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**In A New World or, Among The  
Gold Fields Of Australia**

Horatio Alger

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IN A NEW WORLD

AMONG THE GOLD-FIELDS OF AUSTRALIA

BY

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

AUTHOR OF "FACING THE WORLD," "DO AND DARE," "RAG-  
GED DICK SERIES," "LUCK AND PLUCK SERIES," ETC.

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## IN A NEW WORLD.

### CHAPTER I.

#### OLD FRIENDS IN MELBOURNE.

A stout gentleman of middle age and two boys were sitting in the public room of a modest inn in Melbourne. The gentleman was known to the public as Professor Hemmenway, who announced himself on the programme of his entertainment as "The Magician of Madagascar," though he freely confessed to his confidential friends that he had never seen the island of that name.

The two boys were Harry Vane and Jack Pendleton, American boys of sixteen. One had come to Australia as assistant to the professor, and had been accustomed to sing one or two popular songs at the magical entertainments which he gave, besides rendering himself generally useful. Jack Pendleton was a young sailor, who had resolved to try his fortune in the new country, either at the mines or in any other employment offering fair compensation, before resuming his profession. Harry and the professor had been passengers on board Jack's ship, and the two boys had struck up an enduring friendship. The ship had been wrecked, and they had spent some weeks together on an uninhabited island, from which they were finally rescued, as related in a preceding story, "Facing the World." It had been the professor's intention to give a series of performances in Melbourne and other parts of Australia, but the unexpected delay had led him to change his plans, and he now proposed to return to America at once. Harry Vane, however, having no near family ties, for he was an orphan, felt inclined to stay with Jack, and try his luck for a time in the New World, which appealed strongly to his imagination and youthful love of adventure. The day had arrived for the professor's departure, and he and the two boys were waiting for the lighter to take him down the Yarra Yarra River to the point of embarkation, eight miles distant.

"Harry," said the professor kindly, "I don't like to leave you here. You are only sixteen, and I feel that it is a great undertaking for you to attempt to make a living so many thousand miles from your native land. I shall feel anxious about you."

"I don't feel anxious about myself, professor," said Harry, with the confidence natural to youth. "I am young and strong, and I mean to succeed."

"But suppose you fall sick?"

"Then Jack will look out for me."

"You may be sure of that, Harry," said the young sailor, with a glance of affection at Harry.

"You might both fall sick."

"Is it best to borrow trouble?" said Harry, smiling. "I think we shall come out all right. But I am sorry you won't stay with us, professor."

Professor Hemmenway shook his head.

"I am three times your age, Harry," he said, "and am not as hopeful or sanguine as you. Besides, I have a wife and children at home who are already very anxious at my long silence; I did indeed mean to make a professional tour of Australia, but the shipwreck, and those lonely weeks on the island changed my plans. Henceforth I shall restrict myself to America. I have a competence already, and can make an income at home twice as large as my expenses. Why should I incur any risks?"

"I don't know but you are right, professor, but Jack and I are not so fortunate. Neither of us has a competence, and our prospects are probably better here than at home."

"Remember, Harry, that if you return I shall be glad to continue your engagement and will even increase your salary."

Jack Pendleton fixed his eyes anxiously on Harry's face. He feared that he would yield to the professor's persuasion, and leave him, but his anxiety was soon removed.

"Thank you, professor," said Harry, "but I don't want to leave Jack. If I return in bad luck, I may look you up and see whether the offer still holds good."

"Do so. You will always find a friend in me. But that reminds me, Harry, of an important consideration. If you are to remain here, you will want some money."

"I have sixty dollars which I have saved up in your service."

"And how much have you, Jack?"

The young sailor colored, and looked a little uneasy.

"I have only ten dollars," he answered.

"That is, we have seventy dollars between us, Jack," said Harry promptly.

"That is too little," said the professor, shaking his head. "You must let me be your banker."

"On one condition, professor, with thanks for your kindness."

"What is that?"

"A gentleman at home, Mr. Thomas Conway, President of the Craven County Railroad, has charge of two hundred and fifty dollars belonging to me. I was fortunate enough to save a railroad train from destruction, and this is the money the passengers raised for me. I will give you an order on him for the amount of your loan."

"That is unnecessary, Harry; I am willing to wait till your return to America."

"Something might happen to me, professor, and I shall feel more comfortable to think that my debts are paid."

"Have your own way, then, Harry. Shall I give you the whole amount?"

"No, professor, I am afraid it would make me less enterprising."

"How much shall it be?"

"Jack and I have seventy dollars between us. A hundred more ought to be sufficient."

"As you please, Harry, but if you get into trouble, promise to communicate with me, and send for assistance."

"I will, sir."

At this moment a carriage drew up in front of the inn.

"It is the carriage I ordered to take me to the lighter," said the professor. "You and Jack must go with me to the ship and see the last of me."

"With great pleasure, sir. Come along, Jack."

The hackman put the professor's trunk aboard the carriage, and they set out for the banks of the river. It was a new trunk, bought in Melbourne, for the professor's trunk and clothing had been lost at the time of the shipwreck. His first care had been to get a complete outfit in Melbourne, and he was now as well provided as when he left New York.

The two boys found the trip down the river a pleasant one. The trip by land would have been considerably shorter, but the professor preferred the river. The distance to the mouth is nine miles. Vessels would be able to ascend the river but for two bars which obstruct its course. The city of Melbourne is situated chiefly on the north bank, and is at present a handsomely built and prosperous town of about five hundred thousand inhabitants. At the time of Harry's arrival it had less than half that number. The country bordering the river is not particularly inviting, but it was new, and the two boys regarded it with interest. The soil was barren and sandy, and the trees, which were numerous, were eucalyptus or gum trees, which do not require a rich soil, but grow with great rapidity on sterile soil.

"What peculiar leaves?" said Harry, "they look like leather."

"True," said the professor, "and you notice that instead of having one surface toward the sky and the other toward the earth they are placed edgewise."

Soon they reached the mouth of the river, and there, just beyond the bar, rode the good ship *Arcturus*, on which the professor was to sail for Boston. His baggage was hoisted on board, and then the professor himself followed.

"Will you come on board, boys?" he asked.

"No, sir; we will go back by the lighter."

"Then good-by, and God bless you and bring you good luck."

Harry could not help feeling sober as he bade farewell to his good friend, the professor.

"I have only you now, Jack," he said. "I don't know what lies before us, but we must stick fast to each other in sunshine and in storm."

Jack's only answer was to seize Harry's hand and press it warmly. Nothing more was needed.



## CHAPTER II.

### PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.

The two boys returned to the Crown Hotel in time for dinner, of which they partook with the zest to be expected of boys thoroughly healthy. When the meal was over they repaired to the public room.

"Now, Jack," said Harry, "it is necessary for us to settle on our plans."

"All right," said Jack.

"Have you anything to propose?"

"No, Harry, you are smarter than I am, and I leave it to you."

"Thank you, Jack, for your confidence, but we are on a par here. Neither of us knows much about Australia. We have a great deal to learn."

"Then you had better decide for us both."

"Very well, I accept the responsibility, but I prefer to talk over my plans with you. First of all, then, shall we stay in Melbourne, or strike for the mines?"

"Just as you say, Harry, but I would prefer the mines."

"I feel that way myself, and for that reason I have been making some inquiries. There are three principal localities, Ballarat, Bendigo, and Ovens. We might try one of the three, and if we don't have good luck make our-way to another."

"Which shall we try first?"

"I have thought of Bendigo. I hear of one party that cleared two thousand pounds out of one hole."

"How much is that?" asked Jack, who was not very well acquainted with any but United States currency.

"It is equal to ten thousand dollars," answered Harry.

"That's a big pile of money," said Jack, his eyes sparkling.

"True, but we mustn't expect to be so fortunate. It isn't everybody who succeeds as well as that."

"I should be satisfied with a thousand, Harry."

"And what would you do with it, Jack?"

"Convey it home to my mother, Harry. But I would fix it so that my step-father couldn't get hold of it."

"You are a good boy, Jack, for thinking so much of your mother. I wish I had a mother to provide for," and Harry Vane looked sober.

"Do you know how far off Bendigo is, Harry?"

"About a hundred miles. That is, it is seventy-five miles to Mount Alexander, and the mines are twenty-five miles to the north of that."

"It won't take us long to travel a hundred miles," said Jack hopefully.

"On the contrary, it will be a long and difficult journey, as far as I can find out. The country is full of bogs, swamps, and moist land."

"Then we can't walk?"

"No; the custom is to charter a cart, drawn by oxen, which will give a chance to carry a stock of provisions. The roads are not very well marked, and are often impassable."

This description rather discouraged Jack, who was more used to the sea and its dangers than to land travel.

"I wish we could go by water," he said.

"So do I, Jack, but unfortunately Bendigo happens to be inland. However, you've got good stout legs, and can get along as well as the thousands that do go. Besides, it will give us a fine chance to see the country."

"Ye-es," said Jack doubtfully, for he had very little of the traveler's curiosity that prompts so many to visit strange lands.

"There's another difficulty besides the mud," continued Harry thoughtfully.

"What's that?"

"The bushrangers."

"Who are they?"

"Haven't you heard of them?" asked Harry in surprise.

"I heard two men speaking of them last night, but I didn't take much notice."

"They are highwaymen—robbers, who wander about and attack parties of miners and travellers, and unless successfully resisted, strip them of all their property."

"Are we likely to meet them?" said Jack eagerly.

"I hope not; but we stand a chance of doing so."

"When are we going to start?" asked Jack with alacrity.

"Do you want to meet these gentlemen, Jack?" inquired Harry with a smile.

"There'll be some fun about it," responded Jack.

Harry shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't think there'll be much fun about being robbed," he said. "I would rather they would give us a wide berth, for my part."

Jack did not answer, but from that time he was eager to set out for the mines. The hint of danger invested the journey with a charm it had not hitherto possessed in his eyes.

While the boys were conversing, a tall man, with heavy black whiskers and wearing a rough suit and a slouch hat, appeared to listen attentively. At this point he rose from his seat, and lounged over to where Harry and Jack were seated.

"Young gentlemen," he said, "do I understand that you are thinking of going to the mines?"

"Yes, sir," answered Harry, surveying his inquirer with some attention.

"And you talk of going to Bendigo?"

"Yes; do you know anything about the place?"

"I ought to. I only came from there last month."

"What luck did you have there, may I ask?"

"Pretty fair. I brought back about a hundred and fifty pounds in gold dust:"

"And how long were you there?"

"Four weeks."

"That is pretty good pay for the time."

"That's so, especially as I made little or nothing the first three weeks. I struck it rich the last week."

"What do you say to that, Jack?" said Harry, turning to his companion; "nearly eight hundred dollars in a month."

"That pays better than being a sailor," answered Jack, smiling.

"I should say it did."

"When do you expect to start?" asked the stranger.

"As soon as we can get ready," Harry replied.

"You are right there. Have you got money?"

"Why?" asked Harry rather suspiciously.

"It will cost something for an outfit."

"Yes; we have a moderate sum with us."

"That is well," said the stranger approvingly. "Do you know," he continued meditatively, "I have a great mind to go with you?"

"Then you are not satisfied with your pile?" said Harry.

"There's very little left of it," said their new acquaintance.

"You haven't spent a hundred and fifty pounds in a month?" said Harry in surprise.

"Pretty much. I may have twenty pounds left."

"You must have been living high, then."

"No. I have lived plainly, but the faro table has taken most of it. I'm so near broke that I may as well go back to the mines for a fresh supply before my money is all gone."

"We shall be glad of your company, sir. May I ask if you are an Australian?"

"I was born in England, but I have been out here half a dozen years."

"And have not made your fortune yet?"

"It is my own fault. I have been unable to keep money after I got it."

"We are from America."

"I surmised it," said the stranger. "That is a country I want to visit before I die. You have mines there, too."

"Yes, but they are a long way from where we live."

"My name is Fletcher — Dick Fletcher my friends call me."

"I am Harry Vane, and my friend is Jack Pendleton."

"We will drink to our better acquaintance. Here, John," addressing the barkeeper, "three glasses of ale here."

"If you won't mind, Jack and I will take sarsaparilla."

Fletcher stared at them in amazement.

"You don't drink ale?" he said.

"We belong to the temperance society," said Harry, smiling.

"You won't keep that up long at the mines," said Fletcher, shrugging his shoulders.

Harry did not reply, but quietly resolved that he would disprove that statement.

