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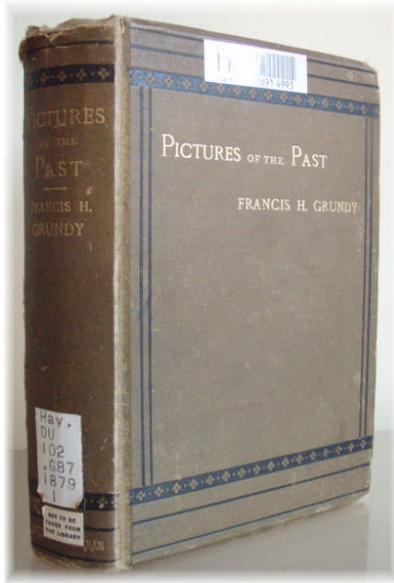
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PICTURES OF THE PAST:

*Memories of Men I have Met and
Places I have Seen.*

BY

FRANCIS H. GRUNDY, C.E.



GRIFFITH AND FARRAN,
WEST CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON.

1879.

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IS it worth while for one who has done ‘not wisely nor too well’ with his life, to tell his tale of ‘talents wasted, time misspent?’ I have no moral to deduce,—a lifetime should show its own,—nor do I believe in the *Aspice finem*. Never was inference from foregone premises more false than that so constantly insisted upon by old age prosing to ‘hot youth.’

‘Ah! so Dick Daredevil’s dead at last. I knew he would come to grief. What a fellow he was! a rollicking, jolly dog, the best company in the world; how he knocked about, went everywhere, and saw everything! But he did no good for himself, never

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I WENT ashore next morning to seek a shelter for my head. I ate bread and butter and drank draughts of beer at the very first public-house I came to. These were the days of returning diggers, of mirth, dissipation, and reckless extravagance. Presently I went into a shop for some tobacco. It came to 1s. 3d. The tobacconist had no change, so he said that I must either pay 1s. 6d. or have it for 1s., 'it didn't matter.' I found a room at £2, 2s. a week in Hunter Street, which is perhaps two hundred yards from the wharf. After some search I found a barrowman who condescended to go for my boxes. He charged me 10s. 6d., and would not help to carry them up-stairs.

Drunken people of both sexes were lying about the streets—a mere matter of course, seemingly. For the next few days I attempted only to *do* the town.

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CAMPING OUT IN THE BUSH.

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THE making of the tents occupied two days, during which time we non-sewers lounged about, and called upon our squatter, a very pleasant gentleman, recently married. He asked us to dinner for the following day, and we were very glad of it, for we had seen a lady, a drawing-room, and a piano. Now that night and the next morning it rained heavily where we were, and harder yet on 'the range.' The insignificant little river Talbragar, which we could at dusk skip over dry-shod, rapidly filled; the water came rushing down with a roar amongst the round boulders, with a head three feet high or so to begin with, and by morning the little stream was, in technical parlance, 'a banker,' tearing down at a rate of six or eight miles an hour, and bearing great trees on its waters, now ten feet deep at the least, and forty feet across from bank to bank.

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AT last I reached Wallerawang, and on going to the public-house I found my cart and men just come to meet me. Off we drove to camp, a mile away, 'Tommy' jogging along in the shaking shafts quite contentedly. Tea was ready—bush tea, but with various remnants of civilisation, as rolls, butter, chops, and so on. Nevertheless, it was fully two years since I had camped out, and I got to my spring-cart bed as soon as possible. Here I had the satisfaction of discovering that the cart was about three inches too short, so that I could not stretch my tired limbs. The result was that I gave myself cramp almost nightly by pushing my feet against the boards.

Presently the lightning flashed, then the thunder roared, the wind blew a hurricane, the rain came down a deluge; everything was carried away, canvas covering,

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Excursions.

NEXT morning we determined to try to cross the Turon. Hill End, properly so called, is the termination or end of the hill, and the Turon river washes it. The Turon and Macquarrie rivers join, perhaps half a mile lower down, at Hawkins Hill, a place to be remembered—a place, indeed, to think of and to dread. We transformed Tommy into a pack-horse. He took it quite good-humouredly, and calmly slid his two and a half miles down the hill, chiefly seated upon his haunches. We walked down upon our heels, stopping repeatedly to relieve our wearied calves, which threatened cramp at intervals, so steep was the descent. I believe an occasional tendency to leap madly out of bed in the small hours, stamp furiously about the room, and return to bed with a limp, dates from that day. All the way there were claims. Can any amount of eventual gold recompense a weary workman for a daily

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I ACCEPTED a proposal to go on a business visit to Lake Macquarrie two or three years since. Lake Macquarrie is situated upon the coast near Newcastle; it is of considerable extent, and has an outlet to the Pacific capable of admitting coasters of fair size, but the channel is of shifting sand and uncertain. Fish are plentiful, and timber has heretofore been the principal object of traffic.

It is a great coal district, and some day will, for that reason, be a busy place. The route is to Windsor by train, a small town forty miles from Sydney; thence by an old road or track, which for years was the only way by which land communication could be had with the North-West interior. Now there are other ways, of course, but this is even yet the great line by which fat cattle from many a distant station find their way to Sydney. On this trip I had an American tray-wagon

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All of this and more may be available in a seemingly mundane book such as a directory. Learn much of the background of life at the time, even if your ancestor is not listed there.