment & heard some musical talent displayed of no ordinary kind & at the next minute heard through the open window of the adjoining house a dispute going on about the ace of trumps. Afterwards passing down Latrobe Street and just opposite the Police Barracks I heard in a house the Piano going & a number of folk enjoying a lively polka. How much longer will it be before Sunday will be recognised only as a holiday?

187 A steamer—which shortly after went out of business—plying the Melbourne–Warrnambool route. See Diary, 8 December 1871.

NOVEMBER 20 MONDAY 1871

A rather fine day though a little inclined to hot wind. Went to the Court at ten o'clock this morning & afterwards called upon Dr Motherwell to be examined by him on behalf of the Assurance Compy. from whom I propose to borrow the money that will get me out of debt. The doctor was very kind & chatted most amiably while he asked the preliminary questions before I laid bare my massive chest. As soon as he saw it, he exclaimed 'Hullo you have been doctoring here'. At first I did not understand but soon remembered a mustard plaister I had had at one time while under the influence of a bad cough & cold. The doctor sounded me most gently & whether or no my body discoursed most excellent music he seemed satisfied & began to talk upon topics foreign to the subject business of my visit, Penal discipline & other kindred subjects. 'There's one thing more for you now to do,' said the doctor & led me to a little instrument like the model of a gasometer 'Now let me see how much air your lungs will hold.' I siezed a tube that was hanging from the instrument & began to blow down it as hard as ever I could till stopped by the doctor who assured me I was altogether wrong & instead of doing what he required was disarranging the machine. I tried to learn, made a great fuss, inflated my lungs & with a lamentable littleness only puffed 170. That wont do my lad said the doctor. I puffed away again & with much the same result. Then I puffed again & reached 210 & I firmly believe with half an hour's practice I could puff 310 just as or a great deal more easily. The doctor however said the 210 would do and I went away feeling satisfied I had passed the ordeal necessary to insure my Life being accepted. The Case against Cuthbert in the Mining Court was heard to-day before Judge Molesworth. Judgment was reserved.

Went to the Club this afternoon. I did not muster as I had been through the Gaol with the V. Justice. Stayed at home in the evening & played Bezique with Polly. Harry gave lots of trouble over his sums & at length I was obliged to give him just a little bit of a thrashing which did him good.

NOVEMBER 30 THURSDAY 1871

St Andrews Day, kept as a holiday by the Banks. By Post this morning Harry got an invitation to attend the Scotch College School Sports. Godfrey Lotherington sent two tickets, one for Harry & one for me. Mamma however arranged that Harry & Walter should make use of them & they did so accordingly. There was a holiday at the Sheriff's Office. After dinner to-day, I was lazily lying on the Sofa when Marcus Clarke put in an appearance; he had brought Mrs Clarke to see Polly. Did not Muster this afternoon but went to the Club after four o'clock instead. Walked part of the way home with Jardine Smith & Duerdin. The dinner the Club is to give to Anthony Trollope will come off on the sixteenth of December. My name is down for it or I should not be inclined to pay the guinea. Stayed at home this evening & after doing

a little reading & visiting the pigs played Bezique with Polly till it was time to go to bed. This morning I went into town & called upon Walsh. He promised he would do what he could to help me obtain promotion. I called upon him in the shop & he bewildered me with the civility of the shopkeeper. It is very hard to ask a man a favor when he is continually sir-ring you & treating you as if you were in a superior position. Behind the Counter is no place for a member of Parliament. This is the last day the Sheriffs will have full charge of the Gaols, to-morrow Mr Duncan commences to reign in their stead.

DECEMBER 4 MONDAY 1871

Got up at half past five this morning & went into the Gaol where I saw the men on Parade, then went into the Old Wing & saw the irons taken off Geary. This man seemed in a state of religious exaltation & to have no fear of his approaching death. He said how lucky he was to be about to die as he was with all the comforts of religion about him. Now, said he, I shall have Mass & then the Holy Sacrament at the very last, how different from many a poor fellow in the Bush, 'Glory be to God'. Nor, however, continued he, but what I had taken care to be in reach of a Minister where I was staying. From Geary's manner since he has been under my notice I am of opinion that he has for a long time been brooding over his crime & has paid great attention to his religious duties in the hope of obtaining mercy from Heaven if not from man. At ten o'clock the usual crowd had assembled in the Gaol & the usual formalities were gone through, after which Geary was hanged. He was praying devoutly to the last moment & until he was placed on the dock was very strong & self supported. The usual tremor came over him at the very last; he died without a struggle. Dr Barber was present & took the part as usual of directing executioner.

Polly took baby down to Elsternwick to be out of the way of the Gaol while the execution was going on. The weather the whole day was fearfully hot & dusty. I had to go down to the Penal Office & was tolerably well roasted. Mustered in the afternoon. After Muster went into town & called at the Club, then came home to tea. Went out again in the evening. The Club room was more like the hot room at a Turkish Bath than an ordinary apartment. I got Duerdin to go out for a walk & we strolled up & down Bourke & Collins Streets for more than an hour. When I went home Polly was at Mrs Robertson's & did not come home till past eleven o'clock. She had been having oysters & came home in jovial spirits the doctor accompanying her. I wrote a letter to my father to-day & said some very plain things in it. However as I was going to the Post Office I made up my mind that it would not do any good & might cause the old man uneasiness so I did not post it. Got some stamps & sent *The Australasians* for the month. Polly very unwell & was to-day obliged to come from Elsternwick earlier than she intended in consequence. Hall was at home to-day suffering from a galled foot.

DECEMBER 8 FRIDAY 1871

This morning I was unable to sleep after four o'clock so at about half past four I got up & dressed then went through the Gaol, after which I took a stroll through the meat market & then through the Eastern Market. In the latter I saw Joe, Emma & Agnes. They had bought six lbs of strawberries & were contemplating other similar extravagances. I was sorry to hear from Joe that the Steamer on board which William has got employment is not likely to be kept on as the trade to Warrnambool has not paid her owners. I hope Bill will not be long out of a billet but am afraid this will interfere somewhat with the merry christmas the Lotheringtons had cause to anticipate. Before I came home to breakfast I bought a Snapper as it looked a nice fish. I heard however afterwards Snapper was not very good & I must say we found it very dry & without much flavour. In *The Argus* of this morning there was a leading article commenting on Duncan's appointment to the charge of the Gaols¹⁸⁸ & showing pretty clearly it was impossible he could do justice to all the Establishments placed under his control. I spoke of this leader in the Sheriff's office & Ellis looked very knowing & said he was aware it was coming some days ago. I made Jardine Smith laugh at this & he declared no one knew he had written [it] till the day before & only then when he sent his copy into the office & had written without any prompting from the office & the office even didn't know he was going to write.

DECEMBER 9 SATURDAY 1871

Got up this morning feeling tolerably jolly & comfortable. Went to Church with Polly, Sissy, Dotty & Harry. The weather was fine but rather warm. After dinner we had a feast of strawberries & cherries & then Polly took the little girls to see Mrs Smith. Mustered & then lazily read *The Cloister and the Hearth* by Read until Polly came home to tea. In the evening I went into town for a stroll & called at the Club where I met Jardine Smith, Kane, Purvis & Telo. Jardine Smith & I left the Club together & as he was passing near our house I induced him to come in & have a smoke & some brandy & water. We got on very jollily as Polly likes Mr Smith & were talking away very freely when our visitor's chair (a ladies one) collapsed & brought him very funnily to the ground. Of course we all laughed & Smith himself took his downfall very good temperedly. Got talking Shop & in a moment of confidence I told my position as regards money & showed with all my supposed advantages how hard it was to get along at all & make both ends meet. Smith left at about eleven. I smoked another pipe or two & then went to bed feeling none the better for Smith's strong tobacco. I had borrowed or rather took some from his pouch as my own was empty. The new boilers in the Gaol Cook-house were used to-day for the first time. Some of the women complained that the hominy tasted nasty.

188 Duncan became Inspector-General of Penal Establishments.

DECEMBER 10 SUNDAY 1871

DECEMBER 11 MONDAY 1871¹⁸⁹

Somehow or other I have got wrong a day with my diary & am now writing this on Tuesday afternoon & can only record in these two pages for Monday. I was busy all day in the office worrying over a lot of Returns that have to be done for Mr Duncan's office. Mrs Gee this morning had ordered a virago of a woman into her cell when the woman turned upon her & made a grab at her brooch which she tore off her neck & ground to pieces in her mouth. I sent for Mr Sturt the Visiting Justice & he ordered her two months additional sentence. Mr Alexr. Rodgers who was well known to us at Beechworth called this afternoon & stayed for a while chatting about Beechworth & Beechworth people. Mr Barrett the Clerk of Works called by Appointment to meet Mr Duncan & came in to our house until the big man arrived. Duncan came in due course & we went to look at a proposed alteration in the Labor Yard. Mr Duncan promised to come & spend the afternoon on Wednesday & make a thorough inspection of the Gaol. I can get along with Duncan very well but feel tolerably certain there will soon be a row between myself & Snelling as I can see by his Memos he means making mischief. Did not muster but went into Melbourne & called at the Club where I saw Jardine Smith, Duerdin & some others with whom I am tolerably well acquainted. Came home to tea & spent the evening reading *The Cloister and [the] Hearth*. Polly left off practising the piano at a little before nine & then we played a couple of games of Bezique after which like good children we toddled off to bed. I hardly know how to conclude these pages & fear I must write rubbish to enable me to do so. Heard Dotty read to-night & was quite pleased at finding she was very much improved & able to read easy words without any trouble. Harry is a great fellow for reading but something like his father has a fancy for skimming, instead of reading books & so can generally be found with four or five different books scattered about him. The dinner the Yorick Club talk of giving to Trollope does not seem to create much enthusiasm among the members of the club & judging from the small number there are who have promised to attend I fear it will be next akin to a failure, unless the arrival of the novelist will 'stir men's blood' & make them forget the shillings in the satisfaction of entertaining a man who has created for himself a firm standing in the literary world although he has done too much writing not to have written a good deal that his friends might well wish unwritten.

DECEMBER 16 SATURDAY 1871

Got up this morning at half past five & took Sissy & Dotty to the market where we bought strawberries, Gooseberries & flowers. Got home at a little

189 As the dates indicate, Castieau wrote up the entry for these two days together

after seven o'clock. Was busy in the Gaol till after eleven o'clock, then I went into the Court & asked the Sheriff to attend an Enquiry at the Gaol with regard to a statement made by a prisoner concerning the conduct of Detective Christie. Went into town & called for Mr Sturt. Got him & brought him up in a cab with me. The Enquiry was gone into & the Detective was accused of what is called 'putting up' robberies & conniving at others, in fact he was made out to be an infernal villain & a thorough faced scoundrel. The prisoner Williams who made the statement said Christie had given him some skeleton keys which he must have taken out of the Detective Office. Williams said these keys were now lying at the top of his house & could be identified by some of the detectives if they were got. After the Enquiry was over I took a cab & went with Turnkey Buck to the place described & sure enough there was a bunch of skeleton keys. The statement of Williams is a most determined one & given with a fair show of frankness, still it is only a statement & it would be very unfair to judge Christie upon it without some substantial corroboration.

DECEMBER 25 MONDAY 1871

Christmas day was a very busy one with us. Polly & nurse were hard at work at a dozen different things from very early morning. The decorating the rooms with green stuff took some time. We had as many flowers as we could get & made up with branc[h]es of fig, vine & Mulberry. Joe & Emma with their two boys came at a little after one o'clock & shortly after Edwin Smith put in an appearance. We had extemporised a leaf to our table & managed to sit down very comfortably. The geese were rather hard to carve but the pudding was a tremendous success increased by the four penny pieces which were scattered in it. Sissy & Dotty each got one & so did Uncle Joe. We had a dozen bon-bons to amuse the youngsters with in the afternoon; the caps they got in them caused a good deal of fun. After a visit to the pigs & poultry we all went into the playground where we played all sort of little games & wound up with a game of cricket. Polly about this time had retired & was suffering badly from an attack of indigestion. She got all right however again in the evening. After tea Flory Morphy, Maggie & Dotty Robertson came over & we got up a dance, Lucy Morphy & Mrs Parkins joining in for some time. Polly & I went to bed at last both pretty fairly tired out with our exertions as must have been Julia for she worked & played like a regular little brick for the whole of the day. Aunt Emma gave Sissy & Dotty each a doll & one was given to baby by Uncle Joe.

DECEMBER 28 THURSDAY 1871

Was very busy all the morning in the Gaol & none the better able to do the work for having as I did a nasty attack of dyspepsia. Mr Nicholson came to the Gaol with Detective Walker to make further enquiry into a statement made by a prisoner against Detective Christie. I went with the prisoner & the



J.M. Nelson

Boxing Day Near Red Bluff, St. Kilda, 1873

watercolour; 27.2 x 56.8 cm

Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an5694850

officers of Police to a Pawn shop where we saw a pair of ear-rings which Christie, the prisoner said, had given to his (the prisoner's) wife. The Detective took possession of the ear-rings. Fred Brown & Mr Shadforth came to see us but I was not able to go into the house & so did not see them. Mustered in the afternoon, at muster a woman named McInnery was very noisy & was complained about for having broken her night-stool. After I had passed her cell, she began to smash & so when Muster was finished I went to her cell & threatened her with a strait waistcoat. Upon this she got violent & first of all tried to claw me & then flung a pannican at my head. The pannican struck the wall & bounded back to the far end of the cell. I went & picked it up & turned to leave where off the virago got her boot & let fly. The female officers however got the door shut & me out before the missile reached its destination & it came with the bang that might be expected from a Gaol boot against an iron clad door. The female officers mourned over me like the females did over the Faithful Shepherd in *Pickwick* & I could'ent help feeling very much amused though not edified over the whole affair. In the evening went into Melbourne & called at the Club where I saw Duerdin & walked for a time with him in Bourke Street.

CHAPTER 5: 1872

'JACK'S AS GOOD AS HIS MASTER'

It was in the year 1872 that Castieau devoted himself to the diary as never before or after. The entries for that year amount in total to about 150 000 words and cover personal and familial concerns in a wider context than any other year. They also signal a diarist at ease with the form in a way that goes beyond the observation of events and opinion to reflect in his own guarded way on the world passing before him.

Living on the edge of the city the Castieaus were superbly placed to catch the rhythms of urban life. Whatever anxieties might have been felt by Melbourne's middle classes about the 'pathology of the night',¹⁹⁰ it is striking how free city-dwellers like the Castieaus felt in wandering the city at night. It is true that they avoided the back-lanes, but the principal protection followed from their sociability—going to the theatre or shopping in the night-time meant almost always going as part of a crowd of family or friends. The city at night offered endless spectacle that the Castieaus enjoyed as much as any. When a city fire broke out late one Sunday night in August, 'we were both very sleepy, but Polly must go to a fire if there is any chance of getting to it & so we got up' and off they went about midnight to see the 'great blaze' a few blocks away.

There were other free entertainments of the city, some closer to the circumstances of Castieau's employment. A sensational divorce case early in the year provoked in Castieau a conventional distaste for the vulgar and vicarious enthusiasms of the crowd who attended the court 'when there is any sexual matter gone into'. There was no shortage of court business to attract the interest of the crowd during this year that began with the trials of a ship's captain over the wreck of his ship at the entrance to the bay, and ended with the sensational trial of two other mariners for the murder of South Sea Islanders during a blackbirding venture at Bougainville.

Alternating rises and falls in expectations about his own future continued to weigh on Castieau during 1872. A renewed application for promotion was met by a decisive re-buff from the premier and Charles Gavan Duffy, Chief Secretary, who wanted to see the gaols become more 'self supporting', a requirement which Castieau considered, with some justification, as excessively burdensome when the Melbourne Gaol served also as a remand prison. The sense of thwarted ambition was pervasive in a year when Castieau also faced some rebellion within the warders' ranks, where an incipient trade unionism was making its presence felt. The charges made against him by the

190 See Andrew Brown-May, *Melbourne Street Life: The Itinerary of Our Days* (Kew, Vic.: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 1998), p. 117.

leading agitator of the warders drove the prison governor to exasperation: 'Jack's as good as his master and a little better under the present democratic state of affairs'.

A change of government later in the year brought Castieau back into the range of influence. His sister was a governess to the family of the new attorney-general and intimations came by letter from her of a favourable view of Castieau becoming the inspector-general. But not even Polly's eager pressing of his case before the new premier was enough to bring the desired promotion. So the year ended with the diarist railing against the 'meanesses and trickeries of the Civil Service'. Not even the comfort of a bed-time toddy was left to Castieau and Polly, so burdened by debt that they had decided to suspend purchase of any more drink until they could afford it—to keep, as he put it, a 'Temperance Hotel'.¹⁹¹

JANUARY 1 MONDAY 1872

A few minutes before the commencement of the new year Polly & I went over to Mrs Morphy's & as the clock struck twelve did a little kissing all round. Had a glass of wine & then went home thinking there would be no keeping up the New Year as in olden times; but we were mistaken for after divers pricking up of ears at fancied distant music & just as I was getting into bed, a martial band came nearer & nearer till at length it stopped at Dr Robertson's door. There was no going to bed then so after hastily dressing again I ran across with Polly & with Harry who had been got up by his mother. The doctor & De Verdon were busily engaged opening bottles to refresh the musicians & I helped them most liberally dispensing the doctor's drink. The band was that of the Carlton Volunteers who came to do honor to Dr Robertson their medical officer. After two or three tunes & a like number of drinks, 'Auld Lang Syne' was played & then the band marched off taking a pretty considerable crowd that had collected away with it. Then our turn came & we sat down to eat, & drank till the men folk were rather more jolly than well behaved. It was three o'clock before we got home. Up at usual time, the day was lovely & the holiday was largely taking [i.e. taken] advantage of, all Melbourne nearly turning out. Harry Hall & our Harry went to the Hippodrome in the afternoon & Polly took the youngsters up the River in a boat & landed them at the Botanical Gardens. In the evening Polly took the whole of the children to the Wax Works. I stayed at home, smoked & drank toddy. Heard this afternoon at the Club, that the Sussex one of Wigram's crack ships was lost coming into the Heads. Five of her sailors were drowned. When I came home I heard Polly had gone to Dr Robertson's. Was going to bring her home when I met Jemmy Robertson coming for me. Had a nice friendly supper.

191 Diary, 28 January 1872.

JANUARY 2 TUESDAY 1872

Woke up this morning with an uncomfortable feeling that I should receive unpleasant correspondence from the office. Mr Duncan called in the afternoon & spoke to me about a Return I had said could not be done without extra clerical assistance. He pooh poohed the idea & of course got his way but I had the satisfaction of speaking pretty freely to him on various matters.

Had a goose for dinner. While we were picking the bones Gale came in & astounded us with the information that he was ordered to Beechworth to take charge of the Gaol. Gale did'ent like the idea but we spoke highly of the place & comforted him as much as it was in our power to do. Went into town with Gale in the afternoon & saw him start for Pentridge, then went to the Club & read the papers. In the evening Polly went to the Circus with the youngsters & I stayed at home in charge of the baby who fortunately for me was good enough to keep asleep the whole time they were away. When Polly came home I gladly went to bed.

There is a girl named McInnery, alias Considine in the Gaol who is a great nuisance to the Gaol, myself & the officers. She has a foul tongue & when the fit is on spares no one the use she can make of it against them. She is terribly destructive & has torn to shreds several sets of bedding & broken to pieces several night stools. I do not know what to do, reasoning has no effect nor punishment either. 'Quite sane' the doctor declares, so repugnant to my feelings as it is I have been obliged to leave her without bedding & without tub. There she is like a wild beast, without even the cleanliness of one, she dirties one cell & then she is removed to another. It is hard to tell what she wants, except it is to go to the Yarra Bend.¹⁹²

JANUARY 10 WEDNESDAY 1872

Another very hot day & one I found particularly wearisome. I was up at half past five & went into the Gaol where I attended to many things particularly about providing a supply of water for any emergency. All through the day a dull Enquiry into the charges brought against the Detectives was carried on by Messrs Wright & Sturt.¹⁹³ There were very strong assertions made by the prisoners but they were uncorroborated & consequently were not received as being of much value. My own opinion however still is that there has been a great deal done by the Detectives which they had no right to do & which put them very nearly on a par with the Criminal Class from whom they looked for the information which was to get them the designation of 'active & zealous officers'.

192 One of Melbourne's lunatic asylums.

193 See Diary 16 & 25 December 1871. A prisoner had alleged that Detective Christie had been involved in planting evidence and framing suspected criminals. The detectives were cleared (*The Argus*, 11 Jan 1872, p. 5). Castieau's son later edited Christie's reminiscences, *Reminiscences of Detective Inspector Christie Related by J.B. Castieau*, (Melbourne: George Robertson and Co., n.d.), see also John Lahey, *Damn You, John Christie: The Public Life of Australia's Sherlock Holmes* (Melbourne: State Library of Victoria, 1993).

Mustered in the afternoon & in the evening went to the Club where I met Duerdin, we had a little walk together & on his pressing me I went with him into Scotts & had some Ballan water & ice. To Duerdin's surprise on his tendering a shilling for payment the waitress told him each drink was a shilling. As it happened Duerdin had no more silver so I had to pay for my own drink. Got home at a little before ten o'clock. The wind changed at about five o'clock but the change was not very decided & the house continued to be terribly hot. Was obliged to go to bed without a bath & felt 'used up'.

JANUARY 14 SUNDAY 1872

This was a terribly hot day. In the morning Polly did not seem to care about going to church so I took five of the youngsters, leaving the two little ones at home with Polly. In the afternoon I felt very lazy & not at all inclined to Muster so I went into the Gaol & wrote up my Diary instead. Polly took Godfrey to see Mrs Smith. At about five o'clock there came on a glorious rain which lasted for an hour or more, after which the weather cleared & there was as fine a sunset as I have ever seen. Notwithstanding the heavy rain the weather was still close & muggy. I went across & had a chat with Dr Robertson about the English news. Polly came home at about eight o'clock & then I went as far as the Club. There were several members present. After a time Jardine Smith & I left together. We walked with one another to the end of Swanston Street.

Bright a professed spiritualist & James Smith another, a little more so, preached at the Unitarian Chapel to-day.¹⁹⁴ Bright on 'The Creation' & Smith on the Religion of Shakspeare. Bright preached in the morning & Smith in the evening. The Divine origin of Jesus is totally denied by the spiritualists & all creeds are declared to be vanities. Good works done help a man both in this world & the one to come. Smith is wonderfully impressed with the new power & states he is among the most favored of mortals, receiving manifestations from Spirits of the highest spheres. He even went so far as to say it is reported that he had a message from God himself. Poor fellow 'Yarra Bend' on the brain I very much fear.

JANUARY 19 FRIDAY 1872

This was an agreeable day & I felt very well & so able to enjoy it. Received a letter from Mrs Smith & also two which I forwarded for Edwin, later in the day one came for Edwin which had apparently been part of the Mail on Board of the Rangoon, forwarded that also. After I had got through

194 For the enthusiastic embrace of spiritualism (about which Castieau is clearly a sceptic), see Lurline Stuart, *James Smith: The Making of a Colonial Culture* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989), especially pp. 135–151, and Alfred Gabay, *Messages from Beyond: Spiritualism and Spiritualists in Melbourne's Golden Age 1870–1890* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2001).

ordinary Gaol business I went to the Town Hall to get some money for road metal, saw Cosgrove the City Treasurer who was very civil & invited me into his office where he would insist on my having some refreshment. I took a glass of sherry & a biscuit. Went to Mr Duncan's office & paid in my collections. The Inspector General was preparing to go to Portland so I only said Good morning & did not trouble him further. Snelling was civil & so also was Stone, the latter very obliging.

Mustered in the afternoon & in the evening took the usual walk to the Club. Had a chat with Shillinglaw, Ogier & the new Editor of *The Herald*. Began to talk Titchbourne¹⁹⁵ & afterwards New Guinea. Ogier it seems has an objection to the Hotel people at the Club & invited us to have a glass of beer with him at the Argus Hotel. I went for the chat was interesting. We went into a nice comfortable room where we found Semple sitting. We chummed up of course & New Guinea again came on the carpet. An Expedition has just started from Sydney for the Coast of New Guinea. The adventurers intend landing on the Coast if possible & if not to try something in the way of pearl shell fishing. Shillinglaw considers the whole affair will be a failure & that if a landing is made the natives will eat all the strangers to the soil. The *Herald* Editor thought better of the enterprise & considered the Pearl Shell to fall back upon would be a security against loss while if a peaceable landing was effected there would be a great chance as it was well known there was gold in the country.

When I came home I played a game of Bezique with Polly & then went to bed.

JANUARY 20 SATURDAY 1872

Got up rather late, was however in the office by nine o'clock. More suggestions & circulars from the Penal Office. In the course of the morning I received a letter giving Mr McCall the *Coup de Grace*. He is to leave at the end of the month & the Chief Secretary's order is to be obeyed without further correspondence. This is a blow to me for McCall was trustworthy & very smart; his going away will I fear cause me trouble. In the afternoon I mustered, when I came back to the house I was told there was a gentleman waiting to see me. I found it was Mr Francis Nixon who was Editor of one of the Beechworth Papers a very long time ago. He was of course hard up, had'ent in fact food for his family, would I lend him a pound until next Wednesday. I felt I should'ent get the money back & I knew I could'ent afford to lose it yet I lent it. Nixon went away forcing an I.O.U. upon me which I have put away carefully in my Safe. There is one blessing; he is not likely to come to see me again while I hold the proof of his indebtedness. When Nixon

195 The Tichborne case centred on the claims of an English inheritance by Arthur Orton, a butcher from Wagga Wagga. It caused a popular sensation in the early 1870s in England and Australia. See Michael Roe, *Kenealy and the Tichborne Cause: A Study in Mid-Victorian Populism* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1974).

had gone away I went back to Polly who was chatting with Richard Warren the proprietor of *The Owens and Murray Advertiser*. When he went away Polly & I had a little domestic difficulty about Nixon. Polly was right I know, but she has a nasty way of nagging & keeping on at it. I got spiteful at last & just as we were commencing tea I released the bile by violently smashing a plate which of course I know was a very foolish thing to do. Went into town in the evening, at the Club met Telo & Cane. Watched the people crowding into the Town Hall to a concert, could see the Stage & hear some of the music at the club window. Did'ent however stop to avail myself of the opportunity. Walked into Bourke Street, hunted about for some time to get something nice for a shilling for Dotty as it will be her birthday on Monday. Could'ent see anything better than a bundle of Kisses so got them.

JANUARY 29 MONDAY 1872

Had more than a suspicion of bilious headache the whole of this day. In the morning was obliged to go into the women's wing & hear a number of Cases many of them trivial but still such as could not be passed over without giving the turnkeys some excuse for laxity of discipline. I punished ten or twelve women & among them two or three were very excited on receiving their sentences & made the corridor resound with their threats & abuse. One woman, Catherine McGuirk, a great creature nearly six feet high could scarcely restrain herself from flying at Mrs Aspinall. That little woman however stood with her arms akimbo 'as one who knoweth not'. McGuirk spoke daggers but used none I am happy to say; her language was however a caution.

McInnery is very fond of me & I got a number of pet appellations showered at me from the top of her voice. 'Little black devil' was about the mildest. I wish Mr Duffy could spend a week at the Gaol & see what I have to do. I feel certain I should get promotion without having to ask for it.

FEBRUARY 2 FRIDAY 1872

Felt much better this morning than I have done for some time. Mrs Mathews very sensible & almost cheerful. Charlie had passed a good night & she had evidently a little rest which had made her feel better.¹⁹⁶ Received a cheque last night for the pay so this morning I went to the Bank to get it cashed. The weather was rather cold & unpleasantly dusty. Called at the Bank of N.S. Wales & deposited a small sum to each of my accounts then went for the pay. Came back & settled with the turnkeys, mustered. After Muster was thinking of going into the fowl yard when I noticed a commotion in the house & heard from Julia that the doctor was wanted immediately. I was about sending for Dr Fitzgerald when Polly came running to me to ask me to go for Dr Robertson. The doctor came over at once & we found little Charlie very

196 This episode relates to the illness and death of the child of family friends, the Mathews.

much worse, in fact the poor little fellow was dying. It was pitiful to see the dear little fellow struggling for breath & apparently in a fright at not being able to speak. The doctor went away after suggesting some little simple treatment to endeavour to alleviate the boy's sufferings, but he evidently knew human skill was of no avail. I walked into the street with Dr Robertson. When I returned Charlie was all but dead. I brought Dr Robertson back. He was powerless, life was gone. Poor Mrs Mathews felt bitterly & quietly. She allowed the necessary things to be done, then on her knees by the side of the corpse, she knelt for hours. Charlie was the favorite of his father & mother. The little fellow looked more angel than mortal when the placid expression of death came over his features. His end was merciful, for with the disease he was laboring under, life must have been a burden & suffering his lot while in the world.

I telegraphed to Mr Moffett of Albury to prepare Mathews & then I wrote to Dr Cobbett & telegraphed to James Orr. Mathews got the news & sent back a telegraph, thanking us & being thankful that Mrs Mathews was with her son. Went to the Club & saw in an article in *The Australian Journal* a lot about the Gaol & its iniquities purporting to be written by a discharged prisoner. Bet Mr Wyatt a new hat that the Tichbourne claimant would never get the estates.

FEBRUARY 3 SATURDAY 1872

Up tolerably early this morning & spent a busy day with one thing & another. Sent for Mr Daley the Undertaker & he came pulling a very long face & professionally grieved of course at having to provide for the funeral of poor little Charlie Mathews. Telegraphed to Mathews that arrangements had been made for the Funeral & shortly after received one from him which must have crossed mine in which Mathews said the Echuca Coach would leave Echuca for Albury on Monday at two & arrive the next evening at Albury, it would bring Charlie's remains if I thought it advisable to send them. Mrs Mathews most anxious Charlie should be removed & Polly anxious to give her satisfaction. I could not however conscientiously recommend it for it is a long time till Tuesday & the sending the coffin by Railway to Echuca & then for thirty hours in a Coach to Albury would I thought be too much to chance its arriving there except in such a condition as to make it far from comforting to poor Charlie's relatives & friends. I Telegraphed however that 'Mrs Mathews wished removal, can alter arrangements but will await another telegram'. The answer came, 'Better remain, risk too great' so the funeral will take place as arranged tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock. Invited Messrs Keogh & Morison to the funeral. Littlewood called this morning to see Mrs Mathews. He will attend. A Wesleyan minister of Albury called & will preside at the funeral. Received a telegram from James Orr. Mrs Mathews also had one. The coffin was brought for Charlie this evening; it was very pretty. The poor little fellow looked very peaceful in it. Harry feels Charlie's death very much but says he is in a better

position than us & that he Harry dreamt Charlie came to him last night an angel. Polly went to the Cemetary & selected a piece of ground. She has been good through the whole trouble.

This morning I had to go into the Labor Yard to make enquiries about a man who was found dead on the Railway at Emerald Hill & who was supposed to have been in Gaol. As the man I suspected him to be had had his boots mended I went to the shoemaker's shop to see & noticed the shoemaker on seeing me put down the work he had in his hand behind a screen & took up a Government boot which he began working at. I looked behind the screen & saw a pair of boots nearly finished, evidently intended for some turnkey. The shoemaker would not tell who the boots were for but I hope to find out.

Went to the Club in the afternoon, saw Marcus Clarke, he is not the Editor of *The Australian Journal* now. I thought he was & wondered he had allowed the article about the Gaol to appear. In the evening went into Melbourne with Polly & Harry. The girls went to-day to stay at Doty's & the boys to Uncle Joe's.

FEBRUARY 4 SUNDAY 1872

A very cool day, weather look changeable but the wet kept off. Went to Church in the Gaol. In the afternoon punctually at three o'clock Mr Keogh & his son, Mr Littlewood, Mr Morison & the Rev. Mr Watsford arrived. The undertaker was also up to time & the remains of poor little Charlie were taken to his last home. I paid at the Cemetary Office £5. 17. 0 for the ground &c.¹⁹⁷ Everything was done quietly & nicely in connection with the funeral & I hope that Mrs Mathews will soon get over the very deep grief she now feels & begin to take nourishment; then I hope to see her get about a little & pluck up for the sake of those she has left. Littlewood asked me to go to St Kilda with him & I did so, though the Keoghs & Morison stopped to tea at my house. It looked strange my going away but Polly insisted a change would do me good & they all persuaded me to do so. Had a nice drive in Littlewood's trap to St Kilda, he & Mrs Littlewood have just returned from Sydney where they had evidently enjoyed themselves very much. Mr & Mrs Woolf were at Littlewood's. Came away from Littlewood's to catch the quarter past eight o'clock train. On the way from Littlewoods I ran up against a gentleman & without looking at him asked the nearest way to the Station. He smiled & then I saw it was Wyburn. Went to the Club where I saw Dr Avent, Dr Gilbee, Levy & Telo. Did not stop long but came home. Mrs Littlewood [should be Mrs Mathews] was chatting with Polly & a little more cheerful. If she would only take a little nourishment she would soon be herself again. She has taken Harry into her confidence & they had a long confab about Charlie & his belongings.

197 Castieau's accounts for the year suggest that he paid for the child's burial plot at St Kilda Cemetery.

FEBRUARY 5 MONDAY 1872

Mr Sturt came to the Gaol this afternoon. I brought a shoemaker before him who had been caught making a pair of boots on 'the cross' or in plain English, secretly. I expected the boots were intended for one of the turnkeys. It was not without some difficulty I could bring the Magistrate to see the man had done much wrong. However after a time he sentenced the prisoner to an extra month.

If Mr Sturt knew the evils of 'cross work' as well as I do, he would know how necessary it is to make an example when any one doing it is caught, as the man was, red-handed. If turnkeys employ prisoners to do work for them secretly they bring themselves at once to the level of the prisoners & lose all control. Prisoners do not work on 'the cross' for nothing & the turnkey who employs them must pay in some way or other either by giving tobacco or visiting friends or taking out letters or bringing in contraband articles. One officer in a gaol thus false to his duties will while he is undiscovered upset the efforts of Governor, or the best system. The offending officer is not easily discovered while he keeps his own council as it is a point of honor among thieves not to peach upon a 'screw' under the circumstances and so, as in this case, the prisoner declines to tell who he was working for & says it is best for himself to be punished. 'It was the first time he had ever done anything etc. etc.'

Went to the Club in the evening. Met Reed the Architect,¹⁹⁸ came home, found Polly up & better. Had a chat with her & Mrs Mathews then went to bed.

FEBRUARY 9 FRIDAY 1872

Another nice cool day. Polly & Mrs Mathews went to Elsternwick together. Mrs Mathews went to the cemetery the first thing in the morning. Busy in the Gaol all the morning. Mustered in the afternoon. In the evening went to the Club & on the Road called in at the Albion as I wanted to see *The Ovens and Murray Advertiser* & my letter if it had been published.¹⁹⁹ After some trouble I found the paper I wanted & my letter in it, though in very small type. The type I would'ent have minded but I was very much annoyed in finding two or three paragraphs I did'ent write were put into the letter above the signature I used on this, as on other occasions. In my letter (as in duty bound) I studiously avoided all reference to politics & am therefore disgusted that the clever individual who took upon himself to lengthen my letter had inserted a paragraph of advice to the Chief Secretary. There was another paragraph about a Wesleyan meeting of some kind or another, a subject

198 Joseph Reed (1823?–1890), the architect who designed many Melbourne landmarks including the Melbourne Town Hall, the Exhibition Building and a number of city churches (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*). There are earlier mentions in the diary indicating that Castieau knew him in part from Reed's friendship with George Wintle, the first sheriff of Melbourne and Castieau's superior.

199 Castieau continued as an occasional correspondent with the Beechworth paper after his return to Melbourne.

which I certainly should'ent feel tempted to tackle. I think myself badly treated in this matter & shall tell Warren so the first opportunity I have of letting him know my feelings on the subject. Polly & Mrs Mathews were home before I got there. Mr Ingomells Harry's schoolmaster came to-day to ask that Harry might join the Latin class. I said I did'ent mind his doing so but that I found the boy had no application & that it was difficult to make him do what he had to do of English. Mr Ingomells however wished the boy should try the Latin so I consented that he should do so.

FEBRUARY 10 SATURDAY 1872

The weather still pleasant & particularly agreeable for this time of the year. Polly & Mrs Mathews went for Trotty & brought her from School. Busied myself about the Gaol till past one o'clock, then I went into the house & was thinking of having some dinner when I was told Mr Duncan was in the Gaol & so I left at once to attend upon 'the head of the department'. Mr Duncan did the grimly amiable, transacted some business in the office & then went through the Gaol. He found fault with some of the cells & was shocked at seeing the stains of recently slaughtered bugs upon some of the walls. Notwithstanding the Inspector General, I was much satisfied myself with the appearance of the Gaol & should not mind its being gone through by any persons however well up they may be in penal arrangements. I noticed an inclination on the part of Mr Duncan to curry favor with the prisoners. If I were to yield as he was inclined to do, there would be a large addition to the Staff soon required. Did not muster this afternoon & did not go out either until after tea. Mrs Castieau, Mrs Mathews & some of the children with Trotty Gray as a visitor went to the Library. In the evening they went to the Waxworks & I took a turn at the Club, met Mr Eville, Mr Miles & Mr Duerdin; went at Eville's request into the Hotel & had a glass of beer, met Polly & the family, went through the Royal Arcade & then to Paddy's Market. Got home at about half past ten o'clock. The children all tired, they however managed supper before they retired to bed. Wrote to Mathews this morning. Mrs Mathews had a letter.

FEBRUARY 14 WEDNESDAY 1872

This was a close & muggy day. Did usual work in the office. In the afternoon there was the disagreeable business of flogging; this was the first sentence of the kind inflicted under the *Criminal Statutes Amendment Act* which empowers Magistrate[s] to sentence flogging for indecent exposure. The fellow punished to-day was a cur & behaved like one.

Partially mustered when I was sent for by Mr Sturt, & transacted some little business with him, then went in to tea. In the evening went to the Club & after reading the papers took a walk & then came home. Was home before Polly & Mrs Mathews who had gone for a stroll, smoked a pipe & went to bed.

By the afternoon's Post I received a Valentine & by no means a sentimental one either. It represented me as a happy parent blessed with a good wife, who had just presented me with twins which in the picture the nurse was exhibiting with great satisfaction. What was meant for me was loaded with children up to all kinds of noise & devilment & who were evidently too much for the unfortunate depicted as their father. It was very good & we all enjoyed the caricature which spoke home but yet left no sting. Dotty & Sissy got their Valentines in due course & Harry received a penny to console him for not getting a Valentine as well as his sisters. With his penny Harry bought a Valentine representing a hideous monster pounding drugs in a mortar. This he sent to the family Apothecary as being appropriate.

FEBRUARY 15 THURSDAY 1872

Up this morning at about the usual time. The Criminal Sittings commenced to-day & I spent most of my time there though I took a cab in the morning & went to the Treasury & the Town Hall at each of which places I drew some money for the Government. Saw John Hall & he invited me into his sanctum where I sat down & had a chat while my papers were being got ready. As I was journeying to the Treasury I passed another cab which contained John Turner of Beechworth. We were going in different directions so we gracefully saluted & saw no more of each other. Mustered in the afternoon. In the evening went as usual to the Club & after skimming some of the English periodicals went for a little stroll with Duerdin. Got a letter from Mrs Smith in which she said my father had been ill but was recovering. Bought a novel to night, *Memoirs of a Physician* by Dumas.²⁰⁰ I do not think I have read it & if I have not, expect some few hours quiet entertainment from its perusal. Wrote a letter to Alderdice & sent him the letter that had been published by *The Ovens and Murray Advertiser* & signed 'Quits', told him what I had not written of it & asked him to let any one know who had any idea I signed 'Quits'. Polly & Mrs Robertson had a little bit of a rumpus for which I am very sorry. They met to night & I thought had squared matters, it appears however each holds to the opinion that her own children cannot do wrong & that other people's children can.

FEBRUARY 27 TUESDAY 1872

Went into the Court this morning & stayed until some prisoners were sentenced and a charge of Fraudulent Insolvency commenced. At one o'clock went into the court again to hear the Judgment in Capt. Collard case delivered.²⁰¹ A number of witnesses to character were called who all gave the Captain the highest character both as a seaman & a commander. Judge

200 Alexandre Dumas, *Memoirs of a Physician*, of which several English editions were published from 1846.

201 Collard was charged over the wreck of the Sussex at Barwon Heads (see Diary, 1 January 1872).

Barry delivered a long judgment which as usual was see-saw fashion; at one moment I fancied the prisoner would get the heaviest sentence it was in the power of the Judge to inflict, then a little further on I considered the Judge intended to inflict a nominal penalty, afterwards again that the Captain was in for a severe punishment, then again that he would get off lightly after all. Finally the judge sentenced him to one month's imprisonment, this after the solemn peroration of the Judge tickled the fancy of some one in the Gallery & caused him to sneer very audibly. I pitied the poor Captain for really he seemed most terribly cut up & when he went into the back room I saw it was with difficulty he kept back the scalding tears. I shook hands with him & bid him keep up his heart. He told me & I believed it, that he honestly did his duty & to the best of his ability on the night of the wreck, that he did not watch in hand, time the light for it was very unusual to do so, but that he did mentally do so. He attributed the misfortune entirely to the fires lighted by picnic parties on the Barwon Heads. I did all I could for the captain & put him in the debtors ward of the prison. Mr Smyth the Crown Prosecutor brought the Mate to see the Captain & I permitted him to do so.

FEBRUARY 29 THURSDAY 1872

Up early this morning & took a good look through the Gaol before breakfast. Was in the office at my work sharp by nine o'clock & remained until, at a little after eleven o'clock, Mr Duncan put in an appearance. Went with him through the Cook-house & women's wing. He was then obliged to go away. After lunch I went to the Sheriff's Office & wished to see the Sheriff. He was in Court & so I had to push my way through a crowd who were eagerly sucking in the indecent details of the case of Clarson V Blair. Mrs Clarson was in the witness box the whole of the day & the letters she had written were produced & acknowledged by her on her examination.

The general impression is that she was criminally intimate with Dr Blair & became almost insane with jealousy when the doctor took unto himself a wife & dispensed with further favors from herself. It is surprising to me to see so many people who waste or spend their time at the Court when there is any sexual matter gone into. I should be ashamed to be seen unless it was my business to be present, which I am thankful to say it is not. Mrs Clarson owned to being 50 years of Age so the 'gushing sweet' must have been about 43 when she used to sign herself when writing to the doctor 'Your devoted little Carrie'.

MARCH 1 FRIDAY 1872

Up early again this morning & went into the Gaol. About the establishment until breakfast time. Very busy all the morning until I received a Cheque for the pay, then I went to the Bank & got the money. There was a Flogging this afternoon but owing I suppose to the superior attractions of Clarson V Blair there was not the usual crowd; only one reporter put in an appearance. John Dunn the

Comedian got an order from me. Altogether there were only three persons besides the officials present & this I certainly think a decided improvement upon the crowd that usually assembles to see the flagellator do his degrading work.

Captain Coffey & Mr Siddely of W.P. White & Co. came up to see Captn. Collard. I gave them admission after some grumbling telling them they should get orders from Mr Duffy or some other 'great man' & not throw the responsibility of breaking the Gaol Regulations on my shoulders. When Captn. Coffey was going out he asked me if I could do a glass of wine & I replied I had no time, he said well then can you give us one. I answered rather hastily but truly that I could'ent. The Captn. was a little taken aback but I smoothed down my rudeness & we parted all right the Captain saying there was always claret at his office. I said it was'ent my fault there was'ent any at mine.

MARCH 6 WEDNESDAY 1872

The weather still most uncomfortably hot, was obliged to go to the Supreme Court this morning as I was subpoenaed to provide some papers in the Case of 'Warr V Templeton' for False Imprisonment. Mustered in the afternoon. In the evening Mr Fallon came up for Mrs Mathews & Polly & took them to the Opera. I went to the Club & after a chat took a walk with Duerdin. The night was hot but not so uncomfortably so as last night. It was however quite hot enough &, as I have before remarked on this subject, a good deal to spare into the bargain.

There was another highly sensational occurrence took place yesterday. Two men who had been warders in the Hospital & discharged for drunkenness professed an almost or quite a romantic affection for each other & feeling disappointed with the world made up their minds to leave it together. After plentifully partaking of Colonial wine they went into the Park armed with horse pistols which were intended for use one against the other, not out of animosity but in brotherly love, trusting their shades would fly to the same sphere & there be united. It appears that they stood face to face each with a pistol to the other's breast. By some accident however only one fired, twas however with deadly effect for the man shot at fell dead on the ground. The assassin's pistol burst and slightly injured him. When the Police arrived, one man was lying dead & the other lying down calmly smoking. When interrogated he said 'he meant to have shot me' & then relighted his cigar & treated the crowd with philosophical nonchalance.²⁰²

MARCH 12 TUESDAY 1872

Up early this morning & about the Gaol before breakfast. There were 160 men in the Labor Yard which number is far more than can be properly worked. Very

202 The sensational case of these two male lovers, Edward Feeney (the survivor of the shooting, later hanged) and Charles Marks, was reported at length in *The Argus*, 6 March 1872, pp. 5–6: Castieau's account is clearly drawn from this source. See *Diary*, 13–14 May 1872 for Feeney's conviction and hanging.

busy all the morning with correspondence of one kind & another. In the afternoon two men were flogged, a chinaman & a boy. The chinaman had 20 lashes & the boy 12 lashes. There was great howling & Bamford did his work most efficiently. After the Chinaman's howling it was with some pride I saw the youth of the 'pale faces' coming up jauntily to the triangles & I thought to myself of the triumph of blood & the superiority of the races, Young Australia however roared more lustily than even John Chinaman.

Got very tired & shirked muster. Went to the Club where I stayed for a time & then walked home with Jardine Smith. In the evening went again to the Club where I smoked two or three cigars with Duerdin & Levey, then had a chat with Cope & Ogier who had just come in from the theatre. They both spoke most contemptuously of the performance. Shortly after this Dr Gilbee reported that he had been to hear the Rev. Mr Onions lecture on Napoleon 3rd & that he had been very much entertained. Duerdin & I left the Club together & walked up Bourke Street. Then I came home & had a little barney in a pleasant way with Polly before I went to bed. There was no appearance of turnkey Foy to-day so I suppose he has taken the sulks at what was said to him yesterday, or else that he is really ill. I know that the officers are a continual bother & that if I had absolute power I would soon make a change.

MARCH 15 FRIDAY 1872

Was up very early this morning & saw the men on parade at six o'clock. Read a circular to them about the appointment of one of the Gaol officers to give evidence before the Civil Service Commission.²⁰³ Only one witness is required, the matter has created a deal of barneying & the democratic element has been very busy endeavouring to get a turnkey selected instead of myself or some other well known officer.

Had a letter from Gale, it was however only on Gaol business. Two Warders were sent in this morning from Pentridge to render assistance during the sitting of the Criminal Court. I went into the Labor Yard in the dinner hour & in Draper's office found turnkey Meadway sitting smoking & Draper sitting opposite, the pair evidently engaged in some very interesting discussion. The men that Meadway was in charge of were left to look after themselves. This Meadway is a man that I have suspected of trafficking for a long time past & I am convinced from what I saw to-day that he is a very dangerous man to have about. He is a great lawyer in his way & has always some grievance or another; he was I believe proposed by some of the men as the most fitting representative that could be selected to give evidence before the Civil Service Commission. I did not muster but went down to the Club in the evening. Had a short walk with Duerdin then came home & after a smoke went off to bed. This has been a very unsatisfactory day & I feel a

203 This was the Royal Commission, appointed in August 1870, to report on the state of the Public Service and the working of the *Civil Service Act* (Vic.). It delivered its findings in 1873.

bilious fit coming on again & know I shall not be all right until I get it over. Was hunting for Cockle's pills tonight but could only find one which I swallowed greedily.

MARCH 19 TUESDAY 1872

In the Gaol office this morning at nine o'clock & was tolerably busily occupied when Mr Duncan came into the office apparently not expecting to find me at work. We had a long talk about the officers & the hours they had to remain on Night Duty. Mr Duncan appeared wonderfully good all at once or else he has got remarkably funky of his position for he was remarkably liberal in his talk and wished me at once to report the number of extra men it would require to enable the turnkeys all to have an hour's leave for breakfast & an hour's leave for dinner & to be on duty only nine hours at night. I told him I'd let him know. Turnkey Meadway was brought before him for his misconduct on Friday. Meadway showed himself the sneaking humbug I have always considered him to be & whined about my having a down upon him & that really it was so hard for the turnkeys! He was certainly shut up in the shop to have a smoke but on his honor he had never spoke to Draper all the time, he had'ent really. Mr Duncan fined him fifteen shillings only & of course sent the wretch away inwardly laughing & outwardly smirking at the easy way in which he had got off. He richly deserved dismissal but Mr Duncan does'ent feel his feet very secure in his Gaol shoes & wants to make the officers believe he is all that is good & gracious; he is not wise however but thinks himself to be so. He showed his little cunning by endeavouring to satisfy me with the assurance that by & by we should be able to sack these fellows without any one being able to say a word against it.

MARCH 20 WEDNESDAY 1872

Could not sleep this night and at about one o'clock was urged to get up & go into the Gaol. Did so & found all apparently correct. While in the New Wing Leyden who was on Duty told me there was a large fire raging in town & that it appeared so near he thought it must be the Hospital. I went into town & found it was the Theatre Royal which by the time I got to Bourke Street was utterly destroyed. No one could account for the disaster though it was attributed in some degree to a large quantity of inflammable materials that had been left about after being used for the representation of a Fire in *The Streets of New York*, the name of the piece last played on this so long famed Stage. I saw Coppin standing smoking a cigar at a bar counter. He looked rather glum but I daresay there will be plenty inclined to believe the fire is but another of George's dodges.

Went to bed but was up again at half past five though I felt very queer & bad. Went & read a letter that had been sent about the Leave. The turnkeys were evidently very glum & have been airing their grievances. Meadway is understood to be their chosen representative & I wish them joy of him. I felt

queer all day & little inclined in the afternoon to muster so after going all through the Gaol I went into Melbourne where I went & had a good look at the ruins. They brought to my recollection lots of old associations & made me quite ready to yarn about them & hear others yarn also. Stayed doing so till very late when a great trouble overtook me for I was seized with an attack of diarrhoea occasioned I suppose by my drinking claret which I had done to keep sober. I went home feeling very uncomfortable & was ill again in the night.

MARCH 22 FRIDAY 1872

In the office & at my work sharp this morning. The Turnkeys selected Turnkey Meadway as the officer they wished to represent them before the Civil Service Commission. I sent in the list of Meadway's believers & at the same time the list of those who had confidence in me. This comprised the Clerks, Senior Turnkeys, Overseer of Labor, Matron & seven of the most reliable of the turnkeys. I pointed out that an ordinary turnkey could not well represent the officers & that I trusted if a Turnkey was called upon to give evidence I should also have an opportunity of giving my testimony as it should be valuable from my long experience both in Town & Country.

The Visiting Justice went all through the Gaol & as I accompanied him I did not consider it necessary to go round again at Muster time. However I was in the office at work until some time after the Muster was finished.

In the evening the children were very anxious for me to take them out & at last I consented; Harry, Sissy, Dotty & Walter of my own & Flory Morphy. We all went to the Menagerie & had quite a night of excitement. The lion & lioness are really a fine pair of animals & the entry into their cell of a man & woman was very exciting to the feelings; both performers, especially the woman I fancied seemed much pleased to get outside again. However they repeated their performance two or three times during the evening. The children & to tell the truth, myself as well were highly delighted at a comical little cuss of a monkey who dressed as a *danseuse* imitated humanity wonderfully well & went through the usual antics of a tight rope dancer. After this the same, or another monkey dressed as a gymnast went through the usual routine of a trapeze performer. Both monkeys when they had done anything smart applauded themselves by clapping their paws together in a very human-like way. There was a panorama & there was tumbling & lots of other things for our money, so we all came home well satisfied & rendered quite happy with a shilling's worth of lollies.

Marcus Clarke sent Cousins up this afternoon to see if I would cash a cheque for him for £10. The cheque was not to be presented till Monday the 25th. I sent Clarke the money.

MARCH 23 SATURDAY 1872

In the office this morning as usual & busy at one thing & another all the morning. A tolerably quiet day at the Gaol. Mustered in the afternoon, in the

evening went to the Club then took a walk up Bourke Street, bought *The Australasian* & came home. Had a smoke & a chat with Polly & then she went to bed while I continued smoking for a time & when my pipe was out went to the Front Gate where Magree was on duty & began talking with him. Magree was one of the turnkeys who wished me to represent them at the Civil Service Commission & I was rather surprised at it for I should have imagined he would probably be one of the disaffected. Magree told me a great deal of the fancied grievances of the turnkeys & of their opinion of my disregard for their interests. Meadway appears to be a great authority & is supposed to be possessed of wonderful influence. He is to shine grandly when before the Board. Kelly, another of the turnkeys, seems also to be particularly friendly to me & works with Meadway in his efforts for the benefit of humanity & turnkey humanity in particular. My sins are I found out, of the blackest die, for instance in a lecture I delivered I made the observation that 'Governors should have some choice in the selection of turnkeys'. This is raked up against me now & I am reported to be in favor of Turnkeys being appointed & dismissed by the Governors of Gaols. I plead Guilty to some extent & believe if Governors themselves were selected for their fitness there is nothing that would sooner tend to self supporting & properly conducted Gaols than conducting them on commercial principles & trusting the Governors or Managers of them with the same powers that business men would give to those who had the control of establishments where profit was to be made by time being saved & a system observed.

'I wanted to stop the turnkeys' leave' is another charge made against me. This is simply false & Meadway & Co. know it, but what boots it going on further Jack's as good as his master & a little better under the present Democratic state of affairs. What business then have I got to be Governor & Meadway & Kelly only turnkeys. Down with Castieau & let them rule week about.

The coming immediately after Mr Wintle would have been a grand opportunity for a man who would have puffed himself at the expense of the old man but I could not do that & I took the Gaol with all its dirt & iniquity, & cleansing out an Augean stable it has proven to be, & great has been the disfavor with which the job has been seen progress by those who preferred living in the old state of dirt & confusion.

MARCH 29 FRIDAY 1872

This being Good Friday was altogether observed as a holiday in the Gaol. Polly took the children to the Royal Park & Mrs Mathews & Trotty Gray went with them. I did some writing in the office. Good Friday was not kept as a holy day publicly in Melbourne. It was a day people went out to enjoy themselves & with no thought as a Rule of the solemnity of the anniversary which caused the suspension of business. The Volunteers went to Brighton to tackle the enemy who went on before them in Special Trains & as the weather had taken up there was all that was wanted to ensure success for the Review

unless the officers blundered. I am afraid if they did our soldiers would 'reason why & make reply' as well. In the evening Polly & the youngsters went with me to the Railway Station to see the soldiers returning from the battle. They did not all get back till nearly nine o'clock. We waited for more than an hour for one train. When it did come there was something in return for the time we had spent, for the soldiers fell in behind a good band which went off to the barracks playing some most inspiriting music. Mr Duncan came to-day between one & two o'clock. Rather a strange day & a strange hour for him to choose for his inspection, however I was about & things were tolerably ship shape though we were as short handed as we well could be, there being only ten men on duty in the Gaol, the remainder being away on Leave.

MARCH 30 SATURDAY 1872

Received notice this morning that I was to attend to give evidence before the Civil Service Commission on Thursday next. Got one or two letters from the Up-Country Gaols with suggestions. A letter of a rather unpleasant character reached me also from the Bank in which I was informed that a cheque of Marcus Clarke's which I had paid into my credit had been dishonoured. I went to the Library & found Marcus. He expressed his regret & gave me the cash which I confess I was very glad indeed to get. Judge Bindon was with Clarke when I went to his office. The old fellow seemed particularly grumpy. Mr Sturt the V.I. was at the Gaol this morning. He tried one woman for insolence but let her off, which perhaps was as well as she would have made a row if punished & that would have been unpleasant in holiday time & when the officers were short handed. Took the little girls to Elsternwick where I remained to lunch & came home in the afternoon about four o'clock. Had a great game of romps with the boys in the Play-ground, Godfrey doing great tricks on the swing & Harry & Walter trying to compete with him. Took Polly & Trotty to the theatre to night to see the Opera of *Orphee aux Enfers*.²⁰⁴ It was brought out for the first time this evening & proved a great success. The scenery & the dresses were very good indeed & though there were one or two little hitches & Lascelles who played Orpheus did'ent know his part yet, on the whole the Piece went wonderfully well for a first night. Stewart played Jupiter very well indeed & Miss Hattie Shepherd made a good Queen of Heaven. The naughty Eurydice was played by Miss May who was in good voice & much applauded. Miss Easdown had a good part but seemed nervous & did'ent make the most of her voice. Rainford played Cerberus & got much applause for the song which he sings in that character. The Cricket Match with Sydney commenced to-day. Victoria so far has been victorious.

204 Offenbach's opera, produced in the economical style of musical theatre. Castieau's response might have been prompted by reading Neild's review, which commented of such new productions, 'First, there is the opening night when everybody is in good spirits, and deficiencies are not perceived, or are amiably ignored' (Love, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso*, p. 293).

APRIL 14 SUNDAY 1872

Polly's finger was very sore this morning & I had to get it dressed for her before she could feel at all comfortable with it. She did not feel at all inclined for Church so I took four of the youngsters myself. When we were coming out we met Polly with the three others & came home altogether. In the afternoon I mustered & then had a barney with Polly about the pigs, whether one or both should be killed to-morrow. I got cross & used cross language & we made a mess of it between us. Polly went out & I was left alone in my glory for after tea Julia went out with a friend & I had all the youngsters in my own charge. We got on however capitally for I found a nice story in *Chatterbox*²⁰⁵ which I read, much to the edification of us all, & after that at the girls' request after Walter & Godfrey had been put to bed Harry, Sissy, Dotty & I read a couple of chapters out of the New Testament taking each a verse in turn. When we had finished the youngsters were tired & ready for bed so I let them go & read away at the Weekly Papers till Polly came home which she did at a little after nine o'clock. Went to bed soon after but did not get to sleep for a long time as since I have left off drinking Spirits I have been troubled with dyspepsia & cannot but feel very restless. I hope however the feeling will not last many days longer & certainly in spite of the indigestion I feel better without the drink than with it.

APRIL 15 MONDAY 1872

Was up this morning in time to inspect the officers on Parade. The Criminal Sittings commenced this morning, Mr O'Laughlan prosecuting instead of Mr Dunn, promoted to the County Court Bench. Stayed at the Court a considerable portion of the day & instead of mustering walked into town with young Mr Molesworth who has a number of Cases at the Sittings & who is looked upon as a rising young barrister. We talked principally concerning the remarkable case of a man named Feeny who is to be defended by Molesworth. It is one of the most extraordinary Cases on record. Two men named Feeny & Marks [refer also to 6 March 1872 entry] were on the most intimate terms professing the greatest affection for each other, (their intimacy was very strongly expected to go to the extent of a criminal nature). They appear for some reason or other to have become disgusted with this world & determined to leave it but at the same time, with the cursed love of other men's astonishment which most like to create, they determined their death should be sensational. Procuring a brace of pistols they made their plans as to the use of them & then went to a photographer whom they employed to depict them standing opposite each other, each holding a pistol & that pistol touching the other's heart. It does not appear whether or no the photographer thought he had hold of strange customers but at any rate he

205 *The Chatterbox*, an English children's story magazine, published from 1866 and issued weekly as well as an annual.

took their likenesses in the manner described & has no doubt made something out of the negative which then became his own. After the portrait taking which was apparently but a rehearsal of an intended tragedy, Messrs Feeney & Marks seem to have gone together to one of the parks or rather gardens & here stood as they had been represented in the photograph. All that is however really known is this, that a report was heard, that persons went to know the cause of it & found Marks lying dead, Feeney lying opposite to him quietly smoking a cigar & between the two a loaded pistol. Whether Feeney fired his pistol too quickly for his friend or whether the other lost nerve & could not fire his no eye saw & none but Feeney knows. He was of course arrested & is to be tried for murder. Both he & Marks have previously attempted suicide. Here is material for a Sensational Novel who dare use it.

APRIL 16 TUESDAY 1872

Up as usual this morning & in the office at nine o'clock. Was rather worried with a memo. I got from the Penal Office prohibiting my continuing to give a pot of tea to prisoners who were employed at night on urgent work. I thought as there had been only an expenditure of 3/8 & the men who had had the tea had done many pounds worth of work this was coming it rather too strong so I wrote an indignant memo. regretting the Inspector General should think it advisable to interfere with me in such trifling matters &c &c &c. I daresay I shall get a hot reply but there is a time when even a worm will turn & as I hope I am not quite that yet I think there is an excuse for me showing my teeth even though it is useless biting at a file. I wonder whether a file of papers was meant in the fable. A file of this kind protected by red tape is sometimes enough to grind down the sharpest teeth at any rate.

APRIL 17 WEDNESDAY 1872

Up at usual time this morning & after attending to ordinary Gaol business went to the Court where the first Case that was gone into was that of Feeney for the shooting in the Gardens. The prisoner was found Guilty & sentenced to Death. Judge Williams in passing sentence remarked that 'If the two men went out with the avowed intention of killing one another it was a cowardly thing on the part of the prisoner when he found he had effected his purpose & his companion had not been able to do so not to take the loaded pistol that remained & blow his own brains out'. The Judge said he thought this remark would affect the prisoner more than any other he could make, but though the same idea had flashed across my own mind I hardly think it was quite the sentiment to proceed from the Bench. Mustered in the afternoon & in the evening went to the Club, walked home & on getting there found a letter from Edwards inviting me to meet Neild & Hickling & to have a chat about old times at his house between nine & ten this evening. Went, much

to Polly's disgust, & on arriving at the house found Mrs Edwards all alone. Jack came in about a quarter of an hour afterwards & by and by Neild & Hickling put in an appearance. We had some supper & what with reminiscences & gossip, the time flew swiftly away & it was not till one o'clock we broke up, although I had been trying to get off for an hour before that.

Walked down town with Hickling & at the old Bar of the Theatre Royal went in to oblige Hickling by taking a parting drink. I stuck to the non intoxicating fluids & called for claret. After a time some was produced which on gulping down I found to be tolerably fair vinegar. Having advised the barman to label it as such & so avoid mistakes for the future (there is no knowing how long the bottle might last as Melbourne folk are not much given to claret) I said good bye to Hickling & went straight for home. Polly was sitting up indignant & I got some hard words, however as I was perfectly sober I believe she rather admired me than otherwise. Went to bed, to kick, but not to sleep. Cold beef, Salad, cheese, Pine apple &c had possession of my chest & trampled on it the whole night through.

APRIL 19 FRIDAY 1872

At luncheon time this morning Mr Ware of the Chief Secretary's office went over the Gaol with me. I was not at all pleased with the Labor Yard & considered the men were idling away their time pretty much as they pleased. Must bully Hackett to-morrow. There was to be a meeting of the delegates who had been chosen to give evidence before the Civil Service Commission to be held this afternoon at the Crown Lands Office. The Meeting was convened by Mr Clement Hodgkinson. Ellis & I went down together & on arriving at the office found the Meeting had commenced. There were about twenty persons present among whom was turnkey Meadway. It was soon apparent that no business of any consequence would be transacted. A resolution was carried that a Committee of Classified & Unclassified Officers should be appointed 'to settle the affairs of the Service', but when they were about to elect this Committee I expressed the opinion that the meeting no more represented the Civil Service than the three tailors did the people of England & advocated an adjournment. Ellis fell in with my view & moved an adjournment of the meeting until the chairman considered it advisable to re-summon it. I seconded this & it was carried so no mischief was done. In the evening went to the Club where I met Duerdin & went for a walk with him. We went through the Flagstaff Gardens, up by the Mint, passed the meat market & down Elizabeth Street into Bourke Street, then said 'good night' & went off home. Harriette called to-day & was very jolly with Polly & the children. Mrs Stephen called for her & left Cards of Mr Stephen.²⁰⁶

206 Harriette was employed as a governess by the Stephens. James Wilberforce Stephen was a wealthy lawyer and MLA for St Kilda from 1870, and from June 1872 he was Attorney-General in the Francis ministry.

APRIL 21 SUNDAY 1872

Had rather a queer night's rest having been troubled a good deal with dispepsia. I wondered at this as to avoid it I took some carbonate of soda last night thinking I was suffering from acidity of the stomach. Got up & began chaffing Polly who got out of temper & gave me a severe talking to. Went to Church with Polly & all the children save John & the baby. At dinner time had a disappointment as a cheek of one of the pigs killed last week & which we expected would prove a treat turned out to be bad & uneatable. I was finking for the whole of the pork but Polly accounted for the head being queer because the butcher had hit the pigs on the head to stun before he killed them. I sincerely hope she is right in her judgment.

After dinner went out for a walk & a short distance from our house met Duerdin so we strolled away together. We went over Princes Bridge & inspected the site of the Governor's new house, the foundations of which are being laid. The situation for the building is airy & will command a fine view. After this we went to the Botanical Gardens & span out a very pleasant walk till six o'clock, when after looking in at the Yorick we separated. Home to tea, more unpleasant arguments & had words about little or nothing, myself I must acknowledge most to blame. In the evening, Polly read to the children & then gave them a bible lesson. Before the lesson commenced I came into the office & wrote up my Diary. It is wonderful how happy some youngsters are in some of the remarks they make. Our Harry aged ten is not by any means a bright looking youth & is as clumsy in his manner & careless in his habits as any brat of his age well could be, still he is fond of reading & recollects very well many of the things he does read. To-day at dinner there was fowl & bacon. I noticed Harry left all the fat of the bacon & doing the *Paterfamilias* reproached him for it. With a self possession for which I envied the rogue, he looked me in the face & said grandly, You know Papa, 'Twas fat, not fate by which Napoleon fell'. I did'nt know, but I could'nt help inwardly grinning & Mrs C she laughed outright & evidently thought no small beer of her eldest born. A couple of Reporters interviewed me with regard to the goings on of Feeney under sentence of Death. I had however nothing to tell them beyond the facts of his being much the same as he was before he received the sentence. They can however make a paragraph of that & I suppose that is all they require, though of course one with a little sensation in it would please better than one without anything in it to make the gentle public roar.

Have got through this week without taking any spirits & though I have not slept well at nights yet have felt in the day time better without the grog & believe I have looked a great deal better also.

APRIL 27 SATURDAY 1872

This morning felt very much better though when I went into the office & read my letters I did not feel in very good spirits. There was a Circular from

Duncan stating that after the first of the month no work would be allowed & another calling upon me to state the number of Domestic Servants that were employed by the officers & the Authority under which they were employed. I wrote a reply to the latter & occupied myself nearly the whole day in writing a letter to the Chief Secretary asking for promotion. Went into town in the evening & called at the Yorick. There I remained reading for some time, then I took a walk as far as Spencer Street Railway Station, came back to Swanston Street, met Polly & after a stroll into the Eastern Market went home, took some more brandy & water & went off to bed. The stopping our allowances will make a great difference to our comfort & if we do not get our Washing done for us the extra expense will be very serious indeed. I hope yet however that Washing will be considered as part of the services of ordinary Servants & if so we shall get it done by those allowed to us. I wish sincerely I was in a position to abstain from having anything to do with the Gaol beyond my duty & certainly as soon as it is distinctly settled as to what we are allowed I shall be enabled more freely to do my duty & be independent.

APRIL 29 MONDAY 1872

In the office as usual & did ordinary work. Polly went to see Joe White but did not find him at home. She however met with a kind reception from Miss White & went up again in the afternoon to see Joe. He promised he would do all in his power to help us & I really believe he will. In the afternoon was Mustering when I was joined by Mr Duncan. He went round the Gaol with



Spencer Street Station c.1880
b&w photograph; 38.0 x 24.0 cm
Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an10638277

me & then when we had got back to the office became communicative. He told me he had recommended my Application strongly. This took the wind out of my sails entirely & I blurted out, 'I am much obliged to you for I really did'ent think you would'. This led to his asking the reason why & I had my little grievances out & made a clean breast of everything. Duncan assured me the Chief Secretary was to blame in the matters which I attributed to him (Duncan). The matter of the 'refuse food' was caused by some tittle tattle at Geelong about Gibson's poultry & it was'ent even known that I used the refuse or had poultry.²⁰⁷ I said I had had two pigs but that they were killed & I should have no more. With regard to prison labor Duncan said that he had recommended some compensation to the officers who had been accustomed to look upon it as a sort of portion of their income but the Chief Secretary said he would allow no compensation for what ought never to have been allowed. Duncan & I then shook hands & separated.

MAY 1 WEDNESDAY 1872

This morning was up in good time & went steadily to work in the office till I was startled by a letter or rather Memo. from the Penal Office, telling me not to flog a man until as I read it 4 May. I did'ent happen to know there was a man to be flogged to-day so the memo. came very opportunely. I looked up the Warrant & found the prisoner was sentenced to be flogged on the first of May so I argued he could'ent be flogged on any other day & thought it best to go & see Duncan on the subject. I took a cab & went to the office where I found or had explained that instead of 4 May it was 4 o'clock. There was a party had given notice they were trying to get the whipping commuted & so Duncan did'ent want the flogging to take place until they would have a chance of getting an answer & so named four o'clock. I went to Kerferd & spoke to him about myself. He promised to keep the matter in view & to speak to others on the subject. I then went to the Chief Medical Officer's office & told him about the flogging. Got the Pay this afternoon & took another cab to get the money. Got it all right & as I had'ent a bag stuffed one hundred & ninety, one pound notes in my coat tail pocket. When I had paid the cabman & was bustling away almost at a run towards the Gaol some one shouted out to me in a very energetic manner & on turning round I found to my consternation I was dropping notes pretty closely as I proceeded. Of course I picked them all up & started again but there was another shout & I found my pocket was still raining the precious papers. I felt a little stupid more particularly when the cab-man I had been with presented me with several notes he had found in the cab. The man who had hailed me seemed pretty well to do, he however would have me shout & I gave him a shilling which he accepted but would insist also on shaking my hand & my friend evidently considered he had done something wonderfully honest & I

207 Evidently a reference to possibly scurrilous allegations that Castieau had used the prison kitchen scraps to raise his own poultry and pigs.

am sure his conscience will gratify him exceedingly. When I had found that my money was all correct, which I did by counting it in the Sheriff's office, I returned & gave the cab-man five shillings as he might easily have stuck to the notes that I had lost in the cab. Memo. in future if I have no bag to remember to stick notes in my breeches & not my coat tail pockets.

MAY 4 SATURDAY 1872

To night I received an answer to my Application for Promotion. It was a guarded one but still unfavorable. Mr Duffy minuted the papers to this effect, 'When effectual measures have been taken to render the Gaols self supporting I will consider this application favorably, not before'.²⁰⁸ This is a blow to my hopes for I really cannot see what can be done more than is being done in the Gaol at present. Perhaps in my letter I ought to have laid more stress upon the work & responsibility unconvicted prisoners impose upon me for after all, though the Public & the Press conveniently ignore this Class, yet the keeping them safe & in good discipline without interfering with the legal privileges they possess is Duty of an important character & in Melbourne is pretty well work enough, what with the City & the Suburban Courts every day & the Supreme Court once a month.

Joe White sent me a letter saying a gentleman to whom he had written & who he believed had some influence with Mr Duffy had written to him on my behalf. I am very much obliged to Joe but am sorry his friend has been too late. I did not expect an answer so soon but suppose the Chief Secretary has been spoken to about me & got the application out of the way as quickly as he could. In to-day's *Age* there appeared a very unfair article on the Castlemaine Gaol. It was headed 'A Model Prison' & gave great praise to Hyland at the expense of the other Gaol officers. Hyland has done no more than I did many years ago at Beechworth, but from the Article which evidently has been compiled from information supplied by himself it would appear that Hyland & Hyland only was managing a prison properly in the Colony.

MAY 8 WEDNESDAY 1872

Busy in the office during the morning. In the afternoon mustered & then went to the Club. Walked home with Dr Maloney. In the Evening went again to the Club, found no one there but Marcus Clarke & Shillinglaw. Had a chat with them. Marcus read a portion of a comic Opera he was writing to be called 'The Jolly Beggars'. It was very funny but I should think better adapted for the pages of *Punch* than for the Stage. Shillinglaw was bemoaning his hard fate at not being able to get any number of fellows to rush in with their £25 & enable him to start off to Queensland & take up a mile of Country which he says

208 Castieau engaged in a lengthy correspondence with the Chief Secretary over this rejection of his case: Public Records Office Victoria: VPRS 679, Index of Registered Inward Mail—I.G.P.E. Volumes 14 and 15, Item(s) 2138, 2278, 2395, 3332, 3378, 3598.

Mr Ulrich the Geologist pronounces to be rich in tin. Eville came in to the Club & I left with him. He had an order to see Mr Leslie, an Electro-biologist who was holding a seance at the lower St George's Hall. I went with Eville & saw the usual biological entertainment, boys being made to forget their names, nurse imaginary babies & otherwise make fools of themselves. There did not however appear to be any originality about the affair & so I came away. Eville wanted a beer so we went up stairs to the Café of the Theatre Royal (that used to be). Oh it was so melancholy looking, the Gasoliers with the exception of one over the bar were not lighted & the room was consequently almost in darkness. Coppin & two friends were sitting at a table & this was all the Company in a room that used to be one of the most frequented in Melbourne. We had one drink & came away at once. Got home by about half past nine & had some grog & a smoke or two. Polly went off to bed but I dozed for some time in the chair before I went upstairs myself.

MAY 13 MONDAY 1872

This morning in the office as usual though very careful of my thumb which I exercised as little as possible. Am not aware of anything particularly worth remarking this day. Mustered in the afternoon. After Muster went to the Club & walked home with Jardine Smith. In the evening did not go out as I had a man under Sentence of Death who was to be executed to-morrow. After nine o'clock I went over to see this man who was Edward Feeney charged & convicted of having murdered Charles Marks in (see 6 March).²⁰⁹ Feeney was particularly quiet & when I spoke to him said he was quite prepared to meet his fate. He however wished he said to make a statement & that was to deny the allegation that he had been told had been published of his having been improperly intimate with the murdered man Marks. This he solemnly declared to be untrue & as a dying man declared there was not the slightest grounds for the rumour. Feeney wished me to make this statement of his public & I agreed to do so. Did not go out this evening but was interviewed by a Reporter of *The Argus* to whom I told my tale. He of course was delighted to get it as it was something approaching the Sensational. Julia still continues in the sulks & has made Mrs Castieau very cross. Julia's conduct is inexcusable but when I proposed speaking to her to-night Polly would not let me but insisted on her being let alone till to-morrow. Polly & I had a difficulty & then we went to bed.

MAY 14 TUESDAY 1872

Got up this morning feeling very unrefreshed having taken more gin & water last night than was good for my complaint. Put on my black clothes & went into the Gaol to see things were in readiness for the execution of Edward Feeney. At ten o'clock the usual business was transacted. The

209 Castieau's notation.

Sheriff & I went to the Cell & Feeney came out. Old Bamford was ready to pinion him & did so a little more clumsily than usual. In putting the cap on Feeney's head he had a little difficulty getting it over the hair. At such a time a second seems like a minute & a minute almost an hour. Feeney prayed to the last. He was evidently in a great state of fear & shook a good deal. This I could see being close to him. The bystanders some little distance off thought he showed little signs of concern. Bamford did the pulling tight the rope a little too hard & when the bolt was drawn the body scarcely fell fairly, the rump catching the side of the scaffold & thus breaking the fall. Feeney seemed to struggle much longer than men who are hanged usually do. Dr Barker however styled the horrible spasmodic movement as simply 'reflex' & of no consequence. He could not however answer my question as to why some when executed were troubled with reflex movements & others were not. There was a Post-Mortem held after the usual Inquest & the Medical Students under direction of Dr Barker revelled in the luxury of a fresh & healthy corpse. Oh poor humanity how small you look on the dissecting table. There had been some strange stories told of the connection that existed between Feeney & the murdered man. Barker exposed Feeney's rectum & both he & Dr Youl said it told of a vicious indulgence. I was asked my opinion, or rather to coincide in theirs, but I declined as I had no experience of what a healthy rectum would represent. Doubleday took a cast of Feeney's head.²¹⁰

MAY 22 WEDNESDAY 1872

Mustered in the afternoon & afterwards went to the Club. There I read *The Herald* until it was time to go home to tea. In the evening came into Town again & on the Road to the Club met Marcus Clarke who asked me to walk to-wards the House with him. There was a great debate going on & a want of confidence motion on the grounds that the patronage of the Ministry had been unfairly distributed. Some bitter things had been said of Duffy & as he was to reply to-night there were Great Expectations of something spicy & consequently a run upon the Speakers Gallery. I walked as far as the House with Clarke, but found it was no use trying to get in & so left him to take his place in the Reporters Gallery where his Press connection gives him the entree. Went back to the Club & after a chat with Mr Wyatt left with Duerdin & Eville. In Bourke Street we met Levey²¹¹ & at his invitation went into the White Hart & had a glass. Levey was talking of himself & of the chances of the Ministry. He declared he did not wish a Dissolution just now, as he meant to

210 Casts were commonly taken of the heads of executed persons, with many of them still held at the Old Melbourne Gaol.

211 George Collins Levey (1835–1919), journalist and politician. One-time editor and owner of the Melbourne *Herald*, he held the parliamentary seat of Normanby from 1861 to 1867, but failed in elections in 1868 and 1871. He was a founding member of the Yorick Club (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

get into Parliament at the next election if he could & he was hardly prepared at present for action. Levey made us laugh by gravely stating that Winter was a bad time for an election so far as the candidates were concerned as it made the expenses so much heavier. We asked how that could be & were informed by the ex-member that in cold weather committee-men & supporters would sit round the fire & enjoy social glass after social glass till all hours, of course at the Candidate's expense, while in Summer people did'ent care to be indoors & therefore did'ent so systematically sot away & consequently the Hotel Bills were not nearly so heavy. Said Levey, 'I have had experience & I can tell you without joking that the difference is something considerable'. Walked again down Bourke Street & then came away home.

MAY 25 SATURDAY 1872

Up this morning in good time & feeling tolerably well. Went into the office & remained there nearly the whole of the morning. After dinner as Polly felt sleepy & I was tired, we went and had a nap. Mustered in the afternoon. After Muster was busy for some time & just as I was leaving the office the Post brought a letter from the Penal Office which made me savage & let out an expression that was much nearer an oath than was proper for me to make. Polly had come in to see what I was doing as it was getting late & she just entered the office door as my temper got the better of me & with a stamp of the foot I let off the steam that would otherwise have burst my mental boiler. Polly quickly retired & I sat down as is my wont to answer right off the epistle which had disturbed my equilibrium. There was nothing particular in the letter I got but it was one of a series of nagging, irritating authority assuming ones that I receive from the Penal Office written & signed by Snelling for the Inspector General. This one was with reference to some labor Returns which I had altered to please the Office & which were now sent back again because Mr Snelling evidently was not acquainted with what Mr Duncan had previously written. I wrote a hot & strong memo. but alas it was of no more use than the letters Mr Tommy Traddles used to indite to the Duke of Wellington²¹² for after I had written it I saw it would be unwise to send it & so scored through the severest & the most intended home thrusts in it & then not satisfied began to write again getting more milk & watery every time. At last I gummed a piece of paper over the original memo. I had written & wrote on it something more quiet. Polly for an hour was bothering me to go out with her & the youngsters according to my promise & at length went away in a huff without me. Better spirit however got the advantage & I followed her quick. We went into Bourke Street, through the Arcade & the Market, then returned & on our way home bought some lollies at Mr Nott's. After a smoke & some toddy went away to bed.

212 Tommy Traddles, David Copperfield's schoolfriend who was always getting caned and 'always going to write to his uncle about it, but never did'. Castieau appears to imagine the reference to the Duke of Wellington, who is not mentioned in the novel.

MAY 27 MONDAY 1872

Up early this morning in time to see the prisoners away to the Swamp. Thought much better of my Memo. & cut it down into something civil before sending it away. Was very busy all the morning & amongst other things wrote a letter to Nathan offering to give him £105 for £100 for three months & to be allowed to renew at the same rate if I required to do so. Mustered in the afternoon & then went down to the Club. In the evening went to the Opera with Miss Thorpe & Miss Marchmont & Mr Moore. Polly of course went also. The Opera was *Lucretia Borgia* & I enjoyed it tolerably well though I had rather a bad seat as there was a spooning couple sitting just before me who were unfortunately big people & who were constantly putting their heads close together & thereby obstructing my view of the Stage. Signora Bosisio the Prima Donna is very nice looking & a good actress as well. I was however very much irritated when in the height of some very thrilling parts of the drama & when overwhelmed with passion or despair she so far forgot herself as to respond to the applause of some nincompoops in the Audience by bowing low & sweetly smiling. It is hard to take up the tragic again exactly where it was left off. This absurd notice of the Audience was particularly observable in the great scene between Lucrezia & Alfonso where the Duke insists on the mother pouring out the poisoned wine intended to deprive her son of life. Bosisio & Dondi really acted wonderfully well & spite the absurdity of committing murder musically, yet I was really feeling the dramatic power of the scene when the chord was snapped abruptly by the bowing & scraping of both actor & actress to the audience. Our friends came home & had a little supper with us.

JUNE 13 THURSDAY 1872

Mustered in the afternoon. Afterwards went to the Club where I met Jardine Smith. We walked home together. Smith expressed the opinion that Government officers should have no votes & I agree with him. It would give me much satisfaction to lose my own vote if the turnkeys were deprived of theirs. Just now the turnkeys are very important individuals in their own estimation. They are likely to have a voice in the election of a Minister of the Crown & are being looked after as of some consequence, there being between 25 & 30 votes connected with the Gaol.

JUNE 23 SUNDAY 1872

Up this morning in good time. Sissy was not very well as her tooth was bothering her. She didn't go to Church. Godfrey had a boil at the back of his neck & so he wasn't able to go either. Mamma & I took the rest with the exception of baby. Mr Torrence preached the best sermon we have had from him yet. It was on the text 'First pluck out the beam that is in thine own eye' &c. We all of us had some hard hits. Telo came to dinner as he agreed &

stayed with us the whole of the afternoon. He seems to take to the children & the children make a great plaything of him. In the afternoon I took Telo into the Gaol Hospital where there was lying dead the body of a man named Johnstone who died of Consumption last night. There was also in a terrible fit of Delirium Tremens a surveyor named Raven. While I was talking to him he asked for a pen & when the attendant said he had'ent one, Raven said look, look you idiot, there's a double row of them all up your waistcoat. At one time he fancied there were fish in his mouth & snapped his jaws at them biting his tongue very severely. It will be a wonder if he pulls through for certainly his is one of the worst of many bad cases we have had this year. Telo thinks he can make a pot boiler out of the intercepted letters written to or by prisoners, so I gave them to him as I do not believe it can do any harm & he has promised to let me see the slips before they are *published*.²¹³ We had a regular chat in the evening. Telo told the children an adventure of his with the Bushranger Morgan & a Bush Ghost story. Before Telo went away he had promised to take the youngsters to *School* and the Japs on Tuesday evening next. *School* is the name of a Piece now playing at St George's Hall & 'Japs' is short for Japanese, a number of whom give a tumbling & juggling entertainment after the Drama. Went into town with Telo & called at the Club. Had a chat with Gilbee, McKinley & Amsinck, then came away & got home in good time. Polly expressed herself much pleased with Telo & looks forward to his taking her to the theatre as well as the children. The Elections are exciting great religious feeling. The Orange men are rolling up & unless much care is taken, there will be some broken heads if not worse before the state of the Poll at West Melbourne or some other places is made known.²¹⁴

JUNE 24 MONDAY 1872

Up this morning impressed with the idea that there were a great many things to be done & that it was hard to tell which it was best to do first. Got into a little temper about a delay that occurred in sending some men to the Penal Office. I do not think Senior Turnkey Quin relished at all the way I spoke. *The Argus* of this morning contained a manifesto from Alipius, Roman Catholic bishop of Melbourne,²¹⁵ calling upon good churchmen to vote against the return of the present Ministers & endeavouring to inflame the blood of ignorant catholics by declaring that the system of secular instruction about to be introduced by the Ministry would be the means of enslaving the catholic people & depriving them of their religious rights. The manifesto was too hot & in consequence it disgusted a great many who would otherwise have been opposed to the Ministry. It was said at the Club last night that it would be as

213 Subsequently published in *The Leader* (see Diary, 5 July 1872).

214 The 1872 election was fought especially on the secular education issue and was the occasion of much sectarian dispute.

215 Bishop (from 1874 Archbishop) James Alipius Goold (1812–1886).

good as 200 votes to Langton.²¹⁶ *The Herald* which is the Duffy organ, saw the evil that had been done & attributed the bishop's pastoral to the influence of O'Shannassy, the well known enemy of Duffy. This is however far fetched.

JUNE 26 WEDNESDAY 1872

This was the day of the great contest between the recently appointed Ministers & the nominees of the Duffy faction. I was up at half past six o'clock & in the Gaol. Made arrangements for the turnkeys to have the opportunity of voting & at the same time warned them against being in any way demonstrative or loitering about the polling booths. Quin rather impertinently remarked that the turnkeys had never been guilty of such conduct & I got out of temper & told him I was giving the turnkeys good advice & that as he had opened his mouth he could take it to himself if he thought proper. Quin I thought would sulk but I am glad to say he had the good sense to apologise for the mistake he had made. I polled my own votes early & did not go out of the Gaol again until after the election was over. In the afternoon I mustered & then I went down town. The excitement was great. Polly went off to Elsternwick to Cowderoys by the half past five o'clock train. I saw Polly off. Darvall went down with us & went to Elsternwick later in the evening. Harry was with me & I gave him 3d to spend instead of sending [him] home by the omnibus as his mamma had promised he should be.

Went to the Club. Just as I was going in I met McKinley very excited & he asked me to go along with him & a Mr Britton to the *Age* office where the Returns of the State of the Polls was expected to first arrive. Went there & at the door ran close up to Duncan who was also on the look out. He said he could not go out of town without knowing the result & I said I was going out of town but not until I knew it was quiet. Went back to the Club & drank any amount of brandy & water with a lot of excited press men & others. The Ministers were all returned by large majorities & Finn at St Kilda lost his £30 deposit money. At nine o'clock left the Club with Duerdin who walked with me to the Railway Station where we had a drink together. I started for Elsternwick & got to Cowderoy's where we played bagatelle & looked at Photographs till eleven o'clock when we left to catch the last train to Melbourne. Got home all right, smoked a pipe & was as screwed as screwed could be.

JULY 2 TUESDAY 1872

Through the Gaol early this morning but it was a nasty damp day & I felt that very little except office work would be done in consequence. Ranking, one of the Turnkeys annoyed me very much. He had been away on Sunday & Monday & coolly asked again for Leave to-day. In declining his request I got very much out of temper & thought after a little sulking my model

216 Edward Langton (1828–1905), politician. In 1872 he was Treasurer and Postmaster-General in the Francis ministry (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

turnkey would attend to his duty without more to-do. However this was not the case & about two hours after I received a note from the Penal Office very civilly worded but asking me to give Ranking two hours Leave if he could be spared. The turnkey had sent his wife. I bullied him tolerably considerably & wrote a pretty short memo. referring to his conduct. Mr Duncan was up in the afternoon & I brought Ranking before him & he was told how improperly he had acted in referring to the office without my knowledge. Owing to the Inspector General occupying my time I did not muster. After he left I went to the Club & brought Jardine Smith home with me. He would only stop however for a glass of wine. To-night we had a grand Juvenile Party; about twenty children including our own. There was great fun, no end of dancing & romping, Eating & drinking, Kissing & Squalling. Joe, Emma & Agnes kindly gave their valuable services towards the entertainment of the youngsters & Katey Morphy came over later in the evening. When our friends had gone I made an incautious remark reflecting upon Polly's want of management in not having a plate of sandwiches for the 'big ones'. This brought a storm upon my head & Polly's sailing away in a stiff breeze. I stopped till I had finished my cigar & then as Polly had put the gas out up stairs in a pet, I went to sleep on the sofa in the Dining Room. The town was startled from its propriety this morning by the loud voices of the News Boys crying lustily *Argus Extraordinary*, 2nd Edition, full account of the Telegram



'Nous étions là, lisant les télégrammes à sensation, quand vint à passer un groupe d'aborigènes: quel contrast! (We were there, reading the sensational telegrams, when suddenly a group of Aboriginal people came past: what a contrast!)' c.1866
Reproduced from *Voyage autour du monde* by the Marquis de Beauvoir (Paris, Plon, 1878)

from England. This was the first direct communication with the Old World & the *Extraordinaries* were bought up with rapidity.²¹⁷ As Coldstream would have said there's nothing in it.²¹⁸ The Prices of Stocks, a slight fall in work, though prices were steady & that is about all. The Telegram rushed across the desert unspanned by the wire, with a horse express of great expense brought from the Old to the New World.

JULY 5 FRIDAY 1872

Mustered, after Muster went to the Club. There I met Snee & others. We had a laugh & a little arguing. Walstab in his way is a little 'Wyatty'.²¹⁹ He is generally in opposition & is not to be smoothed down by the submission of the opponents for as soon as they concur with his views, he takes another sight of the Case & proceeds on another tack which quite knocks on the head even the arguments five minutes previously obtrusively urged by himself. Telo gave me *The Leader* with the Prison letters article. There was'ent much in it excepting the two guineas it gave the Author an opportunity of earning. There was however I was glad to observe little that could be construed into a breach of Regulations in allowing it to be published. Walked home with Jardine Smith. In the evening Nurse went to the theatre. She had been away all day at Brighton & had taken nurse [baby?] with her. Polly & I played Bezique then took our toddy & went to bed. We slept the sleep of the exhausted if not of the righteous until I heard the baby singing out, then I nudged Polly & she with a sigh which would have vented itself in an oath if uttered by a male, she rose acknowledging maternal instincts to be stronger than even love of repose. The boy came or was brought to our bed but he would'ent sleep. He wanted nurse & nurse he would find. He was certain she was gone in a cab & if mamma would only open the door she could get in. Polly had to wait till nurse returned which was not however very late. I was I think asleep when Polly got back to the sheets. If so however she awoke me with the weight of her descent. Never mind, we soon got off to sleep again & so far as I was concerned I dreamt this night enough to last a reasonable being for at least a twelve month. The Solicitor General & a big fire were caught up together in the most bewildering fashion & beyond that I cannot remember the why & the wherefore. I had to run to avoid getting scalded from a boiler likely to burst.

217 *The Argus*, 3 July 1872, p. 5. The telegraphic connection to London was completed in November; see K.S. Inglis, 'The Imperial Connection: Telegraphic Communication between England and Australia, 1872-1902,' in *Australian and Britain: Studies in a Changing Relationship*, eds A.F. Madden and W.H. Morris-Jones (Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1980).

218 Castieau refers to a character in the Boucicault comedy *Used Up* played by Charles Mathews in Melbourne in 1855 (see Diary, 9 December 1855).

219 George Arthur Walstab (1834-1909), journalist, novelist, close friend of Marcus Clarke and a founding member of the Yorick Club (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

JULY 9 TUESDAY 1872

In the Office & remained there during the morning. Darvall came to say good bye & I walked with him to meet the Omnibus. Received a Telegram from Edwin Smith calling upon me to write or send a Telegram. I had sent a letter before the telegram arrived. Mustered & then went down to the Club. There was no one there I cared much for but Wyatt asked me to speak to Kerferd about him if I had the chance as he was applying for the County Court Judgeship vacant by the leave allowed to Judge Cope. I said I should be very glad to do so if I got the chance & really think the Government could not make a better appointment for it would surely be approved by the Press & could not well be questioned by the Public. Polly wanted to go to the Opera to-night & so did Miss Thorpe. They had'ent a beau & so I was called upon to accompany them as a protector.

We got to the Theatre some time before it was necessary as I found out my Watch was ten minutes fast. This necessitated our walking about for ten minutes or so before we could get in to take our places. There was not much excitement & consequently no crowd. We therefore had the opportunity of taking our choice of most of the seats & therefore settled ourselves very comfortably in the front row. Mr Tetley & a Mrs Lipscomb came in afterwards & we managed to get them places alongside of our own. The opera was *Traviata*. Signora Bossisio took the leading part & played it very effectively. Beyond her there was not however very much attraction. There was a lot of time wasted between the Acts & the waiting was somewhat wearisome. Notwithstanding all this however I enjoyed the music & came home tolerably contented with the Evening's entertainment. After landing Miss Thorpe safely at her abode Polly & I went home & to bed as soon as she had finished her supper & I my smoke. Sent away to-day a lot of larrikins to Castlemaine. I had trusted to Rowley to select none but able bodied prisoners & was surprised to-day to find how many young fellows there were among the number. They were however all well able to work & I do not think Hyland will have much cause to grumble if he never gets any worse class of men to look after. I should like him to see some that I have left on hand if he feels inclined to be dissatisfied.

JULY 10 WEDNESDAY 1872

Rather sore this morning. The hard seat at the theatre I suppose. How delicate I must be getting. After I had done pressing office work I took a cab & went to the Penal office. Mr Duncan was not in so my labor & cab here were lost. Chatted for a little time with Stone & transacted a little formal business with Snelling then bent my way homewards doing the Block however on the way. It was the business part of the day & Collins Street then has a very different appearance to what it bears for an hour or two after the principal offices are closed for the afternoon. Now instead of gay ladies & amorous bachelors were everywhere to be seen men bustling or plodding

at business, mostly with anxious faces & a 'not to be done' look as if everyone was mistrusting his contemporary. Got home before lunch time, had rather a scraggy leg of mutton for dinner. I managed my share however having got hungry under the influence of bitters. Polly was out of sorts & longed for something more toothsome.

JULY 15 MONDAY 1872

This morning as soon as I came into the office I wrote a private note to Mr Duncan with regard to the prison servants, trying very hard to induce him to alter the rule he had laid down & allow the female officers to have their washing done for them.

The Criminal Sittings commenced this morning & of course I went to the Court. The Chief Justice presided. Came back to the Gaol as there was plenty of work to be done. Had a chat with Dr Cairns respecting a young man who is going home by the Mail & who is now in my charge. I am to take him on board the Boat on Wednesday. In the afternoon I was at the Court for a time, then mustered. After Muster went to the Club, saw McKinley & had a chaffing match with Bright & Duerdin. Came away in time for tea, had what Polly calls a 'Potato pot' a kind of Irish Stew & eat very freely of it, in fact I am afraid I eat too much for I felt very lazy & worthless. After the meal was finished, heard Harry & Sissy read. Then played a couple of games of Bezique with Polly; she won the first & I the second game. Polly has lectured me for the last two or three days on account of my having had too much of my hair cut off & allowed the barber to clip my whiskers & moustache. She considers the hair on my face sacred to her own scissors & will allow no one else to interfere with it if she can help it. Last week I went to get my hair cut & like a lamb allowed the operator to cut away as he thought proper. Polly was disgusted & made me feel mean when I came home, & many times since.

Had some toddy when Bezique was over & after the toddy & a smoke was quite inclined for bed. Polly was in *deshabille*, having had her hair washed. She came into the room with it all hanging over her shoulders & looked like a 'mermiad' with a good sensible pair of understandings instead of a tail. Got to bed but tossed about a good deal before going to sleep. Irish Stew, Potato Pot or whatever else you choose to call, the dish we had for tea must get the credit of this wakefulness on our parts.

Things appear very quiet just now & the reverse of sensational. I suppose some astonishing incident will soon take place. If it does not we shall be very dissatisfied. There must be something to raise the blood to boiling heat at least once a week or else Victorians begin to grumble & to bemoan the quietness & dullness of all about or connected with the Colony. There's nothing in the Newspapers & nothing anywhere. Nothing to eat, nothing to drink, nothing to read, nothing to do.

JULY 24 WEDNESDAY 1872

Today as usual employed at ordinary work. Went to the Sheriff's office & saw Walford. He is determined to get his Promotion if worrying about it will ensure it. He has tackled Mr Crews now and looks forward to his Case being brought forward in the House by that gentleman. I told Walford that unless the Government consented to make no opposition, there would be little chance of any but the usual Reply, that the Government would consider the subject as soon as they had time. Walford however considers his case to be an exceptional one. Was about the gaol the whole day but did not muster. Mrs Manders was very anxious to go to the Inspector General and tell him of her grievances. I let her go. She was not however able to see him as he had not put in an appearance at his office. I wrote a Memo. on an application put in by Mrs Nixon and Mrs Henry for servants to be allowed them. I recommended strongly that the old system of allotting three female servants for the Washing of the female officers should be returned to, but at the same time I urged that whatever the result of the application the officers must be informed that they cannot be allowed to keep on grumbling & must during hours of Duty think more of the Establishment and less of themselves. Polly was away as usual. She came home at some time or other in the evening & said she had been to Mrs Kilpatrick's at Elsternwick. She is looking over my shoulder now so I had better not express further my real opinions as to her going on. She might be worse but certainly could be a great deal better. Went to the Club & after a loud talk left with Duerdin & Jardine Smith. Polly was in time for tea in the evening. Harry & I read for a long time together. Harry is beginning to understand what he reads & takes a fair part in Dialogue Reading. After Harry had gone to bed I went on Duty & played a Regulation Game of Bezique with the Missus. Polly went off to bed & soon screamed for me to follow. I did without delay as I was afraid of the consequences if I at all showed a proud spirit. The Somersetshire arrived to-day & brought later English News, nothing however very startling. Tichbourne Case is again talked about, the Claimant is Starring it throughout the English Provinces. He made his last entry into Bristol where he appears to have been feted & made a great deal of. He should visit America; properly 'Barnumised'²²⁰ he would make a fortune out of the Yankees & would make with his 26 stone weight & the Romance of his position a better show than Tom Thumb, or Washington's nurse.

JULY 27 SATURDAY 1872

Got up this morning & remained up as soon as the bell rang at half past six o'clock this morning. It was very damp & cold but although there was a little rain at first it was not much to signify. Went through the Gaol & saw what was going on. After breakfast, commenced office work. Received a letter from

220 Refers to the publicity technique employed by P.T. Barnum and the Barnum and Bailey Circus.

Mrs Smith telling of her daughter in Law's intended departure from England & asking my services on her account. Later in the day I also received one from my father which had been enclosed in one to Joe to save postage I suppose. Received a number of English papers from Edwin Smith's relatives. Forwarded him some letters I had received for him. Mustered in the afternoon & after Muster was over, went to the Club. Had a look at *Punch* & *Vanity Fair* & then left. In the road home I met Duerdin who advised me strongly to have nothing whatever to do with the Claims at Alexandra which I had been asked to speculate in. He knew the promoters & did not believe in them. I was not much tempted ever to have done so particularly as I have no money. However I certainly shall positively decline all connexion with them now I have had such advice. Polly & I each made a very hearty tea of lobster. Polly was commenting upon the dearness of the shops. The lobster we had to-night was a fine one & very fresh & at the door cost only a shilling. At a shop one of the same size & quality would be sold for two shillings. The hawkers are certainly sometimes beneficial to housekeepers. For dinner yesterday, Polly had to pay at a shop 3/6 for a little fish the like of which is often brought to the house for 1/6. Now meat is getting dear again housekeepers moralise over these apparent trifles. Harry this evening commenced reading McAuley's *History of England*.²²¹ He is getting a great deal too fond of Plays & funny pieces & as he reads for marks I mean for the future to make him earn them with literature more solid & substantial. Polly amused herself this evening with the *Family Herald* & I read *The Australasian* until it was time to go to bed. We got to sleep between eleven & twelve o'clock, but when I was off & away, ding, dong went the bell, & with a nudge from Polly I was out of bed, into my trousers & ready to answer it. Detective Brown was at the Gate with a prisoner he had just brought in from Sandhurst. I took him in & went to bed again, but it was a very long time before I could get to sleep again. I had been thoroughly awakened & sleep had deserted me; when I did sleep, I had nightmare & dreams of a decidedly unpleasant nature.

JULY 28 SUNDAY 1872

Sunday morning. Expected the Dean to preach in the Gaol. He did not however come. I had intended to hear him but did not go into the Gaol when I heard from Mr Studdert that the visit of the 'very venerable' was postponed.

Polly was rather cross at my thinking of attending prayers in the Gaol instead of going with her & the family to St John's. I was very unwell & got out of temper very quickly. In a fit of sulkiness I would'nt go to Church at all. The boys were full of life & mischief. In my nervous condition they played the deuce with my head & I was very thankful when they all cleared away & went with mamma to Church. After a quiet read for an hour or so I felt much more

221 *The History of England* by Thomas Babington Macauley (1800–1859) ran to many editions.

amiable & undertook to take baby out for a walk. The little fellow was very chatty & agreeable & we went for a good long stroll. All went merry as a marriage bell, till in a thickly populated thoroughfare, the youngster startled me by saying he wanted to P. I got him in as quiet a neighbourhood as possible & tried to help him get ready. I could'ent manage, however, so I told him he must wait till he got home. We walked on for another five minutes when Ernest most emphatically remarked, 'I will P, now,' & P, he did. I trust no evil results in the shape of cold will follow, but I record this little incident as it left on my mind a strong impression of the helplessness of a man when left alone by himself with a little child. With a woman, Ernest's difficulty would have been got over in an instant. With me there was only one thing that I rejoiced at & that was It was only to P he wanted. Met Polly & the children as they came out of Church. The Bishop had preached to them & they were late in consequence. It was past one o'clock when they left the Church.

Got bad-tempered & disagreeable at dinner. Stayed at home all the afternoon & in the evening went to the Club, read for a time & then came home. Smoked in solemn silence, building all the while castles in the air of prodigious strength & importance, Castles that if substantial structures would make me wealthy & the envied of the enviable, they dissolved quickly when for a moment my thoughts turned to the Bills I have to pay next month. Went to bed. Before I went to sleep I grumbled a half apology to Polly for my bad temper to-day, then turned & tried to force myself to sleep. Must honestly say I did'ent find it much trouble so to do.

JULY 29 MONDAY 1872

Usual employment in the Gaol. It was however a very slack day for a Monday & fewer prisoners received than usual. I was much amused by one prisoner's letter that in the course of Duty I read to-day. The prisoner is in Gaol for beating his wife & excused himself in this fashion. 'I came home not in the best of tempers not having made much money during the day & when I went in to the house my daughter was scrubbing the floor. She told me I ought to have gone in through the back door & not dirtied her floor. I said it was like her impudence & then she called her mother who took her part. Now I had had a drop of drink & though I know it was wrong, I must admit I did slap her face, but there I assure you, the slap she got would not have raised a blush upon her cheek.'

Mustered in the afternoon & after Muster went to the Club. Walked home with Jardine Smith. In Swanston Street, the Missus & some of the youngsters picked me up & went home with us. In the evening I read to the youngsters out of Peter Parley²²² & then heard Harry read a Page of Macauley. Went into the office & looked over some of the pages of my last year's Diary. Really it

222 Children's book or magazine by Peter Parley, the pseudonym of S.G. Goodrich, a Canadian whose stories (e.g. his *Short Stories for Long Nights*, 1838) were immensely popular in the Victorian era.

is wonderful how much one forgets; but for the Diaries I believe I should in a year or two have no conception or recollections of heaps of things that were when they took place considered of great importance & which even now when remembered seem important still. Sent Edwin Smith his newspapers & also wrote him a letter asking his intentions with regard to his wife when she arrived in the Colony. I fear very much he has no intentions except to share with her the money she brings with her. I put the matter to him very plainly & think I must draw an answer from him. That it will be a satisfactory one I can scarcely expect.

I am invited to attend a Meeting to-morrow afternoon called for the purpose of initiating measures for the Establishment of an Aid Society for prisoners on leaving Gaol. I shall go because I think a Society of the kind if properly managed would be very useful & be the saving of some who would not return to Gaol if there was some employment for them to go to upon their discharge. I think also it would be well worthy the attention & support of the Government. I am convinced both men & women frequently leave the Gaol impressed with the folly of leading dissolute lives. They cannot however battle with the world without assistance. Reputable people turn the cold shoulder upon them & their applications for employment & at last in desperation they seek the kind word & shelter where it is to be got, among their old companions or those they have made in Gaol. Return to prison is then certain & merely a time of days or weeks. Their having been in Gaol before & the company they are keeping is sufficient to make them fair game for the Police.

JULY 30 TUESDAY 1872

In the Gaol as usual. Have not been at all well for some time & to-day felt very queer. Transacted usual business & in the afternoon went to a meeting called for the purpose of establishing a Society for the Aid of Discharged prisoners. When I went into the room I saw the Dean, a number of Clergymen of different denominations & Captain Standish.²²³ The Captain hailed me with apparent thankfulness. He said until I came he felt as [if] he were the only sinner in the crowd & that he was entirely out of his element. Judge Pohlman was in the chair & said in opening the meeting all that pretty well was to be said in favor of the movement. Mr Grieg the Superintendent of the Immigrant's Home then read some Reports from America on Prisoners Aid Societies & the good that had there been effected by them. After this the Judge in a very kind & flattering manner called upon me to express my sentiments. I got up & said what I thought which was that if properly conducted a Discharged Prisoners Aid Society would be a great benefit. Standish afterwards promised to do all he could to aid the Society. The Jewish Clergymen spoke of the success of a little Society they had for helping

223 Frederick Charles Standish (1824–1883), Chief Commissioner of Police from 1858 to 1880.



Jon Rhodes
*The Burke
 Memorial Stained
 Glass Window, Burke
 Museum, Beechworth,
 Victoria* n.d.
 gelatin silver
 photograph;
 26.9 x 18.0 cm
 Pictures
 Collection,
 nla.pic-an23407039

discharged prisoners of their religion, then a Committee was formed of which I was elected a member & the meeting broke up. I went to the Club & then came home to tea. Polly went in the evening with Miss Marchmont & Miss Thorpe to see *The Huguenots*.²²⁴ I got my pipe & smoked away till it was getting very late, then without waiting for Polly's return I went to bed & was asleep before she came. I received to-day two letters from Beechworth, one from Alderdice asking for £1.12 he had paid Tom Cole for the Abyssinian on my account & one from Bentley asking me to get a design for a painted window for the Beechworth Burke Museum.²²⁵

JULY 31 WEDNESDAY 1872

It is a long time since I was so ill as I was today. From the time I got up till the evening I was troubled with acidity on the stomach and was miserable in consequence during the whole of the day. I plucked up enough to do my work & mustered in the evening. After muster I went to the Club and had a chat with Major Snee who is to have twelve months in England to study Gunnery. I promised when he went home to give him a letter of introduction to my father & he seemed very much pleased at the chance of meeting an old Artillery Officer. Polly was not very well tonight and we both went to bed early. The women today had a grievance about their hominy which they said was served to them cold. I told them I would enquire about it & if there was anything wrong endeavour to get it rectified. They are evidently a little unsettled & anxious to make a little excitement for themselves. I spoke tolerably plainly to them & let them understand if they did'nt like Gaol Fare, they should stop away from prison. They drew very unfavorable

224 Meyerbeer's opera, *The Huguenots*, perhaps attended with special interest, given the Castieau family's Huguenot background. Castieau and Polly had attended an earlier production in 1870 (Diary, 15 August 1870).

225 Castieau had been an important promoter of the Burke Museum. The decorative Burke Memorial Window, with its emblem of the Southern Cross in gold stars, was manufactured in Melbourne and installed at a cost of £30 in 1874. It remains a centrepiece of the museum in Beechworth.

comparisons between the Gaol & Pentridge & told them Pentridge I knew was a very nice place & I wished with all my heart they were there. Polly & her domestics had a great day teasing some hair for a mattress. They were all sitting round a big heap of hair and most industriously picking it asunder & making it fit for restuffing. *The Argus* had no report of the meeting yesterday for the establishing of a Discharged Prisoners Aid Society. The *Telegraph* however had a tolerably fair report & *The Age* came out with a sub leader in which they expressed their gratification at seeing that Captain Standish, Mr Sturt and myself were present. They said that our presence was a criterion the Society would be formed on a practical basis. I think if properly gone about, the Society will receive substantial recognition from the Public and be in a position to do much good. I will have however to be careful & not excite the jealousy of Mr Duncan by taking a too prominent part as he may think it his right from the position he holds to be the foremost in the movement.

AUGUST 1 THURSDAY 1872

Better to-day but still rather shaky feeling weak & without energy. Wrote letters to Alderdice & to Bentley. Was about the Gaol the whole of the day. Mustered in the afternoon. As I finished Muster Mr Duncan put in an appearance. He talked about the Gaol & about the Prisoners Aid Society. He talked about the Quarters & is evidently bothered at the number of promises & half-promises that have been given to one officer & another at different times. He told me had recommended the closing up of Kilmore Gaol & the officers who were doing Duty there being transferred from Kilmore to Melbourne Gaol. This certainly is very sensible on his part but it is I fear too practical for the Government to adopt, as the Kilmore people with John O'Shannassy at their head will be sure to make a great fight to retain the dungeon walls in their midst. It will test at any rate the probabilities of the Penal Commission's suggestions as to the doing away of the Country Gaols being carried out. Mr Duncan asked me if I had heard any more about my receiving any consideration. I said I had not, he said he thought Mr Francis was favorable but didn't like to go against the Estimates of the late Ministry. He said he couldn't understand how it was that some of the things he proposed had been agreed to & others not. I said, 'It was strange'.

AUGUST 7 WEDNESDAY 1872

In the evening I heard Harry read. He could not however get on very well & so I turned him over to his mother & played first 'Beggars my Neighbour' with Dotty. I bounced respecting my Play very much before we commenced but the young lady beat me in a manner that made her quite satirical. Then Harry like a young Elephant commenced with me a game of Bezique. He spluttered the cards here & there, made sometimes a sensible keen remark but lost the game in a highly flighty & over excited manner. The boy will not

be slow that's certain; probably it would be better if he were. My quickness has done me little service & brought me into many scrapes.

After Harry, methodical Sissy played Bezique with me. She plodded along & in the end won 'Hands down' (this is not intended for a pun). Smoked away for an hour or so, then as Polly had gone to bed went also. Was very restless however & could not sleep well. What does it portend? Twice I have dreamt long of a great funeral & once of seeing the shade of Mr Wintle. The old gentleman did not look at me but was sitting in a chair leaning his head upon his hand. Do Spirits sit & have they chairs?

AUGUST 15 THURSDAY 1872

The Criminal Sittings commenced this morning & I was at the Court by ten o'clock to be in attendance upon the presiding Judge who this time was Mr Justice Barry. There were no cases of importance; one miserable looking deformed blear eyed youth pleaded Guilty to an Unnatural Offence. He was caught in the act with a Goat. Mr Barry seized the opportunity & dealt out an elaborate sentence. Ten Years on the Roads & to be three times whipped by the Common Hangman, 25 lashes on the breech with a cat o nine tails. For an attempt at a similar offence the 'Arab'²²⁶ was sentenced to three years cumulative. Now so far as the heinousness of the offence is concerned, I for one would offer no defence, but was this wretched youthful specimen of humanity who pleaded Guilty to-day aware of its heinousness, or did he do it as something he thought if found out he would get 'larruped' for? I questioned him & found he was cunning, but beyond that almost a born natural. He said his age was about 15 but he had whiskers on his face & hands that looked like those of a deformed man. I should think he was from 18 to 20. He said his mother was dead & that his father had been a digger at Chiltern, & was taken ill while working, which caused the boy to be taken from him & removed to the Industrial School. He was at School (according to his statement) at Chiltern, but notwithstanding his tuition there & his further schooling at Sunbury he is now unable to read further than the knowledge of the letters of the Alphabet. There was a book on my desk with H.M. Gaol, Melbourne, marked on the back of it in capital letters. The boy was asked to read it & said H correctly, then N for M, & after calling G, C spelt G.A.O.L. correctly. 'What does that spell?' was asked; the little blear eyes emitted a faint sparkle & their professor replied exultingly 'Gold'. The horrid part of this matter after all is the statement made by the prisoner when arrested which was that he had learnt the crime he had committed from seeing the boys at Sunbury commit themselves in the same way with the Goats that were about the Station. The sentence of Judge Barry's would have been a righteous one if the culprit had been a man but with this idiotic infant I think it lacketh discretion & will cause the judge tribulation.

226 -Street urchin.

AUGUST 21 WEDNESDAY 1872

Not a very exciting day. In fact I can scarcely tell how it passed away, yet it did pass away & I was not idle either. There were no less than thirty-six male prisoners discharged to-day. Fifteen of them were sent away to the Hulk.²²⁷ They were particularly required to be able bodied & were passed by Dr McCrea. They did not however I must say look a very lively lot. At Luncheon or rather dinner time there was a loud knocking at the door which Polly found came from Mrs Kerferd who had come to see us bringing all her little ones. Of course it happened we were very unprovided having only cold meat. However we made the best of it & pulled the children through with the help of bread & butter. Polly went out with Mrs Kerferd in the afternoon but was not over delighted with that lady's style of buying the articles she wanted at the drapers' shops & rather astonished at her only getting two tickets for herself & family when she got to the Railway Station. She had Madeline, almost a young woman, & four other children. Polly would have had four whole tickets. Some people however know how to manage better than others.

Mustered in the afternoon & then went to the Club. Felt my position unpleasantly while there, for I was called out of the room & told I was wanted in the Strangers Room. I went & found Walstab the Novelist in charge of a constable who had arrested him for non payment of his wife's maintenance. Walstab asked me to tell the *Telegraph* people of his trouble & I did so, then hastened home so that I might be in time to receive the prisoner when he arrived at the Gaol. Left the Club with McKinley & on the way home met Mr Panton the Police Magistrate of Geelong & who was formerly Visiting Justice at this Gaol. Walstab was soon in my custody & I sent him to the Cell directing particularly that he should be supplied with clean bedding. I thought it better to do no more than that for him. The Visiting Justice was here to-day to try a prisoner for Assaulting another in the Labor Yard. The prisoner was sentenced to a month with seven days in Solitary Confinement & got off very cheaply as he had struck another with a hammer. Had to-day a hunt for my tobacco & could not find it. Polly took Harry to task & it appears the young scapegoat had taken & according to his own account smoked it. I did not speak to him about it, leaving his mother to manage the matter as she thought best. The little boys were in trouble to-day again about their books. They cannot be brought to bring them home

227 The *Sacramento* at Williamstown. Prison hulks were used in Victoria from 1852 to 1859 to cope with overcrowding in the gaols and prisons and as places of punishment for refractory prisoners. In the 1860s they were used again to house female prisoners before their later removal to Pentridge and then to Melbourne Gaol. The *Sacramento* was used in the 1870s to accommodate well-behaved prisoners employed on public works at Williamstown. The most famous hulk was the *Success*, which was resurrected as a floating convict museum and toured the world from the 1880s; see James Semple Kerr, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind* (Sydney, 1988), pp. 71-72 and Iris Petrass, "Those Who Trespass Against Us": Women in Victorian Prisons, BA Hons thesis, Monash University, 1989, ch. 5.

regularly so to-night they were sent to bed & their sisters were well scolded for not looking after their little brothers. A woman was murdered by a drunken companion in some low den in the neighbourhood of Little Bourke Street. A bottle of rum was the cause of Quarrel & an axe the instrument of the murder.

AUGUST 27 TUESDAY 1872

Not very happy to-day, had I fear a little fit of the Blues. Transacted ordinary routine work in the Gaol & was upset by an answer I received from Mr Duncan with regard to my protest against the Circular in which I was directed to visit the Gaol at night & record my visits. I think the Circular was an ill advised one yet I believe acting on impulse as I invariably do is about the worst thing a man in my position can do if he studies his own interests. Polly went away early as she was to go to Elsternwick to see the wedding of Frank Stephens' daughters. It was a great affair, one girl was married to Mr Travers a Squatter & rather aged, the other to Dr Madden a rising Barrister. Sissy & Dotty with their cousins formed a little group in blue & I have no doubt looked very nice. Mamma plumed herself at any rate upon having heard Lady Canterbury call attention to them. I mustered in the afternoon but did not go out before tea-time. Polly & Miss McDermott came. They had left however the little girls behind as there was to be at Auntie Dotty's a doll wedding & a Party to celebrate it. We went to the Railway Station to meet the children who arrived by the quarter to eight o'clock Train. It will be Harry's Birthday to-morrow & mamma wanted to buy him a Stamp Album but didn't wish him to see it till to-morrow. Much against Master Harry's will he was sent home by the omnibus with Dotty who was tired & then Polly, Miss McDermott, Sissy & myself went into Bourke Street & bought the Album.

The ladies went home & I looked in at the Club. Had a long chat with Pickersgill, Amsinck, Levey & Duerdin. It was most amusing to hear Pickersgill 'blow'. According to him fortunes are made & lost day after day in Melbourne in manner most simple. He was full of a 'Spec' he had on hand for the introducing into the Colony an English eleven to make a cricketing tour of the Colonies. There was money to be made so 'Pick' affirmed. He rather startled us by declaring that Spiers & Pond made £17,000 out of the first English cricketers who visited the Colonies. It saved them Sir; they were bankrupt till then. Their counting house was paved with writs & they had not the slightest chance of getting over their difficulties till the advent of Stephenson & his team. I got home at about ten o'clock. Miss McDermott it was arranged should stay at our house to-night & did so. I smoked several pipes, nursed my knee & dull care at the same time. Went however to bed soon after Polly took her departure up stairs.

AUGUST 30 FRIDAY 1872

Was in the Gaol at usual work to-day & employed myself during a portion of the day at taking notes from an American Prison Report. Mustered in the afternoon. Attended in the Women's Wing in the morning & heard a number of Cases. After Muster went to the Club & walked away from it with Duerdin. In the evening played Bezique with the girls & afterwards a game with Polly. Nathan came in the evening with a renewed Bill. I accepted it & paid him £5 Interest. I also paid him 12/ for a hat stand he had bought for us. I told Nathan if he liked I would take £50 more from him. He said however it did'ent pay him at the price. I said 'all right' & sent him about his business. Twenty per cent does'ent pay, & yet Nathan can take my Bill to the Bank & get it discounted at eight per cent. I foretel a good deal of trouble for some time with regard to money matters & cant tell how I shall be able to get along this month as I shall not have a rap when I have paid my Insurance & the portion of the loan now due. Ours certainly is an expensive house or rather ours is a very little income. We certainly do have more grog in the place than we should. This is however really the only extravagance. The children must be taught & Music & such like accomplishments must be paid for.

...

There is to be a great lot of people at Seymour on Monday at the opening of the Railway through to that place. Invitations to the extent of £500 it is said has been issued by the Government. We were not among the lucky ones invited.

AUGUST 31 SATURDAY 1872

Busy in the Office all the morning. Mr O'Loughlan the Crown Prosecutor called to tell me he had represented to the Attorney General the advisability of not flogging Angus Adams a young fellow convicted of a nasty offence at the last Criminal Sittings. A Reporter from *The Herald* was here also. He was he stated leaving *The Herald* & about joining *The Express*, a new Evening Paper about to be started. He seemed bitter against *The Herald* & would'ent ask for any news for it to-day. I showed him a book I was making notes from, a Report on the American Gaols. He tried to make me promise I would work my notes into an Article & give them to him for the new Paper. I did not promise but he went away expressing himself in a way as if I had done so. Mustered in the afternoon & after Muster went to the Club. Came away with Duerdin. At the Eastern Market I bought a lobster & thought I had got it very cheap as I only gave a shilling for it. When I got home, Polly I found, had gone to meet me so I started Harry off to let her know I had reached the house in her absence. When Polly returned she also produced a lobster. She had been to the Eastern Market & for a shilling had also purchased a lobster. We made merry over the coincidence & arranged to have one lobster for our tea & the other children's breakfast in the morning. Alas, when we had commenced tea & Polly had tasted her share of the fish, she cocked her nose

in the slightest but still most suggestive manner & exclaimed 'Is this lobster quite fresh?' There was no getting away from the fact, 'it was'ent quite'. Well, so much for that lobster. Polly's had been put on the side-board & before the evening was over it sent forth the intelligence most palpably that it was'ent quite fresh either. Then we compared notes & found that we had purchased of the same man & that he had most emphatically represented the lobsters to be in first rate condition. We came to the conclusion that perhaps a fish monger's lobster at 1/6 or even 2/- was preferable even on the score of economy to a shilling one at the Eastern Market. Read *The Australasian* & *The Age*. Then read a little to the youngsters & at ten o'clock went to bed. About half past eleven Nurse called to us there was a fire. We were both very sleepy but Polly must go to a fire if there is any chance of getting to it & so we got up. There was a great blaze which we followed & found to proceed from an Agricultural Instrument maker's, the corner of Elizabeth Street & Latrobe Street. The Fire seemed to be all up stairs, several shops below being still open & apparently uninjured. The roof was iron & the whole of the premises were sheltered by a wide iron verandah. There did'ent seem much to burn yet the fire fought valiantly against an immense shower of water & the houses were gutted before it was thoroughly conquered.

SEPTEMBER 2 MONDAY 1872

Got to usual work & at usual time. Was tolerably busy all the morning & occupied any liesure with taking notes from an American Gaol Report. There was to be a Flogging administered this afternoon on a youth who I have previously mentioned, Angus Adams. At first this morning I thought there would be a bother about getting the flogging done as Old Jack had'ent put in an appearance & Rowley did'ent know where to find him. I wrote a letter to the Detective Police & had sent it away. The Messenger however returned saying Bamford was coming. Jack then made his appearance & the difficulty was surmounted, though I wanted to be prepared yet I did not think the Flogging would be inflicted & so it proved. O'Loughlan as he had stated applied to the Crown Law officers to get the sentence of flogging remitted & they forwarded the letter to Dr McCrea declining to interfere & instructing him to exercise as usual his discretion. When the doctor came, he in my presence examined Adams & then certified 'he was not in a fit state of health to be flogged at present'. I am very glad the punishment did not take place as two or three of the Warders assure me Adams is not 'all right'. He walks about without taking notice of any one or anything & is more like an animal than a human being.

There was to be an Election at the Yorick to-day & I was asked particularly to come down & vote, so I did & then returned to muster. After Muster I went again to the Club & after a chat left with Duerdin & Jardine Smith. It was Smith's birthday & he came into our house & had a little brandy & water

before he went home. In the Evening I read a story from *The Arabian Nights*, then played a game of Bezique with Dotty. This nearly spent the Evening, for Polly & I went off to bed by ten o'clock.

To-day was the last day for registering votes & obtaining Electoral Rights. I got mine this afternoon. The Registrar told me great efforts had been made to get as many Catholic Votes registered as possible, in order no doubt that should there be a great fight over the Education Question & a General Election follow, that the Catholic Party may be in a position to show their strength. I said to the Registrar, 'so I suppose you will keep open late to-night as it is the last day for Registering?' 'I dont think so,' was his answer; 'but you keep the shillings dont you?' said I. 'Well, not exactly, you see I get the shillings & so much per annum if I register under 200 but if I register over 200 my salary is reduced by £5. Consequently if I keep open late & register 200 I should get 50/- more & lose £5. Now this wont pay.' I agreed.

SEPTEMBER 3 TUESDAY 1872

While I was in the office to-day I was astonished at hearing from Polly that she had been to see Mr Francis²²⁸ with regard to the question of my promotion. Mr Francis received her very kindly & said he was not aware of my having sent in any application. He promised he would personally enquire into the matter. I hardly knew whether to be pleased or displeased with Polly's action but trust it has been for the best as I feel confident it was intended. This Evening was rather a lazy one. I read & afterwards played a game of Bezique with Polly, then went to bed. The Pay for August came to-night. Just now there is a little excitement with regard to Port Darwin where new Gold Fields are said to have been discovered. If the News is all corroborated there will be an Exodus from the Mining Population of Victoria.

SEPTEMBER 5 THURSDAY 1872

Mr Duncan put in an appearance at my office almost as soon as I did myself this morning. He was very chatty & we got on remarkably well together. Polly astonished me again to-day with another specimen of her strong mindedness. She went to the Attorney General's office & took up the cudgels in my behalf. She is determined I shall be promoted & so I suppose I shall be if there's any truth in woman's determination being always sure to guarantee success. This was the Quarterly Visiting Day & from ten till four o'clock there was quite a swarm round the Gaol Gate. Not all those assembled were very respectable. On the contrary, the most looked hardened & either ex Gaol birds or candidates for admission to the prison. Two or three were a little drunken & consequently a little rowdy as well. There was however on the whole very little trouble. I did not muster but went to the Club where there was a good

228 James Goodall Francis (1819–1884), Premier of Victoria from 1872–74, with Castieau's friend George Kerferd in his ministry.

deal of chat going on with regard to Baron von Mueller, the Director of the Botanical Gardens.²²⁹ The Baron is at loggerheads with the Government & tried to get the better of it, by lobbying the members of Parliament. The Baron is however too much of a bore & most people are extremely tired of him. The Government therefore carried their point without any difficulty & the Baron got a good wiggling for his pains.

I left the Club with Duerdin. In the evening stayed at home & smoked a new meerschaum which I was extravagant enough to purchase this afternoon. I gave 15/- for it, a long price but Damman assured me it was a good article. There was this afternoon a great concert at the Town Hall in order to give the Common School children a chance to hear & see the organ. Harry was among 4 or 5000 youngsters. The other of our children who go to school were allowed a holiday. Polly took the little girls to see Auntie Emma & Agnes. I should have said that Mr Stephen was particularly kind & gentlemanly to Polly this morning.

SEPTEMBER 7 SATURDAY 1872

Transacted usual business in the Gaol & in the afternoon made up my mind to go to Sandridge & see the *Omeo* off for Port Darwin, the road to the last reputed Eldorado. Dempster went as Surgeon in her & no doubt if the Diggings prove successful he will be successful also & make a good deal of money. He is to be paid for his Services, so even if he has to come back again he will have had a change & be very little out of pocket.

I did not get to Sandridge till it was too late to see the *Omeo*. She had cleared out some time before I got down. Walking along the Pier however I met Duerdin so we joined & walked together for some time. We saw the *Sarasan* clear out for New Zealand. The weather was very pleasant & I quite enjoyed my little outing although it was only to Sandridge. I saw Nicholson the Superintendent of Police & Mainwaring a detective. The latter told me that about 300 had gone in the *Omeo* & that the most of them were hearty healthy looking fellows who looked as if they meant work. A boatman to whom we spoke said if any more good news came from the North there would be no more left in the Colony but cripples, old women & children. Went up to town by the four o'clock Train. At the Melbourne Station met Kerferd with his daughter Madeline & her younger sister. Spoke to Kerferd about Polly's visit to Francis & Stephen. He seemed to think it was all right but said 'nothing would be done until the recess.' Went to the Club where Britton & I played several games of cribbage with McKinley & Telo. We were the conquerors & had three games to the good when we left off playing. Telo came home

229 Ferdinand von Mueller (1825–1896) was born in Germany and migrated to Adelaide in 1847. He was the first Government Botanist in Victoria for 43 years and was the Director of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens from 1853 to 1873. He was regarded as 'largely responsible for the international recognition given to Australian scientific endeavour' in the nineteenth century (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).



JOHN BURNER QUAM, FOR THE SANDRIDGE RAILWAY PIER, 1872

'Port Darwin Rush: The S.S. Omeo Leaving the Sandridge Railway Pier'
Reproduced from *The Illustrated Australian News*, 10 October 1872, p. 205

according to promise with me this afternoon. Harry was on the lookout for him & the children (with the exception of Godfrey who has a shy fit just lately) regularly rushed him. Dotty seems to consider Telo as her special property & sat on his knee pretty well during the whole of the time she was in the Dining Room. Of course he had to tell the youngsters a story & of course he told one about a murder & a trooper & of course it was of thrilling interest & was listened to with breathless eagerness by the children. After the children had gone to bed, Telo, myself & Polly (how gallant to put Polly last) sat talking till past twelve o'clock. Telo then went away & I had just one more little smoke & then followed Polly who had gone up stairs to bed.

SEPTEMBER 8 SUNDAY 1872

In going round this afternoon, I found in the Male Hospital one poor fellow who appeared to be dying & when I got to the Female Hospital, there was an old woman who also appeared to be sinking. The old woman had refused all nourishment & I asked her if she would like an orange. She faintly answered 'Yes' & I told Polly who took her some. I am afraid there will be three Inquests on Monday. There is one woman lying dead now & the man & woman I have spoken of will scarcely last through the night. None of these persons though in Gaol have committed any offence except that of being ill & without friends. The Magistrates too do not send them to prison but from motives of charity. The Gaol affords them shelter & alas there is but little shelter for the poor & miserable in Melbourne but the Gaol, the Benevolent Asylum being full to the brim.

SEPTEMBER 10 TUESDAY 1872

In the Gaol as usual. The first thing I had to do on going into the office was to see Mr McDermott, the father of Miss McDermott who teaches our children music. McDermott had been received on a Fraud Summons but I did not know about it until I saw him this morning. He wrote a letter to his daughter which Polly gave her & then went with her to see the detaining creditor with whom an arrangement was come to but not early enough in the day to effect the prisoner's liberation. Kept myself busy this morning in writing a paper on the prison Report I have been reading. Was working at it for some hours. Mustered & then went to the Club. Left with Duerdin & walked with him up Bourke Street. Polly & the little girls came to meet me but I missed them & got home long before they did. In the evening went to my writing again & stuck at it for a couple of hours, then smoked myself nearly stupid & went away off to bed. Hackett bought for me to-day over £2 worth of leather; the shoeing my family is beginning to be a great consideration particularly now the prison labor has to be paid for. I can't help smiling sometimes when I think how people are deceived as to my means, the general impression being, "That I am well off[?]. Dr McGauran came to me to-day to know if I would buy a poney. He has one which I very much admired when I saw it the other day. I told him I had no money but the doctor seemed to treat this as a capital joke. It was not however that I had'ent the heart to laugh at myself. There is a kind of lull in Melbourne just now, whether it is the calm before the storm time will show. At any rate we are beginning to feel in want of stimulant; like dram drinkers, we must have our regular nips of sensation or we get fidgetty & uneasy. A big nugget or two from Darwin or Charters Towers would set Victoria topsy-turvy & make the people anxious to Rush spite of all prudential reasons. Even with the little cheering intelligence from those distant Fields, numbers are on the move. One Ballarat Paper speaking of the excitement warns intending emigrants of the necessity of being provided with Funds. They say they know of one man who has gone to Port Darwin with only £5 beyond his Passage money & naively remark if this man does not starve it will not be his fault but from his encountering a big slice of luck.

SEPTEMBER 11 WEDNESDAY 1872

Lazy this morning. Still in the office in good time. Scribbled away for some hours at the Article I was writing. Altered the whole of the Introduction & then let Polly read the Paper. She approved & I felt a little excited & went away to the *Argus* office with my production at once. Saw Haddon, the Editor.²³⁰ He was very gracious & said the Article should appear but that he could'ent tell when.

230 Frederick William Haddon (1839–1906), journalist, editor of *The Argus*, founding trustee of the Yorick Club.

No sooner had I surrendered my Article to the Editor of *The Argus* than reaction set in & I mooned over the wisdom or rather the folly of some parts of it. I could not help thinking over the matter & lying awake in consequence. I have said what appear to me now some rather severe things with regard to the management of prisoners at Pentridge & I should like to obliterate them. Probably I shall wait upon Haddon to-morrow & get him to let me do so. Certainly there is no reason my being at loggerheads with either Duncan or Snelling. I feel I am an impulsive fool not to have waited & reflected before I took the precious 'coinage of my brain' to the *Argus* office.

OCTOBER 1 TUESDAY 1872

Up this morning to give out the keys at half past five o'clock, as the work of the Gaol commenced at half an hour earlier. Mr Duncan was here this morning & I spoke to him about the Deputy Inspectorship. He did'ent seem to like the idea of such an appointment being made but expressed himself as being well disposed towards me & desirous of giving me help if he could but he did'ent see that a Deputy was required at present. I told him it would not hurt him & that if I did'ent get it now probably it would be given to some one by and bye that he would'ent like even as well. He seemed very flurried & began talking about my firing up at fancied grievances. I told him I might have acted imprudently but at any rate honestly in the matter. He said he did'ent like it because others might imitate. I said 'if his Governors imitated me he would'ent have much to complain of'. We parted apparently on friendly terms. Mustered in the afternoon & after Muster went to the Club. In the afternoon I went to the Bank for the Pay. Met Whiteman & asked him to help me about the Inspector Generalship when the proper time came. He promised he would do so. In the Evening, went out again ... & went to the House. Sent up my card to Kerferd who came out almost immediately & had a chat with me. He told me he had spoken to the Chief Secretary & that Mr Francis promised not to commit himself in any manner about the Inspectorship & that he seemed very well inclined towards me. He advised me to make no application until the appointment of a Deputy was sanctioned. I thanked him & came away feeling as if there was something good coming. Went to the Club where I played several games of cribbage with McKinley & Amsinck. Then walked towards home with Ogier. Got home in time to see the *Argus* Reporter who came after ten o'clock.

OCTOBER 14 MONDAY 1872

Woke this morning at a little before two o'clock & took the opportunity of going through the Gaol. Found things apparently all correct, the Warders all on the alert. In office usual time & got through ordinary business. The weather very unsettled & almost Wintry. Was not able to muster to-day as

there was a Meeting of the Discharged Prisoners Aid Society & I thought it best to attend it. There was not much business transacted at the Meeting beyond the Appointment of a collector, or rather the agreeing to the advertising for a collector. I walked away from the place of Meeting with Mr Buckley of Buckley & Nunn's & when I left him went to the Club. While there I sent a note to Haddon by Jardine Smith asking him to return the article I had given him on Prisoners about a month ago as I supposed it was not accepted & I thought it would do for some paper if it did'ent come up to the mark of the Leading Journal. He sent me back word 'that he did'ent want to be rude but he would see me d-d first'. He meant to use it but had not yet had space to spare. I suppose I must take this as a compliment but if the Article is to do any good it ought to be published before the public interest about Gaols is cloyed with the heaps of leaders & paragraphs about prison & prison discipline which are appearing day by day. Walked towards home with Jardine.

Found when I got home a letter from the Attorney General. He had received my note and in reply said he had forwarded it to the Chief Secretary who took a warm interest in the Gaol Bill. He acknowledged the force of my argument with regard to the rotation of Visiting Trustees but thought the rotation would have to be given to enable the Bill to be passed through the House.

OCTOBER 19 SATURDAY 1872

In the evening after Polly had got back from Kew I went again down the street & at the Club met Telo, he did'ent seem to have much to do & we chummed. First of all I accompanied him to his tailor's where he possessed himself of some raiment that he had given to be repaired. After he had deposited these at home we took a stroll down Bourke Street & just to see what it was like went into St James Hall, Tickets 1/, Reserved Seats 2/. We paid a shilling & went up stairs. There was a row as if two men were quarrelling in the room. We found however this proceeded from the Stage where Johnny Cowan & someone else were enacting what is professionally called a 'Black Farce', that is a farce in which a nigger is introduced & written for Ethiopian Serenaders. Johnny Cowan is not by any means a bad actor of his Class & there was I must acknowledge some fun. However I soon grew a'weary of the stage & what was going on in the way of entertainment & looked for amusement in the audience. There was not however much to be found even among them. There were about a hundred & fifty males, mostly apprentice lads, & two or three women whose dress & style proclaimed them common property. There was plenty of laughter particularly at anything painfully extravagant & an apparent satisfaction with the amusement that was being obtained. Telo & I could not help wondering at there not being some worthier style of entertainment available for the hundreds in Melbourne with shillings to spend & an anxiety to dispose of them. Quiet concerts wont do. I feel certain there must be a certain fastness if not absolute

naughtiness about any night resort that will attract the larrikin & the wanderer about town. There's the difficulty: the Entertainer knows not where exactly to draw the line & for fear of the Police can but give a namby pamby entertainment just however as vicious if not more so than any more attractive one he would be glad to offer if sure of non interference. Was home before ten o'clock & went to bed as soon as I had smoked a pipe.

OCTOBER 27 SUNDAY 1872

Lay awake for hours this morning not feeling that I had strength enough to move. I suffered during the night from clammy cold sweats & shivered in my bath which is a certain sign with me of being queer all over. Did not go to Church but did a lot of work of one kind & another in the office. Mustered in the afternoon & then went for a stroll. Called in at the Club but there was no one there excepting Mr Major so I did not stay long but after a glance at the papers came away home again. In the evening I went into town again & at the Club met McKinley & Levey. Levey asked McKinley who wrote the article in *The Argus* of Saturday on 'Prisons & Prisoners', McKinley replied 'oh I suppose some one who knows something about it'. Levey shook his head & said 'oh I don't think he does know much about it'. 'It was'ent one of the staff I suppose?' From those remarks of Levey's I suppose I must look out for squalls for evidently the article will be noticed & that too unfavorably. Duncan was with Levey yesterday about Exhibition business & I daresay Gaol matters cropped up & probably my production.²³¹ Of course as is usual with me when I get what I want it loses its value. All ready re-action has set in & I begin to feel I have been a fool to bother about what was said about Gaols & that I had much rather have kept my ideas to myself. I was too free yesterday in admitting that I wrote the article in *The Argus*. Came home at about nine o'clock. Polly was very unwell all day & lackadaisical in consequence, lying on the sofa most of the time. Mrs Smith was with us in the afternoon & I lent her some books. Before I went out this evening Mr Dobson & Katey Morphy called & did a little romantic walking in our garden while we were having our tea. I wrote to Kerferd to-day complaining of Snelling having received his promotion & begging him to look after me or else that I feared being left out in the cold. I called his attention to the article in *The Argus* & asked him if he had not read it to glance over it. Felt very unwell even when I went to bed. I was so troubled with acidity of stomach that I took carbonate of soda three times during the day in the hopes it would relieve me. Some change I must get or else I feel that I shall be knocked up entirely. It is the bothering money that is the nuisance. If I had plenty of that I would soon have a trip & give Polly a trip that would set us both up.

231 Castieau's article may have been published in the supplement to *The Argus*, 26 Oct 1872. It is not in the regular part of the paper.

OCTOBER 28 MONDAY 1872

Tolerably busy all day, but did not feel at all well. Saw Dr McCrea in the afternoon & he had seen by the Books that Dr McGauran had prescribed an emetic for me the day before, so he said 'I see you have been going into emetics since my last visit'. I said 'Yes'. 'How are your bowels?' was the next question & I said 'much too open'. 'What, since the emetic?' I was fairly caught & blundered out 'Yes', not liking to acknowledge I had not taken the medicine. However I did'ent feel comfortable at having deceived the doctor so before he went away I told him the truth & said I would take the emetic in the evening. Went to the Club & left it with Duerdin. When I got home & had tea I courageously went up stairs to my bed room & took the emetic. I suffered for more than an hour & then was well enough to go down stairs. Annie Foreman was playing bagatelle with our youngsters.

Polly seems very unwell. She is hankering for a change & will I suppose before long get it. I wish we had lots of money. Then I would only be too pleased for her to spend some of it in getting a change of scene.

NOVEMBER 3 SUNDAY 1872

Got up this morning feeling considering my losses of yesterday very well & tolerably good tempered. Took the little girls, Harry & Walter to church. Mustered in the afternoon, in the evening or rather by the five o'clock train went to Hawthorn & then on to Kew. Found Morison & Pilcher at Kerferd's. The Solicitor General was amiable & we soon got into a chat about business matters. Kerferd said he was afraid some one had been speaking against me to Francis for he said the other day 'I talked too much'. This must have been Duncan & no doubt was the result of my candidly telling that gentleman I was trying to become his Deputy. I saw then he did'ent like it & suppose having the ear of the Chief Secretary he has damned me with faint praise. I do not think he has the pluck knowing that I have friends to censure me directly. Kerferd advised me however to keep quiet & wait. Mr Stephen had shown Kerferd my letter & Kerferd thought I had better not write again. It is troubled waters Government officials flounder about in; no doubt if they wish to float, the quieter they keep themselves the better. It is hard however for some constitutions. Left Kerferd's in time to catch the quarter past nine o'clock train. Got home at ten o'clock leaving Morison & Pilcher in Bourke Street. Wore to-day for the first time a paper collar. I have always turned up my nose at them but on Saturday as I was walking with Jardine Smith he turned into a shop & bought a box of collars. They looked very nice & as I had collars nearly worn out I bought a box also & found the one I wore to-day very comfortable.

NOVEMBER 9 SATURDAY 1872

Here I am at Half past two A.M. Sunday morning filling up my Diary because I find I cannot sleep & must do something to occupy my time. This day,

Saturday [Derby Day], has been an unhappy one for me, though if all things were as they should be I ought to have been taking pleasure like the rest of Melbourne. There has been however no pleasure for me for a long time. I am in a streak of bad luck & everything goes crossly. As it was the Prince of Wales' Birthday as many of the Warders as could be spared were allowed Leave. I went into the office at the usual time & McNee soon put in an appearance. After the Discharges, I went through the Property Book & found to all appearance I was Fourteen or Fifteen pounds short of the cash my book showed me I ought to have. How it happens puzzles me to know. I do not like to think I have been robbed, or that the Book has been tampered with. One however of the two things must I am convinced have taken place for I have carefully kept account of all money expended & there is the amount I am missing deficient. 'It never rains but it pours' is an old adage & bad luck seems to have settled on my shoulders this year. I am wretched & have no comfort in doing my work or in any of the pursuits of life. The Penal Department Red Tape will be found wound round my heart whenever a Post Mortem is held on my remains. Mr Duncan, taking advantage of the Holiday I suppose, bounced in this morning & began at me about the memos I had written. He took considerable advantage of his position as Head of the Department & bullied for a time accusing me of impertinence & disingenuousness. I answered him back for a time telling him the Gaol was becoming demoralised & that he wanted to do me an injury. He repudiated this & gradually quieted down. We then went in for a quiet talk & inconsistently enough I admit talked away as if we were on intimate terms. Duncan is a great villain, or else I have done him wrong, for he talks fairly enough to me & seems as if he wished me well. I have never been open enough to say to him what is the fact that makes it impossible for me to get on satisfactorily with the Penal Department but there is no doubt it is Snelling. He has worked for his own Promotion at the expense of myself & the other officers in charge of Gaols, been regardless of any worry & annoyance he might occasion so long as he could score a few more letters or returns to add to the number 'the Office' put through. Verily he has had his Reward, he is promoted & I who have had most of the extra work and responsibility have been left out in the cold.

NOVEMBER 12 TUESDAY 1872

In the Gaol as usual this morning. Last night Mr Rusden read a paper at a meeting of the Royal Society on the subject of prisoners. He recommended in it that habitual criminals should be at once arrested & kept for ever in confinement on the theory that their constitutions prevented their resisting the temptation to commit crime. While in Gaol, Mr Rusden proposed to utilise them by making them the tests of all sorts of medical & surgical experiments. He would divide the Criminals into three classes. The little offenders he would simply experiment on so far as trying the effects of a new drug or medicine, but the man who had committed a capital offence would

be made to undergo any operation even though danger to life attended it. I saw him at the Club to-night & helped with Walstab & others to chaff him considerably. He bore it all however very good naturedly. I told him as soon as vivisection & other similar amusements were tolerated in Gaols, the Government would have to look out for another Gaoler as I would'ent undertake the superintendence under a system that would permit such barbarities.²³²

NOVEMBER 22 FRIDAY 1872

In the Gaol as usual this morning. Busied myself after I had got through ordinary work in the office in writing a leader not to send to any Newspaper but just to relieve my feelings after the style of Traddles (I think it was Traddles) in *David Copperfield*, who used to write letters to the Duke of Wellington & other eminent & celebrated individuals when he was excited by any thing out of the common run of events. My Leader was of course about Gaols & in it I expressed the feelings I have with regard to what ought to be the proper position of a Governor of a Gaol. Showed it to Polly & I suppose shall do no more with it. Polly went to Elsternwick to-day to see if Julia could go down there to stay & Dotty's nurse take her place here for a time. Julia has been very unwell for a considerable time past & is now very weak indeed. I did not muster to-day but stayed at home & read till after tea. In the evening I went to the Club. There I met Henry Smith & paid him a pound which he had won of me on the Derby. I reminded him that he had promised to say a good word for me to Mr Francis if he got the chance & he acknowledged he had done so & would whenever an opportunity occurred. Henry Smith is the Head of the *Argus* Reporting Staff & has considerable influence with the Chief Secretary. He showed me a snuff box 'The Chief' as he termed him gave him a short time ago.

NOVEMBER 25 MONDAY 1872

In the office at usual time this morning. Mr Duncan came at a little after nine o'clock & stayed for some time chatting in a very friendly manner on different subjects. After he had left I went into the Women's Gaol & tried a number of females for different offences. There was one great brute, Catherine Jesson, to whom I found it necessary to administer two days Solitary Confinement. Upon my decision being given Kate immediately began to bully & to threaten; when she was got into her Cell she tore her clothing. I directed that she should be put into a strait waistcoat, & sent a couple of warders to Mrs Gee's assistance. The waistcoat was put on but it was afterwards reported to me that the prisoner had got it off. I was not going to be beaten in that way

232 Similarly *The Argus* could not agree that crime was simply a 'physical disorder' and regarded Rusden's comments as those of an 'earnest and advanced disciple' of a 'cold-blooded social school': *The Argus*, 15 November 1872, p. 4.

& so directed that it should be put on again. The warders were sent in & helped the women who had to put on the restraint. There was a regular battle royal & then Jesson had to be carried to the punishment cell cursing like a very trooper & using as much violence as she could with the crowd that were holding her. As she passed me she delivered herself of a torrent of abuse & I must say I received a gentle reminder of my beginning to fall into the sere & yellow life; previously when any thing pretty has been said to me & I have been called out of my name, it has been prefixed by 'little', as 'Oh you little --'. Jesson this afternoon dropped the 'little' & grinding her teeth exclaimed 'Oh you old --'. When I went to muster about an hour afterwards this specimen of the gentler sex was sitting singing in her cell. She had got every scrap of clothing gathered up round her waist or up to the strait waistcoat & was sitting with her lower extremities all naked cross legged like a tailor ...

NOVEMBER 28 THURSDAY 1872

This was Sissy's birthday. She is ten years old to-day. Mamma made her a present & so did Mr Brown. I bought her a fan & the whole of the things she got made the little Puss appear very happy. I went into Melbourne this morning & in Collins Street met Judge Cope. The old gentleman thinks if the Supreme Court Judges get increased salaries there will be a chance for the County Court Judges also to get a rise. Mustered in the afternoon. After Muster went to the Club, came away with Duerdin. There was some rain again in the evening. Annie Forman had her tea with our children in honor of Sissy's birthday. While I was in town this morning I met Nathan & made arrangements with him for the renewal of the Bill he has of mine. Money matters are very bad with me & I cannot see how ever I am to get square again. There was sometime ago a great talk about Judge Pohlman.²³³ In a moment of weakness the old chap appears to have yielded to the lusts of the flesh & to have been too loving with his housekeeper. Their commerce resulted in the lady losing her shape & the old judge made the best of the matter & married her. Now Judge Pohlman had been a leading member of the Morality Committee, in fact he had been a shining light among all societies favored by the 'unce guid' & there was a general lifting up of eyes in horror when the poor judge's weakness was hinted at. I for one have known Mr Pohlman for a very long time & I never knew anything of him but that rebounded to his credit. He has been liberal & kind almost to a fault, strictly conscientious & painstaking, in fact from over anxiety to do right he has earned the character of being slow & tedious. I have always looked upon Judge Pohlman as being really a good man & it only shows how weak the best can be at times. Instead of flinging a stone at the old fellow I would give him credit for having acted honorably under the circumstances & condoned the injury he had done to the partner of his foolishness by marrying her.

233 Robert Williams Pohlman (1811-1877), country court judge.

The Judge's morality friends however have acted differently, for at a meeting of the Religious Tract Distribution Society of which the Judge has for a long time been a Vice President, the Dean of Melbourne expressed his regret at the scandal that had existed & pointedly alluded to the 'falling off' of one who they had all thought so well of, Rev. Mr Strongman obsequiously taking the Dean's cue proposed that Judge Pohlman's name be taken off the list of Vice Presidents & the slight was passed upon his honor without apparently a dissentient voice. Mr T.T. A'Beckett who was appointed Vice President wrote at once to the Secretary of the Society & declined to accept office after the slight that had been put upon his friend Judge Pohlman. This letter was published in the Papers & *The Argus* & *Telegraph* wrote Leading Articles complimentary to the Judge's character & sympathising with him. The Dean & his merry men were as may be supposed pretty severely handled & serve 'em right.

DECEMBER 2 MONDAY 1872

Mr Duncan came in this morning shortly after I had taken my seat at the desk. He chatted away in a friendly manner enough & informed me on my enquiry that the Reformatory Boys were to be removed to Pentridge, to what were the quarters for the females, consequently there is little prospect of the women being taken away from the Gaol at any rate for a considerable time. Transacted ordinary business during the morning. In the afternoon Mr Sturt put in an appearance & I attended upon him. The old gentleman was rather queer, seemed to have been primed by some one for he began to make objections to what he had always previously appeared to have been favorable to viz, the asking the prisoners in the different Yards if they wished to make any complaints. This system I have always found a wise one though it is contrary to the Regulations now in force. Mr Sturt also found fault with the office thinking it was not solemn enough for a Court. By Jove if he would only be a little less believing & punish prisoners according to the evidence against them & not according to their own statements, he might try in a barn as effectively as in a Court House with Bench, Dock & other &c's of Justice. He is a good old fellow however & I hope while I am Governor he will continue to be V.J. Miss Fowler & Miss McDermott had their tea at our house to-night & in the evening Polly went with them to a Concert given for Giorza's Benefit at the Town Hall.²³⁴ While Polly was away I read to Harry &

234 *The Argus*, 3 December 1872, p. 3. The benefit was for Milanese-born conductor, performer and composer Paolo Giorza (1830–1914), with a performance of his *Messe Solennelle*, which Polly also took Sissy to see and hear at St Francis' Roman Catholic Church on Christmas Day three weeks later. Giorza was musical director for the Sydney International Exhibition in 1879, for which he composed a number of items such as the 'Manly Beach Polka' and the 'Australia March' (held at the National Library of Australia). For more information about Giorza's concerts in Australia, see also Katharine Brisbane, *Entertaining Australia: An Illustrated History* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1991), p. 95.

Dotty one of the Ingoldsby's *Legends* & then Nathan came & I paid him £5 & renewed a Bill for £105. I told him I was very hard up & that I should have to get some more money & that if I could'ent get it without I must give a Bill of Sale over my furniture. Nathan offered to let me have another £100 if I would give a Bill of Sale. I said I would think of it.

DECEMBER 3 TUESDAY 1872

In the office as usual. After I had got through the urgent portion of the work I went into town to pay off the portion of the Loan due at the Australian Alliance Office. In Collins Street I met Joe who hailed me as being a 'tremendous swell'. I had a frock coat & a big bouquet, both together knocked Joe all of a heap. Went to the bank of N.S. Wales & paid in £10 to my credit, met Dempster & walked a little way together. Then he went off to the Swanston Street Station & I to a barber's in Elizabeth Street where I got my hair cut. Miss McDermott had her dinner with us. I tried to persuade Polly to go out this afternoon but she was too lazy & declined although she had nearly got ready. Did not muster, but was about the Gaol while Muster was going on. Went to the Yorick & left with Duerdin. Things are becoming more & more English every day. Passing the Eastern Market I noticed some pottles of strawberries got up quite in Covent Garden style & only sixpence each. I bought a pottle as the basket is quite a new thing in Melbourne. The strawberries were worth the sixpence. I was in the Exhibition for a little while this afternoon & met a Mr Grover who I had known or met at Beechworth. I forget I am sure what position he is in; he was along with Brown, the Sporting Correspondent of *The Argus*. Played bagatelle in the evening for some time. Mrs Smith came over to see Polly. She had been spending the day at Elsternwick with Dotty. This was rather a hot day & so before we got into bed Polly & I both indulged in a bath. Harry went to bed in disgrace to-night before six o'clock having told his mamma a fib. Harry cannot lie, for he soon confesses his untruthfulness.

DECEMBER 13 FRIDAY 1872

This morning before I got up Polly called my attention to a Warder in the Garden of Rowley taking charge of prisoners who were Weeding. He was sitting down reading a newspaper while the men he had charge of were doing pretty well as they pleased. The warder turned out to be Kelly, a man who I have noticed frequently as being very careless indeed in the performance of his duty. When I went into the office I spoke my mind to him very freely. He did'ent seem at all to like it, but I was savage & could'ent help showing my teeth. Was very restless all the day & took too much to drink. This did not improve my temper & I was in a very queer way when I returned from the Club where I went so soon as I had finished muster. Came away from the Club with Jardine Smith & Duerdin. Purves was at my house when I got

home. He wanted an order for some lady friend of his to see Mount. I willingly assented. Instead of having tea I took to raving at Polly who with no doubt the best of motives tried to prevent my taking any thing to drink. She did harm however instead of good for her interference & refusal to give me the keys of the cupboard made me obstinate & determined. I talked wildly & played the fool till I got what I wanted, then I poured out some grog & smoked till I was tired. Polly then became affectionate & I repentant. It ended as our rows generally do, in my acknowledging how wrong I had been & Polly showing her fondness for my unworthy self in every way she possibly could. We went to bed very early & I soon got to sleep.

DECEMBER 19 THURSDAY 1872

Woke this morning with a sore throat & great oppression on the chest. Found I had got a very bad cold. Went into the Court. It took some time to start, but at length, the Jury were sworn & the Trial of Mount & Morris for murdering a man name unknown on board the British Ship *Carl*, commenced.²³⁵ The Crown was represented by Adamson, Garnett & McKinley, instructed by the Crown Solicitor in person. The prisoners were defended by Messrs Ireland & Molesworth. Great interest was taken throughout the case & many notables were present. The Miss Irelands & some other ladies were in the Court. Winch prompted the Crown when anything was overlooked. The Witness he had brought from Sydney, Fallon, was the one who gave the strongest evidence against the prisoners. He detailed fully the story of the Kidnapping & related that after a fight with the Natives who resisted being captured & swam for their lives, Morris on two occasions deliberately shot and killed a black man, also that on one occasion when the boat was returning to the ship four or five wounded natives in the water were passed. Mount who was in charge of the boat refusing to take them on Board, saying that they were no use. The poor wretches were thus left to perish. The case was continued till about seven o'clock when the Jury were locked up. The Court adjourned till the morning. Polly was down at St Kilda this morning. She reported that Mrs Littlewood had had a miscarriage & was very ill in consequence. I went to the Club for a little while.

DECEMBER 20 FRIDAY 1872

My throat & chest were still very painful. Went to the Court & remained there for some time. Heard Mr Ireland address the Jury. His defence was that the prisoners committed no murder on the date fixed. This was the night when there was so much shooting into the Hold. He argued that all the natives who were killed were shot by Murray & others, not the prisoners, the next morning when they fired through the bulk-heads. The learned

235 The killing of Melanesians at Bougainville by labour traders Murray (who was tried in Sydney), Morris and Mount was much discussed by Castieau. See entries for 20, 23, 26 November 1872.

counsel drew a plausible picture of the utter barbarism of the Figians, spoke of the cannibal husband, the cannibal wife & the cannibal baby, said the Labor traffic was absolutely necessary in order that the fairest islands in the world should be brought under proper culture & their inhabitants civilised & christianised. He pointed out that the Licenses given to ships to procure labor was an admission of the necessity of the traffic, a traffic which could not be carried on successfully without some amount of violence. He implied that the Natives got what they brought upon themselves, not in an attempt to Escape but in the endeavour to revenge their loss of liberty by siezing the ship & murdering & eating their late captors. Mr Ireland denounced Dr Murray & laid the atrocity that was committed on the doctor's shoulders. The Chief Justice summed up against the prisoners though he gave Mount some credit for having on two occasions acted with an appearance of humanity. The Jury retired at six o'clock & at ten brought in a verdict of aggravated manslaughter against the prisoners. The Judge said there was no such offence as aggravated manslaughter & the verdict was recorded as one of Manslaughter.

DECEMBER 21 SATURDAY 1872

Chest still very painful, but no worse for which I feel thankful. Attended at the Court & saw it started. Was about the Gaol the whole of the day & mustered in the afternoon. Little Dotty went off to Geelong this afternoon with Aunty Emma. Agnes & Joe Lotherington came to our house & had tea, Harriette called & also went to see Mrs Smith. I walked to the Railway Station with Harriette & saw there two of her pupils, the Miss Stephens & a young man who was introduced to me as a Mr Stephen & who was I suppose their brother. Went to the Club for a while & then came home in time for tea. In the evening, Polly took Sissy to the market. Joe, Agnes & her brothers went with them.

My people got back at a little after nine o'clock & Polly & myself were quietly having our toddy when there came a knock at the door & on Polly going to it she found Julia's old beau. Julia had gone to bed & so Polly had a fine chance of asking the young man his intentions. She began to talk to him plainly & openly, but I got fidgetty for she kept on too long & did all the talking herself instead of letting the young fellow express himself. I could not hear what was being said but jabber, jabber, jabber went on unceasingly for half an hour. When Polly came back to the room she was wild with me because I said it would have been better for her not to have talked so much. She said the man would'ent go away & to that I answered well then I would have said 'Good Nighr' & left him. Polly was very cross with me for this & I got my share of a lecture & we went off to bed in a pet.

Was disturbed after I had been in bed about an hour by the female officer coming for the keys & after I had given them out & gone to bed again was

awoke again an hour or two after by another ring. The keys were wanted again there being a woman in the horrors of drink who could not be managed. The poor wretch was making a great row & was evidently surrounded by devils who terrified her beyond endurance. Having I suppose been weak enough to make no fuss about Weachurch being left on my hands, the Penal Dept. have had a happy thought & seen a way of getting rid of troublesome prisoners by sending them to the Gaol. Yesterday a fellow, half mad I believe, but who had made himself famous from assaulting Warders, was sent in to the Gaol on the plea that the Chief Medical Officer wished to have an opportunity of examining him. Mark you, there is a Resident Medl. officer at Pentridge.

DECEMBER 31 TUESDAY 1872

This has been altogether the hardest year I have had. Business has been altogether unpleasantly conducted & a great deal of worry has been entailed upon me in consequence. For nearly four months I was without a Chief Clerk & had to do most of the work that belongs to such an official. Then the constant nagging of Snelling has irritated me & been a perpetual blister. The red-tape of the office has been prodigious. Among other things, over a hundred Circulars have been launched at the heads of Governors of Gaols. I honestly confess to have no knowledge of more than ten of them & I know that the alteration they have caused in the management of this Gaol is infinitesimal. The prisoners get an extra blanket now. This is a change, but from my thinking not one for the better. Duncan probably means well but has fallen into the mistake of thinking everything in the Gaol Department wanted altering. He & his trusty Chief Clerk have upon this supposition treated the Governors of Gaols as enemies & heaped Penal regulations upon them at the same time carefully avoiding to relieve them of any of their responsibility. After twenty years of experience & honest intention to be called to account & instructed by those who I can but feel are not more intelligent & less practiced than myself makes me very bilious at times & with money troubles added, has made me over & over wish I had never seen the Gaol or become acquainted with the meannesses & trickeries of the Civil Service.

CHAPTER 6: 1874

'THE DIFFICULTIES OF MY POSITION'

Castieau kept a diary in 1873, or so it seems from the entry for New Year's Day in 1874: 'Seem very pleased to get back to my old fashioned style of Diary, the other was very awkward & I never rightly got accustomed to it',²³⁶ Perhaps economy had driven him in 1873 to the cheaper foolscap-size diary that he later used for sporadic comment during 1877–79—it cost 2s.6d. compared to the 8 or 10/- he paid for his preferred Lett's Diary No. 8. The record for 1873 would have been uncomfortable for other reasons as well: the humiliation of his arrest in demeaning circumstances in May of that year, and his subsequent demotion. All the work of solid preparation for a promotion had seemingly gone to waste. The determination to start anew in 1874 is evident in the optimism of the account of the first few days of the new year.

Inevitably the mood could not be sustained. There were further disappointments to come. Failure to gain a promotion, which might have brought relief from the constant burden of debt and envy and lessened Castieau's sense of failure, continued as he watched others around him progress. For instance, he saw his friend from Beechworth days, George Kerferd, assume the mantle of Premier of Victoria. Castieau was still close enough to pay the Kerferds a regular Sunday visit, but the tone had changed with George's elevation. Castieau sensed condescension ('The Prime Minister was cordial enough but yet seemed to have an innate consciousness of the dignity of his position') and confided to the diary his wish that Francis had remained in power, and Kerferd just a minister in the government.²³⁷

The Castieaus were left managing both debt and ill-health throughout the year. In the process Polly's strengths came to the fore. The devotion evident at the beginning of the year finds expression in her determination later in the year to address the family's pressing financial problems. The result is a remarkably detailed portrait of Victorian household management as Polly takes on the business of meeting creditors and using her wiles to extract reasonable terms for settling debt, while also displaying admirable firmness in dealing with the more hard-headed businessmen who resist her proposals. When, at the end of her week-long efforts to resolve the demands of the creditors, one of them presents a bill for immediate payment of £5 her response is determined: 'the man cant have it & there's an end of the matter'.²³⁸

236 Diary, 1 January 1884.

237 Diary, 30 August 1874.

238 Diary, 4 July 1874.

Polly's intervention in the management of their affairs reflects also Castieau's growing physical incapacity at this time. A succession of illnesses in May and June 1874 prompted discussion of a long break, even of returning to England for a time. In September a complete physical breakdown involving severe rheumatism and other symptoms left Castieau incapacitated for the better part of two months, during which he was unable to keep the diary. There was again discussion of him returning Home for a while, and his journalist friends encouraged newspaper speculation of a grand tour to investigate penal methods in other countries. The speculation came to nothing—Castieau had recovered by mid-November to a point where he took a rehabilitative trip to Beechworth, Wangaratta and Albury, renewing his acquaintance with the district whose fortunes had coincided with his own career only a few years before. It was not Home, although the break was welcome. In spite of *The Argus* and *The Age* each supporting a trip to visit European prisons, Castieau's year ended in disappointment at Kerferd's indifference to the proposal.

Home remained the ever-distant prospect, perhaps better avoided in any case, for Castieau's real and imagined physical decline might have been aggravated by too close an acquaintance with his father. Shortly before Christmas 1874, the family received letters from John Buckley Sr in England, enclosing self-portraits of the 84-year-old survivor of the Napoleonic wars, 'a hale hearty, upright old chap ... without stick or spectacles'. Castieau's maudlin commentary on this revelation was prescient: 'I could not help thinking that he has more life in him than his son is in possession of'.²³⁹

JANUARY 1 THURSDAY 1874

Seem very pleased to get back to my old fashioned style of Diary, the other was very awkward & I never rightly got accustomed to it. Woke up early & received a hearty kiss from Polly & a sincere wish from her heart, I know, for my future health & happiness. She would most unselfishly insist upon my going out to-day & packed me away by nine o'clock. I went to Sandridge almost wishing to miss the Train so that I should be too late for a boat that was going to Queenscliff. I was however just in time & got on the pier at Sandridge just as the *Williams* was quite full & ready to start for Queenscliff. I trod the gangway of this vessel & soon found myself on board of her with about 700 others. The weather was glorious & we had a capital trip although we were very crowded. I met Sandilands & Hornby, two Melbourne Solicitors. The first is a great friend of Kerferd's. There were a few others on board also that I knew but not nearly as many as I had expected to have met. Sandilands crossed over to Portsea & I went with Hornby to the Queensland Hotel where we arrived just in time for a good dinner. After dinner Hornby took me for a little walk & I did the light-house & the Beach. Crowds that had arrived by the steamers were sensibly

²³⁹ Diary, 14 December 1874.

making little picnic parties & enjoying provisions they had brought with them. The beach is such a nice sandy one that it quite made me wish to run about barefooted on it & more than once did I wish for the wife & children & a game of romps with them on the edge of or even in the water.

My acquaintance Hornby was to stay at Queenscliffe, so I started for home by myself. The steamer soon crowded & off we went. I met Mr Strachan going home & we chatted together for a little while. I saw his wife & daughter but was not introduced to them, fancy however my not being so was owing to my own awkwardness. Reached Sandridge by half past seven & got home in an hour after. Polly came running out of the house to meet me, all had been well at home. Master Harry had however been giving himself airs & had at last got a whipping as he deserved.

The English Cricketers were playing to-day at Ballaarat. They did a great deal better there than at Melbourne & when the stumps were drawn to-night the Englishmen who had gone in first were 225 runs for three wickets down. Bertie was to come to-day but a telegram was sent this morning telling us not to expect him.

JANUARY 2 FRIDAY 1874

This was generally felt to be a terribly hot day. Many old colonists went as far as to affirm that it was the hottest day they had ever experienced. Memory however is scarcely to be trusted on such subjects. The first reminder that I had of its being extra hot was a Report from the Labor Yard that one of the men employed there had had a fit & had been sent to the Hospital. This was no doubt caused by the heat. The man recovered in an hour or two but had evidently been really unwell. One of the Warders also was invalided by the Medical Officer. I was employed in the office the whole of the day & mustered after. After Muster I went to the Club. The principal topic of conversation was of course regarding the heat. Harrison, Editor of *The Geelong Advertiser* & I left together & as it was the beginning of the year we made that the excuse this time for having a drink. Just then up came Smith the Chief of the *Argus* Reporting Staff & we could'ent well have our drink without asking him to join us. I had some shandy-gaff & found myself minus 1/6. I could not help as I walked home moralising on the folly of this wretched drinking & shouting, this extravagant waste of money, 1/6 actually pitched into the publican's till without any return worthy of as many pence as it had cost sixpences. I made up my mind once more not to give way to the evil habit feeling that while I did there was little chance of my getting all right again.

Bertie arrived by the afternoon train & I was very glad of it for if he had stayed till night it would have put us to some inconvenience. He was ordered to join his ship to-day, so at about eight o'clock he went away to Williamstown. I should'ent wonder however if he comes to Melbourne again before the ship leaves for England.

The English Cricketers have had things pretty well their own way at Ballaarat; they scored 470 for their first innings. The two Graces each made over 100.²⁴⁰

Played Croquet with the little girls for a time & a game of cricket with the boys & Bertie. Went away to bed soon after ten o'clock.

JANUARY 3 SATURDAY 1874

Money, Money, Money. How to get it & how to keep it. I seem to understand How to spend it & evidently that is all I know about the bothering worrying mischievous 'root'. Strict economy is now my motto & yet I find it frittered away without any show for it again to-day. Sissy came in from Elsternwick with Kitty Hall & took Dotty & Kitty away with them. There are now no little girls at our house. I could have better spared all the boys than Sissy & Dotty.

This afternoon by Post I received a letter addressed to me in a villainous hand but with a Lion rampant as the seal of the envelope. On opening this I found a carefully closed parcel & on opening this another still more closely protected, on opening that still another parcel shut up like the others. This however I did'nt bother with for I could read through it some beastly words and knew then that the whole thing was what my larrikin friends would call a 'sell'.

There was every appearance when we got up this morning of our having another roaster but though during the day the weather was particularly muggy there was little sun & the heat in consequence was not nearly so great as on Yesterday. I was tolerably busy all the morning in the office & finished up by going to the Bank. Dotty & Kitty went into Collins Street with me as they had to call for some portraits. Met Turner the Beechworth Jeweller. He was in company with Mr Berry formerly Sub Treasurer at Beechworth & now the occupant of a Masonic Almshouse, having been dispensed with for economy's sake by the McCulloch Government & having lost his few hundreds of compensation money in Mining Specs.

Did my business at the Bank, met my little girls & hurried back to business. Mr Duncan came shortly afterwards & remained chatting for a considerable time. He professed to have no idea why the Cabinet ignored my application for Promotion except as a punishment for the slip I made. I told him that I fancied there must be something else & that I would try & find out if it were so.

There had been some considerable excitement at Pentridge this morning, as the factory in which wool is made into blankets was found to be on fire.

240 Very likely Dr Edward 'The Coroner' Grace and his brother W.G. Grace, though there was a third brother, Frederick, in the famous cricketing family. Edward and 'W.G.' represented England in the first-ever Test in England against Australia, in 1880.

It seemed that the building had been duly inspected by three different officials & that everything was pronounced to be all right. Three hours afterwards however a fire was discovered, fortunately in time for there was very little damage done. Had the danger however not been perceived for an hour longer, thousands of pounds worth of machinery and stores would probably have been destroyed. The fires in the Engine room are it appears put out on Friday nights and consequently there was less to be apprehended than on other nights when a little fire was retained to prevent delay in getting up steam the next day. There was no work except cleaning & such like on Saturdays. Mr Duncan seemed satisfied the fire was accidental & if he be correct, the machinery must have heated & charred the beams of the roof or some of the wool must have ignited by spontaneous combustion. I urged upon Mr Duncan the necessity of the most careful enquiry into the origin of the fire as if it were not the result of accident but the work of an incendiary, he might look out for another attempt. Stayed about the Gaol all the afternoon & after four o'clock went to the Club. Read a lot of papers there & got home in good time for tea. The Ballarat cricketers were making a good score & the game was likely to be drawn for want of time. Bertie Newell came up from his ship this afternoon & Harry & he went off to the Pantomime at the Opera House. The Pantomime is the production of Garnett Walsh²⁴¹ a local author & is highly spoken of. Harry liked it much.

JANUARY 6 TUESDAY 1874

I had scarcely sat down to my dinner when a knock came at the door & I was told after it had been answered that I was wanted. In the drawing room I found a Mr Godwin from Wellington, New Zealand who had brought a note from Cowderoy introducing him & asking me to show him over the Gaol. I asked Mr Godwin into lunch & chatted with him till two o'clock, then I went with him through the Gaol. Mr Godwin led me to understand that he was likely to be the Secretary of a Penal Commn. about to be appointed at Wellington & so I showed him all that I could of our Gaol. The crowded state of it & the business going on of one kind or another made I have no doubt things appear very strange to him, particularly as with my usual luck neither Quin nor Nixon were in the New Wing & Adams who was in charge was in a disagreeable humour & though respectful when spoken to did'ent make himself appear either as smart or as sharp as he could have done. After we had seen the Hospital which did not look well either as the doctor was there & a crowd of our patients around him, we went to the Labor Yards. The boys seemed getting along very well but when I took the New Zealander on to the Tower & showed him the men's labor yard I was very much ashamed

241 Garnet Walsh, journalist, dramatist, also secretary of the Athenæum (formerly the Mechanics Institute) in Collins Street. The Athenæum had a subscription library which Castieau joined later in 1874.

of it. The Warder on the Tower & the Warder in the Labor Yard were off their guard & did not catch sight of us smartly while a number of the prisoners were idling altogether or napping away in a manner well calculated to express a beholder with the idea that they were doing a more than usually powerful Government Stroke. We went into the Yard & then I was glad to see that the Heaps broken during the day were much better than might have been expected under the circumstances.

JANUARY 10 SATURDAY 1874

In Gaol in good time & feeling tolerably salubrious. Very busy all the morning. At about a quarter to two Mr Duncan called. I was in the house just about commencing a smoke after dinner when I was informed that the D G was waiting to see me. He said he had just called in because he had'ent been during the week & that he wanted nothing. Mr D looked I thought very much worried. Polly asked me to take her to the Fitzroy Gardens in order that we might hear what is called the Head Quarters Band play. Johnny & Ernest were allowed to go with us, the weather came on very hot indeed for although there was no bright sun there were Bush fires all around which scorched the atmosphere. We saw Mrs Morphy & Katey, also Mrs Elliot & her mother. Polly riled me because she got very excited & would rave against all the people she saw. They were a set of dowdies, the girls were badly dressed & the men were idiots. At length Jardine Smith put in an appearance & Polly tripped off to him just to show Mrs Elliot that any rate if there was a gentleman about she was acquainted with him. Afterwards Semple & Keeley joined Smith, there was a very great argument about the heights of Bosisio, Zanoni & Ribaldi the well known vocalists; Keeley maintaining that Ribaldi was the tallest whereas Polly insisted that Bosisio was. There was a great deal of loud talking before the subject dropped. I went away with Keeley, Smith & Semple leaving Polly to grumble away with her female friends. We went to a hostelry at Richmond where we had beer & drank it as tho we were thirsty, we talked a great deal of nonsense & some little sense, then Keeley went home & I, Smith & Semple took a cab and rode into town. Semple & Smith went in for something to eat at the Club & I started away for home. In Swanston Street however I was tempted to go in for some oysters. When I got home Polly was very cross & accused me of rudeness in going away from her at the Gardens. I retaliated by blaming her for being so ill natured in her talk about the promenadors. Went early to bed.

JANUARY 11 SUNDAY 1874

When I was at the Club to-night I bought a cigar to smoke when I got home, for Polly this morning broke my pipe because she caught one of the servants smoking it. Polly was very indignant & pitched into Elizabeth hot & strong. I expect however Elizabeth cared the most about being deprived of her smoke.

I did'ent feel very angry about the matter as I knew that I should'ent have left my pipe about as when a woman has a penchant for smoking she is not likely to resist the temptation of having a whiff if she finds pipe & tobacco within reach of her hand. Polly was disgusted at the idea of the woman using my pipe but she does'ent know how careless folk become in this respect. Many in other respects particular if not fastidious persons will take a pipe from the mouth of another man & not think anything of the piggishness of the action. If Polly had'ent broken my pipe I daresay when the inclination for a smoke came upon me I should have used it & not fancied it any the fouler because I knew it had been between the lips of somebody else. I should'ent wonder if Lizzey has'ent had many a smoke out of it before she was caught in the act.

JANUARY 13 TUESDAY 1874

Polly very queer with face ache & all sorts of other aches. I should have mentioned that yesterday Polly took Sissy, Dotty, Walter & Godfrey to the States School at the West of Melbourne under charge of Major Parnell, Harry's old master. Harry & the little boys would have gone also but they have to stay at home being suffering from ringworm.

Polly gave a very good account of the appearance of the children & was particularly pleased at finding Miss Gamble, who had been our little girl's teacher at St James & who is now head teacher at the West Melbourne School, was very glad indeed to see Sissy & Dotty & welcome them cordially saying how pleased she was to see some of her old pupils back again.

...

I stayed up very late to-night reading Thackeray's scraps contributed in the olden days to *Punch & Frazer's Magazine*. Some of them interested me very much though I was reading under difficulties for the book was one that had been ill used in the Gaol & it frequently happened that when I came to some particularly interesting point there was a leaf gone & the thread of the story lost in consequence. Went into the Gaol at twelve o'clock, found the Warders all keeping good watch. Adams was on the Gate & was very talkative about one thing & another. He is smart but a difficult man to keep straight at all times.

JANUARY 14 WEDNESDAY 1874

Read some of Thackeray to Mrs Castieau & the youngsters this evening. The account of Master Augustus's visit to the pantomime delighted Harry very much & he could'ent help noticing a great similarity in his own manner with that of the young gentleman who accompanied Mr Spec to the play. The All England Cricketers are playing at Warnambool & seem to be doing better. The Warnambool men went in first but only scored 68. The Englishmen got 140 in their innings but four or five of them made no runs.

JANUARY 15 THURSDAY 1874

In the Gaol as usual this morning. The Mail from England was telegraphed to Adelaide. Went to the Treasury in the morning & saw Hall, we are certainly not very much like brothers in law towards each other, of the two however I think he is the most distant. The weather was very hot & I was rather tired when I got home. Polly though better than she had been was still far from well & at tea time did'ent improve her condition by getting into a bad temper, by some carelessness the milk was spoilt & this raised Polly's dander. She 'cant abear' her tea without milk & the servants caught it for causing her the deprivation. I got my share of the blowing up in consequence of my venturing on a remonstrance with regard to some statement of Polly's touching some cold lamb & a great many of my shortcomings were told much to my discomforture. Fact is Polly works too hard some times & when she does gets over tired & easily worried.

Went to the Club after Muster where I played some cribbage with Cox. The Club-room has lately been very poorly attended.

This afternoon I attended with Dr McCrea a flogging on a miserable wretch who had been amusing himself at Geelong by indecently exposing himself to children. The flogger, Andrews, now under the name of Gately is again a prisoner in the Gaol having been sentenced for Vagrancy. He is reported to have been living with some abandoned women somewhat after the style of his predecessor Bamford who used to herd with two or three of both sexes in some wretched shelter place in the neighbourhood of the Police Barracks. Andrews at any rate returned to Gaol with an attack of Gonorrhoea for which he was treated by Dr McCrea with confinement in Cell & low diet. The fellow grumbled sorely at this but when he was told of the 'job' for this afternoon, he brightened at once & professed himself as ready. His sickness & his want of food did'ent save the man he operated on from getting a severe hiding.

JANUARY 17 SATURDAY 1874

Did'ent get much sleep before I got up. Felt in fact rather more tired than when I went to bed. The sky was cloudy from daylight & we got a little rain before eleven o'clock.

Polly suffering very much from indigestion. She has been lately quite a martyr to it. Sent away a letter that arrived by the Mail for Edwin Smith. It was delivered last night & there was no other for anyone else. I stayed in the Gaol all the day & then when I found my presence was not required I took my umbrella & went through the rain, which was then pouring heavily, as far as the Club.

Met Keeley there & had a chat about old times & especially concerning theatricals in London in 1851.

Afterwards Britton & I played Amsinck & Keeley Cribbage. The play was tolerably even. Amsinck was the first to leave & Blackburn came in. Keeley & I played Britton & Blackburn. In the evening Polly had plucked up

considerably and as the weather had improved she was anxious to go out for a walk so as in duty bound I accompanied her. We went through Burke Street & had a look at the Eastern Market. It was dreary in the extreme. There were scarcely any vegetables & consequently scarcely any people. Polly wanted a duck but upon reflection she considered the money that such a creature would cost would be better spent in *Chatterbox*, so she bought that for the youngsters instead. When we got home the children who had gone to bed sniffed the *Chatterbox* & came trooping down to see it. Their eager countenances gathered round mamma with the New Book would have made a good picture if there had only happened to have been a good Artist to have caught the idea & sketched them as well as their long nightgowns & bare feet. Marcus Clarke commenced in this day's *Weekly Times* a series of articles under the title of 'The Wicked World' or Melbourne Men & Melbourne Life.²⁴² The Article to-day described Camomile or Collins Street. Marcus has set himself a difficult task. He will have either to be very personal & so make enemies or be dull & considered commonplace. He might if he were mean enough perhaps make his subject the vehicle for advertisers. If his work is read many would pay to have their establishments even appear wicked in it.

JANUARY 20 TUESDAY 1874

One of the Warders, Lawlor, came on duty this morning the worse for drink & was reported by Chief Warder Rowley. I saw him at nine o'clock & found him unsteady so I sent him home to get right & return by two o'clock. He didn't come back till half past two & was not all right even then, in fact he was rather worse than he had appeared to be at nine o'clock. I told him to go home till the morning & then he went & wrote out his resignation. I refused to accept it until the next day when he would have had time to fully consider what he was doing & sent him away telling him that if he chose to return at six o'clock the next morning I would receive him leaving him of course to be dealt with for his misconduct by the Inspector General. He went away saying that he would rather resign than have to appear before Mr Duncan.

JANUARY 25 SUNDAY 1874

Very Lazy this morning & did not make any attempt at going to Church. Polly did not go either, the children were however away in good time. Yesterday I made up my mind that it was running too great a risk to keep Ellen Tighe as a servant. She is under sentence of 12 years & though I feel sure that she would not run away yet I could not help being anxious knowing well that if she did I could not justify giving her the chance of making her escape. Polly agreed that I was right & Ellen went in, some one else taking her place.

242 Marcus Clarke, *A Colonial City: High and Low Life: Selected Journalism of Marcus Clarke*, pp. 301ff. (The first title is correct).

There were two men flogged yesterday morning. One was a China-man, he came out smiling & putting his hand to his hat in the most obsequious manner. He pulled off his shirt & put himself into position in almost no time. During the first part of his punishment he danced a good deal but when he had received about 10 lashes his head fell forward & he didn't move until he had got his number of lashes, 20. He was so still that I thought he had fainted but he was all right & when he was cut down & had to pass Dr McCrea & myself, he touched his hat again & in a manner as if to thank us for some great favor we had done him. The second man who was flogged was a European sentenced for tampering with a child under the age of ten years. This fellow howled so loud that he could have been heard all over the Gaol & must have been also by people in or about the Court Houses. When the doctor had gone, Gately the Flogger who is under the doctor's hands for gonorrhea & no nicer looking for his illness, asked me if I had been satisfied with the way he had done his work. I told him he had done very well & then he begged for a piece of 'backer' 'not to smoke', 'only to chew'. I told Rowley he might give him a fig.

FEBRUARY 4 WEDNESDAY 1874

At the Court part of the time. Mr Ass, one of the Audit Commissioners, was here at eleven o'clock. He was very brusque in his manner but after all very kind. The books were tolerably correct but the Commissioner didn't go half through them & for one thing did not look at the Stores at all. This was a terribly dusty day. I was at the Court till nearly six o'clock. In the evening I went to the Club. There I met Semple & walked away with him. He came to our house & Polly began to bully me for going away from her when I had taken her to the Fitzroy Gardens some two or three weeks since. I went away with Semple, Jardine Smith & Keeley. Polly spit out her feelings in the matter & made me very cross. I was particularly annoyed and told her so, that in argument she would never allow the person she was talking to to have a reply, always contradicting and going on with the talk so soon as any one else began to speak. Polly cannot help doing this & to night as she indulged in a great deal of plain speaking & washed a lot of dirty clothes in Semple's presence I foolishly gave way to my feelings & spoke out openly too. Semple stayed till late, we smoked & drank more than was good for us.

FEBRUARY 6 FRIDAY 1874

In the Court in the morning. Very busy afterwards in the office. The Mail was telegraphed to Adelaide. Mustered in the afternoon.

After Muster went into the playground. The children & some young lads of the name of O'Connor were playing at pantomime. As soon as I entered with Mrs Castieau we were received as the Governor & his lady & 'God Save the Queen' after a style was struck up. Of course we bowed gracefully before

taking our seats. Harry & Master O'Connor then came forward & delivered the following address

With great suspence you [left blank]

Then there was a retiring behind the green curtain & a lifting up of another curtain to disclose baby, Johnny, Godfrey & Walter crowned with laurels & in striking positions. Baby & Johnny were evidently fully impressed with their importance & were still as still could be. Again there was a rustle of curtains & down once more went the scene; like lightning it rose again to display the Union Jack, which as the flag of Old England was greeted with hot applause. Then the flag slowly raised itself & waved aloft over the heads of the whole of the Company formed into another tableaux. When the curtain fell again, the performance was at an end. In the evening I went to the Yorick & read quietly for a time. Keeley was writing so I did'ent bother him. Walked up Bourke Street & bought some coffee for Mrs Castieau then came home & got off as soon as I could to bed.

FEBRUARY 7 SATURDAY 1874

Up in good time & just soon enough to enable me to take a glimpse at the letters before going off to the Court to attend the sentencing of a large number of prisoners convicted during the present Sessions. There were nearly twenty on whom judgment was pronounced. A number of these were quite young men but very few of whom had not been previously convicted. In fact it seems that in the majority of cases after a young fellow has had the prison stamped upon him once, there is little chance for him hereafter. This is such a gossiping place. There are so many detective & other police to look after an old gaol bird that his disgrace is almost sure to make him an outcast from decent society & to drive him to take refuge with the dissolute & to form part of the flock from which the police gather their harvest of fresh cases for each court. One young fellow sent in a statement quietly & apparently openly worded; he declared that he had been tempted by a young man he knew to take part in a burglary, that after some persuasion he had been contented to do so & that a third party was also taken as a mate. When the robbery was coming off, the instigator of the whole affair suddenly cried out nit, nit, nit & took to his heels, then immediately several detectives appeared on the scene & arrested the other two red-handed with the plunder in their possession. Now, said the prisoner in his statement, I am certain the young man who persuaded us to join him was in the pay of the Police, that the detectives knew of the robbery & the details of it & that we were led to commit the theft just to enable the officers to gain credit by our capture. I am guilty, I admit continued the statement maker but I think it is very hard that the man who tempted us into crime & then sold us should be allowed to escape to entrap fresh victims for his detective employers.

This statement was duly sent by me to the Police & the truth of it indignantly denied. The whole narrative in the opinion of the Crown Prosecutor & the Judge was a spiteful attempt at injuring the officers & showed what a hardened villain the man must be who would disparage the zeal & energy of the detectives & meanly endeavour to deprive them of their well earned exertions & attribute their success to the trickery of the planner of the burglary, himself in their pay. Query, if the officers knew a house was to be broken open & did not prevent the breaking were they not something like accessories?

I was fidgetty to-day for I had a great deal to do & the charge was heavy. I went to the Police Court as soon as I could after the prisoners were sent back to the Gaol from the General Sessions. After a little difficulty I found Mr Sturt & told him my business which was to this effect. A woman had come into the Gaol two or three times lately & on each occasion had brought in with her a puny infant; the mother when brought in was suffering from heavy fits of drunkenness & on each time she came in brought the child in a still more emaciated condition. At the doctors desire

FEBRUARY 8 SUNDAY 1874 [I.E. SATURDAY CONTD]

the child was taken away & put into the Gaol hospital where it was nourished with a bottle. The poor little thing seemed however to gradually wither though every care was bestowed upon it. The mother's time for discharge came round to-day but Dr McCrea gave me a certificate to the effect that if the child was given up to the mother its death would be a certainty as she could not be trusted to look properly after it. Upon this I tried to get the baby into the Hospital, but got a polite intimation that the Immigrants home was the proper place for it. I tried the Immigrants Home & Mr Greig sent me word that there was no accommodation in his Institution, but that the fitting place for an infant was the Industrial School. The poor little youngster was not of course handed about in this way from post to pillar, it was all the while being nursed in the Gaol. As I said I went to Mr Sturt and after I had told my story he gave me a mandate for the child's admission to the Industrial School. The mother got out this afternoon & wanted to take the child saying she did'ent dare go home without it. I expected she would want it & that is why I protected myself with the warrant for the school. I refused of course to give up the child but let the mother see it before she went away. The mother was a young woman, very decent looking, with a husband comfortably off. She gives way however to the most degraded intoxication & then her infant was barbarously though probably unconsciously cruelly neglected.

FEBRUARY 9 MONDAY 1874

Mrs Gee reported that the little neglected one had died this morning. I gave notice to Dr McCrea & he referred the matter to the Coroner who directed an Inquest for this afternoon.

This morning when the cell of a woman named McGrath was opened she appeared to be the same as usual & no particular notice of her was taken; she was under medical treatment & entitled to be in bed. About an hour after, the woman's breakfast was brought to her when to the astonishment of the attendants she was found to be sitting up in bed nursing a fine baby; according to her own account she had been confined at about one o'clock but had not thought it worth while calling out. When asked why she had not spoken the first time when her cell was opened she replied that the child was asleep. This woman has been strange in her manner & not considered to be quite right, her being pregnant was not suspected by the officers, the prisoners, or the doctor. Dr McGauran came as soon as the birth could be announced to him & went away saying that the woman was all right.

Received a letter from Mrs Smith, forwarded one to Edwin Smith which had come in it. Miss McDermott had her dinner with us. There is some excitement over at the Morphys; they intend leaving in a few days time & removing to Jolimont. There is a great deal of cackling going on among the women as to what is best to be done about the furniture. Polly went to see the new House to-day and is very anxious to help Mrs Morphy if she can.

At three o'clock this afternoon an Inquest was held upon the baby. I was examined simply upon dates at which the mother came in & went out of Gaol. Dr McCrea gave the medical evidence & certified that the cause of Death had been disease of the brain brought on by insufficient food & great neglect by the mother. A constable gave evidence to the effect that the neighbours testified to the mother being very kind to the child & the father said she certainly was so when sober but could not be kept from drink. There was a sentence of six months in default of Finding Sureties given to the woman for an assault & I taxed the husband with it. He said however, she had not assaulted him & he knew nothing about it. I had the warrant hunted up & to my astonishment found that it was for assault & threatening the life of the very infant now lying dead. She remained in Gaol on this occasion for about 3 weeks & the husband then bailed her out. The verdict was in accordance with the medical evidence & a warrant was issued by the Coroner committing the woman for Trial on a charge of manslaughter.

Mustered & started to go to the Club, had been working so hard one way & another throughout the day that I felt tired & came back again.

Attended in the evening a meeting of the Parishioners of St John's.²⁴³ The trustees & the Bishops Council seem to be at variance with one another on the subject of the building of a new church. The Trustees want a new structure, the Bishops Council express the opinion that the church only wants a few hundred pounds spent in repairs & that St John's Parish out of its surplus income should assist the Church General fund. A resolution was

²⁴³ One of the two churches attended by Castieau since the 1850s. The other was St Paul's.

put into my hand, proposing a deputation to wait upon the Bishop & endeavour to induce him to change the opinion he had expressed. I tried to stop till the end of the meeting but could not manage it so made my exit as quietly as I could.

FEBRUARY 17 TUESDAY 1874

Very busy in the office, went to the Court, but had to return to send away nineteen prisoners to Pentridge. The Police only wanted to take a portion of the men but I objected & after some consideration got a cab to hold those who were left after the van was filled. Gave evidence at the Court in a Case where two women were charged with a brothel robbery, one of the women as soon as she got her share of the plunder came up to the Gaol to pay the fine for her 'Fancy man'. There was no doubt of the women having got the money but the Judge seemed to think it served the loser right & summed up in the prisoners favor. They were acquitted.

Dr McCrea showed me some correspondence he had received from the Chief Secretary's office about the rations for short sentenced labor prisoners. I had with great trouble got the scale altered when Mr Duffy was Chief Secretary. Mr Duncan took advantage of a paragraph that appeared in *The Age* some short time since in which it was reported that two larrikins had asked for Labor instead of imprisonment only because of the rations being good & the labor nominal. Without saying a word to me Mr Duncan sent this paragraph to the Chief Secretary giving it as a reason for altering the rations to the old scale again. The matter has been referred to Dr McCrea who Duncan knows is given to starving people & so I happened to see the correspondence. It seems to me that Messrs Duncan & Snelling are cold bloodedly endeavouring to ruin me. The Gaol, spite of all they have done or tried to do gets on better than Pentridge & this galls them. Oh that I only was cold blooded enough to fight them with the weapons they use which are deceit & selfishness. I am not such a fool however after all to wish so far as that. It is better for me to be hot & hasty & show my hand than to be guilty of the meannesses they indulge in, meannesses that could only have been brought to perfection in the old Hand School at which the pair of them graduated. I shall blaze over I know soon & then I will let the Chief Secretary know a little more about the Department than he does at present.

FEBRUARY 25 WEDNESDAY 1874

In the Gaol at usual hour. Polly rather better to-day & went to Elsternwick in the morning for a change. She called at Cowderoy's & had dinner at Dotty's house, she got home by tea time. I went to the Club in the evening but did not stay late. Duerdin walked up Bourke Street with me. At the Eastern Market I saw some tempting looking tomatoes marked at a penny per pound & I bought six penny worth; at the same stall there were some

larger tomatoes at 2d [tuppence]. With the exception of their size they did not appear any better than those I purchased & I asked why they were so much more expensive. The dealer replied, he supposed it was because some people thought they could'ent be good at 1d & would rather pay 2d. Upon my word I believe he was speaking the truth. The man said that he had frequently sold apples of similar quality some at 3d & others at 6d, the sixpenny ones being wiped up a bit. It's a rum world my masters & I do not doubt the truth of what my seller of tomatoes told me. A white hat in Bourke Street costs 15/-, the same sort of one in every respect is charged a guinea for in Collins Street. One street is however a fashionable & the other but a business one.

MARCH 11 WEDNESDAY 1874

In the Gaol office as usual, spent a very quiet day & mustered at the proper time. Went to the Club where I played some cribbage with Wyatt & McKinley, came away with Semple & got home by tea time. In the evening as the weather was very warm Harry, myself & Mamma were sitting together outside in the fresh air, when Master Harry proposed that we should sing one after the other, the first breaking down to suffer a penalty. We sang away at a great rate Harry showing some little knowledge of music, Mamma singing like an angel & I boldly as a lion. When we were tired of singing we went into the house & did some Shakespearian Readings. Harry & I read the Grave-diggers. Harry read the 1st Gravedigger very well. Afterwards Polly & I did Pericles & Catherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*. This amused us very well & brought on ten o'clock. Then Polly & I had our toddy & then I got in real life a lesson of how absurd the Play was we had been reading & how false it was to nature for my Katherina gave me a lecture & shut me up in very quick time. Money & how we were to get over our difficulties was the burden of our talk. Polly gave it to me hot & I suppose that I deserved it.

MARCH 12 THURSDAY 1874

Have let my Diary run on for three or four days without attending to it & consequently shall have some difficulty in making it all right again. Went to the Club after Muster. Polly had made an arrangement to go to the theatre with Joe & Emma, neither of them however came to the Gaol according to promise & Polly went away with Godfrey. Received a communication from the Crown Law Officer asking me to get a statement from a man named Richardson who had been convicted of rape & against whom sentence of Death had been recorded. I took the statement & sent it up to Harriman.

It was a queer story the man told but I believe he spoke the truth to a great extent & that there never was any rape committed, nothing at any rate it seemed had been said about it by the woman till about fourteen days after the man had connexion with her & then because she was suffering from gonorrhea

& had afflicted her husband likewise. Stayed at home drinking & smoking & doing a little reading till Polly returned with Godfrey from the theatre at twelve o'clock. Godfrey would stay till the end. Polly still very queer & suffering a great deal of pain; the remedies she takes for her liver do not appear to do her any good & I think it must be worry & over exertion that is making her ill & keeping her from getting well.

MARCH 13 FRIDAY 1874

This morning Williams came up from the *Age* office & read me what he had written with regard to the Gaol. I went into town with him & McKinley. Completed a statement that Richardson made to me & sent it to Harriman, who sent me a nice note this morning. In the afternoon Mr Duncan came to the office & we had very much like a row. I said something about the Gaol not being in such good order now as it was before the amalgamation with the Penal Department & this riled the Inspector & we went on till things looked very unpleasantly. The Inspector after a time began to try and smooth matters down, he said he did not intend the Memo. relative to the money to annoy me but simply to enable me to warn my clerks about the necessity there was for being particularly careful with the accounts. He wished that I would not take official matters so much to heart & not take everything that was written as intended to give me annoyance. I went on a great deal more than I ought about Snelling & I am afraid made matters a great deal worse instead of better. In the evening I went to the Club where I played some cribbage. Received a Telegram from Darvall telling me he would be at the train this evening, went to the Railway Station to meet him but just missed him. Returned to the house where Darvall had just arrived. After a long talk went off to bed.

MARCH 24 TUESDAY 1874

Stephen the Attorney General. I have scarcely ever seen him without a wig & did'ent know him when he came into the train. I daresay he thought me a sulky ill-tempered brute for not bowing to him & I am sure I am very sorry that I did'ent. I could have had I believe a very nice little chat with Mr Stephen as he rode all the way to Elsternwick & got out when I did. I am not in form & have just now a streak of devil's own luck, that's very certain. Will things get better I wonder?

As soon as I left the Station I made directly for the Beach & after a rather tiring walk across the shingle came upon Polly & the children. They did not see me till I was close upon them. Polly was barefooted, dancing in the sand while the children were playing jollily near her. They were delighted to see me & I never had any idea of the relief that Polly could feel at being away from the cares of her household. She was apparently as happy as a child & as contented as possible with the shadiest of accommodation so long as she was

allowed to rest her mind. So far as her body went she evidently was not resting that & did not find it tired either. I went into the bathing box & arrayed myself in Polly's dressing gown, then took a bath as well as I could with the novel encumbrance of the gown. The dip did me good.

Aunty Doty & her youngsters came down to the Beach & had a little romp with us, then Polly & I went home to tea. Polly put the children to bed & then walked as far as the Village Belle with me.²⁴⁴ I went back some distance with her & then went to St Kilda, came to Melbourne by Train & got home sometime before nine o'clock.

APRIL 1 WEDNESDAY 1874

Great pain in my chest & severe cold in my head. The General Sessions commenced, I went at ten o'clock & remained till nearly twelve in order to see the business fairly started. Quin being away on Sick Leave Fiddimont had to take his place at the Court. Mustered in the afternoon & then went to the Club, stayed talking for some time & then walked away with Duerdin. When I got home I found Polly in a rather excited condition. A servant she got in yesterday & who she thought would suit her capitally had given herself airs & refused to do the ordinary work allotted to her situation. Polly sent her back to the Gaol in disgust. There have been two or three servants lately who have behaved in somewhat similar a manner & I shall have to take this one in hand myself & show the rest through her that the work of my house will have to be done as regularly & correctly as any other work of the establishment.

To night Annie Forman was with our children & after they had had a game or two of bagatelle & drafts, they settled down in the parlor & Mamma, Harry & myself read a scene or two from Shakspeare. Harry was particularly delighted with the Witches Chorus in *Macbeth* & would insist upon his audience encoring him in it. To please him we duly went over it with him again. Polly, Harry & I then read the Trial Scene in *Othello*, Polly taking Desdemona & Harry Brabantio, leaving Othello for your humble servant.

APRIL 3 FRIDAY 1874

Good Friday. Bad cough & cold yet. Hot Cross buns in the usual style. Macnee sent or rather brought Mrs Castieau a fine bunch of flowers. I attended in my office, did a little business & then made up my Diary. In the afternoon went to the Club, where I played some cribbage, came home to tea. Miss Watson, Mrs Zincke, Mrs Dalziel & Jenny went with Polly in the evening to hear the Opera of *Moses in Egypt*. They were rather disappointed for instead of the dramatic version of the Opera which they expected to see, the performers appeared only in private dress & simply sang the music.

244 Polly had obviously taken the children on a seaside holiday, while Castieau remained in town.

I took it into my head to-day that as things were looking desperate with me I had better do something desperate, so I sent a letter to the Chief Secretary in which I asked him to give me my promotion telling him how hard up I was & how my difficulties had come about. I addressed it to him as a private letter & directed it to his residence. Mrs Zincke & her brother were at our house this evening.

APRIL 11 SATURDAY 1874

In the Office as usual & worked hard there until about one o'clock. At half past one Polly & I started off to the University where we were invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Session & see the takers of Degrees presented to the Chancellor. There was a great crowd we found had arrived before us & we were obliged to content ourselves with standing on a table in a side room which had windows looking into the main building; the windows were open & we could see & be seen very well. As the weather was exceedingly hot & the Hall only canvas while our roof was a permanent one, we had rather the best of it as we were not nearly so much incommoded with the heat as those who had got the good places.

Agnes Lotherington²⁴⁵ was with the Stephen family & of course the Attorney General's party was in a place of honor. The Chancellor Sir Redmond Barry was gorgeous & only a little less so was the Vice Chancellor Dr Brownless. The Dean, Professor Hearn, was resplendent in scarlet, the chairs provided for the Chancellor & Vice were as bright as gilt could make them. The Chancellor's seat was the more throne like, but on each side of it was a chair that looked grand enough for an emperor. There was a little fuss made & the Governor was announced; he took his seat in one of the chairs by the side of the Chancellor. The presentations were then made, but just as the last man was presented the Governor, escorted by the Vice Chancellor left the room. In two or three minutes he returned wearing a scarf showing the Degree he had taken, entitled to it as he was by his English University education. There was much cheering when the Governor bowed to the Chancellor & when that magnificent individual graciously lifted his plumed cap in return. Sir George made a speech & so did Sir Redmond & then all was over. Take it altogether the ceremony was interesting & amusing. Mr Frank Duffy²⁴⁶ obtained the first prize for an Essay on the discovery of Australia & was called up to read it. The young gentleman seemed to have plenty of confidence & got on very well. As he saw that the crowd did not want to listen however good his composition was, he skipped over page after page amid loud laughter from the assembled students. The reader at last stopped & bowing said, 'well gentlemen I really did'nt expect to furnish you with so much amusement'.

245 Castieau's niece, daughter of Emma, 19 years of age at this time.

246 Frank Gavan Duffy (1852-1936), later a brilliant advocate and, at the end of his life, Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia (1931-36).

When Frank Duffy left the presence of the Chancellor he was warmly greeted & appears to be a general favorite; he has a good chance of making a good position for himself with his father's name & his own talents combined.

APRIL 13 MONDAY 1874

Began in the office as usual & was tolerably busy all the morning. In the afternoon Jenny came in; she went with Polly into town purchasing various articles & returned to tea. I went to a meeting of the Committee of the Dischd. Prs. Aid Society & found quite a large attendance. Judge Pohlman was in the Chair & Mr Duncan amongst the other Committee men. I walked up the street with the Judge & was very much amused with the set made upon him by the Newspaper Boys. He gives 3d for his penny *Herald* & is spotted as soon as he shows in the street after the publication of the 'Evening Thunderer'. The Judge did not get into Mullens' Library²⁴⁷ before he had had to give another urchin 3d; the lad worked upon his feelings in some way or another & went away grinning at his good luck.

I called in at the Club & walked home with Jardine Smith. Jenny had a bad cold but for all that she plucked up strength enough to go to the theatre. Mrs Zincke also went with us. Mr John Dunn kindly sent me an order for a gentleman & party of ladies so that outside the usual expences of moving about we were not much out of pocket. Moving expences however are not to be sneered at. There were to-night 1/6 for lollies, 6d for ginger-beer, sixpences for cloak room so far as Polly and myself were concerned. Mrs Darvall & Mrs Zincke they had their Travelling Expences. *The Palace of Truth* was played & after it a mad piece of absurdity called *The Wedding March*. This was the most outrageously ridiculous & nonsensical piece I have ever seen & it made us all laugh heartily; it was however rather too long & the third Act could be very well dispensed with. I took Jenny down to the Railway Station as soon as we had started off Mrs Zincke to Simpsons Road by a cab. At the Station we met Mr Berry & in his care we left Jenny. Got home by twelve o'clock & to bed before one o'clock. Polly went with Jenny to-day to see the Bilsons.

APRIL 17 FRIDAY 1874

At Court this morning but left it to get on with my work as soon as I could. There was plenty to do in the Gaol. In the afternoon I went again to the Court where a prisoner named [blank space] was being tried for rape on his step child, a girl of eleven years of age. According to the child's testimony, the offence was committed in a right of way of Little Bourke Street on a Saturday night after ten o'clock. The child said she did not scream because her father put his hand over her mouth & she was also frightened that if she made any noise her father would murder her. She told no one of what had happened

247 A fashionable lending library in Collins Street.

till some time after the occurrence. The Judge summed up greatly in favor of the prisoner, putting it to the Jury, whether it was probable a man would have attempted such a crime in such a place when he must have been aware that he was liable to be intruded on at any moment as there were sure to be numbers of people about at the time, especially in the locality where the offence was sworn to have been committed. The Jury found the prisoner Guilty & he was sentenced to Death.

Went to the Club where I played three or four games of cribbage with McKinley & Short. When I got home I found that Polly had gone out to meet me so in common politeness I went after her, taking Godfrey & Walter with me. We met Polly & Harry in Swanston Street.

Received yesterday a letter from Mr King of Adelaide stating that he had sent me a case of grapes & telling me where to get them sent, but by some mistake the grapes were not received. Wrote to Mr King & told him so. All this day I have felt fitty symptoms & was afraid to be about; it is a most wretched supernatural kind of feeling & makes me very uncomfortable. Began taking Hydrate of Potassium again.²⁴⁸

APRIL 18 SATURDAY 1874

In Gaol nearly the whole of the day & mustered in the afternoon. After Muster went to the Club. Left with Semple. Met Marcus Clarke in Swanston Street, & undertook to stamp & post a letter for him. Had nearly got home when Polly & some of the youngsters came to meet me. Went to bed tolerably early.

Mr Coppin called to see me this afternoon with reference to my Vote for the Assembly. I did not make any promise but was very civil. Polly had got hold of Coppin before I came in & evidently would have promised him a hundred votes if she had had them to give.

Polly received a letter from Jenny. She had reached home all right & was evidently delighted at being in her own place again. In her letter she went into raptures at the cleanliness & comfort of her house; no doubt Fanny deserves a good deal of credit for having looked so well after things in the absence of her mother.²⁴⁹

The bromide of potassium I have been taking for this last day or two seems to have shut out the phantoms that were busy whispering into my brain & figuring before my eyes. I feel it is lucky for me I had such a remedy for tis certain without it or some other as powerful I should have had another illness; as it is, I feel subdued but not sick & trust to get again all right. The Newspapers are full of election proceedings & there will be apparently in the neighbourhood of Melbourne some keen contests. The Ministry will however have the best of the fight & will be able to claim a victory when the battle has terminated.

248 Presumably as an alkaline agent.

249 Refers to Polly's sister's return to her family in Beechworth. Fanny was her eldest child, then 16 years.

APRIL 19 SUNDAY 1874

Took it out in bed this morning & did not get up till after nine o'clock, went for a little walk towards the cemetery with Polly & Harry. Polly was not very well & fancied a walk instead of going to Church, the little girls & Walter & Godfrey went to Church. I did not go very far with Polly but soon returned to take charge of the house, met Dr Robertson & at his invitation went into his house with him, had a chat for some time principally upon the subject of the elections. Dr Robertson remarked that with regard to Mr Hearn the Dean of Faculty, he should be glad to hear of his being relegated back to his duties in the University. It seems that his being enabled to come forward was a dodge, the bye-laws of the University prohibiting the Professors from sitting in Parliament, Professor Hearn's friends were seized with a brilliant idea & made him a Dean with all the privileges & responsibilities of a Professor; the change of name had this advantage that Deans were not prohibited from interfering in politics & so Mr Hearn's candidature.²⁵⁰

In the afternoon I went to Kew & had tea with Kerferd. Mrs Kerferd had only returned from Sorrento the day previous & so there was a little confusion in the house. I was however very hospitably entertained. In the course of the evening Mr Kerferd told me that the Board appointed to consider the claims of the relatives of deceased officers had recommended that Mrs Wintle should receive £900. This is a heavy lump & is supposed to be in consequence of Mr Wintle's special duties & of the onerous responsibilities he had in the early days of the Colony. I imagine also the injustice that was done him was taken into consideration of only allowing him pension on his salary & not giving him any thing in lieu of his Quarters &c. Met Dempster & Winch at Hawthorn Station, saw Mr & Mrs Ellis in the Bus coming to Carlton.

MAY 3 SUNDAY 1874

Came into the office this afternoon & wrote up my Diary which of course has been neglected altogether during the past week.²⁵¹ In the evening felt a little inclination to be out & when I hinted at going for a little while Polly began to think that she would like a change as well. I took her to the Post Office & put her in a cab that would take her near to Mrs Smith's house, then I went off to the Club where I saw McKinley, Harrison & Amsinck. Williams came in afterwards & I took him to the other room & spoke to him about the article on the Gaol in Saturday's *Age* & which I knew he must have written. He told me that the article was a very different one from that he sent in. The Editor told him he was surprised at receiving such an article as the paper had always

250 William Edward Hearn (1826–1888), legal academic, political economist and aspiring politician. His earlier attempts to enter parliament had prompted the Melbourne University Council to pass a statute prohibiting professors standing for parliamentary election (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

251 Castieau had been severely ill for a week.

gone the other way. Williams was therefore obliged to take his article & cut it another way & that was a way as unfavorable for the Gaol as could be. Williams acquainted me that he had been at Pentridge & that he was not at all well impressed with it. He said he was going to-day to see Duncan & to ask him for the information about Pentridge that I had given about the Gaol. Williams will unless he is thoroughly false give Pentridge worse than he has given the Gaol; very likely however this will not suit the Editor & I shall not be surprised whatever may be said. Facts are evidently of no consequence.

MAY 5 TUESDAY 1874

Have not quite recovered & although I was about the Gaol the whole day felt weak & out of sorts. Mr Curtain M.P., Mr Pidgeon T.C. & Mr Corcoran Licensed Victualler, all of whom are anxious to pull down the Gaol or rather that it should be pulled down, paid me a visit this afternoon & I went with them through the buildings & showed them what a lot they wanted to destroy. According to their practical ideas, the pulling down & the reconstruction of the Gaol somewhere else would be only a trifling matter & the expense of the work not worth consideration when the value of the land the present Gaol now stands on was taken into account. Mr Duncan came before the Visitors left.

I received two memos., one calling me to account for my absence. Duncan knew perfectly well that I had been sick, the other with regard to the Article in *The Age* & asking whether the tone of the article was derived from me & whether I had made the statements that were in it. Duncan & I went at it hammer & tongs this afternoon. First of all I pointed out how unnecessary it was to send the memo. about my absence when he, Mr Duncan, knew perfectly well that I had had to lie up. Dr McCrea came in then & I got a certificate from him, the doctor grumbled out 'that I had not been absent'.

Mr Duncan & I talked, according to him I had been an obstructive & had not taken things quietly like I ought to have done. I retaliated by saying that ever since I had made an admission that it was intended to make me Deputy, Mr Duncan had turned against me & that I was looked upon as a black sheep & that the object was to get rid of me. I pointed out that I considered Snelling had a down upon me because I would not consider him as a superior & I said I could not look up to him as a superior either from experience or antecedents. The latter word Duncan did not seem to like. The I. General then began to talk of what he had done for me & instanced the case of Warder Meadow. I pointed out to him that this man had been charged by me with Neglect of Duty & Undue Familiarity with a prisoner & that he had acquitted him of the latter charge although I had distinctly proven it. Mr Duncan would'ent believe this for some time & insisted on seeing the record. I showed it to him & then he began to remember that the 'undue familiarity' was not proven. I told Mr Duncan that I looked upon the present attack upon me as being in consequence of the estimates coming forward & said

that I had the strongest hopes of being promoted as I was sure the Chief Secretary was favorably disposed towards me. Duncan's jaw fell; he could not support my promotion unless the Superintendent at Pentridge was promoted also. He considered the offices were on a par. Sometime ago Mr Duncan told me he did'ent know what Mr Gardner was wanted for. I said I knew nothing about the Superintendent & did'ent care who was promoted so long as I was.

Went to the Club, read in the evening & went to bed early.

MAY 6 WEDNESDAY 1874

In the office early, answered the memos sent me yesterday. The weather changed to wet, Polly however went away to Emma's. G.C. Levey who has been home to England called to see me. This morning David Blair had another Leader in *The Argus* on the Gaol & made it out to be terribly crowded with an idle population. I got Levey to walk through & he said it was as well conducted a Gaol as he had been in in England & that he had'ent seen anywhere a work room like the one in which our women are employed sewing, nor a lot of women conducting themselves in a more orderly manner. Mustered in the afternoon & then went to the Club where I played three games of cribbage. Wheeler was my partner & we played against Judge Cope & Mr Wyatt the Police Magistrate. Polly had arrived home before I got back from the Club; she had been to Mrs Elliot's as well as to Mrs Lotherington's.

MAY 7 THURSDAY 1874

Busy in the Office all day though I called at the Sheriff's Office in the morning. There was a great letter in *The Age* from Curtain & a leading article both advocating the removal of the Gaol & making use of the site for a Central Railway Terminus. There is evidently a 'Ring' formed to carry out this nice little job & I expect, as the Press seem to be in it, that very likely it will succeed. The proposed change would no doubt be a good thing for a few property owners in the neighbourhood.

The Visiting Justice & Mr Call were here in the afternoon. The first Case gone into was that of a girl in whose possession three half sovereigns were found. The girl stole the money & swallowed it. While in Gaol she recovered its possession, but as she would not share the money with another girl who knew she had it, the latter in revenge told the warders all about it. The money was ordered to be given to the rightful owner, who will I imagine be rather astonished at getting his half sovereigns back again. Two or three devils of women were brought up for Assaults & punished.

Went into town after five o'clock, on the road met Williams of *The Age*, he told me that he had seen Francis & that the chief had taken him to task about the Article on the Gaol & seemed inclined to be angry with me for furnishing him with the means. Williams said he told Mr Francis that he got very little information from me but went outside for the most of it. Williams had been

to Pentridge last week & from what he told me is not at all inclined to praise up that establishment. It seems that he went with one or two other reporters & got rather cavalier treatment, not seeing either the Superintendent or his Assistant. They were at last handed on to a Warder, but declined to go with him & after a little flourishing of the Chief Secretary's order were taken in hand by an Officer who I imagine must have been the Chief Warder. Williams formed no favorable impression of the prison & if he writes as he expressed the intention of doing will rather astonish the Pentridge people. *The Age* however will very probably be placated before the article is published & it would not astonish me to see a glowing description of the central prison with a highly eulogistic & circumstantial account of the excellent management & the very satisfactory amount of work performed, together with the encouraging moral effects produced upon the prisoners by the deterrent, though at the same time merciful & impartial discipline in force &c.

At the Club I played three games of cribbage, got home before seven o'clock. Read in the evening & went to bed at ten o'clock.

MAY 8 FRIDAY 1874

Had to hear a number of charges against women. One brute after receiving a sentence used an opprobrious expression towards me & told me I could now go & f--- Mrs Gee. This is not pleasant to put up with in the presence of a number of female officers.

Mr Gorman asked for Leave; poor fellow, his wife it appears is very ill & he has two children bad with Typhoid Fever. I recommended his being allowed to leave at once. His application was granted.

Mustered in the afternoon & then went to the Club, played one game of cribbage. Got home early but on the road met Polly & some of the children coming to meet me. Spent a very lazy evening & went to bed early.

The Newspapers are still hammering away at the idea of doing away with the Gaol. The *Evening Herald* to night said that several members of the Cabinet were in favor of the movement & it was generally hoped that the Government would decide & act at once in the matter.

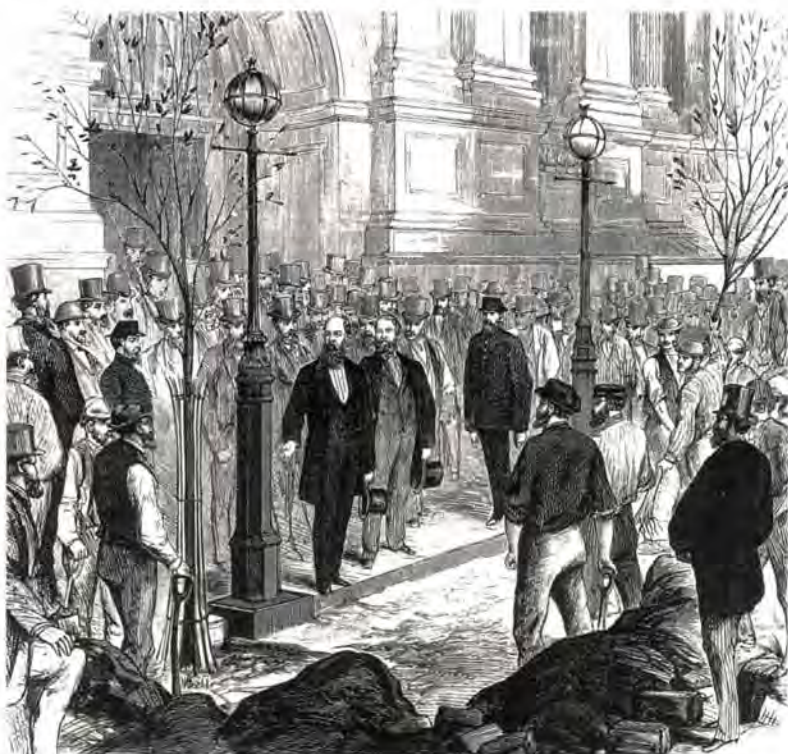
The woman Jesson that I punished this morning was destructive during the day & at night towards Muster time, with the view of giving me a treat, stripped herself stark naked. I did not avail myself however of the opportunity but contented myself with the knowledge that she was alive & strong as I could hear her shouting in her cell. She had to be put in a straight waistcoat later on in the evening. There are about six beasts of women who it would be really no crime to quietly put out of the world. They are a nuisance to themselves & an abomination to every one about them. Kindness has no effect upon these wretches & they seem to glory in the excitement of punishment. The gag & the whip would perhaps have some effect if such weapons could be held *in terrorem* over them.

MAY 14 THURSDAY 1874

Mr Evans the Editor of *The Argus* & Mr Jardine Smith came to the Gaol this afternoon to make enquiries about the working of the establishment. It appeared the Chief Secretary had been remonstrating with the *Argus* people about the article that Mr Blair had written with regard to the Gaol & the want of employment in it for the prisoners & the crowd of larrikins it contained. I went through the buildings with them & was sorry they had come after Lock-Up time. Jardine Smith is evidently to write a leader on the Gaol. He is to come to-morrow to get particulars from me about the number of young fellows between 16 & 20 there are in the Labor Yard. I walked into Collins Street with Dr Evans & Mr Smith & left them as they passed the Club. Played some cribbage with Wheeler for a partner & McKinley & Short for opponents, each side won two games.

MAY 16 SATURDAY 1874

The Criminal Sittings continued. I went to the Court but did not stay there much of the day. In *The Argus* of this morning was published Jardine Smith's Leader on the Gaol. It commenced with an Apology for a previous article



"The Mayor of Melbourne Planting the First Elm in Collins Street"

Reproduced from *The Illustrated Australian News*, 14 June 1875, p. 81

which had been inserted which the present one acknowledged had been written on incorrect information. It then pointed out the defects of the Gaol system owing to want of accommodation & then went on to give credit for what was done to make the best of things. Altogether the article was a very favorable one & one judiciously written so as not to tread upon the toes of any one but David Blair, the writer of the first article that the Editor published.

In the afternoon I went to the Club & played some cribbage. Left once to learn how things were going on in the Court & on the way met Mr G.P. Smith. We walked together & had a chat; he looks forward again to office. He has been spoken with as to the advantages of removing the Gaol & making a Railway Station on the present site. He strongly advised me to hold myself in readiness to show how the removal could be effected. While Smith & I were talking we met Poole the Sub-Editor of *The Age* & Smith told him what we had been talking about. Went back to the Club & had a chat with Semple. Met Edwin Wintle & he joined me. As we walked up Swanston Street Edwin asked me to cross the road with him & I consented; this was when we had got as far as the Police Court. While in the road I was talking with my head turned towards my companion when I ran up against a barrow that was in the way. It was very dark & neither of us had noticed it. I partly fell & just then a cab passing by struck my ankle & made me very dizzy.²⁵² It was a minute or two before I quite knew what I was about & then I was careful in getting up for fear my leg was broken. I was very glad when I found I could feel [?] the ground & use it, although it was not without a great deal of pain that I was able to do so. My walking stick was broken in the tumble. I went with Edwin to the Earl of Zetland. Got my clothes brushed & had some brandy & water then Edwin walked with me as far as the Gaol. It was very painful for me to use my leg. When I reached home I got Cameron to look at it, he did not however think there was any necessity of doing more than to patiently rest it.

MAY 18 MONDAY 1874

My leg was very troublesome to-day. Polly however got me a walking stick in the morning & with this I managed to hobble into the Gaol & do my work in the office. The Court was going on but I could not go near it. Towards Muster time I went through the Gaol & saw the Labor men turned in out of the Yard, spent the evening at home reading, sent to-day newspapers to my father & a letter to Mrs Smith.

Miss McDermott was with us to-day & gave the usual music lessons. Polly had to change servants yesterday; while she was at Church she expected the house would be made tidy & that everything would be correct in the

252 Castieau's accident highlights two of the 'nuisances' of the city—its lack of lighting and its street obstructions, such as this barrow. See Andrew Brown-May, *Melbourne Street Life: The Itinerary of Our Days* (Melbourne, 1998), especially pp.112–119 and ch. 6.

kitchen on her return, however to her disgust there were no beds made & things were at sixes & sevens throughout the house. My wife likes her dinner well cooked & great therefore was her annoyance when that meal was served to-day to find no gravy had been made for her chicken & that the bird itself was stuffed with sage instead of the correct seasoning. There was some grumbling but no action as Polly hoped for the best & was loth to send the woman who was in fault back to the Gaol. Affairs were at a crisis towards evening, & sadly complaining that she had not had time to get her dinner, in went Jessie Robertson.

Went early to bed having a little talk with Rowley before I went off to my couch & hoping sincerely I should be able to walk about when I got up again.

MAY 19 TUESDAY 1874

During the night I suffered terribly from what I suppose must have been indigestion. I had a terrible pain all across my back & when I dropped off asleep soon awoke again almost with a scream from the torture I was enduring. At last Polly got up & made me a mustard plaster. This did me good & I should have got an hour or two's sleep but the boys were wakeful & rowdy & in consequence their Mamma was kept in & out of bed in the vain attempt to stop their mass diversions. Got into my office in good time. Mr Duncan paid me a visit & talked very amicably about things in general. We spoke of the newspaper articles & Mr Macnee was called into the office to tell what Mr David Blair had said when he called at the Gaol. Macnee could'ent say much about it, he had'ent taken notice. Mr Duncan told him he should have taken notice or referred him to me for information. Mr Sturt was at the Gaol in the afternoon, he stated that he had spoken to Francis about me & that Francis had promised to bear what he said in mind. The warders sent in a grumbling petition asking that all the warders should perform the same amount of night duty. I was going to answer it all in a hurry but thought it wiser to think about it before I took any action. Spent the evening reading with Harry & Sissy; both of these youngsters have some idea of dramatic reading & like very much to show off their capabilities. Sissy & I read a scene from the *School for Scandal*. Harry & I soared higher for we tried several Shaksperian pieces.

Walter & Godfrey were in disgrace, they were restricted to bread & water rations & sent to bed as soon as their frugal repast after they came back from school was finished.

MAY 20 WEDNESDAY 1874

Parliament opened by the Governor. Tried to get on a boot on to the foot I injured but found it would not go on as my ankle was still very much swollen. Had to stay in the office the whole of the day, the greater part of which however I spent in putting my papers into order. This was a wearisome

task for I had collected such a lot of apparrent rubbish, the most of which however I felt it was not safe policy to destroy for fear of its being wanted some day or other. I did clear out some however & so far did good. I must have another attack to-morrow.

...

This morning I was very much annoyed with Hackett; he rushed an old man to my office & charged him with being grossly insolent. Hackett has the reputation of having had six wives & it appears this is known among the prisoners. As he was going through the Yard the old man I speak of twitted him with having killed four women. The old man in extenuation of his conduct alleged that Hackett had called him a whoremaster the day before. Witnesses were sent for & it appeared that some of the prisoners it seemed had said it was a shame that an old man should be charged with Idleness & that Hackett had replied to them 'that he was not too old to be a whoremaster'. I asked Hackett if he had made use of any such remark & he replied 'he did'ent know', 'He was'ent sure'. I got out of patience with him, dismissed the charge against the prisoner & told Hackett if he did'ent be more careful, I would report that he was unfit for his position. It was only the other day that a prisoner talked of the Overseer playing chequers with the prisoners instead of looking after them at work.

MAY 28 THURSDAY 1874

In the Gaol the whole day. Mr Slack a well known litigant & who acts as his own attorney gave me notice that he intended bringing an action against me & others for Assault & Imprisonment. Slack was confined in Gaol on the Sheriff's Warrant for a very long time. He threatens his Action against the attorney who was employed in the Case against him, the Sheriff, the bailiff & myself. I do not think Mr Slack will do himself much good or us much harm.

In the afternoon I had to go to the Gaol to see some women who had made a fuss about their rations. I gave one two days solitary for insolence & she was abusing me most terribly when Mr Duncan came into the Wing. I went with the Inspector through the Gaol & talked to him about proposed alterations in the Labor Yard then came to the office & saw a woman who had to complain of her ration. She lied stiffly enough but got no good by it. Mrs Gee & myself both asserting that her ration had been a rather better one than usual.

I showed Mr Duncan the answer I had written to the warders letter about their night duty, he said he thought 'I had answered them very fairly'.

Went to the Club walking as far as Bourke Street with Miss McDermott who had been to-day giving the usual music lessons to our children & to Harry Hall. Poor little Sissy came from School to-day in a bad way. She had been taken very ill & was obliged to come home sooner than usual. She had to go to bed & take Diarrhoea mixture.

Played some cribbage with Cox & Harrison, came away from the Club with Harrison, walked up Bourke Street with him. In the evening played a game of Bezique with Polly & another with Dotty & went to bed by ten o'clock.

Chaffed Judge Cope to-day about a little boy Mrs Cope has presented him with. The Copes hav'ent had a baby for some years. I said to the Judge that he was setting a bad example, that my youngest was five years old & that he made me feel uncomfortable at the chance of a further increase. The Judge went off saying all I can tell you is that you are never safe.²⁵³

JUNE 6 SATURDAY 1874

For some days I have been suffering from very painful corns, they make my feet so tender that I really have no comfort in walking about. This evening I stayed at home while Polly went out marketing. She also put my name down as a Subscriber to the Athenaeum. I have joined that Institution as I shall be able to get books there & read all the papers and at the same time bring some books away for home use. The Yorick did not seem to answer for me. I was constantly making it an expensive place of refuge & was doing myself no good with having the reputation of being on intimate terms with press writers. I must say the company that I met at the Yorick was much more to my taste & that I shall give it up with great reluctance; still I know it will be prudent for me to do so & that Polly will be very glad for me to content myself with the Athenaeum & to have no more to do with the Yorick.²⁵⁴



A.C. Cooke
(1836–1902)
*The Melbourne
Athenaeum
[Hall] c.1872*
wood engraving
Reproduced from
*The Illustrated
Australian News*,
5 December 1872

253 Thomas Spencer Cope (1821–1891), judge, county court judge at Beechworth from 1858 to 1868 and thereafter at Melbourne; a well-known member of the Yorick Club (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*). Cope was 53 in 1874. Castieau's last child was born when he was 39 years and Polly was 34.

254 The subscription to the Athenaeum (a library, not the club also located on Collins Street) was 10/-, compared to the Yorick's £1.6.0 in 1872.

When I went to bed this evening I felt very far from well & so took a couple of pills. Polly was very loving & tried hard to make me comfortable. I was notwithstanding very ungrateful & kicked about a great deal instead of going to sleep as became me.

JUNE 7 SUNDAY 1874

Polly took Harry & Dotty to the Roman Catholic Church this morning as the opera singers were to be in the choir & help celebrate a Grand Mass. Harry, Godfrey & Walter went to our church. I stayed at home, not thinking it would be safe to risk the effect of last night's pills. Had a very hearty dinner & then mustered. After Muster went to the Railway Station to start for Kerferd's, met Stiles of the Bank of N.S. Wales & had a little chat with him. Got to Kerferd's in due course. The Attorney General was in excellent temper & both he & Mrs Kerferd treated me very kindly. Had a long chat, Kerferd probing me about my money matters. He advised my going 'home' & I expressed how much I should like to do so but how impossible it would be for me to afford to do it. Kerferd said that when the Estimates were brought forward the Chief Secretary had expressed the intention of restoring me to the position I had lost²⁵⁵ & that no member said a word against his doing so. I said that I had expected more but of course would be very thankful for even what I was to receive. Kerferd told me that Duncan had a grievance against me with regard to a newspaper article & I said that it was very unfair of him to blame me, that I had only given information I was instructed to do & that I had nothing to do with the tone in which the article was written.

JUNE 8 MONDAY 1874

In the Gaol & tolerably busy all the day. Polly went up to see Kerferd with regard to my going away for the benefit of my health. He was very kind & promised that if I got a certificate from Dr McCrea that he the Minister would do all in his power to help get me the Leave I required on full pay.

Polly spoke to Dr McCrea in the afternoon but although he was very kind & spoke highly of the good feeling he had towards me he would not he said recommend my going away on a long voyage because he did not consider it was what I required. The doctor was most impressive when speaking of the necessity there was for my entirely giving up the use of all stimulants, he felt confident he said that total abstinence would be better for me than moderation. Poor Polly was made very uncomfortable by the doctor & is I fear in a great way about my state of health. She is a dear good wife & mother.

This afternoon I went to the American Consul's Chambers to attend a meeting of the Discharged Prisoners Aid Society; on the way there I met Messrs Poole & Williams of the Age office & went with them into the Town Hall to see the Portrait of Sir Henry Barkley which has just been received as

255 That is, his demotion in 1873 (see Introduction).

a present to the Corporation from that gentleman. Did not think very much of the likeness.

At the Meeting transacted a considerable amount of business & was placed on a Sub Committee appointed to consider the best means of rendering assistance to Discharged female prisoners. Left the Meeting with Zox.²⁵⁶ Went to have my hair cut. Got home in time for tea & to receive Harry who had been to the Athenaeum to get a book changed. Played bagatelle with Polly & went to bed before ten o'clock.

JUNE 10 WEDNESDAY 1874

Woke suffering great pain all down my left side. The agony I suffered was so severe that I could not help actually crying out with the pain when I essayed to move about. As I had a bad head ache as well, I sent for an emetic; this cleared my stomach of a great quantity of bile & relieved me somewhat of the pain though it still left me very weak & suffering a good deal. Polly not satisfied with Dr McCrea's decision saw Dr Robertson.²⁵⁷ He however agreed with the C.M.O. that a sea voyage was not likely to be do me good service & Polly was therefore obliged to give up the idea of getting rid of me. Dr McCrea came in to see me in the afternoon & prescribed some alterative pills which he directed me to take one each night & morning. Polly had a long talk about money matters with me before we went to bed to-night; she seems confident that if I let her have full control of my money she will be able to get me out of debt. She wishes to sell the drawing room furniture & to make other sacrifices. I have told her some of my difficulties & annoyed her very much when I let her know that Simmie's Interest was due for six months. She thought there was but two months owing.

I have much to answer for, though I have been heavily weighted; with a little more prudence I ought to have kept out of debt. If I had done so I should have known none of these troubles. Insurance & Heavy interest reduce my income so greatly that I cannot pay my way & every temporary extrication of myself only the more fatally sinks me after a little respite from the difficulties of my position.

Polly told me she had been talking of our affairs to Jardine Smith & that he was anxious to help me as much as was in his power. Warder Brown offered Polly assistance if money was what I wanted. I like Brown very much & would not mind being under an obligation to him as a man but I could not borrow money from a subordinate & so I told Polly very emphatically. She said she felt certain such would be my decision & had let Brown understand as much. Brown's kind & disinterested offer made me feel very soft & the tell tale tears scalded my eyes though I fought against their showing themselves.

256 Ephraim Laman Zox (1837–1899), a well-known financier, politician (Member for East Melbourne from 1877 to 1899) and philanthropist. He was later a chairman of this society (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

257 Dr James Robertson, resident on Victoria Street opposite the gaol and a friend of the Castieaus.

JUNE 14 SUNDAY 1874

Felt so helpless this morning that I struck my colours completely & remained in bed. The doctor came to see me between ten & eleven o'clock & changed my medicine. Polly was as full of attention as ever & could'ent do enough for me to please herself. Johnny & Ernest looked bonny in their new clothes. Harry went off with them for a walk while the little girls went to Church. I had some books to read & when I could get anything at all like an easy position in bed I stayed satisfied. In the evening I got up & went down stairs while my bed was being made & a little fresh air introduced into the room. The girls & Harry went to Church.

I found it much more difficult than before to settle down in a comfortable position in bed & passed a wretched time. Polly rubbed nearly a bottle full of anodyne liniment about my body. It killed the pain for a little while but not for long; however I got to sleep through it & that was something to be very thankful for. Harry went to the Theatre Royal last night & was very communicative to his Mamma with regard to all that he had seen. He did not think much of the Girards in their celebrated piece they called *Legmania*. Harry says he does'ent think they are men but demons, but was delighted with the Burlesque of *The White Fawn* & particularly with the lines in it spoken by Mr Greville & in which 'Castieau's hotel' is alluded to.²⁵⁸

I went on Saturday & paid my Insurance at the Alliance. Polly gave me £20 but did'ent tell me where it came from.

JUNE 18 THURSDAY 1874

My poor wife was regularly knocked up this afternoon with want of rest. I have been so demonstrative in bed that I have prevented her a good deal from even the chance of going to sleep & then poor creature she has been so nervous about me & so much in dread of my having a fit that even when I was asleep she could not settle down to calm repose herself. This lying awake has worn her out & to-day she fully intended going to bed all the afternoon but one thing after the other prevented her & I found her when I came into the office at four o'clock this afternoon quite unsettled & with nerves altogether unstrung. Old Gorman came to the door & saw Polly. The old man when a prisoner in the Gaol was wardsman in the Front Yard & as he had been an old soldier knew how to make himself very useful to Polly & agreeable to the children. He does no good out of Gaol & I have relieved him once or twice. To night he got 5/- as positively a last contribution.

Polly frightened me, for after she had been talking to the old man she grew quite maudlin & talked a lot of rubbish about how if I had gone off to England she would have got into a cottage & had Gorman as servant to look after the children &c &c; she was regularly tired out & fatigued beyond endurance. Misfortunes never come alone & shortly after Gorman went

258 That is, Melbourne Gaol.

away, there was an enquiry for me at the front door & Polly went to see what was wanted. I heard her arguing & not liking to leave her in the spirit she was in to manage my business I went to see for myself & found a red faced unsteady looking man at the door who hailed me as an old acquaintance & said his name was Anderson of Anderson Brothers Cattle Dealers at Beechworth. He had just come down he said with a mob of cattle &c. I asked him in to the Dining Room as Polly hovered about & I was afraid of a bother. She did tell Mr Anderson very plainly that I could not be troubled with business, that I was very ill &c &c &c, & that I had to be left alone. I felt very uncomfortable for some time watching my opportunity to get rid of my friend who was evidently though well spoken rather 'tight', when Polly put an end to any chance of getting him to go, by asking him to have a cup of tea. She evidently thought one would do him good. Anderson consented & drank the tea, declining however to eat because 'd'ont you understand Mrs Castieau I should be delighted to partake of your hospitality but I have no palate'. The fellow was evidently well informed & decently educated & was lavish in his admiration of my Beechworth character & of my reputation in that part of the Country. His brother 'had never met another gentleman at Beechworth besides myself'. Tea was at length over. Miss McDermott arrived & the children all were ready for the Theatre. They came into the parlor & Mr Anderson was delighted with their appearance. He must take his leave but wanted to say a few words privately to me. I knew at once what was coming & that I was 'sold again'. Would I let him have 8 or 10 shillings till to-morrow afternoon between three & four o'clock, he could'ent go into town, he could'ent do something else, it did'ent much matter what, to put him into funds & had therefore come to me? I had no silver & just sufficient caution left to prevent me giving him the whole of a pound, so I sent out for change & fortunately smuggled Polly & the children away without them knowing Mr Anderson's errand. He is to come back punctually to-morrow afternoon. I hope he may, of course I dont expect he will & yet I must confess that it would'ent surprise me much if he were to take me in & show up with the ten shillings & the pair of gloves that he was determined to make me accept.

JUNE 20 SATURDAY 1874

All last night I slept heavily, too heavily in fact & to-day I had a head ache in consequence. Dr McCrea²⁵⁹ called me on one side & asked me if I still had any thoughts about going on Leave because if I had my recent illness would give me some claim & he should be inclined to go out of his way to assist me. I spoke frankly to the doctor & told him that monetary difficulties had been my great worry & that I could not go away & incur any expense by so doing. He said that Mrs Castieau had led him to understand that I could go to

259 William McCrea (1814–1899), a leading medical administrator, he was Chairman of the Central Board of Health, 1853–1879 (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*).

England & back without expence & I was then obliged to assure him that so far as I was concerned I had no idea of how such an arrangement could be made. I said that if the Government could give me something to do at a distance away from Melbourne & pay my expences in going to & returning from my work I should be delighted & that I was perfectly satisfied if I could leave Mrs Castieau my pay, she would do better with it without me than if I were at home but that it would be of no use my leaving her with less than my present salary. The doctor was very kind & I promised to think over the matter of Leave & to tell him as a friend whatever I considered it best to do.

JUNE 23 TUESDAY 1874

Did not sleep very soundly & at about three o'clock heard one of the children sobbing as if there was something very much the matter, went to the room the crying came from & found Godfrey very upset. When I asked him what was the matter, he said, 'Oh Papa as soon as ever I shut my eyes the people come & make faces at me.' The poor little fellow generally is very brave but I suppose he must have had night mares. He is very active but for the last two days has had no running about owing to a sprained foot. I soothed him as well as I could but it took him some time to stop the sobs & Sissy heard him before he succeeded. She got up to take him to her bed & Mamma then went & brought him to mine; he soon went to sleep & stayed so till it was time to get up.

Polly went to-day to see Mr Murray Smith about our affairs, he could only recommend our coming to a regular compromise with our creditors offering them, if they would give us time, 10/- in the pound & to pay in full after four years if we were able. I could not see my way at all to act in this manner towards Simmie or the good friends who have gone Security for us with the Alliance. I would much rather try & pay every-body. Simmie must be content with his Interest alone for some time & I must see whether the Alliance will consent to allow the debt to them to remain over for 12 months on my paying the Assurance & Interest. If the Company will agree to this I think the Securities would be foolish to object. Simmie must be paid at once the Interest due to him & his permission obtained for us to sell what furniture we can do without, with the money we get we must meet McClure's bill²⁶⁰ & then grind along the best way we can manage.

JUNE 28 SUNDAY 1874

Took Johnny with me into the Gaol Church to hear Mr Mantell. Polly & the other children with the exception of Ernest, went to St John's. After Service was over in the Gaol Mr Mantell came into my Quarters & sat & chatted for nearly an hour; we got on very well indeed together.

260 McClure, Valentine & Co., wholesale grocers and wine and spirit merchants at 240 Elizabeth Street.

In the afternoon I started by the four o'clock train for Hawthorn on the way to Kerferd's house. When I got to Kerferd's I found besides the family Messrs Stewart, Morison & Townsend; stayed till it was time to go away in order not to miss the eight o'clock buss, had no chance of talking to Kerferd about my own affairs, he seemed however to consider that I might reasonably expect to obtain a twelve months Leave on full pay if I asked for it. Got home by a little after nine o'clock & went to bed before eleven.

Kerferd evidently very much worked. I am sure to night that he was glad to get rid of us. He had some Bill to read over although he had been at his office the whole of the day previous notwithstanding Saturdays being generally considered as Holidays in Government Offices. I think Kerferd would be very glad indeed to have a Solicitor General. At present he is Attorney General & Acting Solicitor General also. Mrs Kerferd cant get a servant & so all the Attorney's General's establishment besides his wife & children consists of one little nurse girl.²⁶¹ Mrs Kerferd however seemed jolly enough & no doubt can be grand enough when circumstances require her to sink the housewife & appear as the better half of the Honorable The Attorney General.

JUNE 30 TUESDAY 1874

Dr Robertson came across to see me this morning about the letter that I sent him yesterday; the doctor expressed his willingness to help me as much as was in his power but was frightened at something he had read a short time ago in which an Assurance Company had been represented as having called upon Surety to pay the whole of a loan & refused to allow him to pay the amount in instalments. I assured Dr Robertson as well as I could that there was no fear of his being treated in that manner & he signed as I had requested. In the morning I went to see Mr Lucas of the Alliance & told him what Dr Robertson had been afraid of & he told me the case the doctor alluded to was not in the Alliance Office but what had occurred was that the Sureties had shirked their liability & the Company had only fairly protected itself. He said if anything was required from the Sureties they would all receive notice & all be treated alike. After leaving the Alliance I went to Craig's office & found Simmie sitting there. I paid £21.11.8 Interest which I thought would be to the end of June but Craig on looking at his books, said he made it to the end of July.

TUESDAY EVENING. Polly after she had had her tea went off to see Mr Alston with regard to the bill we owe Alston & Brown. I wrote a note for her to give to Mr Alston. Polly returned buoyant, she had been extremely well received by Mr & Mrs Alston & on her alluding to the account told not to worry about it; the terms I offered were Bills at 3, 6, 9 & 12 months with discount

261 The shortage of servants in colonial Melbourne was notorious. See Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*, pp. 202–204.

added. Mr Alston said he would much rather I met some of my creditors & made a compromise of 10/- in the pound extending over 18 months. As for himself he would accept it. He told Polly to send me to his office & that he would see if we could'ent manage something. Mr Alston took Polly to the Railway Station, paid for her ticket & behaved in the kindest manner possible. Of course when Polly told me this I was very glad & we began to feel more hopeful, soon however there arose a difficulty. I felt if I went to Mr Alston I must tell him all, & then incidentally was mentioned that we owed £18 to Robertson & Moffitt rival drapers & to whom Polly went when she was ashamed to go to Alston & Brown without they were paid. Polly does not like the idea of Alston knowing of this. I cannot see how it is to be avoided unless to run the risk of appearing to have acted disingenuously.

JULY 1 WEDNESDAY 1874

Suffering from a very bad cold. This was what was called a Holiday in consequence of its being the anniversary of Separation from N.S. Wales. The Civil Service kept holiday & so did the Banks. There was however no change in Gaol life. I went in the afternoon to see Mr Alston of Alston & Brown. Alston was very kind & recommended me to go at once to see McClure Valentine & Co. & make terms with them. I went & had a talk with Major Radcliffe; he said that Mr McClure did the finance part of the business & that he could not give me any answer till he had consulted him. I saw however enough to show that I was'ent in favor & that I should have trouble, returned home & had some talk with Polly. Played bagatelle in the evening & went to bed at about ten o'clock.

While I was in town this morning I had to wait for Mr Alston as he was gone to lunch so I strolled down the street thinking to call upon Murray Smith, his place of business was however shut up & I turned back to go to Alston's. Passing Captain Coffey's place he invited me in & would be very friendly. He prescribed & got a bottle of medicine for me, of the same kind as he was taking himself, assuring me it would make me all right if my liver was'ent completely frizzled up, or enlarged beyond redemption. I promised I would take the Physic & not tell Dr McCrea anything about having done so.

JULY 2 THURSDAY 1874

The first thing this morning I wrote a letter to McClure Valentine & Co offering them £3 Cash & £3 per month until their account was settled; in return I got back a very hard letter indeed which alluded to my cool proposal & threatened if I did not meet my Account when the Bill became due the Firm would take immediate steps to enforce payment & lay the whole matter before the Chief Secretary. The last threat was galling but I did not mind it much as I do not care how much the Chief Secretary knows about my affairs. I would'ent have gone to McClure & Co. had not I felt it incumbent upon

me to take Mr Alston's advice & do so & not to do as I proposed, sell my furniture to meet the Promissory Note that I had given.

Polly went out & saw Mr Alston, he advised her to go to Murray Smith, that gentleman was however not at business. Polly however met him & made an appointment for to-morrow at eleven o'clock. Polly had a biscuit & a glass of wine with Mr Galbraith at his office.

Two men were flogged this afternoon. Gately has been fussing about the Gaol for the past week waiting for the job; he did his work & got paid his pound.

Mustered the women & the old Wing. Mr Duncan interrupted me just as I was commencing the New Wing & so I left it to Quin. Mr Duncan talked away very pleasantly & told me that he was going away for a few days. After tea I went to the Athenaeum & read the papers in the reading room. As I was returning home, I went into a place in Bourke Street where a number of men were amusing themselves with rifle shooting; whenever a bull's eye was made, there was music sounded or some other prominent announcement of the fact from the target that was struck. Duerdin saw me & we went for a stroll. The Yorick Club does not appear to be very flourishing & there seems to be some intention of removing it from its present premises.

When I got home I had a game of bagatelle with Polly & then went in for a smoke & a glass of toddy. Jardine Smith called to see us & joined me in a smoke & drink.

Judge Cope & the Rev. Mr McMillan who I used to know at Beechworth went through the Gaol this morning. The Judge had two daughters with him.

JULY 3 FRIDAY 1874

Polly in a great state of mind to-day & started at once this morning to see Murray Smith with regard to McClure & Co's Account. Smith advised her to go to McClure's & she did so. McClure was very stiff & inclined to be particularly nasty; he made the remark that he was afraid I had brought some of my misfortune on myself & hinted that I was not perfectly sober when I called upon them on Wednesday. This was however a great mistake on their part. I had been upset & was worried with the business I had on hand & had overwalked myself in a heavy coat. I had though but just come from Mr Alston with whom I had been talking for half an hour & certainly took nothing at Alston's or on my way to McClure's. I had some sherry & bitters twice with Capt'n. Coffey before I went to Mr Alston but this was all. I parted with Coffey at Mr Alston's. McClure would only agree to half cash & the other half at a month; he promised however to speak to Major Radcliffe his partner & see if he would agree to any further concession. McClure came up to the house in the afternoon & agreed to take £10 Cash & £10 per month afterwards. This Polly consented to. She told McClure so & at the same time let him know that I had heard what he had said about me. This he did'ent seem to like but Polly told him she had no secrets from me.

JULY 4 SATURDAY 1874

Wrote a letter to McClure Valentine & Co & sent it with a cheque for £10 on account of their bill. Polly went to Murray Smith & got a cheque from him for £10 of Harriette's money which is to be paid back in January. I sent a receipt for this to Murray Smith & also wrote & thanked Joe White for his kindness in signing the Assurance paper.

Spent the morning in the office. Polly came & said she was going to see Cameron the baker, so I wrote her a note to take to him. In this I told him that I could'ent at present pay what I owed him & that I should be much obliged if he would allow us to pay cash for what we had in future with £2 per month of the old account; according to Polly Mr Cameron made not the slightest objection.

Polly also saw McLauclan the Grocer. He was at first remarkably acquiescent but afterwards sent Polly a note in which he asked for £5 cash. Polly did'ent seem to mind this a bit however but simply said, the man cant have it & there's an end of the matter.

JULY 5 SUNDAY 1874

Polly was tired out with her exertions of the past week & did not care about going to Church, so I took most of the children & went to St Johns. Dr Bromby preached a sermon in behalf of the Pastoral Aid Society. The old gentleman was very impressive & preached an excellent discourse.

Polly made up her mind to go to Elsternwick & stay the afternoon with Doty; she could not however muster up courage to dress & after delaying from train to train at length sensibly made up her mind that after all she would be best at home. Poor girl she kept up wonderfully well when the work was to be done then came reaction & she was used up. The children are a continual plague, they are far from being bad youngsters but are a continual irritation. It's Ma, Ma, Ma, all day long & 'please I want this' or 'Johnny's doing that' or 'Sissy wont do tother', till all chance of rest or quiet is put an end to.

In the evening I sat down to read *The Vicar's Daughter* & got so interested in it that I began to read tit bits aloud. Polly who was very tired got interested also & pressed me to go on reading. I did so till nearly ten o'clock, then we had some toddy & went to bed.

JULY 6 MONDAY 1874

The General Sessions Court is still going on. This morning the trial of a young man named Kitts, a clerk in the Waterworks office, commenced. He was charged with stealing a cash box from the office. The Case was only partly heard & then the prisoner was liberated on bail & the Jury were dismissed to their homes for the night. This practice of allowing a jury to disperse before a case is over is one of only modern date & is I think a mischievous innovation. Jurors are but men & will talk & listen to talk away

from the Jury box; they are likely to hear a great deal about the Case they have to Decide & may be influenced by tattle instead of evidence. No doubt it is very hard to be locked up all night, still if I were judge I should be inclined to subject a jury who had commenced a case to it, if they were unable to finish without & I should also keep a prisoner in custody after he had once been given in charge until the charge against him was fully decided.

JULY 22 WEDNESDAY 1874

While I was at Muster this evening a woman made a very great complaint to me about the dinner she had served to her to-day & among other things said that she had got no meat. I called the officer who had charge of the rations & she assured me that the woman had had actually more than her share. It seemed to me that the prisoner was telling a very bare-faced lie & so to make it a caution to her & others I sentenced her to two days Solitary Confinement. The officer who served the dinner is a Miss Byrne recently removed from Geelong. She is one of the Queen's dear bargains & is so far as I can judge about as unsuited for her position as a woman well could be; it seems however that let one of the people get a hold of a Government biller there is little chance of getting rid of him or her for the future unless something outrageously wrong in the manner of conduct calls public attention to the impropriety of the individual receiving Government pay. In a business if Miss Byrne had proved herself not the proper person to remain employed, she would have been dispensed with. In the Public Service she was transferred & when found unsuited for a little Gaol was sent to a big one.

JULY 23 THURSDAY 1874

My old enemy bile got hold of me to-day & clawed away at my head with great power. I bore up against him with all my might but after mid-day I had to succumb & go in for an emetic. I was in the midst of the trouble occasioned by hot water after emetic when I was called upon to write a letter & deal with a woman who Mr Duncan considered had been punished as much in consequence of the irregularity of an officer as for her own misconduct.

Mr Duncan was here this morning & apparently very friendly. I got on very well with him. After he was gone however I got a private note with regard to the woman I have mentioned above & at his request I remitted the punishment I had passed upon her.

To-day Polly was full of excitement in consequence of a Sale of cheap boots for children & women that was going on at Carson's. It would appear that at this shop there is being turned out a heap of stock more or less damaged & that these originally first class boots are being sold at much below the usual rate for first class goods. Polly bought some. Alfred Darvall is down from Beechworth to get the benefit of Turkish Baths, he called upon us this afternoon. Went to the Athenaeum in the evening. When I came home I found Charley Gee engaged

with our youngsters singing comic songs & making himself otherwise entertaining. The children enjoyed his company very much; before he went away he joined Harry & myself in some Shakesperian Readings.

JULY 24 FRIDAY 1874²⁶²

As usual of late commenced coughing as soon as I woke up. Polly very feeble & unwell.

Went into the office at usual time & worked away in the usual routine fashion. There was a woman charged with Insolence & I had to deal with her. It shows how dangerous any interference is with the power given to the Governor of a Gaol to correct his prisoners, or rather how quickly any interference is noticed & laid hold off by prisoners. This woman who had been very impertinent flounced out of the office after I had punished her saying, 'that really Mr Duncan must be made aware of the way things were being carried on'. This showing off was of course caused by the punishment being remitted of the woman I have mentioned in my Diary of yesterday.

JULY 27 MONDAY 1874

Coughed away for a time this morning but managed to get a very good breakfast for all that. Went into the office & remained there till routine work was finished. In the afternoon went to the Treasury & got the money that was due, then called at the Crown Law Offices & saw Kerferd who promised if Mr Francis left office he would ask him to leave a favorable Memo. for me in the office. After I had left Kerferd I went to the Detective Office & saw there a Photograph of a man who had been shot at Ballan while attempting a robbery or some other crime. I could not identify the individual. The Photo was however taken after Death & was not the more recognisable on that account.

Mustered and then after a little chat with Alfred Darvall went to the Athenaeum. Darvall walking into town with me.

Semple came to our house & stayed to tea. In the evening he played Bezique with Mrs Castieau & then drank & smoked with me. Semple has been sounded as to his willingness to write some articles for *The Ovens and Murray* & asked me what I knew about Warren. I told him the truth & expressed my belief that the proprietor of *The Ovens and Murray Advertiser* was sure pay. Polly & I had a stormy discussion about the children & their music, Polly being very severe upon the State schools. Did'ent get to bed till after one o'clock.

JULY 28 TUESDAY 1874

There was great enquiry to-day at the Gaol about Maher the old man who Died yesterday. The Newspapers all seemed anxious for full information regarding the Claimant's last hours. In the evening McKinley sent me a note in

262 Includes entry for 25 July.

which after asking about Maher, he told me that Francis had resigned & that it was understood Kerferd would be called upon to form a Ministry.

The Government supporters had a meeting to-day at which they mustered very strong & it would appear that when it was thoroughly understood Francis would not continue in office even though allowed Leave, it was decided that Kerferd would be the best man to represent the Party & that Mr Francis should advise his Excellency to send for him to take the responsibility of forming a new, or rather to re-construct the old, Ministry. To mention a little personal matter, it seems funny that I should have yesterday gone to Kerferd to ask him to get Francis to leave a favorable minute on my papers & have made the remark, 'It would help me so very much with the next one', little dreaming that Kerferd would himself succeed Mr Francis as Chief Secretary. Had some flogging to-day. Bellew came up to see it. Alfred Darvall was here this morning & I took him to see Lynch. Mr Lynch gave him a lot of information & promised to introduce him to the Sheriff. I am afraid Alfred is not very bright & that his billet will be rather too much for him.

Did not muster but went to the Athenaeum to read the papers. Stayed at home in the evening & read for a while, then smoked for a time, then coughed for a change & then sucked liquorice till it was time to go to bed.

JULY 29 WEDNESDAY 1874

Plenty Cough again to-day. The papers showed that the information sent me last night by McKinley was correct, Mr Francis had resigned & recommended Kerferd to be sent for. Langton it is said has taken the sulks & declined to be anything but Leader of a re-constructed Ministry. It was said also that Casey would do the high & mighty business & also retire; in my opinion he will think twice before abandoning his port-folio & that in a few days Langton will gnaw his nails in vexation at having out of vainglorious sentiment thrust away the sweets of the Treasury-ship.

An Inquest was held on the body of Maher this afternoon between one & two o'clock. It was a very awkward hour for the enquiry, as the Gaol officers were taking their reliefs for dinner & the poor jurymen captured outside the Gaol were all men leaving their work for the dinner hour.

One jurymen who was afterwards made foreman was very bounceable because there was no room for him to sit down immediately he was brought inside the gate & because, as he indignantly remarked, the jury had to stand in the Gaol Yard like a flock of sheep until twelve had been gathered together. I tried to soothe, but it appeared that my gentleman had attended Inquests at Yarra Bend & that there the Jurors were treated with all proper consideration. At last I got out of temper & told him I had done so. At the Inquest my friend as I have before remarked was appointed foreman of the jury & displayed a great knowledge of corpses & of what their appearance ought to be. I didn't want any discontent of my treatment to the Jury to be shown & so after they

had given in their verdict I talked to the Coroner about the inconvenient hour at which the Inquest was held & he explained circumstances that showed it to have been unavoidable. Then I condoled with them for losing their dinner time & made a little fun out of the inconvenience serving ones Country sometimes entailed. Dr Youl helped in the rubbing down & the 12 citizens went away in tolerable good humour. My foreman friend hoped I would 'excuse him' & I in return hoped he would 'excuse me'. The verdict of the Jury was that 'Death was caused from Disease of the brain'.

AUGUST 1 SATURDAY 1874

About the Gaol all day. Went to the Athenaeum in the afternoon & spent the evening at home. Polly still complaining very much of neuralgia. Do not remember anything particular occurring to-day, bought *The Leader* & *The Australasian*. As I was going to the Athenaeum I met Marcus Clarke & we walked together so far as the Yarra Ferry. Clarke seems all the better for his Insolvency. He informed me that no one had appeared at the meetings to oppose him & that he had an order from the Assignee to draw his salary.²⁶³

As we went along Swanston Street I invited him to go into Clements in order that we might have a look at the new place just opened. It is certainly a fine house. We met Levey afterwards & had a little talk with him; he asked our opinions with regard to an article of this day in *The Age* entitled a lady's opinion of things of the day. Both of us spoke of it in a commendatory spirit. The lady suggests that some one of position should try & make nice society in Melbourne; she acknowledged that the Governor has necessarily to invite a mixed crowd to his balls, but thinks so far as his own visiting is concerned he might draw the line somewhere & that in her opinion it was scarcely the thing for him to go to lunch at a house where the proprietor had recently come out of Gaol for Assaulting a publican, particularly when the said proprietor had nothing to recommend him beyond being well off, owing to having had left him his father's money gained while keeping a public house. The lady of course referred to Pindar of Pindar & Wilson who conducted themselves very badly at Scott's Hotel some time ago & were in consequence sent to Gaol for ten days. Pindar keeps Greyhounds & has coursing meetings to one of which His Excellency accepted an invitation. Made things right for Sissy & Dotty who have been for a few days in disgrace with their Mamma. They promised to be good girls for the future.

AUGUST 12 WEDNESDAY 1874

There was not much excitement to-day things going on very quietly indeed. I went to see the Sheriff in the morning & had a long talk with him about Malachi Foley his old servant & who was convicted of stealing from the

263 On Clarke's bankruptcy in August 1874 see Brian Elliott, *Marcus Clarke* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 176-177.

Railway Shed. Mr Foley it appears after all is not so clean a potatoe in the eyes of the Sheriff as Mr O'Lochlen the Crown Prosecutor represented him to be. He looks upon him as the honest man, who stole two bottles of brandy. A week or two ago Polly made up her mind to Visit the Lady Mayoress & promised to accompany my sister & Mrs Harrison. A day or two ago however, a paragraph appeared in one of the papers to the effect that the Mayor intended to give a Fancy Dress Ball before going out of Office; this made Polly hesitate, as it seemed after such a notification to look so much like cadging, making a formal call upon the Mayoress. Emma & Mrs Harrison came for Polly & she would'ent go which I think riled both ladies very much. I stopped in the Office until after five o'clock, then I went into Melbourne. The first I met to whom I stopped to speak was Mr Hart, the Treasurer of the Aid Society. He was indignant at the way he had been treated by the celebrated Bathurst on Monday, much as it was against the grain of Mr Hart who did not believe in Bathurst. I out of Policy succeeded in getting him an allowance of ten shillings a week for six weeks to repay Mrs Bathurst for expense of boarding him while he was seeking employment. Bathurst's familiars, by whom I mean those who knew his circumstances well, wanted to invest a trifle in stocking a wood & coal yard for him, paying the rent of premises, obtaining a hand cart & other etceteras of the business. Others who knew Bathurst were perfectly well aware that he was'ent at all the sort of man to wheel a cart, cut up wood or do any other manual labor & would'ent throw away the Society's money on the chance. My compromise was accepted. Bathurst however waited to day on the Treasurer & accused the Committee of having insulted him by the offer they had made, insinuated that but for his friend Sir Redmond Barry's interest, the Society would not have noticed him & threatened of course to show the Society up. Let him, he had previously three pounds of the Society's funds.

AUGUST 20 THURSDAY 1874

During Thursday, Friday & Saturday there has been a great Case being tried before Judge Barry, Mr Harwood of the Theatre Royal & other Theatres having brought an Action against the Publisher of *The Herald* for Libel contained in the Critiques on the places of amusement published in the *Evening Journal*.²⁶⁴

For some reason or other the theatres ceased to advertise in *The Herald* & then that Paper began to get wonderfully moral & to pitch into Harwood & Co on the Class of Performances they were presenting to the public, stating it would appear as if the managers were encouraging a 'social evil'. Two sisters known as the Duvallis have been for some time engaged as dancers, one being dressed in male ballet costume. The criticism referred to them & to the Girards, the latter performers being young fellows who performed in a Piece

²⁶⁴ This libel case is discussed in *ibid.*, pp. 206–207.

called *Legmania* & in which they threw their legs into very astonishing positions. One of the Girards burlesqued a female. Pictures of the Duvallis & the Girards were handed about the Court during the trial which was not concluded on Saturday. Most of the theatrical people & the Reporters were hanging about the Court while it was going on.²⁶⁵ Telo I heard was asked if the Duvallis' Performance was not enough to send excitable men away at once to a brothel. Well said Telo, they never had such an effect upon me; but supposing you were a young man from the Country? Well said Telo, I must, to have had any such sensation, been a very long time up Country. It came out in evidence that Marcus Clarke wrote the critique complained of & this must have been rather awkward for him as it appeared he had positively denied having done so to Harwood. *The Princess of Trebizonde* was said to have [been] put upon the stage in a mutilated condition & in order that the Jury might see what it was like it was put upon the Boards again to night. Ellis offered to get me a ticket for a Party of Ladies but I declined with thanks principally before [i.e. because] I did'ent care at being patronised or to be seen with ladies at a piece of a doubtful character. This *Princess of Trebizonde* has had a great run & some of the catch sayings have got into favor about Melbourne. One especially 'Keep your eye on your father & he will pull you through'. I shall leave space here to record the verdict of the Jury when the trial is over.

This case was concluded on Tuesday & a verdict for the Plaintiff given. Damages one farthing on each count.

AUGUST 22 SATURDAY 1874

Had a very bad night, being awake for hours with my cough & suffering very much from a wheezing on my chest which when I breathed made a very nasty disagreeable singing noise. Rev. Mr Mantell called & asked me to take the Services in the Gaol for him to-morrow & I consented, hoarse as I was, for I did not like to refuse having once or twice offered to do so if it would be any advantage to him. At Eleven o'clock, a Tall stout determined looking lady with a grim casket in her hand, to lock up the souls she got hold of may be, walked into my office & announced herself as Mrs Ferguson saying she had made an appointment with Dr Singleton to meet me at eleven o'clock to make arrangements for visiting the female prisoners. I made some observation, when Mrs Ferguson immediately stopped me by saying that perhaps the conversation had better be deferred till the arrival of the doctor. I said no more but went on with my work until Dr Singleton put in an appearance. My visitors then proceeded to take the Gaol by storm & seemed to take it as a matter of course that they would be heartily welcomed. I urged that there was no time to attend upon visitors & that the Government provided pastors for the prisoners, remarking that if the people out of Gaol

265 This entry is written across dates 20–21 August 1874.

were as well looked after as those who were in Gaol, they would have plenty to try to do them good. Mr Singleton began to talk of the good that he had done especially at Pentridge. I mildly said that even there his work had not been altogether satisfactory. This made him very sore & he railed against the late Mr Price, who on the ground that Dr Singleton was taking out messages for prisoners, refused to let him visit the prison after a time. Sweet Mrs Ferguson remarked that it would have been so different with her & Mr Price as Mr Price knew her work so well in Hobart Town. I sent for Mrs Gee & introduced her & let Mrs Ferguson understand that I could only encourage her visiting the Gaol in connexion with Mr Mantell. I certainly have a great objection to persons not connected with the Gaol coming to it and expecting to be allowed to run about as if they had a right to do so.²⁶⁶

Felt so ill that I stayed at home all this afternoon & evening & went to bed at nine o'clock.

AUGUST 28 FRIDAY 1874

Paid Mr Wilmot my subscription of one guinea to the Prisoners Aid Society. Saw some prisoners go away at six o'clock this morning to Maryborough. Some of them were rare boys though only under 12 months sentences. I was a little fidgetty in directing Quin about them & was glad to see them off all right. It being so early in the morning there was only the Night Staff on duty.

This was Harry's birthday, he was thirteen years old to-day. He went to bed last night full of promises to his mamma of being a good boy. He commenced the morning by shouting out of the window to the Police Van Driver in charge of the Maryborough prisoners '*Allez houp-la*', 'keep your eye on your father' &c.

I told him a nice character of this Gaol the prisoners would take to their new prison being able to tell how the Governor's son shouted at them & mocked them out of the window when they were going away at six o'clock in the morning. Harry fumed & said it was no good trying to be good, he could'nt be that was certain. He calmed down however & went off to School tolerably jolly having got sixpence from his mother & sixpence from Mr Brown.

An Inquest was held this afternoon on the remains of a man who Died in the Gaol yesterday. This man had been convicted of Stealing a piece of soap from the lavatory for the use of the public at the Melbourne Library; the soap had mysteriously disappeared on several occasions & it was therefore watched until one day this man Robert Nelson was found putting a piece of it into his

266 John Singleton (1808–1891), a doctor and philanthropist, was also known for his strong religious views. His evangelism in gaols had been resisted by Inspector-General John Price in the 1850s and was continued by Inspector-General Duncan in 1875 (at Castieau's recommendation) and again by Castieau when he held that office in 1881. See Public Record Office Victoria: VPRS 3991/P, Box 840, Item 75/H6227; VPRS, 3991/P, Box 1264, Item 81/V1895.

pocket. He was apprehended & sentenced to 14 days labor. This man had been a draper at home in England, here he took his stand in one of the streets as a shoeblack from seven till twelve each morning & then spent the remainder of the day at the Public Library studying theology. He received remittances from some one in the Old Country & used to be pretty well soaked with beer before he went to bed of a night. This was one of the Cases which I cannot help terming the failures of Dr McCrea's treatment; when Nelson came into the Gaol he appeared in tolerable health & was sent to the Labor Yard. There he remained without making any complaint for 5 or 6 days, when he complained of rheumatism & was put in the Hospital. He got emetic & low diet the first day, low diet the second day, low diet the third day & then he was very low & Dr McCrea ordered him Essence of beef, Brandy & in fact anything he would take. He refused however to rally & died the next day. I walked down Russell Street with Dr Youl & the Coroner expressed himself very strongly that there would be a row about the emetic & low diet treatment some day, & went so far as to say that Nelson instead of low diet ought to have had 20 oz of brandy the first day he complained of the Rheumatism. The Post Mortem showed that he was suffering from Pneumonia when he died & so he must have been three days before. I feel placed somewhat awkwardly. I like McCrea very much & I would not like to be unfriendly with him but I would risk that if I could see my way to do any good. He is a doctor & fully qualified, makes no secret of his practice & in fact justifies it & thoroughly believes in it as a conscientious man like him would believe in what he done. His treatment too with nine out of ten of the patients he gets is efficacious. The stomach is generally out of order from excess & an emetic clears off what is working against nature. The pulling down to build up again as tried in the Case of Nelson makes one rather funky when it has such a result for it looks too much like, 'killing, no murder'.

Awfully bilious tried an emetic & went to bed early.

AUGUST 30 SUNDAY 1874

This was a boisterous windy day. I went to church with the girls & with Walter & Godfrey. Mamma was rheumatic & was obliged to nurse herself at home. In the afternoon I went to Kew & visited the Kerferds. Mr Anderson & Judge Cope were with the Premier when I saw him. Cope stayed & we came away together by the nine train from Hawthorn, met Anderson the Clerk of the Melbourne Bench at the Station. He came to town in the same railway carriage. Did not say anything about my own affairs to Kerferd. The Prime Minister was cordial enough but yet seemed to have an innate consciousness of the dignity of his position & that he was overpowering me with a sense of the condescension with which he treated me. I do not wonder if his head gets a little giddy, his exaltation is so great & sudden. I think I would have preferred for myself that Francis had remained Chief & Kerferd a Member of the Ministry.

SEPTEMBER 1 TUESDAY 1874

There are a number of poor wretches knocking about Melbourne who have once upon a time been in a respectable condition of life but who are now reduced to the most miserable shifts to obtain a bare existence. One of these men is Gahan; he is an attorney but has drank away his prospects, friends & opportunities. O'Loughlen to his sorrow knows him & is hunted by him for small sums to enable him to get a bed & a meal. He has been in Gaol as a vagrant & so is acquainted with me; sometimes he gives O'Loughlen a relief & begs of me. To-day he did. I gave the poor wretch a shilling with a grumble & he promised really to settle down to something immediately. Strictly speaking the man deserves no pity & what pity do I deserve for the troubles myself & family are bearing when I remember how much I have spent that might have been saved & how wasteful & extravagant I have been at times.

SEPTEMBER 2 WEDNESDAY 1874

In the office at usual time & transacted ordinary business though I did not go near the Court. In the afternoon there were two men flogged, one had been knocking about the Gaol Yard for nearly six months & had evidently got at the flogger, for when that noble individual began to flourish the cats, I could see he intended to use them lightly & so he did although he paraded very carefully; the next man evidently was due for no consideration & he got it so hot that Dr McCrea whispered to me that the man was being flogged too severely. I checked Gately & the remainder of the whipping was of a milder nature. This is the first time that I have seen Dr McCrea show any feeling of this nature.

In presence of the doctor I called the flogger up to me & told him that I was satisfied he had not flogged the first man as he ought to have done & that he had been paid in some way or other for not doing his duty; the fellow looked conscience-stricken & impudent as he generally is did'ent open his mouth. I shall look after him to-morrow.

There was a very distressing Case came under my notice this morning. Some time since a draper who had been in the employ of Buckley & Nunn was sent to Gaol for 14 days for pilfering. While he was serving his sentence it was shown that he was silly & I got him committed as a lunatic; on the day that he was due for his discharge a delicate little woman came to the Gaol to take him away & was almost heart broken when she found that he was going to the Asylum. The man was her husband, the poor little thing had a baby & she was thoroughly helpless in consequence. She told me she expected remittances from England & that she then meant to take her husband home, that Mr Alston of Alston & Brown had promised to help her & that she thought she could manage if I would only give him up to her. I persuaded her that the Asylum was by far the best place for her husband to be at & promised all sorts of kind things for her until I got her to go away somewhat contented. At Muster time the lunatic himself begged to be allowed to go home & assured me of the excellent

prospects he had if he could only get back to work. I talked to him & lied to him as is supposed to be correct with insane folk & left him satisfied. This morning the little woman ruffled all my feathers again, she wanted her husband & she could'ent do without him, her landlady was remorseless & insisted on her paying the rent or going as she called it 'on to the streets'. I argued in vain about my being obliged to send her husband to the Asylum; 'what was she to do without him?' was her only answer. He can mind the baby while I go out to work. I know I can keep him all right. I fussed & fumed, quietly I am glad to say, & at length wrote to the Chief Medical officer, Mr McCrea, to say that I would let the man go if he approved. I gave this to the little woman in good faith but not expecting much from the doctor's reply, yet to my astonishment in a very short time the little one again returned with a memo. from the doctor saying he had no objection to the man being taken charge of by his wife. I gave orders for him to be set at liberty & then the little one told me the doctor had given her a pound to try & commence fairly; by & bye the poor lunatic was brought to the office & immediately began to talk of his brilliant prospects when he got back to Buckley & Nunn's. Sad to say the man's mind was gone & in his condition he could not possibly have been tolerated behind a counter. He asked his wife if he were to go back to-morrow & she replied with great sweetness & with pathos 'not to-morrow dear you are not quite cured yet you know'. Then the poor fellow enlarged again to me on the money he used to make by the large sales he effected & in a gentlemanly manner thanked Cameron the prisoner hospital attendant for his kindness to him. I saw the man & wife going away & thanked God for all his mercies & in my heart begged for forgiveness for all my wicked & selfish repinings against his judgments. When Dr McCrea came to-day he said that he wished he had had £5 instead of £1 to give the poor woman. He considered hers a real case of distress while day after day he was pestered by idle loafers who wanted assistance without deserving it.

ENTRY WRITTEN ON DIARY PAGES FOR SEPTEMBER 7-9

On Saturday September 5th I went ill to bed.²⁶⁷ This is Tuesday November 16th [i.e. 17th]. I am pronounced convalescent but still suffer from rheumatic pains & find that I am unable to take but little exercise without suffering for it with groggy knees & swollen ancles. I have not gone into the Gaol yet to do any work & do not suppose I shall until I have been for a little spell. Mathews has given me an invitation to Albury & Polly seems to have made up her mind that I shall accept it; as yet however I have not decided upon going away anywhere myself but suppose Polly will as usual make me do what she thinks will be best for me.

Soon after I was taken ill Dr Macrea gave a certificate to the effect that I required twelve months Leave of Absence; some of my friends suggested that it

267 Castieau applied for 12 months leave on 22 September 1874, but this was refused. He was on sick leave until 12 December.

would be an excellent opportunity for me to get a change & yet do some good while I was having it, both for myself & the Government. It was proposed in *The Argus* that I should go to America & then to Europe & visit the principal prisons in both Continents so that I might be enabled when I returned to furnish reports of the different systems of Prison management that came under my notice so that it might be seen whether Victoria could't take some wrinkles from one or other of them. This would have suited me admirably & I jumped at the idea. At the time I was unable to write myself so Polly did the Secretary & wrote for me to the Premier & to Mr Duncan, the Head of my Department. I asked for 12 months Leave on full pay & said how glad I should be to be employed in visiting the Gaols. After some time an answer came in the shape of a memo. from the Penal Department stating that the Ministerial Head of the Department was willing to give me twelve months on half pay. At the time this answer was received I was very ill indeed and Polly, on the doctor's advice, did not let me know of it. She took the letter however up to Kerferd & he seemed to know nothing about it; the Premier however agreed with Polly, that Half Pay would of course be useless in my Case & that I was to get well & then make another application for the Leave I wanted. I saw Mr Duncan & he said he could'ent understand why the Leave was refused as he had recommended it & advised me to apply for six months on full pay. Mr Duncan could not he said recommend that one in my position should visit with a view to reporting on other Gaols & I suppose his veto stopped the Government or rather Mr Ramsay the Acting Chief Secretary from entertaining my proposal. While I was ill Mr Adamson the American Consul called & evidently was under the idea that I was going to the States; he seemed very anxious that I should go & offered me all the assistance in his power towards forwarding my views if I did take a trip to his country.

NOVEMBER 15 SUNDAY 1874

I shall begin from this day to try & consider myself convalescent. Went off to Church in the morning with the elder children. Harry came out a great swell, some new clothes having been made for him by his mamma with the assistance of the sewing machine & a few hour's work from Billy Weeks the Gaol Tailor & barber. Billy shaved me when I required it all through my illness. He is one of the very useful men in Gaol who will work well & willingly while prisoners, but who will do no good for themselves when they are at liberty. Billy has spent three fourths, or perhaps 5/6 of the last twenty years in Gaol, mostly on short sentences for Vagrancy.

Very lazy in the afternoon. In the evening wrote two letters, one to Ogier & one to Mathews. The English Mail was telegraphed to Cape Otway this morning, so without doubt the English letters will be delivered to-morrow.

Did not feel very well to-day; the fact is, the hard seat at Church was rather too much for me after the long time I had been in bed or lying on the sofa.

I felt wofully stiff all this afternoon & evening. All the youngsters are looking well & bright again [following the measles].

NOVEMBER 16 MONDAY 1874

Did think of going into the Office this morning but felt that I was not strong enough to do so & be really useful so determined upon keeping away from duty yet a little longer. Received a letter for Edwin Smith from his mother & duly forwarded it to Campbell's Creek; there were no other English letters came to our house. Polly has made up her mind for me to go to Albury & to-day bought me a portmanteau & some other things so that I might have the necessary requirements for a journey.

In the afternoon I attended a meeting of the Discharged Prisoners Aid Society as I wished to show myself about again. Mr Adamson & the other members of the Committee who were present very kindly welcomed me. The weather changed to wet before business was over & I walked to where the omnibusses passed, under shelter of the American Consul's umbrella. The Omnibusses that passed were however in consequence of the rain crowded & I found that to get a seat I must go to where they started from & so I hobbled as fast as I could to the Railway Station; even there it was with difficulty I got a place inside a bus. When I got to the nearest point to Home & left the bus I found Polly waiting for me with a big coat & umbrella. My thoughtful spouse evidently feared I should get wet & perhaps another relapse. In the evening Jardine Smith came in & stayed chatting for an hour or two. He had just returned from Queenscliff where he had left his children for the benefit of their health.

NOVEMBER 17 TUESDAY 1874

Polly went into town this morning; while she was away Mr Sturt came to the Gaol & I sent word that I should like to see him. He came into the house & I thanked him for his & Mrs Sturt's kind enquiries for me while I was in bed. Mr Sturt advised me strongly not to return to the office until I had had a change of air & approved very much of the idea I had of going to Albury. In the afternoon Dr McCrea came in & authorised my sending word to Mr Duncan that he advised my going away for a week or two. The doctor very pointedly advised at the same time that I should not forego my application for a long leave of absence. I wrote a private letter to my Chief & told him that I purposed going to Albury in a day or two unless I heard anything from him against my doing so. I said that as I was on Sick Leave I supposed there was no necessity for making any formal Application for Leave.

NOVEMBER 21 SATURDAY 1874

Up at half past five in order to be ready for the train at seven. Poor Polly still suffering terribly from neuralgia, she would however get up & go with me to the Railway. Harry was to see me off but gave himself sulky airs & was sent

back to his bed-room. Sissy, Dotty & Walter went in the cab with Polly & myself. At the Railway Station met Stiles the Manager of the Bank of N.S. Wales at Melbourne; he was going up country for a holiday & chummed with me immediately. I introduced him to Polly & the youngsters. Got away all right, the weather soon became very hot & dusty. Stopped at Seymour for breakfast, there was however very poor accommodation & very little to eat. I wanted a chop but could get nothing better than a very dry sandwich. At Benalla there was another rest & another sandwich, this time however it was'ent a dry one & I enjoyed it thoroughly. In due course arrived at Wodonga; there were several busses loading for Albury. I got into a very little omnibus having accommodation for six persons; hot however as the weather was the driver managed to cram eleven into the bus & to allow two men to stand on the step behind. It is at the outside not more than three miles from Wodonga to Albury, yet after the arrival of the train the delay was so great that it took an hour & a half to do that little distance.

Mathews was unwell & Mrs Mathews was in Beechworth. Mathews made me very welcome & I made myself at home. The evening was terribly hot & close & before we went to bed there was some thunder & lightning; the storm however passed away from Albury. Telegraphed to Polly to let her know I had got to my journey's end in safety. With the exception of my shoulders & arms I did not find my rheumatism trouble me & it was surprising how well I had stood the day. Heat however seems to suit my complaint. Thought of Polly very much & hoped her face was better.

NOVEMBER 22 SUNDAY 1874

Slept soundly. There is an aviary close to my bed-room & the birds by their singing woke me soon after daylight. I managed however soon to go to sleep again & did not get up till close upon nine o'clock. Mathews was still unwell & did not turn out of bed till the afternoon; in consequence I had to dine by myself, unless I must count Mathews little daughter, a very engaging young puss of about five years old. I got on very nicely with her & she became at times extremely confidential. She warned me against swallowing cherry stones for said she if you do, you will die & go to Heaven & then you will get nothing to eat.

In the train yesterday were Mr O'Grady & some other leading catholics of Melbourne. They were coming to Albury to welcome the Bishop of Goulburn who was to confer some order of Knight-hood on a gentleman from Wagga Wagga whom the Pope 'delighted to honor'. I had no doubt the installation would be made an imposing ceremony & just before eleven o'clock I went to the Catholic church. It was however very crowded & I could get no seat, so after standing for about half an hour & when I began to feel groggy in the knees I sidled out of the chapel as unassumingly as I could & went back to Mathews' house. Again I was much struck with the well dressed well to do appearance of the crowd at chapel & pleased with the reverence

shown for the House of God by all who entered it; the catholics certainly teach the Protestants a good lesson in this respect. Too frequently there is a total want of anything approaching proper feeling shown by the habits of the English Churches, pew holders especially often swaggering into their seats as if they belonged to them & showing by their manner very little regard for the purpose for which the building they are in was erected.

In the afternoon Mathews took me on a hill & showed me the city from its summit. The place looked very well at the distance we were from it & will no doubt in the course of another generation be thickly populated like other Australian towns. The streets of Albury are wide; there is much however to be done in it before it can be considered a nice place to live in. The roads are now several inches thick with dust & in Winter they must be in consequence equally objectionable from the coat of mud that must take the place of the dust, there is no water supply, water used being obtained from wells or from tanks used to store the rain water flowing from the roofs. Trees grow apparently very luxuriantly but none have been planted in the streets which look very bare & desert like in consequence. The want of united energy among the leading men is given as the cause of the town being very behind-hand in the way of modern improvements.

In the evening went to the Church of England place of worship, there was a very fair number of persons in attendance. The Service was very tame, the sermon not brilliant but to the purpose. I put my hand in my pocket & pulled out a contribution for the place; the gentleman however who collected on the side of the church on which I was sitting did his task in a very careless loose manner & I did not get the opportunity of adding my mite to the funds of the church. Went with Mathews to Mr Gray's house. Mr & Mrs Gray were Beechworth residents many years ago. Gray is now part proprietor of *The Border Post*. Gray came to Mathews & had a nobler, the three of us stayed talking about old times till nearly midnight. After Gray had gone away Mathews & I still sat over the fire & talked of gone by days; we retired at last at about one o'clock.

NOVEMBER 30 MONDAY 1874

Before going to Mr Duncan's Office I called at the Crown Law Offices & had an interview with Mr Kerferd. I said that I intended going back to duty the next day. Kerferd advised me not to do so but to wait until I was quite well leaving things as they were at the Gaol. I said to the Premier 'There was an article in *The Argus* about me on Saturday', he replied 'I have not read it' in a tone that implied he did not want to hear about it either. I then asked if there was any chance of my being sent Home as had been suggested to report upon the systems adopted at the Prisons in Europe. Kerferd replied that it could not be managed unless it was recommended by Duncan. I saw that the Minister intended to be reticent & took my leave. Got home rather tired & with increased rheumatic symptoms.

DECEMBER 1 TUESDAY 1874

In *The Age* of this morning there appeared a short Leading Article strongly advocating my being sent Home to see the European Prisons; the writer spoke in very flattering terms of my competence to furnish an able report of the different systems that came under my observation. Mr Sutcliffe called this morning. Went to the Sheriff's office, saw the Sheriff & was introduced to Mrs Wright; the Sheriff & his wife were both embarrassed in consequence of having no servant. The gentleman showed his hands which were blackened & hardened by the performance of household work & the lady was full of bitterness at the independence of 'maids of all work'. The Sheriff wished to get his family's washing done in the Gaol but complained of the rates charged for washing by the Department; he said he had spoken to Mr Duncan who had promised to look into the matter to see if a reduction could 'ent be made. Felt tired and rheumatic to-day but in the afternoon plucked up & went into Melbourne with Mrs Castieau; while the wife was shopping I visited the Athenaeum Reading room, bought *Punch's Almanac* & did not think much of it after I had got it. Posted some newspapers for my father. Miss McDermott had tea with us.

DECEMBER 12 SATURDAY 1874

As I had promised Mr Duncan I would, I went this morning into the Office & took over charge of the Gaol. Dr McCrea came to the Gaol to pay his usual visit & I told him I had re-commenced duty. He said 'Let it be understood I do not consider you are fit to do so & what is more I do not think you will be able long to continue on duty[']'.

It is to be hoped that the doctor is mistaken & that my constitution is stronger than he supposes. I must confess that at times however I lose heart, for the rheumatism hangs about & attacks me in different parts of my body making me almost helpless as well as causing me a great deal of pain. Cameron has tried to do me good by galvanising me. The battery, so far as I have found, has not had any effect upon my enemy.

Being on duty I felt it incumbent upon me to go through the Gaol & see the prisoners. I went from Yard to Yard & saw all who were in the Gaol & let it be known that I was at my Post if any one in the prison wished to speak to me.

Visited Weechurch²⁶⁸ in his cell & spoke to him about his defence. He wished to say a good deal about the harsh treatment he was receiving, complaining of Mr Duncan in particular. I declined however to listen to any statements about his case & went away when I had personally satisfied myself that Weechurch had all he required for preparing his defence.

268 John Weachurch (sometimes Weechurch) was on trial for the attempted murder of a Pentridge Gaol warder. He had previously been under Castieau's care in 1872 during his trial for attempted murder of Inspector-General Duncan. A brief account of Weachurch's life and eventual execution is in Denton Prout and Fred Feely, *50 Years Hard* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1967), pp. 157-165.

DECEMBER 14 MONDAY 1874

Got up feeling awfully despondent. I was so full of aches & pains, went into the Gaol at nine o'clock & stayed there all the morning. In the afternoon Semple called; I did not however stay with him as I had to attend a meeting of the Prisoners Aid Society. When I returned Home Semple had gone away. There was a full attendance at the Meeting. Mr Wrixon was present; he asked about my health & wanted to know when I was starting for Europe. He seemed surprised when I told him that I was not going at all & said that he had understood it was all arranged I should take the trip; he professed to think it would be a very good thing for the community if I were sent to inspect distant Gaols & I told him that I believed I should have been sent to England by the Government but that Mr Duncan did'ent approve of my going. I said further that I did'ent know his objection excepting that he had the idea he should like to go himself. Mr Wrixon said he would see Mr Ramsay on the subject of my Leave. I do not think however Mr Wrixon who is thick with Sir James McCulloch will press my claims in opposition to Duncan who is particularly McCulloch's protege.

Received a letter from my father this morning. He wrote also to Sissy & Dotty & sent them each one of his portraits. I did not recognize the likeness when Polly showed it to me ... The old gentleman told me in his letter that he would be eighty four in January next. His picture gives him the appearance of a hale hearty, upright old chap & he is represented without stick or spectacles. I could not help thinking that he has more life in him than his son is in possession of.

DECEMBER 15 TUESDAY 1874

Much better to-day. The Supreme Court Criminal Sittings commenced. Weechurch was put upon his trial for attempting to kill a warder at Pentridge. I went to see if Judge Barry would have him brought into Court with his Irons on as he was sentenced to wear them, or whether he would have them taken off before the prisoner was put into the Dock. Sir Redmond thought they had better be taken off, but gave me particular injunctions to have Weechurch well looked after. Mr Ireland defended Weechurch & gave Mr Gardiner the Superintendent of Pentridge a severe cross-examination. Gardiner could'ent recollect much & did'ent shine in the Witness box; the witnesses for the Crown were all examined & then at the request of Mr Ireland the Case was postponed till to-morrow.

DECEMBER 16 WEDNESDAY 1874

Mr Ireland made a bitter attack upon Mr Duncan when addressing the Jury on behalf of Weechurch; he said that the I.G.I. had been afraid to make his appearance in the Witness Box, though he was waiting about the Court during the whole of the trial. This was very unfair for Mr Duncan would have been very glad to have given evidence if he had been allowed to do so. He was subpoenaed for the Defence, this was however only a ruse as it suited

Counsel to bully much more than to examine the officer. The Crown fell into the trap & did not call Mr Duncan, relying upon being able to cross-examine him when the other side put him in the Box. The Judge summed up dead against Weechurch but notwithstanding this the Jury brought in a verdict of Not Guilty. The verdict created general excitement & in the minds of some even consternation. Weechurch was brought back to the Gaol under his old sentence.

In the evening I went to the Legislative Assembly & heard a portion of a debate upon what is known as 'the Flogging Bill'.²⁶⁹ It is proposed to whip Larrikins for larrikin offences, & the idea has caused much tribulation among 'the friends of the people'. So far as my belief goes I do not think flogging will do much good, but I think it is much better to punish a boy by giving him a good caning there & then as proposed than to continue as at present to send him to Gaol. The cane leaves no lasting injury or degradation, the being in Gaol is a reproach during the whole of a life-time.

DECEMBER 22 TUESDAY 1874

In the Gaol before nine o'clock this morning. Mr Duncan was here early & dealt with Warder Lawler for being the worse for liquor on the 14th. Lawler was fined £2.

Mr Duncan went through the Gaol & saw Weechurch in the Yard. The prisoner immediately began to complain of the treatment he was receiving & the rations he was allowed. The Inspector told him he could make no alteration & then the prisoner spoke insubordinately. Mr Duncan as he passed on made the parting remark to Weechurch 'that he was not fit to be associated with other men'. This gave the prisoner an opportunity of being abusive & he indulged himself accordingly, shouting after Mr Duncan that 'his Christianity was only skin deep' &c &c. I tried to stop Weechurch & threatened to send him into his cell but at the same time thought it would have been better if Mr Duncan had not made his last observation. Weechurch is a great infliction, his mind is warped on the subject of his imprisonment & with regard to it, argument has no more effect upon him than it would have upon a post. He is cunning enough however to make a mountain out of a very little mole hill & a splenetic remark like Mr Duncan's gives him the chance of insisting that he is goaded on to misconduct by the authorities.

...

In the evening I went to the Athenaeum. On the way I met Semple; he went to the *Argus* office to see if he could get more tickets for Blondin's entertainment & I went to the Reading Room to wait for him. In a few

269 A Bill that was aimed at addressing juvenile larrikinism through birching. An editorial in *The Argus*, 17 December 1874, castigates parliamentary opponents of flogging as 'friends of the larrikin class', among them a politician who had criticised the bill as 'born of a newspaper panic'.

minutes however heavy rain fell & Semple did not come for me; the rain kept on & I was obliged to stay at the Athenaeum. Polly however was thinking about me & just before nine o'clock in she came having trapsed all through the wet to bring me my overcoat. I felt much the affection shown by Polly but for all that I was wild with her for coming out on such a night & told her she was treating me like a child & as one who could'ent manage in an emergency to look after myself. The rain kept on all the while we were going home & my over coat was a great advantage. Polly declared she never caught cold & there was no danger of her doing so. We did'ent get very wet.

DECEMBER 24 THURSDAY 1874

Mr Geary who has been for a number of years an Inspector of Schools was discharged from Gaol to-day having been confined for some weeks on a fraud summons. He has been in the Bail Yard, which is a very miserable place, all the men there being unemployed & have nothing else to do but lounge away their time.

Geary told me he should write a series of articles as soon as he got out as he had picked up a good deal of information. I daresay he will produce from his experiences something sensational but at any rate I am quite prepared to admit that the system of sending people to Gaol in default of finding sureties is a very bad one & that it is often very unfair, some men & women being kept for months because they are unable to find a surety, an easy matter to others often far more deserving of punishment. Tis a wretched thing too, the having a lot



James B. Philp (fl.1853–1863)

The Eastern Market from the Top of Whittington Tavern 1864

lithograph; 26.5 x 41.3 cm

Plate reproduced from *Melbourne Album* by Charles Troedel (Melbourne Album Office, 1864)

Rex Nan Kivell Collection; National Library of Australia

of idle men herded together day after day & it must be very demoralising especially to those who are enjoying Gaol hospitality for the first time. As a rule the Bail Yard contains some most disagreeable fellows, for the most part men who are wife bruisers or wife threateners & who are bound over to keep the Peace. All these men should be at work, yet as the law now stands they are not supposed to be anything more than detained & those employed work voluntarily. This evening I went to the Athenaeum & then met Polly & all the children. We went to the Arcade & visited a shilling shop where the youngsters each got a shilling's worth. Then we bought a cake at Duncan's & then went to the Eastern Market where the youngsters each had a pull at the lolly lottery. Johnny got a basket, the others only hearts & such small prizes. Johnny in consequence was somewhat of a hero for the rest of the evening. The streets were as crowded as streets well could be & it was some little trouble to get along with all our small fry. We got through however safely & as we were going home had a capital view of Blondin's fire works.

DECEMBER 25 FRIDAY 1874

Christmas Day. Up in good time. Sissy and Dotty each found under their pillows a nice book. They were sent as Christmas Boxes from Uncle William and Aunt Jenny. A sample of the Gaol pudding was sent to me; it was very well cooked and looked good. Two of the cooks sat up all last night to keep the pots boiling. Went into the Gaol this morning & made up my Diary. Then had a game of cricket with the boys in the playground. Our dinner was a great success, the threepennys in the pudding creating much excitement. Four of them fell to Johnny's share.

Polly gave some dinner to the prisoners who mess with Cameron the Hospital attendant & saw also that our own servants got a good feed. The prisoners pudding was well cooked & and although it was not very rich it was appreciated as an extra & thought very well of.

Mr Macnee and Mr Quin came into the house and had a nobler this morning and Polly gave Mrs Gee a pair of ducks. In the evening Teddy Hall came for an hour or two, the boys ran races & went in for a little fun outside the Gaol. By ten o'clock every one in our house had got tired and ready for bed, so off we all went.

DECEMBER 26 SATURDAY 1874

Boxing Day a holiday tolerably general in the world but a nondescript one in the Gaol. The prisoners didn't want to work but when I was interviewed by the Overseer on the subject I found that in accordance with precedent they must do so & directed that they should.

The day passed away very quietly. Semple called & offered me a ticket for Blondin's performance this afternoon. I told him I shouldn't be able to go & he then agreed to go himself & let me have the ticket for the evening.

Mustered the men in their cells.

In the evening took Teddy Darvall & my own Harry to see Blondin.²⁷⁰ The boys are getting big ones & there was some little difficulty in passing them on half tickets, however what difficulty there was, soon disappeared & we all found ourselves in the best part of the tent, a rude affair at the best open to the Heavens with wooden forms for 5/- & no seats at all for those who paid 2/6.

Blondin pleased the whole of his audience, though he terrified to a certain extent a portion of it. His feats on the tight rope are simply wonderful & their very cleverness frightened a number of the people who were looking on by their audacity. Blondin appears to be as much at home on the tight rope as ordinary folk are on the floor & after a time most spectators get accustomed to seeing him & lose the idea of there being any danger in the pranks he plays upon the limited space at his command. Blondin forty feet above the ground turns somersaults, stands in a chair when he balances on the rope, carries his secretary across the rope on his back & does the most wonderful tricks that have hitherto been performed on ropes a few feet above the floor & from which if a performer happened to slip he would have a good chance of escaping without any serious injury. Blondin wound up his performance by wheeling a barrow to the centre of the rope, on this rope was a grand selection of fireworks which 'the Hero of Niagra' lighted & at once became himself extinguished in the blaze & smoke he created.

The fireworks were very pretty, prettier indeed than most fireworks that have hitherto been shown in Victoria, the rockets being brilliant & of all colours; some green ones were especially noticable for their novelty.

Saw Poole of *The Age* at Blondin's; his son was with him. Introduced him to Harry & Teddy. Felt the evening very cold & became painfully conscious that I was still suffering from rheumatism.

DECEMBER 27 SUNDAY 1874

This morning I was full of aches & pains & felt very much inclined to be lazy & to remain in bed. Got up however & had a bath. Mr Mantell came early & I went into the Gaol with him & stayed during the Service. Mr Mantell preached a farewell sermon; he will not be Chaplain after the end of the year as he is giving up his curacy at St James' & the Chaplaincy goes with the curacy. I am very sorry Mantell is leaving as he & I have got on capitally together; it is to be hoped that he will better his condition by leaving Melbourne. He is to be curate at Essendon & to teach in a private Grammar School there is established in that place. Mantell had some dinner with us & we had a little talk about Harry. Polly & I would like Harry very much to be under the care of Mr Mantell by & by if his school prospers.

...

270 Charles Blondin, the French-American tightrope walker, famous for crossing Niagara Falls in 1859.

I mustered the prisoners in their cells this afternoon. Quin gave me some dogrell verses that Weechurch had written on a tract in praise of Mr Ireland. The following is one of them:

The greatest warrior of the Law
That ever the Australian colonies saw
Our men from legal troubles to draw
Is the brave stout hearted Ireland

I will give the whole of the verses a place on the pages that were left blank in this book during my illness.²⁷¹

DECEMBER 30 WEDNESDAY 1874

Harry's head progressing favorably. Mr Sturt was at the Gaol this morning. Gately the flogger, a great brute who would boil babies if ordered to do so was sent into Gaol yesterday for some offence he had committed & his hair & whiskers were cut off. He fairly blubbered this morning about the loss of his hair & told a terrible tale of his troubles. Mr Sturt is however at times a very unsympathetic man & showed himself to be so on this occasion for he sent the gentle flagellator howling away without any consideration for his grievances.

Mustered in the afternoon. I had previously been to the West end of Bourke Street to a Mr McPherson to see if he could give some corn sacks for the prisoners to make in the Gaol. Mr McPherson was however not at home. I wrote to him on the subject when I got back to the Gaol. In the evening I started for the Athenaeum & on the way there met Wheeler, one of the reporters for Hansard. As we passed the Yorick Club some of the members saw me from the window & beckoned to me to come to them. I went & was demonstratively received by McKinley, Keeley, Harrison, Duerdin, Short & others. The Club is now in much better premises than of old and I was somewhat taken aback with the number of rooms & the great accommodation. The place is not at all Bohemian in appearance & possesses a billiard room & a drawing room. I have long had an inclination to be again a member of The Yorick & to-night I was so heartily welcomed that I could not withstand the temptation of joining & so paid my subscription for the first half of 1875. Went to the Athenaeum & got a book. Mr Mantell lunched with Polly to-day.

271 The full verses were entered in the diary page headed '26 September Saturday 1874'.

CHAPTER 7: 1877–1884

‘OH SO WEARY OF THE WORLD’

The diaries of Castieau's last eight years map an increasingly despondent character. He had struggled to the top of his profession, with much disappointment and frustration along the way. Once arrived, there were too many signs of indecisive leadership. Looking back some years after, a Pentridge prison warder, Henry White, concluded that Castieau's appointment as Inspector-General of Penal Establishments was most unfortunate 'as he possessed but few of the qualifications requisite for so high a position, and it was also a matter of notoriety that he was of unsteady habits'. Within four years of his appointment, things had fallen apart completely for Castieau. In the circles that knew him there was, observed White, 'a general feeling of regret that one so kind-hearted and generous should have terminated a long and useful career so ignominiously'.²⁷²

White's reservations seem sound. Castieau was thought of well enough in 1879 to be offered by the Chief Secretary, Graham Berry, the temporary appointment of Inspector-General of Lunatic Asylums in the absence on leave of the office-holder, Dr Paley. Berry looked to Castieau to take an outsider's view of the administration of the colony's lunatic asylums. Castieau's subsequent critical reports prompted a public reply from the Inspector-General on his return.²⁷³ Yet as Inspector-General in his own department, a position at last attained in 1881, Castieau was unable to press home the advantage of his position, proving vulnerable to internal machinations against him, by staff at Pentridge in particular.

The diaries that survive from these years suggest personal circumstances that weighed heavily on Castieau, to a degree that prevented him acting successfully in his office. The occasional illnesses of the early 1870s became more chronic, leading eventually to him being granted six months leave in July 1884. Polly, too, suffered various ailments that feature in the diaries of these later years. There is a sense of some distance between Castieau and Polly, who is frequently called 'Mrs C'. At the same time the diaries more and more show Castieau in a domestic light—a mutual regard between Castieau and his daughters, Dotty and Sissy, comes through the daily record in the last couple of years. This is especially so in contrast to the striking degree of conflict between Castieau and his sons. In the last few months of his life,

272 Henry Augustus White, *Crime and Criminals, or, Reminiscences of the Penal Department in Victoria* (Ballarat: Berry Anderson, 1890), pp. 168, 176.

273 Castieau's critical reports on the administration of the asylums, together with the replies to these by the Inspector-General of Lunatic Asylums are in the Public Record Office Victoria archives at VPRS 3991/P, Box 1164, folio 80/S7393.

Castieau reports his exasperation with Harry in particular ('reckless', 'no energy', a 'Frankenstein'), and Godfrey (at 18 years, 'a disagreeable age', 'I have to bully him a good deal'). Recorded in the diary is a physical struggle between father and son in August 1884 which leaves Castieau with a jacket torn by the 'impudent brat' Godfrey, the one he had reportedly taken to visit Ned Kelly in a prison cell at Melbourne Gaol in 1880. Almost the last observation of the diary is a wish that Godfrey will get a wage rise to justify his father 'insisting upon his taking lodgings away from Home'.²⁷⁴

After the better part of a lifetime in the extraordinary domestic environment of a prison, the family moved, in the last six months of Castieau's life, to Inkerman Street Balaclava, not far from the St Kilda beach which figured so much in the 1870s diaries. The move was predictable for one of Castieau's age and social stature. By the 1880s 'St Kilda had an aspect of ageing gentility; a third of its householders were not in the workforce, many of them pensioners and annuitants'.²⁷⁵ The Inspector-General moved there on leave, and would shortly become an annuitant. The weeks following notice of his enforced retirement were spent in an anxious pursuit of investment possibilities.



'Examination and Remand of [Ned] Kelly in Melbourne Gaol' [J.B. Castieau Centre] Reproduced from *The Australasian Sketcher*, 14 August 1880

The only marginally well-off pensioner sought to secure his family's future through partnership in a small business. In this perilous adventure, which seems to have come to nothing, Castieau at least appeared to benefit from his wide range of associates, in this case especially leaning on the advice of the financier and philanthropist, Ephraim Zox, who shared with Castieau for some years the common interest of work in the Discharged Prisoners Aid Association.

Castieau's last entry was on New Year's Eve. Within a month he was dead at the age of 54. The funeral was held the following day and Castieau was buried in the St Kilda cemetery, where a headstone was placed in 'Loving Memory' of the late Inspector-General.²⁷⁶ Castieau was intestate and so Polly

274 The visit to Ned Kelly may be apochryphal. See Mary Bateman, 'The Lincoln-Cass Films', in *Cinema Papers*, June-July 1980, pp. 170-174.

275 Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (Carlton, Vic., 1978), p. 149, quoting an 1883-84 survey from the St Kilda rate book.

276 For the headstone, see Brendon Kelson and John McQuilton, *Kelly Country: A Photographic Journey* (St Lucia, Qld: UQP, 2001), p. 10.

was left to oversee the distribution of his assets. His sudden death at least brought some financial relief. The life assurance policy he had occasionally pawned for financial relief in the 1870s brought Polly more than £700; she subsequently bought a house in Hotham Street, St Kilda where she lived until her death in 1910. Some family stayed with or near her in Melbourne, while three of the children (Walter, Dotty and Ernest) followed their father's footsteps by becoming gold rush migrants to the Western Australian goldfields in the 1890s.²⁷⁷

The death left unfulfilled Castieau's wish to write up his own life, drawing on the diaries he had so carefully kept and retained over nearly 30 years. Symptomatically, the unfinished business is signalled in a diary record of a negotiation with the listless Harry to assist his father in the process: 'I agreed to give him a pound for a week to help me to look over my papers of which I was to be returned 15/ for Board & Lodging. Harry has no energy & our literary work did not proceed very far. I was cross & out of temper & after the papers had laid about for some days, the girls gathered them up & put them away again'.²⁷⁸ In the end there was no time for reflection or reconstruction, just the writing out of the daily record we see here.

OCTOBER 4 THURSDAY 1877²⁷⁹

After a very restless night I arose this morning unrefreshed and in very low spirits. Things had come to appear as bad as they well could be in a pecuniary point of view & acting on a solicitor friend's advice (Mr Duerdin) I allowed him to send a note to my principal creditors asking them to meet at his office for the purpose of arranging my affairs. The meeting was fixed for this afternoon at four o'clock and shortly before that time I went with a sore heart and a throbbing brain to Duerdin's office. Duerdin put me into a room that was not to be used for the meeting & I sat there for some time pretending nay trying to read *The Age* of the day. I might as well however pretended for I could'ent make sense out of any paragraph. Soon different footsteps could be heard ascending the stairs & I could not help hearing the conversation with Duerdin as there was only a wooden partition between his office and the room I occupied. Seven or eight creditors put in an appearance and Mr E.T. Moubray took the chair. Moubray was most kind. Duerdin offered that I should pay £18 per month and the Chairman who was my heaviest creditor expressed his opinion that it was very fair. After a very little chat it was agreed by all present that the offer should be accepted and that Mr Moubray should receive the money monthly for distribution quarterly *pro rata*. I was most

277 Public Record Office Victoria. VPRS 28/P2, Probate and Administration, Box 177, Item 29/265. Probate Records for J.B. Castieau.

278 Diary, 'Tuesday September 23rd to October 12th' 1884.

279 The date of entry for this volume of the Diary (a single volume for 1877, but with entries dating from 1877 to 1879 that often differ from the printed date on the page). This entry is at pp. 33–34 of the 1877 volume.

kindly treated and did not hear a word said against me. Neither did Duerdin think it necessary for to call me into the room. Yet when I got away I felt dazed and slunk up the Back Streets as if I dreaded meeting any one I knew. In getting home Polly was all anxiety to learn how I had got along. She cheered me as much as she could and I could not myself but feel I had acted wisely under the circumstances.

The pleasure of spending money affords after all but a very temporary excitement. When that spending is beyond one's means, it soon to a sensitive mind brings with it retribution of the bitterest kind. I have got into difficulty mostly from buying when first I came to Melbourne more furniture than I could afford, then borrowing to pay for it, then borrowing again from an Insurance Company, the Alliance, then borrowing after a time to keep the payments made up & so on from time to time, keeping on my legs by borrowing from one to pay another, finding myself with a little time to the good but on each occasion in a worse financial position. Oh how the weeks do run away between the acceptance of a Bill and its coming due & what a terror there is of the approaching day when it seems as if there is nothing to look forward to but a collapse & exposure. As for me I know that at my meals, when performing my different duties, when reading or when conversing, and when I lay down to try to sleep the ugly figures would keep on intruding & my mind would stupidly repeat over & over again without the power of any thought the difficulties I had to contend with. Then would I toss & turn only to lay my head again upon the pillow to remain brooding away until I took another toss & turn to be repeated over & over until exhausted nature at last threw me into a troubled sleep from which how frequently have I awoke from some horrid nightmare of a dream, my body all wet with cold perspiration & my heart ticking like a watch. There is no slavery like debt & there are very few who are in debt but have mostly to thank themselves for their degradation. Credit is a curse to the majority. The temptation of eating well, drinking of the best & being clad in fine linen is too much for the generality of weak humanity & so this is set down & that is got and parties are given & unnecessary expenses of every kind incurred with little or no thought of the day of reckoning. Certain however is that reckoning to come and then the facing the little bills begins the trouble. Creditors soon become less polite, after a while decidedly cool & after another while request to be immediately settled with. Then's the time when a man's affairs seem to himself hopeless and the world a burden, then the devil puts into his head how easy it would be to lie down & rest for ever. What shall it be, just a moment's pain. There's your choice of poison, pistol, razor, or river. Thank God however that so many men though foolish enough to get into debt and then mope over their troubles have still, if regardless of 'The Great Unknown', been gifted with sufficient manliness to save them from the sin of suicide, for coward must he be who with wife or children or both dependent upon him will desert his post reckless of the misery he will

occasion to those he leaves behind to fight the battle of life ' & bear the whips & scorns of time' the most of which their natural protector could if he had done his duty saved them from.

JULY 23 1878²⁸⁰

Although for some time past there has been a powerful party both in and out of Parliament who have agitated for the removal of the Gaol & who are not relaxing in their efforts to carry their point, yet I have not been able to realise the idea being carried out as it seems so opposed to common sense to destroy the expensive structure now in existence & which is centrally situated and suitable in almost every respect for the purpose of a City prison, while it is known that a gaol easy of access is imperatively necessary in Melbourne.²⁸¹ Still therefore believing that the Melbourne Gaol will not be removed from its present site for many years to come I endeavour to improve any part of it as if its remaining where it is was a certainty.

Carrying out this idea I determined to have some trees planted in front of the Gaol; there had been some which Sir Redmond Barry had put in the ground but which did not live. Two *Wellingtonia Gigantia* were obtained from the Botanical Gardens & Sir Redmond graciously consented to plant the fresh trees on hearing from the Sheriff that the ones he had set had failed. After a lot of work in the morning in getting the holes ready, all was prepared by two o'clock which was the hour fixed by his honor for the ceremony.

At that time I went to meet the Judge & saw him coming to the Gaol with the Sheriff. Sir Redmond's continuations were a little disarranged & I notified the fact to him by a pantomime action & a whisper of 'buttons your honor'. Sir Redmond hurriedly adjusted his dress & then lifting his hat said with a grand bow, 'Thank you; I beg your pardon Sir.'

The first tree was planted with great care; the Judge giving innumerable directions of which as many as possible were carried out. Then Sir Redmond remarked, that will do I think. If you please we will name this one 'my Lord Wellington'. When the second tree had been put into the ground with similar attentions, Now this one shall be 'My Lord Nelson'.

Four prisoners, all young men, had been employed in digging & running about & the Judge noticed them favorably. As he was going away, he said 'I wish you lads would work as well outside as you do in the Gaol. You would all make good livings.'

Then I assured his honor I often made the same remark to the prisoners. 'Ah it is a great pity', continued the Judge. 'Now do any of you smoke? Mind I don't advise you to do so, it is a very bad habit indeed! You do smoke! Well it cannot be helped. As you do, if the Sheriff & the Governor of the Gaol have no objection, I will inaugurate the planting of these trees by leaving for

280 At entry space no, 204 of 1877 volume.

281 The government had recently considered this matter, without resolution: *The Argus*, 11 July 1878.

you each a fig of tobacco.' The Sheriff & myself both said we'd take his honor's authority for breaking the Regulations on this occasion. The Judge then took out his pocket book & solemnly asked each of the men his name. They all gave Irish ones & Sir Redmond remarked 'Humph, all countrymen of my own. Well lads dont come back to gaol again & remember this, if you do & I have ever got any more trees to plant, not one of you shall assist me'.

Sir Redmond then went into the Gaol & left the money for the tobacco in the Lodge. I accompanied him & the Sheriff through the Gaol & got a lesson in pruning on the way, the Judge having noticed some vines trained in a manner which he showed me entailed a great waste of wall. Sir Redmond & the Sheriff were shown out of the Gaol by the entrance near the Supreme Court & I went back to my quarters where I inaugurated the Christening of my Lords Wellington & Nelson by partaking of some Whiskey & Water and inviting Mr Gorman the Chief Warder & the warders who were about to drink to the health & long life of the verdant noblemen.

AUGUST 11-19 1884²⁸²

Left Pentridge for new house at Balaclava on this day. The mother slept at Pentridge last night but the remainder of the family at Balaclava where they had been for some days past. The house, considering all things, can be made tolerably comfortable & there will be much less work to do when we have got a gas-stove.

The fires seem now the principal trouble to the girls. Before leaving Pentridge I tried to sell Carpet, Clock, Table clock & Saddles. The advertisement cost me 6/- & I only had one offer which I declined, not considering it a reasonable one. I had great experience of the difference between buying & selling & saw how easy it was to do the former & how difficult the latter. I sent a table to Beechaump's which was sold for £7.5. It cost me 5/- for cartage, 14/6 for Commission & a shilling for entry. I was unfortunate enough to purchase a pair of ponies from Mr Garton for £40. This was nearly two years ago. The first day the boys took them out a cabman ran into one of them & injured the pony's hip. The two however afterwards ran very well together & I hope not to lose more than a few pounds by them. I sent them to Mr Garton as a friend & he promised to do his best for me. I got £22 out of which I had to pay £3.15.6 for Livery, one shilling for advertising & two shillings for entry. My cheque amount[ed] to a little more than £18. Moving is worrying work & if the warders had not liberally volunteered their services & the prison vans were [not] placed at my disposal I do not know how we should have got on without much more expense & trouble. The Gas stove came in on Saturday & the girls managed the Sunday dinner very well with it. New brooms sweep clean & perhaps new Gas stoves cook well. Ours at any rate shapes as if it were likely to be a success.

282 Diary entries for the first part of 1883 were perfunctory and there followed a long gap between May 1883 and August 1884, when Castieau resumed his recording.

Harry professed to clear out on Thursday morning last. He said 'It was no use staying here' & I thoroughly agreed with him. He asked for a few shillings to pay his way & I have him a pound cheque for a week's board & lodging. He did'ent intend telling us where he was going to & did not intend to let me know.

He wanted the cheque changed and I had no cash. The girls produced 5/- but he said he did'ent want all that & took only half a crown. The reckless boy or rather man, he is Twenty-three years of age, then swaggered away without any luggage little caring for all the worry & anxiety he leaves behind him. The weather has been cold & showery all the time we have been at Balaclava & this has interfered very much with the possible comfort we might otherwise have had in our new Home. My annual Report was presented to the Two houses last week but I have not seen it published & can-not but except it is too favorable to suit the papers as my views in some things do not all coincide with those previously expressed in the Press. In one case Flogging has been held up as a panacea to check larrikinism. In the Report I profess that Solitary Confinement on bread & water is in my opinion the only real deterrent in dealing with criminals.

19 AUGUST. Ernest went yesterday (18th) to the State School; he did not seem when he came back to have liked it very much. Mrs Castieau however approved very highly of what she saw of it. Felt very ill all day yesterday (18th) and went to bed early in the evening. The papers had very full accounts of the boat race between Hanlan the Canadian & Beach, a Sydney trained man. Contrary to all expectations Beach, to the gratification of the Australians, won easily.

20 AUGUST. This morning Mrs C and Sissy have gone into town to purchase some American novelties for saving labor in the kitchen. I gave her a pound of which she was to spend ten shillings and of course she spent the whole of the money. She bought a potato torturer. This is supposed to flay a potato without cruelty, dirtying of hands, or inconvenience. I hope it is all that it should be but at present the poor murphys are still skinned with a knife.

There is another combination affair, two pots in one. This is to do wonders in the way of cooking two vegetables at a time; at present however I notice only one comes to the table, spite of the Siamese twins.

This day (20th) I went into town principally to get my hair cut. This was satisfactorily done and then I went to the office and saw Mr Brett. Found that there had been a bother about our washing having been sent into the Gaol this week.

AUGUST 21-24 1884

The girls went into town. On Saturday 23rd, I was very busy all the morning trying to reckon how I stood. Had an appointment with Zox for half past

twelve. Went too late & did not get to the rendezvous till quarter to one & so did not see him. I heard afterwards that he had come back so it was a pity that I did not wait.

Came Home. Mr Adams, a Melbourne Warder, came out to help hang the pictures, he was here all the afternoon & worked very hard.

Mr Gibson & his neices came in the afternoon, but they soon saw it was no time for visitors & did-ent stay long. Harry then turned up wanting money of course. He says he is staying at the North British Hotel, a House which according to my hopeful son is frequented by theatrical people & printers. I am thoroughly disgusted with Harry & do not care to brood over what will become of him. He has no energy & only a bastard pretence at independence which ends in a snivel & promises, which he forgets as soon as his wants are supplied for the time being. I gave him £1.2.6 for a week's board & said now I suppose you will get along. He said if I dont get work I shall want more next week but I replied 'then you wont get it' & I shall try to leave him to his own resources. I shook hands with him however before he went & tried to rouse him but I am afraid without success. If there was a Frankenstein he seems likely to be one to me.

(SUNDAY) Mrs Castieau & Jack went to the church at which Dr Torrence presides. They were pleased with the Service & got Home early. The girls with the aid of the Gas Stove cooked a capital dinner & we all should have enjoyed it but for the priggishness of Godfrey who gave himself airs to his mother & has not the slightest idea how to behave himself.

He got me out of temper & I wanted to put him out of the room but he is stronger than I am & there was a struggle in which my coat was torn. The impudent brat shall not stay in the house if he does not alter his conduct very much. In the evening the girls were going to church but unfortunately it came on to rain & were obliged to stay at Home.

At twelve to-night a man came into the Back Yard & attended to the closet. The dog did not bark much.

AUGUST 24 MONDAY 1884

War between France and China. Telegram of the blowing up of the arsenal at Foo Chow.

SEPTEMBER 2 TUESDAY 1884

Received a note telling me the pay was ready.²⁸³ Went to town in the afternoon & got mine. Bought two pairs of trousers from George & George. Very much surprised at the great show they were making. There was a capital band playing dance music & there seemed to be hundreds of people walking about the show rooms or sitting in the drawing room. As this was a show day no one asked any visitor to buy. All were welcome to inspect even were they only spectators.

283 Castieau was on six months sick leave at this time.

Went to Moubray & Co. Saw Mr Rowan & ordered two suits of clothes a hat & some neck ties. I was getting very shabby & can-not afford to be that just now. Got home at dinner time. Received a Policy of Insurance on the furniture. Paid Godfrey £3.13.0 for tea & sugar.

SEPTEMBER 11 THURSDAY 1884

Received a letter that had been sent to Adelaide for Harry & which was returned to the Melbourne Dead Letter Office. Gave Walter an order to receive it. A pound was enclosed when it was sent to Adelaide.

Got the first No. of the *Wangaratta Chronicle*. It was sent by Harry & I hope he has employment at the office.

SEPTEMBER 22 MONDAY 1884

Received a letter from Police respecting Main.²⁸⁴ The Report was that he was penniless. Sent it to Messrs Gillott & Snowdon. Washerwoman here to-day.

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 23RD TO OCTOBER 12TH

Neglected to keep up my Diary. Have been very much bothered & latterly not very well. Duly received pay and allowance for September. Paid Rent & as many bills as I could manage & was several times in town. Harry turned up on Thursday October 3rd from Wangaratta. Of course he was penniless & thoroughly reckless so long as he could get food & shelter. I agreed to give him a pound for a week to help me to look over my papers of which I was to be returned 15/- for Board & Lodging. Harry has no energy & our literary work did not proceed very far. I was cross & out of temper & after the papers had laid about for some days, the girls gathered them up & put them away again.

I gave Harry a letter to Mr Ferres, the Government printer. His answer was that no men would be taken on until November. Not very jolly at Home & saw it was useless for Harry to remain with us so on Tuesday I gave Harry 17/6 out of the pound I promised him & let him go. I day [i.e. dare] not charge him for his Board. It is evident that he will not work unless that he is driven to do so. He went away swaggering & defiant.

Have had several visitors & heard a great deal about the Gaol and Pentridge; these establishments do not appear to be altogether abodes of harmony although there has been a change of superior officers.

Gibson it is said will have to retire. One evening during the week I went to bed about half past ten o'clock & seemed to feel in usual health. During the night I was siezed with a heavy night-mare & in the morning found that I had given my tongue a severe wound with the end of a jagged tooth. Polly went to see Dr Stewart at Brunswick & he gave her a prescription which she took to Keys at Pentridge & got made up. At Pentridge Mrs Castieau saw several of the Officers and had a chat with Mrs Gibson. The good folks

284 An ex-prisoner who was attempting to sue Castieau and others for false imprisonment at Pentridge.

profess to wish to have us back again. [This story was then repeated.] Suffered with a severe attack of Influenza & Lumbago. Polly rubbed me well with turpentine which did me for a time a little good. Left off taking what is known as drink.

...

Mrs Gibson was in a great way about Gibson of whom Mr Magee has reported that he is neither mentally nor physically fit for the position of Chief Warder. Met Gillott in town. He has obtained an order to cause Main to find Sureties for £25 costs before he commences his action. Dean O'Hea called to see us. I put myself in communication with a Produce Farm in the Western District. A partner was wanted with £2000. I asked for a reply through Zox as my agent. One was sent but though it looked very well, Zox did-ent think it good enough & so with his advice I left it for him to decline.

OCTOBER 13 MONDAY 1884

Very unwell suffering from Lumbago. Polly helped me all she could but I got worse & on or about the 15th had to take to my bed where I suffered terribly though I got disturbed sleep at night by the assistance of sleeping draughts & powders. I wrote to Dr Stewart but made light of what ailed me & told him not to inconvenience himself by coming to see me. He did not come so I went on using Blair's gout pills internally & Jacob's oil externally.



'Melbourne International Exhibition—Interior View of the Main Building'
Reproduced from *The Illustrated Sydney News*, October 1880, pp. 12–13

On Tuesday the 21st I was much better. Mrs Coffey came up in the evening & I was glad to hear that Gibson was re-instated, Mr Magee's forcible certificate as to Gibson being mentally & physically unfit for duty not being confirmed by the Medical officers Drs Stewart & Shields, but an entirely different opinion to that of Magee's being given of Gibson by both doctors.

OCTOBER 22 1884

Better. Found Stewart's pill rather too powerful however. Got up & dressed. Wrote letters to Harriette, Emma & Mrs Hollaway. Sissy & Dotty went to town to the Blacks. A Scissor & knife grinder came on his round, he got 6/- worth of work from us & we were quite satisfied to pay him for it. Mr Lindt the Photographer some time since invited me to have a large portrait taken to form one of a collection he is getting ready for Exhibition at the forthcoming celebration of the Jubilee of the Colony of Victoria. I wrote two days since telling him I had been ill & that I would give him a sitting if he would make it as late as he could. To-day I got a polite reply asking me to suit my own convenience.

OCTOBER 23 FRIDAY 1884

Got up very much better & went to town. Called upon Zox & went to the Chief Secretary's office. Mr Berry²⁸⁵ was not there. I saw Mr Wilson & went into my offices & talked to Brett.²⁸⁶ There was an Execution to-day, a new hangman name[d] Jones officiated & did his work well so all the papers say.

Went to Lindts & gave him a sitting for a large photograph. Mr Lindt took also one on a smaller plate. I was astonished to see how little trouble the work appeared to give. Managed very well but was fagged by the time I reached Home. While in town I had a cup of coffee & a pie at the Coffee Palace. It made a very good snack & cost but sixpence. Bought *Life of Sarah Barnham*²⁸⁷ (Sara Bernhardt). It is villanously scandalous & makes the great actress out to be little better than a beast. It is however humorously written & I sat up reading it till nearly midnight.

26 OCTOBER SUNDAY – 1 NOVEMBER 1884

Went to Church with Sissy in the morning. It was Hospital Sunday & there was a good collection. A stranger preached an appropriate sermon but unfortunately the Rev. Gentleman was not able to speak his words very distinctly & in consequence a good deal of his sermon was lost to his hearers ... Mrs Castieau went out in the afternoon. I wrote up my Diary & read in the evening.

285 Graham Berry (1820–1904), three times a premier of Victoria, but at this time Chief Secretary and responsible for the prisons.

286 William Gore Brett, whom Castieau had known since 1856 in Beechworth, was appointed Acting Inspector-General in place of Castieau from July 1884.

287 Evidently a popular version of the life of Sara Bernhardt, the actress.

Monday 27th. Went to town in the morning & settled with Mr Goldstein. Looked in at a Sale at Gemmell's. Vases, China & ornaments were sold at high prices, did not venture to bid & so came to no harm from my visit. It seems wonderful, where all the grand ornaments can be sold & paid for.

Came home to lunch but went again to town in the afternoon & attended Discharged Prisoners Aid Society Committee Meeting. Called upon Joe. He had just welcomed Godfrey who arrived in a cab from the Brisbane Steamer. Godfrey had his arm in a sling but was looking well after his accident. Chatted with Joe about Harriette. He was much concerned because I had not been able to keep up her allowance; assured him I would as soon as my affairs were settled & I could see my way to do so.

Got back to Balaclava, Edie Cuthbert was at our house. No dinner had been cooked & so eggs & bacon were got ready by the girls. Mrs Castieau not well & upset. She went early to bed.

Tuesday. Awoke early & as it was too soon to get up read for an hour in bed. Did not go to town to-day, read & wrote in the morning. In the afternoon went to the Beach with Dotty. Troubled with a touch of cough & very much lamed with a corn. Wrote a letter to Dr Henry asking him to send me some tonic.

In the evening commenced reading again a book called *Five Years in Penal Servitude*.²⁸⁸ The book refers to English prisons & professes to have been written by one who has served a sentence. It evidently is the work of an author well up in what he has made his subject. Went early to bed.

Wednesday October 29th. Went to town this morning & strolled into the Picture Gallery. Saw several new pictures, but none of them impressed me so much as Esther & so I had the longest look at her ...

Thursday October 30th. Went to town with Mrs Castieau & Ernest. Ernest was to get a new suit of clothes. When we got to town he caught sight of 'A man he wanted to see' & made a run. He soon came back & announced that his friend was Mr Wilmot & that he wanted to go with him & would meet his mamma at one o'clock.

Mrs C & I then went to see Quin the old chief Warder of Melbourne Gaol. We found him in bed looking a complete wreck. He was terribly thin & evidently unlikely to get out of bed again. His wife had the place clean & although it was morning the bed room was tidy & free from any unpleasantness. Mrs C went her way & I looked in at the Gaol to see Mr Williams who is now in charge as Mr Magee is ill. Williams was gone to the bank, Mrs Gee away on Leave. I chatted for a little while in the office &

288 Edward Callow, *Five Years' Penal Servitude, by 'One Who Has Endured It'*, published in numerous editions after its first appearance in 1877.

then left cards for Mr Magee & Mr Williams. Spoke to Gibson. Saw Julia Gee as I was leaving and told her I had been going to see her mamma, but had been told she was away from Home. Got back into Melbourne & was at Balaclava at about two o'clock. Ernest had ordered his new clothes. Read & wrote till bed time. Brought some Hop bitters, not the celebrated ones but some prepared in Melbourne & which our grocer confidently recommended to Ernest as being much cheaper & quite as good as the advertised American mixture. Received a bottle of tonic from Pentridge. Troubled with a stubborn cough after I had got to bed. Eat up some lollies I had by my bed side. What I thought was one more, after putting it in my mouth I found to be a halfpenny so after a suck or two I disgorged it & went to sleep.

Saturday, November 1st. Went to the office in town & got my salary. Saw Brett. This was the Derby Day & of course there were a great many people knocking about. In the evening read the papers. Rufus won the Derby. Bargo was the favorite. Jack drew him for me in a Sweep. I of course had a flutter for the money which of course only lasted till the race was run. In the evening I took Mrs C to see the opening of the Jubilee Exhibition. There was a Grand Choir of about a thousand Victorian born whites. They were led by Mrs Perraton & sang very well. There was a good deal of speechifying but it was not very successful as most of what the speakers said could not be heard owing to their voices being lost in the immense hall. The actual opening of the Exhibition after 'God save the Queen' had been

sung was greeted with much cheering. Walked about but did not notice much novelty. However was not able to judge what the sight would be as many of the Exhibits had evidently not been placed. It seems rather strange that spite of long notices of coming Exhibitions, they are never ready for the Public on opening day. Mr Shadforth as the oldest Colonist present took the principal part in the inauguration. There was some little ill feeling expressed at the Governor not being present. The Exhibition is looked upon more as



Scenes in Melbourne 1880

[Top: 'To the Exhibition from Flinders Street Railway Station'; below: 'Scene in the Exhibition']
hand col. wood engraving; 31.6 x 23.2 cm
Pictures Collection, nla.pic-an8737411

a private speculation than a National undertaking & probably the Governor was advised not to officially recognise it. Went through the Eastern Market, it was nearly closing time but from the way a number of the stalls were arranged it really looked something like a continuation of the Big Show we had just come from. Got Home comfortably by the train at about midnight & eat some sandwiches we had purchased in Bourke Street & which turned out to be cheap & palatable.

NOVEMBER 2-4 1884

Monday November 3rd. Much confusion, my watch not agreeing with the clocks. Went to the Railway Station & found that my watch was right & that I was half an hour earlier than I wished to be, returned Home & got my watch which I was sending back in dudgeon to the watch-maker's as I had only had it recently cleaned. It turned out that the girls had altered the clocks by the Convent bell which had been ringing at seven o'clock, their not being aware that the time from the first of November was altered to half past six. Got to town & saw Zox. Came to an understanding with him. I had met him on Saturday & asked him if he was going to the Derby. He said No 'You are a pretty fellow' & then he was interrupted & we parted. This morning I asked him what he meant & at first he could not recollect, but then he said, 'All I meant was, that you should ask me if I were going to the races on a Saturday' when it was his Sabbath & he was the President of the Synagogue. I told him that I thought he was going to upbraid me for something I had done which had annoyed him. Gave him a cheque for some money that I had borrowed from him a few days ago. Went to the new Law Courts. Saw the Sheriff & Lynch & had a chat with them. Came home to lunch. While at lunch received a photograph from Mr Lindt, it was very much approved of by all at Home & the general cry was that I must get some more like it.

Tuesday November 4th, Cup Day. Started the boys who walked to the Course from Town. Went myself. There were hundreds of people waiting at the different Stations on the way to town but who could find no room for them in any of the carriages & who looked very glum as the train rolled away. Obtained a ticket for train & Grand Stand at the Post Office, though not without a very unnecessary amount of pushing & struggling. Got a seat, or rather standing room in a carriage for Flemington & arrived at the Race Course all right. There was an immense crowd assembled & the Grand Stand was densely packed. Was able to see but little of the races & being too timid to speculate, did not have much enjoyment or excitement. Met Raecke & he went halves with me in a bet I had made of five to one on Pilot for the Darling Stakes. The only satisfaction we got for our money was to see our horse run a good second.

The Cup was won by a favorite. It was a good race & in time that had only been shorter on two previous occasions. Saw another race & then started for Home. Some thousands were on the same intent & there was in consequence quite a rush, was very lucky in getting a seat though to secure one I gladly got into a second class carriage. Walked from Spencer Street to the Suburban Railway & got standing room in a train for Balaclava. Home by a little after six o'clock, very tired & as I had had nothing to eat or drink from the time I started for town in the morning was hungry as well as foot-sore. Was just sitting down to dinner when a cab drove up to the Gate & a policeman came to the House. Ernest had been knocked down by a cab & struck by the box of one of the wheels which grazed the lower part of his belly. A constable very properly made the driver of the cab take Ernest to the Hospital where the boy was examined by Dr Aitchinson who found that no bones were broken but could not tell whether there were any internal injuries. I took the address of the cab man & the name & number of the Policeman, a very intelligent & decent man. Paid the cab-man six shillings. Examined Ernest who had been carried to-bed. Did not think there was much the matter though he evidently had had a very narrow escape of being seriously injured.

Mr Wells a neighbour came over to sympathise, told him I should not send for a doctor until I saw there was any signs of the boy requiring the services of one after having been already examined by a medical man. Had something to eat & then read & smoked till after twelve o'clock. Visited Ernest & found he was sleeping soundly, did not disturb him & went to bed rather tired & slightly rheumatic.

Mrs Cuthbert & her daughters were here in the evening & saw the victim of the accident. This morning before the boys started I gave Jack & Erny each half a crown. Jack put his money into Sweeps & won a half crown one. Erny had six ice creams. Well I said that will be only sixpence. Oh answered the sucking gourmand, I had threepenny ones & then I suppose his distended stomach gave the cab a chance to run against him & bring all the trouble Home.

NOVEMBER 8 SATURDAY 1884

Stayed at Home in the morning. In the afternoon went with Dotty to the Exhibition. Wandered about the building & purchased a few little Japanese articles. They did not cost much. We did not leave the Exhibition till we heard a hint given to some other visitors that it was five o'clock & time to shut up. When we got Home found that Sissy had returned. She had stayed as we thought she would with the Miss Blacks. There was a letter waiting for me from the Under Secretary informing me that the Chief Secretary wished to see me at his office on Tuesday next, I suppose to tell me what has been decided about the Insp. Genl. ship. Expect the worst but will try & hope for the best. Edie & King Cuthbert came to see the girls in the evening. Ernest was still in bed but I begin to think he is foxing a little. Very unhappy, smoked more than usual & went to bed.

NOVEMBER 11 TUESDAY 1884

Saw by this morning's *Argus* that Mr Magee died on yesterday. Had an appointment with Mr Berry this morning. He sent for me to call at half past eleven & I was punctual. A Cabinet Meeting however prevented his being able to keep the appointment & I did not see him till the afternoon. He told me that I was to retire on compensation as he believed was my wish. I replied that I had not said it was my wish but that I was willing to do so if the Government wished. Mr Berry had evidently fallen in with the wishes of intriguers & had listened & believed one side of the question without taking any trouble to hear the other. He said that Pentridge had been in a state of demoralisation & that the change that had been made had prevented a catastrophe. I emphatically denied there having been any demoralisation, but found it was useless my attempting to argue with the Chief Secretary. Saw the Under Secretary & then came Home.

Had to encounter the usual cause of unhappiness²⁸⁹ & spent a wretched evening. Was cheered however by receiving a letter from Harry. He was at Launceston & employed in the *Daily Telegraph* office. He wrote apparently being satisfied & with the feeling that he had a chance of remaining at work. He sent some wild flowers which he had gathered; they had been plucked for some time but were none the less welcome for that. I wrote to him & so did Sissy.

The Constable who brought Ernest Home after his accident on Cup Day called ostensibly to see him to-day. I had meant to write to him & so was glad he came. I gave him Ten shillings for his expenses & then found from him that there was a charge hanging over him of Drunkenness & he wanted me to write to Mr Sadleir in his favor.

I declined having any thing to do with the charge, but wrote telling Sadleir Constable Rainey had done his duty in taking Ernest to the Hospital & then bringing him to Balaclava very kindly & considerately. This seemed to satisfy Rainey & the letter was posted.

NOVEMBER 12 WEDNESDAY 1884

A Paragraph appeared in *The Argus* to the effect that I was about to retire and Brett to be appointed in my place.

NOVEMBER 13 THURSDAY 1884

Went to town & called on the Under Secretary. Mr Wilson told me that I had been laboring under an error in understanding Mr Berry to imply that my compensation would be given at the end of my Leave. It was the intention for me to retire at the end of the month & Mr Brett's appointment to date from the first of December. This did not suit me at all & I went to see Mr Berry. He did not want to see me but I managed to get a word with

289 His ailment, likely gout.

him. He was very uppish in his manner & implied a great deal as to what could have been brought against me. He did not however name any of the charges that could have been preferred. I could not however move him from the position he had taken up, that I was to be dispensed with from the end of the month. Made the best of the matter & came Home to lunch. Offered to take Mrs C & the girls to the theatre in the evening. They were glad to promise to go. Gibson came to see us & had tea. He will make an application for the promotion that will be necessary if Mr Magee's death should cause a country Governor to be removed to Melbourne.

Went to the Theatre Royal & had a nice quiet evening. The Play was *The Turn of the Tide* & was as a whole rather a dull play, though Mrs Chippendale, Harwood & Titheridge warmed it up occasionally & there were one or two scenes that were really sensational. As we were returning to the Railway Station we met Mr Zox & he kindly took the ladies to the refreshment room & treated them to lollies & biscuits. We got home comfortably by twelve o'clock.

NOVEMBER 14 FRIDAY 1884

Went early to town, saw Zox who accompanied me to the London Discount Bank where I borrowed £100 for two months to pay pressing liabilities until I received my compensation money. Found however to my disgust that I had to pay £6.15. or so for the accommodation. Could not however but submit.

Met Lynch & told him I was to retire. He said he should then go in for himself as Ellis would have Brett's place. He was waiting hoping that I would return to duty before he did any thing himself. Met Dean O'Hea & friend of his named Gordon. The Dean had had his portrait taken & under pretence of showing mine he took us to Lindt's. The Dean was evidently anxious to see his own & only took us as an excuse. He failed however for his picture was not ready for inspection.

Mine was said to have been sent to the Exhibition. Came Home to lunch & employed myself in the afternoon in calculating what I owed & what I could best pay. The Girls were preparing for a Party to which they are going. It is to be at the Halls & is to be a fashionable affair. *The Bulletin* will doubtless be represented. The girls came back at midnight. Jack was up at the Station to meet them. The rest of the family were in bed.

NOVEMBER 16 SUNDAY 1884

The Girls brought Edie Cuthbert home with them last night. The young ladies all agreed that the Party was rather slow & complained of sufficient attention not being given to the introducing strangers one to another. In the evening Edie went to meet her cousins who were to take her to the theatre. Godfrey escorted her to town & as the cousins did-ent²⁹⁰ turn up took the

290 This passage continues at the beginning of the diary for 1884.

young lady to the theatre himself. After the performance Mrs Cuthbert met her daughter at the Station & Godfrey came on Home.

NOVEMBER 20 THURSDAY 1884

Received a letter from Harry. He spoke very satisfactorily of his position, but a friend of his in the office wanted me to let him have £50. Harry very kindly but rather unnecessarily asked me to refuse & consequently I did so without any hesitation. The friend is a person of some authority in the newspaper office where Harry is employed. I trust my declining to lend the money will not make any difference in his manner. Harry writes that he has been very kind to him. If it was known that I had just borrowed for myself a hundred pounds at 40 per cent, my declining would not reasonably be wondered at. The papers announced that Mr Dwyer of Geelong was to be Governor of Melbourne Gaol.

NOVEMBER 22 SATURDAY 1884

Jack, who is rather unsettled, went for a row with Euston Smith & another friend. I gave him a shilling to pay his share of the boat hire. He has studied very well and I gave him a scarf pin as a reward. I expect he will be Dux of his school but if he is-ent I can-not blame him as he worked right well.

NOVEMBER 23 SUNDAY 1884

Went to Church with Mrs Castieau & Ernest. We went to All Saints & heard the Bishop preach on behalf of the Bishop of Melbourne's fund. The Bishop was very eloquent. He spoke in terms of approbation of the energy of the Salvation Army & praised the work they did in endeavouring to reform the outcast & the vile of the City.²⁹¹

The bishop took care to assert that he did not always believe in the manner they worked but fully approved of the motives which influenced them and the valuable nature of the work they were doing their best to complete. He hinted that the Church of England might well take a lesson from the Army & strive a little harder to assist their ministers in the performance of their endeavours to spread the Gospel.

The bishop gave some of his experiences among the ungodly up Country & preached a very eloquent & manly sermon. In the evening Godfrey & Jack went to town. Mrs Hall & her daughter called & invited the girls to a picnic. Harry Hall who is from Bright was with some friends to take his sisters & some more girls down the river for a row & were then to go on shore & spend the day by the river.

291 The Salvation Army had established its first Australian stations in Adelaide in 1881 and then spread quickly through the other colonies.

NOVEMBER 25 TUESDAY 1884

Went to town & called at the Under Secretary's office. Saw Mr Wilson & spoke of the hardship it would be to me if my services were dispensed with before the six months Leave that had been given me was completed. He promised to speak to Mr Berry again on the subject as I declined doing after having been to him before.

Called & got my book at the Bank. Went into Lindt's. A fine picture of Dean O'Hea's was exhibited in front of the Studio. Asked about the Photos I had ordered, they were not quite ready so I asked that when they were they should be sent to my quarters. At the Under Secretary's I met Mr Peter Wallace who had come to speak of Gibson. Said all that I could in favor of Gibson.

Mr Peter was in great form; he is to escort the Governor & Lady Loch through his district which is in the mountainous country of the Ovens. He promised to bring the Vice-regal party back by way of Beechworth. Met Mr Bilson at the Railway Station & we went together as far as Prahran. He was also trying to help Gibson. We had a good long chat. On his leaving I said if I wanted any little assistance (I meant with the Government) I should look to him as a friend & he heartily responded his willingness to do 'anything' for me. Paid Gas account £1.11.3, 2/6 of which was for rent of stove.

Mrs Castieau bothered me & we had some wrangling before going to bed.

NOVEMBER 26 WEDNESDAY 1884

Went to town in the morning, called upon Zox and walked as far as the Treasury with him. Went to the Sheriff's office & saw Lynch. He had not been well. Came Home & had lunch after which Dotty & I walked as far as the St Kilda Cemetery to see Sir — Mitchell's funeral procession. Nelly a little terrier dog was with us. When we got to the Cemetery found that dogs were not admitted. Dotty carried her for a time but we left the ground before the funeral arrived. When the procession had passed Dotty stayed outside with the dog & I followed the mourners. There was not a large crowd & I found myself very close to Mr Gregory who read the Service. I forgot that I had no sign of mourning clothes & a bouquet in my button hole until I saw a reporter had spotted me & then I hid my flowers with my white hat. The burial rites were soon over & I rejoined Dotty. We walked through Windsor & Prahran and after failing in an attempt to buy a pestle & mortar which we wanted we purchased a pot of Jam for four-pence & got home at a little before Six. The Cuthbert girls came to see our youngsters in the evening.

NOVEMBER 27 THURSDAY 1884

Received a letter saying that my Leave was to end on the 30th June.²⁹² With the letter was an account for me to sign for compensation to that date.

292 Castieau's mistaken entry—it should be 30 November.

I signed the account & wrote a letter in which I said that I was greatly disappointed at not being allowed pay & allowance money to the end of the six months leave of absence that had been granted me. Saw Mr Brett. Dwyer is to come to Melbourne & Fiddimont is to have charge at Ararat. Pinniger is to Go to Geelong & Shigog to Sandhurst. The Governors at Geelong & Sandhurst are to have £350 per Annum but without classification. Saw Zox & appointed to meet him at his club on Saturday at half past twelve. Got back to Balaclava by lunch time. Mrs Castieau went to see her sister Mrs Hall in the afternoon. Jack a little queer after his examination work. Gave him some Cockles Pills & hope they will make him all right. He had to come home from school at dinner time as he felt so unwell. It was then I gave him the medicine.

While I was in town I saw Lynch at his office & told him about my office affairs being settled. Lynch was so unwell that he left the office with me & went Home.

DECEMBER 1 MONDAY 1884

Went to town in the morning. Took the Bus to Brunswick & then walked to Coburg as the little Bus for that place was not available. Rather a disagreeable tramp as the road was very dusty. Renewed my Electoral Right, found that Mr Landells the Postmaster was the Registrar. Met a few of the warders but did not converse with any of them. Went to the Penal Office & drew my salary & allowance for November. To-day I am free from the Government Service & must puzzle my brains in future to get a living. Met a newspaper man who offered to help me if I followed the suggestion of *The Sydney Morning Herald* & wrote a book on my Gaol experiences. He said there was money in it. Went to the Bank & then took the train for Home feeling both tired & hungry. Photographs had arrived & I sent one to Mrs Mair the lady with whom Ernest is staying. Godfrey went to the Exhibition with Mr Beal a traveller of the firm of Vial & Co.

DECEMBER 2-4 1884

Went to town this morning, called twice at the Treasury. My account was not quite ready. Went to the Library & spent an hour in the Picture Gallery. Came home in the afternoon. Jack's position in the School not yet decided. Paid Mr Sutherland £29.15 School Account.

Wednesday December 3rd. Heavy rain in the early morning & showery during the day. Went to town & called at the Treasury where I was paid my compensation money, £2128.19.2. Met Zox and settled with the Discount Bank. Was allowed £3.5.0 of the Bill for £100 borrowed last month & Discount at the Rate of six per cent on £300 owing. Did not get back my Insurance Policy, but shall have it to-morrow & a cheque for the rebate on the £300.

Paid accounts at Moubray & Cos., Raecke's, Smythers', Campi & Cos. & have left to begin the world afresh with about £1400 & with nothing else to look forward to. My Life Policy is free again & that is a comfort.

Home at a little before three. Mr Morris the Landlord came & put a night Catch on the front door. He wanted me to buy the house I am living in; probably it would be a good investment but it is out of my grasp & it would be foolish of me to scheme about it.

Wrote an Advertisement offering the Goat carriage & goats for Sale. Godfrey, Jack & Herbert Darvall took in the Advertisement. The girls went to the Cuthberts. Edie was at a Party at the Hall's. Mrs Castieau went there in the afternoon & met Miss Gampson a niece of Mrs Hall's & this young lady smelt the Party & expressed herself very viciously at not having received an invitation. She is on a visit to town from Ararat. When our girls were at Cuthbert's, some excuse was made for Edie's absence, but Sissy & Doty knew all about it & said 'now is'ent she gone to the Party?' It slipped out that the truth was, when Edie was asked, it said in her note 'Mum to the Castieau's'. This was fine fun for the girls as of course their mamma had told them all that had occurred & what Miss Gampson had said in her presence. Our girls could not have taken offence at not being invited as they were recently at a Party at Hall's & we have no opportunity just now of giving any dances in return.

Thursday December 4th. Went to town this morning. Placed £70 to my sister Harriette's account in the Bank of New Zealand, wrote & told her I intended doing so. Purchased some Linoneum for our Passage at Moubray & Cos. & a lady's chair at Cullis Hill & Cos very big place. Went up a lift to the fourth story to select. There were two floors above where I had to get out. Settled with London Discount Bank. They gave me my Life Policy & said that they had sent Mr Zox a cheque for £9 odd on my account as rebate for the money paid by me in advance of my bills. Took the Policy to the Insurance Office & left it there to be registered as re-transferred to me.

Went to the Penal Office and paid £3.0.11 for labor done. £3.5.6 that had been charged for renovating furniture was taken off the Account sent to me as I had shown it was not due.

Gave Mr Stone one of my Photographs. In town I met Mr Williams the Governor of Beechworth Gaol who is for the present acting at Melbourne Gaol. He is going back to Beechworth in a day or two & I also gave him a Photo to take back with him. Both Williams & Stone appeared much gratified at receiving my likenesses.

Got Home at about two o'clock. The Linoneum came soon after. Mrs Castieau was not very well pleased with it, but as the quantity we wanted had been cut off the roll by my order it could not be sent back. Mrs Castieau was not well but Jack managed to dish up dinner. The girls were away at the

Black's. Godfrey went there in the evening. Made up my Diary before going to bed. There was no enquiry after the goat carriage to-day. The Advt. is however to appear again to-morrow.

DECEMBER 8 MONDAY 1884

Jack was Dux of the School. He did his first paper at matriculation this morning and seemed satisfied that he had done well.

DECEMBER 14 SUNDAY 1884

Showery again. Went to Church by myself in the morning. In the afternoon Sissy & I went to Hawthorn intending to spend the afternoon with Mr & Mrs A.L. Martin. Met with a disappointment as they were gone out & were not expected back till the evening. Reached Home in time for tea. Sissy went to Church in the evening Dotty was not well & had no boots & so for the two reasons combined contended herself at Home. Last night Sissy & Dotty were invited to Mrs Jardine Smith's house. It was raining but Sissy braved the weather & went. She spent an enjoyable evening & did not get back till after midnight. The boys went to town & saw *Diplomacy* at the Theatre Royal.

DECEMBER 15 MONDAY 1884

Showery weather again. Went to town & called on Zox; he was very busy & so I went away to look up Duerdin. After a chat with him, went to see Mr McGrath to whom I had been introduced by Messrs Sinclair & Macrehan of Chancery Lane. Found Mr McGrath at a large office opposite Goldsborough's. He wanted a partner in his business as a produce auctioneer. He impressed me favorably & I liked the idea of going into partnership with him as there appeared to be a very favorable opportunity. Told him I should consult Zox & did so. McGrath had been with McCulloch & Co & also with Monkton Synnot Brothers & Zox undertook to see these gentlemen & to make enquiries of them as to McGrath's character. Undertook to meet Zox to-morrow morning.

Came Home. Met Sissy who was going to some Speech day entertainment. Dotty followed her afterwards but it came on heavily to rain in the afternoon. Jack completed his examination at the University but there had been a little tiff in the morning between him & Dotty & I called him names & was very angry so this made him sulky & I did not speak to him before he went out again in the afternoon. Washing day. Weather & one thing and another had made our place rather uncomfortable.

DECEMBER 16 TUESDAY 188

Went to town. Met Zox and started with him about the proposed business between myself & McGrath. Zox called upon Mr McCulloch who would not however say much about McGrath one way or another. The other reference,

Mr Sinnott, spoke well of McGrath & the chances there were of his being able to make a good business with attention & energy. Mr S. said further, 'to show how I felt towards him I made him a present of Fifty sovereigns when he left my employ'. Zox & I then went & saw McGrath. We told him what we had been doing & expressed ourselves satisfied with the information we had obtained from the references. Then after a little talk in which we were all apparently satisfied that we could come to an easy settlement, it was agreed that McGrath should send Zox a written statement as to the state of affairs as far as I could be made interested if the proposed Partnership was agreed upon, & that McGrath should meet us at eleven o'clock at Zox's office tomorrow at eleven o'clock, in order that we might then go together to my Solicitor, Mr Duerdin. McGrath said £500 was wanted for the business & to that I made no objection.

Came home rather behind luncheon time. Jack went to Speech Day of some school. The Misses Black called to see the girls. Received a letter from Mr J.K. Brown an old Beechworth man. He proposed to go partners with me in building houses. His idea looked very tempting on paper & the business would, it was remarked, be pleasant as well as remunerative. We could easily, wrote my correspondent, build ten or twelve houses per Annum & sell them at a profit of from £500 to £1000 each. I am asked to call at dinner time & discuss the matter.

DECEMBER 17 WEDNESDAY 1884

Went to town to keep the Appointment with McGrath at Zox's office. McGrath did not put in an appearance and after waiting half an hour Zox sent his clerk to tell McGrath we were expecting him. McGrath sent back a note expressing his regret at not being able to come but would be glad to do so on the next morning. Of course Zox was disgusted & I went away & told Duerdin what had occurred. Then I went to McGrath & heard his excuses. He had been so terribly busy. Had been selling all day &c &c &c. I spoke plainly to him & then arranged to meet him at eleven o'clock the next day. He pledged his honor to keep this appointment & I informed Zox & Duerdin accordingly. Went to Balclava. There was much excitement at our house as Jack was to receive his prize as Dux of Carlton College this evening at the Athenaeum Hall. Went with Mrs Castieau, Sissy & Doty to The Athenaeum. There were speeches, recitations & music, then the prizes were given by Mr Turner who acted as Chairman. Jack held a most honorable position and for being Dux was presented with a nice Edition of Prescott's Histories.²⁹³

Left Jack with his schoolmates & came home with Mamma, Sissy & Doty. Presented Jack when he got back with another volume for his library & wrote his name in it giving my congratulations also at his college successes.

293 Probably W.H. Prescott (1796-1859) who wrote about the conquests of Mexico and Peru and the reigns of Isabella and Ferdinand, and Phillip II of Spain.

DECEMBER 18 THURSDAY 1884

Took good care to be in town in good time to meet Zox. Waited nearly an hour for McGrath. To our astonishment & disgust he neither came near us nor sent any word of excuse. At twelve o'clock we gave him up & came to the conclusion there must be something behind the offer that he had made us & that he had seen before our acceptance it must come to light & that he had therefore tried to let the proposed partnership be abandoned. Zox was indignant & I agreed with him that McGrath's conduct was most ungentlemanly & unbusinesslike. Zox acknowledged that I was entirely free from blame. After calling upon Duerdin, I went to the offices of Sinclair & McCracken who had introduced me to McGrath & told them (by their Mr Sinclair) how I had been treated. Sinclair was annoyed & said that he would have nothing more to do with McGrath's business. It was arranged that he should see him & that then he would write to me & let me know how McGrath endeavoured to excuse himself & whether he made any further proposals.

Came home as soon as I had done all the business I could. Found that Zox had sent Jack a nice letter congratulatory on his obtaining school honors & promising that if he further advanced himself he would use his influence in helping him if he wished to enter the Government Service where now appointments were first to be obtained by educational testimonials.²⁹⁴ We were all pleased with Zox's letter & Jack was of course in high feather. Rather queer at Balaclava. In the evening took Jack & Godfrey to the Exhibition. Spent a pleasant couple of hours. Saw my portrait among others. It is a fairly good one. Home before twelve. The girls were sitting up for us.

DECEMBER 22 MONDAY 1884

Selected a Birthday present for Mrs Coffey & a Christmas one for Martin. These were books that I bought on Saturday. Gave Jack a painted Album & a new Game for his friend Beal who has been very kind to him. Went to town & first called at the Bank of N.S. Wales & was told the state of my account & then paid half a crown for a 25 cheque Book. Called at Raecke's & bought some tobacco. Met Taylor of Beechworth & Dr Hutchinson there, had a little Christmas talk. Met Zox. He had quite made up his mind that I had better have nothing more to do with McGrath & said he had seen Duerdin & that both of them had come to the conclusion that McGrath did not care to have his accounts scrutinised. Saw Duerdin himself afterwards and he told me he had consulted with Mr McDougall, an accountant, & that in his opinion I was well out of the proposed partnership. Met Mr Cowderoy & chatted with him. Walked through Burke Street & took a stroll in Cole's Arcade. Purchased a two-penny Xmas Card. Surprised at the number of people there were about & at the free manner in which they spent their money. Bought

294 Jack subsequently became a public servant in the Chief Secretary's Department, Victoria and later worked in the Commonwealth Customs while pursuing his literary and historical interests.

INTERIOR OF COLE'S BOOK ARCADE.

11756



EVERY student in the Metropolis should visit COLE'S NEW BOOK ARCADE, as it is strictly a Melbourne institution being the first of its kind opened anywhere, and as present unparallel in any city of the world. It is three stories high, 100 feet deep, and 50 feet wide. The walls are a kind of a mile long. The ceiling is supported on iron pillars. Altogether there are 140 iron pillars, a larger number than in any other building in the world. The top of the establishment is the roof. There are 50 tall iron pillars placed through the building. (1875) American Notes (See Appendix).

'Interior of Coles
Book Arcade,
Melbourne',
Reproduced from
*Coles Family Amuser
and Intellect Sharpener*
Pictures Collection,
National Library
of Australia

two Scotch Comic Cards for three-pence in the Arcade. The things were cheaper & fresher than at Coles, though they were not so well patronised.

Went into George & George's. They had a glorious display & really their place was turned into a glorious bazaar. They appeared to be doing a great business. Did not buy anything. Went to the Railway Station but did not go away from town, but went back to Collins Street & called upon Rowan at Moubray's. Had a seasonable chat & when I went back to the shop bought a pair of pocket scissors. Met Dean O'Hea and went into George & George's again to show him the Bazaar. Asked the Dean for a present, but he said he had no money 'only cheques, & she wont take them'. The she alluded to was the young lady at whose stall we were standing & who quickly answered the Dean by saying 'Oh yes, I will take your cheque'. The Dean however only made me come along.

The Dean then would take me to Lindt's Photo Studio. Here he admired his portrait & paid for a Copy for himself I suppose. Mr Lindt had a quantity of Kanaster tobacco he had imported & I got him to oblige me with a pound of it at 7/-, the price it had cost him. Said good bye to the Dean & started for Home. Arrived just too late to see my sister Emma & Godfrey who had been making us a call.

Mr Gibson called to see us & stayed to tea. We had a long chat together before he went away. Godfrey & Jack went into town with the books for Mrs Coffey & Gibson. Mrs Castieau not well again. I am very weary and miserable about her. In writing my Diary, I omitted to mention that on Friday evening I went into town intending to be present at Hoskin's Benefit which was given on that evening. The theatre was however so crowded that I was unable to get in. The Heir at Law was the Piece played. I had a white satin Bill of the Performance of that Play in which as a member of the Garrick Club, I took part on November 30th 1855, nearly thirty years ago.

As I could not get in to the theatre I went to Raecke's and smoked a cheroot & chatted away with Raecke & Townsend who called soon after I did. I showed my Bill & talked of the old times & the old Theatre Royal where we played & which since was burnt down. A woman, very drunk & very talkative, came into the shop with a pair of geese and after telling us their history managed to sell them to Raecke for 7/6. This seemed very cheap, yet Raecke shook his head & said he expected to catch it for his purchase.

DECEMBER 23-31 1884

Went to town. The Place very busy, there being a large number of visitors from Up Country. Came back early. Much worked up excitement in the newspapers with regard to information being telegraphed from the Old country as to Germany having annexed a large portion of New Guinea. I expect there will be a number of telegrams before the real facts are known. Called & had a chat with Mr Rowan of Moubray & Co.

24 December 1884. In town got a present from the grocer. Was upset & foolish all day.

Christmas Day. Very ill, did not go in for enjoyment of any kind & did not taste the goose or plum pudding.

Friday, Boxing day. The girls & Jack went for a picnic to Brighton. Godfrey went to the Cricket Match between N.S. Wales & Victoria.

Saturday December 27th. Jack went to Caulfield races. I took a long walk & came home tired. Mrs Castieau was out & the girls were disagreeable. Went to bed very much upset.

Sunday December 28th. There was a large fire at St Kilda during last night. It occurred at a Livery Stable near the Junction Hotel. Mrs Castieau got up & saw the reflection of the blaze. I did not move as I knew there was nothing that I could do to be useful. I saw the ruins this morning; they were very extensive. Over thirty horses perished in the flames. Mrs Castieau went to

Church in the morning. In the afternoon the boys went to the Beach to see the wreck of the *Black Eagle* which sank near the St Kilda Pier on Boxing Day. Luckily she was able to land her passengers before going to the bottom or there must have been a great loss of life, the steamer having left Williamstown with 130 people besides the crew on board. Sissy & Jack went to Church in the evening. Jack & Mrs Castieau went to the Beach. I took a trip to town but did nothing more than a stroll through Collins & Bourke Streets. Back at Balaclava by about nine. Wrote an answer to a Sydney Advertisement & had it posted. Made up my Diary which had been neglected for some days.

Monday December 29th. Went to town this morning. Called upon Duerdin & had a little chat with him. Saw Zox at his office but did no business beyond expressing a favorable opinion of the manner in which the tender Board did the duties entrusted to them.

Home in time for one o'clock dinner. Much excitement with regard to the Cricket Match between N.S. Wales & Victoria. Both sides have up till to-night done well. N.S.W. out in first innings for over 400, Victoria the same number or thereabout to-day for seven wickets. Went this evening with the girls to St Kilda Pier. Saw the *Black Eagle*. She was lying in low water on the bottom.

Called & changed library book on our return. The weather this evening was very sultry & the flies in the house troublesome. Godfrey went to town to hear about the Cricket Match & took the opportunity of attending the Opera House where he saw the eccentric piece *Confusion* played. Godfrey liked it very much. It must from the newspaper reports be highly entertaining. The watch dog through the night was a great nuisance & so was an early cock. Sentences of Death on the cock & at the least banishment for the dog were unhesitatingly passed by myself & partner.

Tuesday December 30th. The Postman rang the bell almost as soon as I was out of bed this morning. Got a card of remembrance from one James Turnbull whom I used to know many years ago. There was an Advt. in *The Argus* about a partnership at Adelaide & as Turnbull sent the card from that City I wrote & asked him to make enquiries about it for me. Sent with letter, Photograph & card to Turnbull. Sent Complts. on a funny New Year's card to Dean O'Hea. Wrote to J.K. Brown. Looked over some old papers. Was indoors all day. The girls went to the Beach with Jack in the Evening. Mrs Castieau had been out in the afternoon & was not very well when she came back.

Mrs Coffey & Mrs Gibson came to our house in the evening & stayed till after the girls returned from the Beach. Godfrey was in great form as the Victorians beat the N.S. Wales eleven in one innings with five runs to spare. The end of the game must have been a great change from the beginning & the N.S. Wales were shattered most ignominiously in their second innings.

Wednesday December 31st. A very hot morning after an exceedingly close night. A welcome change was however experienced at a little after ten o'clock. I am about going to town ... Went to Mullens & purchased a diary & some paper, the latter for me to commence my Reminiscences on. I wish that I could pluck up & commence them at once. Met Garton & asked him if he knew why that Mr Lemme had never asked me for the money for Walter's Premium. Garton knew nothing about the matter but said he believed Lemme did not mean to ask. I am not satisfied however & will see Mr Lemmie or write to him. Went into Smythers & then at the Railway Station purchased a shilling book to read in the train. Mr Habbe who travelled as far as Windsor kept me chattering with him & my book was not opened.



'Godfrey Cass, actor and film producer'
Reproduced from *The Australian Screen: A Pictorial History of Australian Film Making 1896-1974*, by Eric Reade (Melbourne: Landsdowne, 1975)

Things were uncomfortable at Home & the last evening of the year was spent most unpleasantly. Godfrey is at a disagreeable age. He was 18 last month & assumes a good deal. I have to bully him a good deal but gain nothing by so doing. He has been getting 15/- a week & I hope he will get a sufficient increase to justify my insisting upon his taking lodgings away from Home.²⁹⁵ Jack is I think worrying about the results of his examination. It does, no doubt, seem a long time waiting for the decision of the Professors.

I close this carelessly kept book. May I do better & be better if I live to close one for 1885.²⁹⁶

295 Godfrey Castieau (1866-1951) had a later career as the pioneer filmmaker Godfrey Cass, acting, directing and producing silent films in the early years of the Australian cinema. Among his films were two dealing with Ned Kelly.

296 This was Castieau's last diary entry. He died at Balaclava on 25 January 1885 and was buried in St Kilda Cemetery the following day.

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A career in the Victorian penal system might not seem to be a source of excitement or even great interest, but for John Buckley Castieau it was the trigger for nearly three decades of diaries that reveal not only what went on behind prison walls but also much about the colony's early social history. J.B. Castieau was the governor of both Beechworth and Melbourne gaols as well as, somewhat disastrously, the Inspector-General of Penal Establishments. Well-educated, fond of the theatre, frequently in debt, impulsively generous, self-doubting and 'of unsteady habits' in his cups, he knew many of the prominent characters of 'Marvellous Melbourne'—the journalist Marcus Clarke, the famous and fiery legal figure, Sir Redmond Barry, founder and first chancellor of the University of Melbourne, and Sir George Kerferd, Premier of the state.

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