FIVE YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN AUSTRALIA FELIX

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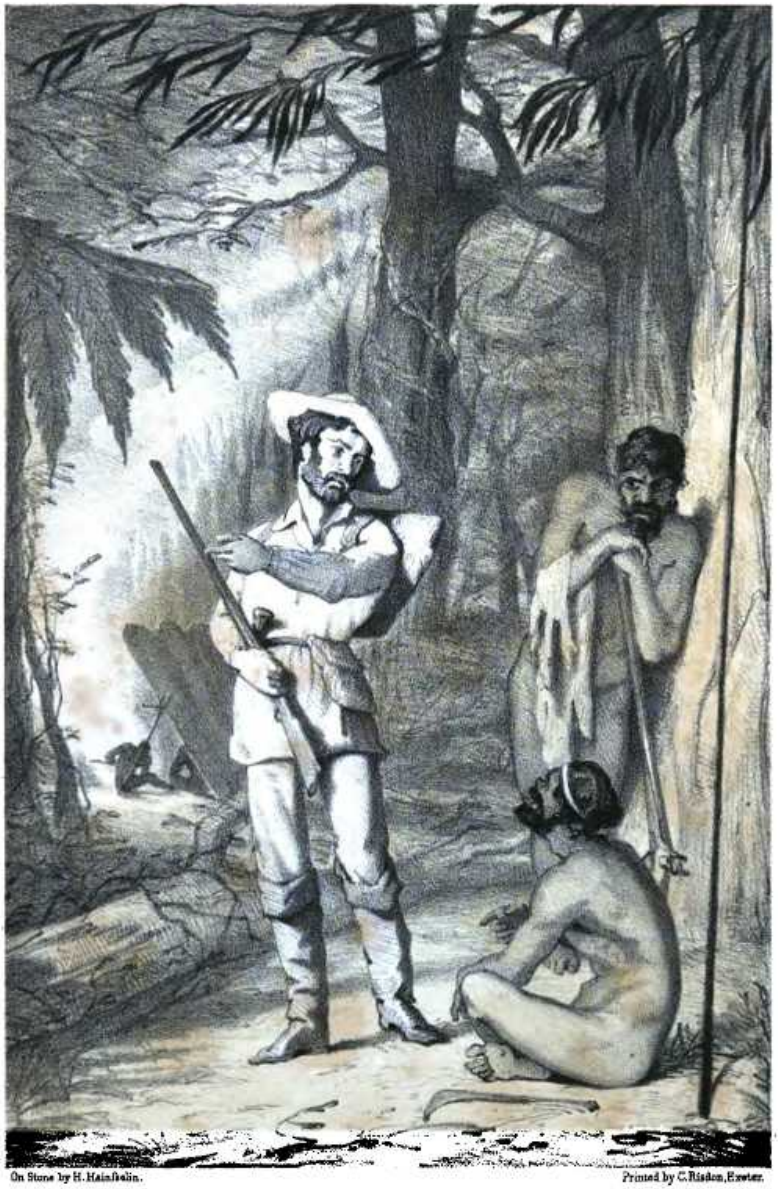

On Stone by H. Hainfselin. Printed by C. Risdon, Exeter.

FIVE YEARS' EXPERIENCE

IN

AUSTRALIA FELIX,

COMPRISING

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF ITS EARLY SETTLEMENT AND ITS PRESENT POSITION, WITH MANY PARTICULARS INTERESTING TO INTENDING EMIGRANTS.

BY

G. H. HAYDON.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

HENRY HAINSSELIN,

FROM SKETCHES MADE ON THE SPOT BY THE AUTHOR.

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ERRATA.

Page 4, line 19, for *are*, read *is*.
Page 8, line 1, for *manufacturing and roofing with tiles*, read *manufacturing tiles for roofing*; line 21, for *Their*, read *There*.
Page 17, line 4, for *when no*, read *where no*.
Page 24, line 1, for *Ophthelmia*, read *Ophthalmia*.
Page 31, line 30, after the word *required*, *a comma*.
Page 48, line 4, for *egg*, read *eggs*.
Page 89, line 23, for *Nepeau*, read *Nepean*.
Page 103, line 24, for *song's*, read *songs*.
Page 108, line 27, for *is*, read *are*.
Page 115, line 12, for *to*, read *no*; line 17, for *were*, read *where*.
Page 116, line 19, leave out the word *adopted*.
Page 119, line 2, for *bitting*, read *biting*.
Page 122, line 26, for *after a few months keeping is a good substance for bread*, read *and after a few months' use is a good substitute for bread*.
Page 126, line 30, for *horses refuses*, read *horses refused*.
Page 150, line 24, for *ever*, read *never*.

INTRODUCTION.

My object in writing the following pages, is to give the most recent and authentic information concerning the Province of Australia Felix. Having been a resident for some years in this fine portion of the British dominions, I have had opportunities of witnessing the great changes which have taken place in its affairs; during that period I have seen it sink for a season into a state of nearly universal bankruptcy—not from any dearth of natural resources—not from its inaptitude for colonization—but rather from that headstrong spirit of speculation, which in all newly-formed communities is generally found to prevail. This was doubtless the main cause of the late unfortunate crisis; that it was not the only source of its depression the reader will perceive by perusing the following pages.

It ought also to be remembered, that at the time affairs in Australia Felix assumed such a desponding aspect; all the Australian colonies were suffering in a nearly similar manner. I will merely allude to the state of the pet colony of South Australia, simply because this part of New Holland was settled about the same period as Australia Felix, the charter to the South Australian Company being granted in 1835. This colony, of which Adelaide is the capital, after receiving every aid that the powerful and universal agency

of the British press could afford, supported by a wealthy landed proprietary in England, and cherished by legislative enactments, was declared to have been at the period to which I refer, in as bad, if not a worse state, than neglected Australia Felix.

But those days of adversity are passed; both these colonies are in a much healthier state, and it is to be hoped the severe lesson of experience the colonists have learned may act beneficially on them in future.

Numerous works have appeared on the subject of emigration to the Australian colonies, some evidently puffs, emanating from interested parties; others abounding in the most wild and dreamy imaginations, having to all appearance been written by persons, who evidently were never out of their own country. Writers of this description have been of the greatest injury to these colonies; deceiving the poor, but respectable emigrant, with the idea that he is proceeding to a land "flowing with milk and honey," but he finds on his arrival that an industrious and steady course of life are equally as necessary as in the mother country to gain a mere livelihood. The idea which he had been led to entertain of making a rapid fortune fades away before the realities of a colonial life. He becomes a disappointed man, and dwindles down into a lazy shepherd, spending all his wages in ardent spirits. This is the fate of many who on their arrival, had they not been puffed up with such foolish hopes, might have done well.

I have in this volume, touched on few subjects which did not come immediately under my own observation, and therefore trust that the facts which I have adduced will be useful to those contemplating emigration, and amusing to others who are interested in our colonies, but who have no inclination to leave the solid comforts of an English home.

CHAPTER I.

THE province of Australia Felix, also known as Port Philip, is situated on the south-east coast of New South Wales, between the 141st and 146th degree of east longitude. It is bounded on the south by Bass's Straits, on the west by South Australia, the River Murray in the 36th degree of south latitude forms its northern limit, and the swampy river in the 141st degree of east longitude bounds it to the eastward. It occupies a space of thirty thousand square miles, or twenty millions of acres. The greatest extent from east to west, is two hundred and sixty miles; from north to south, one hundred and sixty miles. It commands a navigable sea coast of five hundred miles, and abounds with harbours and roadsteads.

For many years before Port Philip was settled, sealers and barkers from Van Diemen's Land had visited its shores and also the neighbouring harbour of Westernport. These wanderers returning with a favorable account of the country, induced a few enterprising colonists from that Island to make efforts for the formation of a settlement somewhere on the coast; their own lands being overstocked, did not afford sufficient nourishment for their fast-increasing flocks and herds. Its permanent occupation was effected by these