

## .....NORFOLK STORY.....

IN OCTOBER, 1774, Captain Cook, sailing in the S.W. Pacific, discovered a remote and lovely island about 1000 miles from Sydney and half as far from New Zealand. He named it Norfolk Island; he noticed that a flax plant grew in profusion; and, believing that he was "undoubtedly the first human being to set foot to its soil" he blithely sailed away.... To-day, that little island -- it is only about five miles by three -- has a history that is stranger than fiction. For, after being twice used as a convict settlement, it has now for 85 years been the home of the descendants of the mutineers of the "Bounty" -- those vigorous Englishmen who, while the French Revolution was raging, put Captain Bligh overboard in a small boat in the South Seas, and then took to themselves Tahitian wives.

For fourteen years after Captain Cook found it, no-one visited Norfolk Island. But in February, 1788, Governor Phillip, the first Governor of New South Wales, sent to the Island a small batch of convicts, nine men and six women. An able young Cornishman, Lieutenant King, was in charge of the settlement, being given detailed instructions. Among other things, he was "to proceed to the cultivation of the flax plant, as likewise to the cultivation of corn, cotton and other plants." He was also "to observe what are the prevailing winds... best anchorage... rise and fall of the tides... dry and rainy seasons." No boat longer than 20 feet was to be built; there was to be "no intercourse or trade with any ships or vessels that might stop at the island," and "the prayers of the Church of England were to be read with all due solemnity every Sunday."

As soon as he put ashore on the island -- and it took him five days to find a landing-place -- King first drew up for his community a simple set of rules which is a model of terseness, lucidity and sense. He then systematically explored and named every bay, cape and mountain, and the two islets, Nepean and Phillip, lying to the South-West. His journeys over the island were not easy, for he found it "one entire wood," with "not one yard square of cleared land." Nevertheless, his reports to Governor Phillip were enthusiastic. He spoke of the bananas and of all other luscious fruits that grew in abundance. "Nothing," he said, "can exceed the fertility of the soil. And the climate is pure, salubrious and delightful, preserved from oppressive heats by constant breezes from the sea, and of