

and an old gentleman who wore a bandana under his fur travelling cap, and got out for refreshment at every inn at which the coach stopped to change horses, munching ham-sandwiches and drinking cold brandy-and-water almost without intermission when the coach was in motion. Walter had a much pleasanter companion in the coachman, behind whom he sat, and who told him stories about the gentlemen's seats they passed, and gave him the biographies of all the horses, and even let him hold the reins sometimes, when Mr. Jehu got down at a roadside house to deliver a parcel or drink a glass of ale. Walter enjoyed the first part of the journey exceedingly, but he was very tired and sleepy before it was over.

As the coach swung through Mile End turnpike, the coachman woke him up with a back thrust of the butt-end of his whip, and said, "Now, then, Squire, you can reckon yourself in London." Walter just opened his heavy eyes, and then shut them again—not thinking much of the Great City, if that was London. By the time the coach got to its inn, he was so sound asleep again that a waiter had to carry him up to bed. The ride from Norfolk to London, however, was flying on eagles' wings compared with the voyage from London to Sydney. In those days the magnificent steamers and sailing clippers that now arrive almost daily at or from Australia had not been dreamt of. At long intervals clumsy old tubs of ships and barques sailed for the far-off southern land, potted about for months at sea, and at last turned up at the Antipodes, seemingly more through good luck than good management. The barque in which our party sailed was named the *Atalanta*. Walter had often read through the proper names at the end of his Latin Dictionary, and was greatly amused by the barque's flying name when he found how she crawled. She had to put in at Plymouth, Lisbon, Bona Vista, and the Cape. She was just half a year in getting from the Nore to Port Jackson Heads.

Once inside the Heads, however, even Mrs. Daventry and Phoebe picked up a little spirit, and Walter was in ecstasies. Both sky and water were so brightly blue, the islands sprinkled on the water looked so pretty, and, though the trees seemed almost as black as ink to English eyes, the rocky, wooded shores, sweeping down to the little coves and bays, beached with white sand that shone like silver under the glowing sun, had a fairy-land-like look. Sydney then had not the fine buildings it boasts of now, but the town was so much more civilized in appearance than Mrs. Daventry and Phoebe

expected, and the little country houses that even then had begun to dot the south side of the harbour were such darling little nests, that both mistress and maid fell in love with Sydney. Captain Daventry came on board as the *Atalanta* let go her anchor in Sydney Cove. He was very brown, and he had a long curly beard. He was dressed more lightly than he would have been at home, but still he *was* dressed, and like a gentleman. A horrid load was lifted from Mrs. Daventry's mind, since she had half given in to Phoebe's belief that Master would only wear a bit of 'possum or kangaroo skin about his loins, and that he would carry a spear instead of a walking-stick. As for Walter, he was very proud of the brown manly-looking Papa whom he had not seen since he was almost a baby.

"Oh, Walter," cried Mrs. Daventry to her husband, when the kissing was over, "I hope your farm is close by. I used to think that they sent the convicts out here because it was a hideously ugly hole, but this is a love of a place."

"It's nicer to look at than to live in," the captain answered. "What with convicts and emancipists, you'd soon be sick of living in Sydney. No, my grant is some miles up-country. There's a nasty swarm of ticket-of-leavers round it, but, of course, you'll have nothing to do with them. And then there are some good fellows of our sort within reach—some of them married, too. What a time you've been! I was down two months ago looking out for you. It's quite by chance I'm down now. However, there'll be room on the dray for your luggage, if you haven't brought out a ship-load, and we'll start home to-morrow, if one night will be rest enough for you. I've been buying some horses, and you and Walter can ride two of them, and help me to drive the rest. You'll be better off than you were before you married me, old lady. You had only one horse then, but I can give you your pick out of a dozen or two now. Of course Walter has learnt to stick on a horse somehow, though you couldn't keep a pony for him? The girl will have to learn to ride, too, if she wants to get about up-country. In the meantime she can go up on the dray. The bullock-driver is an assigned servant, but he's as true as steel, and that's more than I can say for some of the beggars I've got."

But when the loaded dray was brought to the inn-door next morning, with a chair on it for Phoebe, she had learnt that assigned servant meant convict, and refused at first to take her seat. She wasn't going to have her throat cut with her eyes open, she