

Even the younger ones were not excepted. With their little slash hooks they helped to clear the thick underscrub, and the girls, led by their mother's brave example, did their best to assist to build up our fortunes. Now they turned the handle of the churn till their little arms ached, then they were dropping potatoes after the plough, and again in the autumn helping to dig and bag up the ripe crop for winter use.

It was a time of beginnings. Here was our first great burn. Oh! how we laughed and clapped our hands as we watched the flames, from a distance, leaping and dancing and roaring amongst the fallen bush which had been drying all the summer!

Then came our first brown loaf made from our own patch of wheat, exultantly threshed by our first little flails, and ground in a hand mill. Then followed our first fifty sheep, and, joy and wonder, the first white lamb that wagged its tail as it ran by its mother's side.

Soon a hundred acres were added to our farm, then a thousand, and thus the years rolled on bringing prosperity in both hands, and showering it upon us as they passed.

Smiles visited my mother's sweet face, and instead of sighing, we heard our father gaily whistling about the farm.

About this time an aunt, in Melbourne, wrote for me to finish my education over there.

Five years later I visited my home again. I hardly knew it. Where was the heavy bush? Where were the great stumps and blackened logs of long ago? Gone, all gone, and in their places were great paddocks of waving grass, where thousands of sheep were being mustered for the shearing. A bell

rang for the high tea which was always enjoyed in our home now.

"Come, my son," said my father, drawing my arm through his affectionately. No longer in the kitchen did we take our meals, but in a large well furnished dining-room.

The maid placed before my father a joint of beef, and before me, all crisp and brown and smoking, a roast shoulder of mutton. I started to my feet, my hand pressed to my head.

"Dear boy, are you ill?" cried my mother in alarm.

I made my way to her chair and put my arms around her.

"Oh! little mother, don't you remember? Have you forgotten that evening long ago when we had such a feast? Have you forgotten the morning when I asked for meat, and took my father's lunch? Don't you remember you called me 'greedy,' and you looked—oh, *how* you looked! You never understood that I thought the other children had been given meat, and I had been forgotten."

My father rang the bell and asked for the joint to be removed.

"I understand, my boy," he said, with a smile half quizzical, "and so you find it hard to face a shoulder of mutton on your first evening at home?"

"Hard!" I repeated, smiling at the astonished faces round the table, "I have never seen a shoulder of mutton since without feeling like a thief at the bar of justice—judged and condemned by my mother's eyes!"

"Dear child," said my mother, her heart and eyes very full. "Dear child," and she drew my face down and kissed me.

