

A VOICE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649203666

A voice from the Australian bush by Robert Bruce

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ROBERT BRUCE

**A VOICE FROM THE
AUSTRALIAN BUSH**



THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE LONDON.

Frontispiece.

A VOICE
FROM THE
AUSTRALIAN BUSH.

BY
ROBERT BRUCE,
WALLELBERDINA, S.A.

WITH THREE PLATES.

ADELAIDE :
FREARSON & BRO., PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS, KING WILLIAM-ST.

1877.

GIFT

953
B89
v. 2

PREFACE.

HAVING, at different times of my life, so far forgotten myself as to perpetrate rhymes on various subjects, I, like others afflicted with the same incurable malady, became desirous that I should not be the only sufferer, so, inflicted a small edition on my friends, the people of South Australia; and the critics of the said Province having been very merciful, (I was going to say *just* and merciful) and the public most easy to please, why, the book sold, and I (being reinforced by a friend who understands punctuation, and is a severe, though kindly critic) furnished up some of the old poems, and made some new ones, and I now offer the same to be properly cut up by the critics, if it will give them any satisfaction to do so; and, thereafter to be perused with all sorts of sensations, by more unsophisticated readers who desire to see things described as they are, and to understand what they read.

As what is pleasant and nutritious pabulum to one, is poison to another, I have ranged from "the sublime to the ridiculous," so as to have a plum for all who investigate my pudding.

In justice to my critical friend, I must here observe that several pieces occupy pages in this book which he wished left out, but I think, if they draw off the venom from a crabbed critic or two, they will have served a good purpose, and I shall be recompensed accordingly.

R. BRUCE.

WALLELBERDINA,
May 6th, 1877.

LIST OF PLATES.

No.		Page.
1.	—THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE LONDON—(<i>Frontispiece.</i>)	
2.	—THE DINGO HUNT	82
3.	—BURNING OF THE COSPATRICK	121

THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE LONDON.

LIST to that capstan song, and with me view
The gallant steamship, which her active crew
Haul from the crowded dock, whose gates, thrown wide,
Permit her egress to the Thames' dark tide.
Slowly she glides, her ev'ry motion scann'd
By crowds of gazers gather'd on the land ;
And by the harbour-master who, alert,
Can well his brief authority assert,
And order all—the ready tars obey
His short, sharp mandates, which brook no delay.
Out to mid-stream the good ship grandly glides ;
Swings with the tide, and there in safety rides.

Now, with colossal force, the prison'd steam
Drives the vast vessel o'er the deep, dark stream.
Proudly she moves, while from the crowded strand,
Loud cheers resound for her, and for her band
Of emigrants who, from the decks, reply
With fainter shouts and kerchiefs waved on high ;
And many tear-dimm'd eyes are strain'd to keep
In view some friend, who tempts the stormy deep ;
Buoy'd by the hope that, in that southern land,
Wealth may repay the labour of his hand ;
That smiling fields and new found friends, in part,
May fill the void occasion'd in his heart
By this rude sev'rance of those social ties
Which men hold lightly ; but perversely prize
When they are sunder'd by stern strokes of fate
That, all too often, vex this mortal state.

With steady skill the quartermaster steers
The ship down stream, amid the crowded tiers
Of merchantmen, whose lofty hamper shows
Like a dense forest with incumbent snows
Piled on its branches, for the wind-worn sails,
(Bleach'd by exposure to unnumber'd gales),
Now trimly folded by the gallant tars,
Glean, like bright snow-wreaths, on the taper spars :
These, nicely-balanced on each lofty mast,
Full oft have bravely borne them to the blast.

Onwards she steams, while many a vessel's crew
Crowd to the sides the stately ship to view),—

Her size, her spars, her graceful lines they praise,
 And tell, with confidence, the tale of days
 Her trip will occupy ; but not one word
 Of evil augury is to be heard,
 For all that skill, and all that wealth can do,
 Has been expended on the ship they view.
 Well-found, well-mann'd, and with a master-mind
 To guide her motions, waves or stormy wind
 Against her prestige, and her perfect state,
 Seem to weigh nothing in the scales of fate.
 But men are blind ; and what may her befall
 Is known to Him, and Him alone whose call
 Can wake the hurricane, and with it heap,
 In awful waves, the bosom of the deep.
 Then on, brave ship ! and ye who in her sail
 Trust, in your hearts, the Ruler of the gale.

Gravesend is gain'd—the engines stopp'd—and now
 The anchor plunges from her lofty bow ;
 While, from the deck where it in folds has lain,
 Out through the hawse-pipe surges forth the chain ;
 And o'er the waves loud rolls a sullen roar,
 In growling thunder, to the distant shore.
 Now to and fro the busy wherries glide,
 Urged by strong oarsmen, o'er the brackish tide,
 To bring more emigrants, or to convey
 Some from the ship, who, e'er they sail away
 (Perhaps for ever) from their native shore,
 Take this last chance to visit it once more ;
 For very dear, unto a Briton's heart,
 Is England's soil when from it he must part.

The grimy stokers, down below, once more
 Heap high the fuel, and the red flames roar
 Within the furnaces, and quickly raise
 The toiling giant of these modern days,
 Which, bred from water, by consuming fires
 Within its prison fuming fierce perspires,
 Ready to drive, with vast untiring force,
 The noble vessel on her trackless course.
 Forth from her funnel floats, in volumes vast,
 The rolling smoke upon the chilly blast,
 Which, through the shrouds, with mournful moaning sighs,
 As if sad spirits, with prophetic eyes,
 Lament above that gallant craft, which they
 Presage to Ocean as its destined prey !