

game went on. The curious part of it was that these dissipations never appeared to affect his health. For the moment he was a wreck, but a few days work always set him right, and in a week or two he was as sound as ever.

We often wondered how he had drifted out to the colony. He was not at all the type of the "assisted emigrant." He could never have accumulated sufficient capital to pay for a passage even if he had desired to do so; and there was nothing in his style or appearance to suggest that he had been sent out "for his country's good." He used to tell interminable stories about his early home as a boy on a Yorkshire farm, and of his subsequent adventures on a canal-boat, which he said used to sail right up into Regent's Park. The various fragments of his colonial life, if carefully pieced together, would have covered a period reaching back to the coming of Captain Cook, but there was always a hiatus that was never filled up. It was a far cry from the Regent's Canal to the Kauri Bush, and we were naturally anxious to know how he had spent the interval. Of course, we might have asked the question, but, whatever it may be now, in those days it was considered an unpardonable breach of Bush etiquette to ask a man how he had come out. As Jack himself expressed it, "You might as well ask a fellow at once what he had been in for!"

We got a clue one day, however, in an unexpected manner. Our friend was returning from one of his periodical escapades in a condition of incomplete recovery, when he chanced to look in at a house where he found the old Major engaged in teaching his nephews the sword exercise with a pair of single-sticks. He stood watching the performance with great interest from the doorway, when at last—during a pause—he said, "Wot's that y'r tryin' to do, Major?" "Why, don't you see, you fool, I'm teach-

ing the boys the cuts and points?" "Cuts and points!" he snorted, "that'll do for the Line. Gimme the stick, Jimmy." And with that he straddled his legs wide apart, and grasping an imaginary bridle in his left hand he swept the weapon round his head, as he shouted in a voice we had never heard before—"Circ'lar guard. Hengage!" In about a minute the Major was up in a corner, and as soon as he got his breath, he said: "Why, Jack, you old sinner, you've been there before, and you always said you couldn't ride!" This little episode, together with the fact that he had a very neatly tattooed figure of a field-piece on the upper part of his left arm, inclined us to think that some time or other he had got tired of the Royal Horse Artillery.

Of course, I had my turn with the rest. I had just burned off a large clearing, and was glad to obtain the services of an experienced bushman to help in the "logging up." This is hard work, and one which demands a good deal of skill, as anyone knows who has tried it, and one would suppose that eight hours spent in chopping, and rolling and piling among the flames and smoke would be enough to exhaust a man's energies for the day. It might have been with most men, but not with Booreedy Jack. In addition to his work in the clearing he did all sorts of odd jobs about the house. He was generally up before daylight, and he had a breakfast cooked by the time most hired labourers would have condescended to turn out. He was a light and dexterous hand with the frying-pan, and his "slap-jacks" were the envy of all the housekeepers in the settlement, while in regard to fried potatoes—well, I have occasionally eaten worse on the Boulevards, which is saying a good deal.

During the lengthening autumnal evenings—after we had done a good day's work on the clearing—we would sit and smoke our pipes by