

their rapid extirpation. The Tasmanian aboriginal was a better fighter and readier with his long spear and heavy club than his remote and dark-skinned relatives on the other side of Bass Straits. And it took heavier doses of hypodermic leaden arguments to convince him against his will. He was scarcely fortunate, too, in the particular class of white man whom the British Government 'dumped' upon him—rough and heavy-handed officials and convicts who had 'left their country for their country's good.' Yet the Tasmanian aboriginal was not at first unfriendly to his white visitors. But one day—it was in 1804—a party of soldiers turned fifty of them into dead meat at Risdon. The firing (it was subsequently explained) was done in a moment of panic. The murdered blacks had done no unfriendly act. But from that time (says Jose in his 'History of Australasia') 'the colonists and the blacks regarded each other as natural enemies. Every Governor in turn proclaimed that a black man's murder would be punished as severely as a white man's; but it was impossible to control the actions of scattered settlers and convict storekeepers on the distant bush farms.' The natives, on their part, plied their spears industriously on isolated shepherds and lonely homesteads. They found, at one time, a sturdy leader in an Australian warrior, nicknamed Musquito, who had been deported by Governor King to Tasmania. He was captured and died by the hangman's noose. But his death only exasperated his followers and intensified the already bitter war of races that raged over the settled parts of Tasmania.

The war of savage wrongs and savage reprisals went wearily on till 1828. In that year Governor Arthur tried a new method of 'pacification.' 'Reserves,' says Jose, 'were set apart for native use, and "capture parties" were sent abroad to bring recalcitrants in to the appointed districts. But most of the parties simply took to hunting down the blacks and killing them. Even Balfour, who took every care to explain his friendly motives, found himself more than once forced into a fight. At last Arthur's patience gave way. The whites, he knew, had first been in the wrong, but as matters stood they must be protected. He determined to make a line of beaters half-way across the island, who, advancing steadily from north to south and wheeling round their right flank, should drive the black inhabitants before them into the cul-de-sac of Forestier's Peninsula. For nearly two months the long line kept pace across the hills and valleys, through dense bush, over difficult rivers, till it was concentrated between Spring Bay and Sorell. Then it closed in triumphantly on East Bay Neck—and found not a soul in front of it! One old man and a boy, captured on the way, were the sole trophies of an undertaking that had cost the colony more than thirty thousand pounds.'

The denouement of Governor Arthur's Grand Battue furnished the solitary element of comedy that lit up the dark tragedy of the Black War in Tasmania. The sequel is soon told. Arthur had the manliness to admit the failure of his great sloop and to alter his policy towards the aboriginals. He could not force the blacks into his reserves. He resolved to try the gentler suasion of kindness. He entrusted the new policy wholly to a bricklayer named George Robinson, who, as manager of the Bruny Island reserve, had captured the hearts and won the confidence of the tribesmen. With a few of his 'boys,' Robinson went unarmed to and fro among the native tribes throughout the Island. Within four years he drew the whole of the aboriginal population to Hobart. And then the white residents of the colony learned, somewhat to their chagrin, that one of the most dreaded of all the tribes counted only sixteen men and six-and-twenty souls all told; and that all previous estimates of the numbers of the hostile aboriginals had been greatly exaggerated and founded less upon a count of heads than upon the terror which the spearmen had inspired. The remnants of the black

population were deported—in deference to the fears of the whites—to some islands on the north-east coast. And there, says Jose, they 'died off rapidly of mere home-sickness.' Truganini was the last of his race. He died in 1876. And the passing of Mrs. Fanny Cockburn Smith—the last half-caste Tasmanian aboriginal—at Port Cygnet on February 24, rings down the curtain on the last scene in the century-old tragedy of that strange and interesting race.

Notes

The Archbishop's Return

A telegram from a Wellington correspondent announces that his Grace the Archbishop arrived in the Empire City on yesterday (Wednesday) from his visit to the Holy See, and that an address of welcome, a testimonial, and a complimentary concert are to be tendered to him this (Thursday) evening in the Thorndon school. We join with his Grace's host of friends in wishing him a hearty cead mile failte.

An Echoed Fallacy

It is strange how the foolish contentions of bigots get echoed around the world. Some weeks ago we read, in a London secular daily, a letter by some 'Constant Reader,' or by our ancient friend 'Pro Bono Publico,' contending that the Sisters of Nazareth, Hammersmith, should be dealt with 'the same as any other mendicants' and placed under lock and key in his Majesty's prisons. And lo! in a northern N.Z. paper there has just appeared the self-same contention from another coy anonymity (belonging to the same menagerie as his shy friend in London. Curiously enough, this is precisely one of the 'fallacies of ambiguity' that are pilloried in Professor Jevons's 'Logic.' 'On the same grounds,' says the Professor, 'any one who go about soliciting subscriptions for a charitable purpose would be liable to be sent to gaol as a rogue and vagabond. A mendicant is, no doubt, one who begs; but we must not convert the proposition simply, and say that whoever begs is a mendicant. A true mendicant not only begs, but lives upon what he gets by begging, and does no useful work in return. When, therefore, the law punishes mendicancy, we must take care that it is applied only to those who beg for their own support, and make themselves a nuisance to the public.'

A New Crime

The traveller Palgrave tells how, according to the moral code of the Wahabee Arabs, smoking is the second greatest crime, coming next in heinousness to idolatry, and rating far higher than wilful murder. But the Irish police—who are blue mouldy for lack of occupation in an almost crimeless land—easily surpass the half-wild barbarians of Central Arabia by the ingenuity with which they pile new and hitherto unheard-of offences on the criminal code. Our Irish readers will readily recall how, in the early days of the Land League, a small boy was sent to gaol in Connaught for having whistled the popular air 'Harvey Duff,' 'in a threatening manner,' in the presence of a horrified 'member of the force.' A few years ago an adult 'criminal' was 'sent up' for 'smiling a humbugging smile' at a sensitive 'peeler.' But these high crimes and misdemeanors have been thrown into the shade by one that was laid to the charge of one John Moran at the Swords Petty Sessions (Co. Dublin) a few weeks ago. The aggrieved constable in this case declared upon his solemn oath that the defendant 'blew his nose in a contemptuous manner towards me!' He further stated that Moran 'put his finger to his nose towards me.' And of course 'Irish justice' demanded that this desperate 'criminal' should enter into bail—himself in £10, and two securities in £5 each—to 'keep the peace' towards the affrighted