

**THE CONVICT KING: BEING THE LIFE AND
ADVENTURES OF JORGEN JORGENSON,
MONARCH OF ICELAND, NAVAL CAPTAIN,
REVOLUTIONIST, BRITISH DIPLOMATIC AGENT,
AUTHOR, DRAMATIST, PREACHER, POLITICAL
PRISONER, GAMBLER, HOSPITAL DISPENSER,
CONTINENTAL TRAVELLER, ETC.**

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The Convict King: Being the Life and Adventures of Jorgen Jorgenson, Monarch of Iceland, Naval Captain, Revolutionist, British Diplomatic Agent, Author, Dramatist, Preacher, Political Prisoner, Gambler, Hospital Dispenser, Continental Traveller, Etc. by James Francis Hogan

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JAMES FRANCIS HOGAN

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THE CONVICT KING.

AN
(JORGENSEN, J.)
Juergensen

“*Write romances!* Why, this poor old convict, Jorgen Jergenson, who has been resting in his nameless grave these twenty years, has *lived* one beside which the ‘story of Cambuscan bold,’ the adventures of Gil Blas, or the doings of that prince of scoundrels, Mr. Barry Lyndon himself, dwindle into insignificance. All the raven-haired, hot-headed, supple-wristed soldiers of fortune that ever died, drank, duelled, kissed, and escalated their way through three volumes octavo, never had such an experience. Think over his story, from his birth in Denmark to his death in Van Diemen’s Land, and imagine from what he *has* told us how much more he has been compelled to leave unrelated.”

MARCUS CLARKE.



ILLUSTRATIONS.

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INTRODUCTION.

AMONGST the mass of commonplace offenders against her laws whom England banished to Botany Bay and Van Diemen's Land during the first half of the nineteenth century, were not a few remarkable characters of a superior type and with singular records; and the most conspicuous member of this class, the "usurping despot of a little reign," the only monarch who has left London for the Antipodes in a convict-ship, was the extraordinary adventurer whose chequered career is described in detail in the following pages. The name of Jorgen Jorgenson (Jürgensen is the strictly correct spelling) is not wholly unfamiliar to the reading public, for he has his little niche in all the biographical dictionaries;*

* See Cates' *Dictionary of General Biography*, page 670; Haydn, *Universal Index of Biography*, page 289; Maunder, *Biographical Treasury*, page 526; Ripley and Dana, *American Cyclopædia*, vol. 9, page 685; *Chambers' Encyclopædia*, vol. 5,

but these standard authorities abruptly dismiss him on his transportation to Van Diemen's Land, "where," they all agree in saying, "he is supposed to have died shortly afterwards." * But this gratuitous supposition is entirely erroneous. Jorgenson lived another active and adventurous career extending over twenty years at the Antipodes—he pushed himself to the front at both ends of the earth—and wrote his autobiography in the *Van Diemen's Land Annual* for 1835 and 1838. This unique record of a strange, a kaleidoscopic, a melo-dramatic life in real action I have thought

page 739; and Charles Knight's *English Cyclopædia*, vol. 3, page 652. For articles on Jorgenson in periodical literature consult *Household Words*, vol. 14; *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 28; *Eclectic Magazine*, vol. 57; *Colburn's Magazine*, vol. 126, and *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 97. Incidental references to Jorgenson and his career will be found in Sir W. J. Hooker's "Tour in Iceland," Sir G. MacKenzie's "Travels in Iceland," the Rev. S. Baring-Gould's "Icelandic Scenes and Sagas," West and Fenton's histories of Tasmania; Burwick's "Last of the Tasmanians," Marcus Clarke's "History of Australia," and David Blair's "History of Australasia."

* All the biographical dictionaries and the cyclopedias erroneously state that Jorgenson was transported to New South Wales. For instance, *Knight's English Cyclopædia* says:—"Our impression is that he died not long after his arrival in New South Wales, but a search for a mention of the fact has proved unsuccessful." The search was made in the wrong colony. It should have been instituted in Van Diemen's Land.