

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Strachwitz Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow  
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil  
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus  
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus Moltke  
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo  
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht  
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz  
Marx vom Stein Lawrence Irving  
von Ossietzky May Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka  
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Liebermann Korolenko  
Sachs Poe de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



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# **Australia Revenged**

pseud. Boomerang

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## PREFACE.

Each character in this work is a type. The Australian characters may be met with every day in the Colonies. Nor are Villiers Wyckliffe and the Detlij Club distorted figments of the imagination; and the broken heart is a symbol of the aims of the one, and the object of the others, softened down so that the cheek of modesty may be spared a blush.

In those parts of the work where Colonial Governors are mentioned, they appear in a less heroic light than that in which one ordinarily sees them in print. Therefore for the further enlightenment of the reader, an appendix has been added, in which the standpoint wherefrom Young Australia views them is fully explained.

"Boomerang" is the joint *nom-de-plume* of a Young Australian and his collaborator.

B.

London, October, 1894.



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## CHAPTER I.

### THE DETLIJ CLUB.

In a handsome block of buildings in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly—a phrase which may embrace a considerable area, North, South, East or West—is located the quarters of that small and extremely select Club, known, and known up till now only to a favoured few, as the Detlij Club. The name, like the Club itself, is an uncommon one, and is simply indicative of the sad mischance which must befall each member before he can qualify for admission. No mysterious or secret rites were shadowed in the title, and the ultra-curious in search [Pg 2] of the origin of the name, need no more overhaul their Hindu or Persian dictionaries, than they need their Liddell and Scott. A simple inversion of the letters is all that is necessary to solve the riddle, a process which discovers the word "jilted," and discloses the character of the Club.

Briefly, the origin of the Club was in this wise. Some four years previous to the date our story opens, a certain Major Fitzgerald, a man of unenviable notoriety in Society, whose name was almost as well known in the Divorce Court as it was in the clubs and boudoirs—a fact which, though it caused his exclusion from some circles, made him more welcome in others—chanced to meet the young and charming heiress, Helen Trevor, at the time of her *début*.

"That's the girl for my money," was the Major's inward comment. He had no money, by-the-bye, it was merely his *façon de parler*. So he lost no opportunity of cultivating Miss Trevor's acquaintance. Now the Major was a handsome, dashing man, with complete knowledge of the world, much *savoir faire*, the faculty for making himself dangerously agreeable, and no morals to [Pg 3] speak of. Helen Trevor, too, though a girl of her time, was one of those strong characters that—thank goodness!—have not yet been eliminated from the human species, either by the artificial restrictions of Fashion on the one hand, or the undisciplined vagaries of Female Emancipationists on the other. She was too young and enthusiastic to have surrendered her habit of sympathy for the cheap cynicism that marked the culture of her day. Brimming over with sympathy, impatient for

some sphere of active interest, and just sufficiently tinged with the spirit of martyrdom to be anxious to feel herself doing some work in the world, her sympathetic young heart, that had no suspicion of evil, went out to the Major when he murmured in a tone of manly contrition: "It is true, Miss Trevor, I have been wild and reckless, but it was all due to my having no one to guide me."

Helen's older acquaintances shook their heads in mysterious warning, and supplied just the needful hint of opposition to cause her to devote herself to what seemed to be a labour of moral heroism, helping him to the best of her ability. And Fitzgerald congratulated himself on his success in having brought about the very condition [Pg 4] of mind he had laid himself out to produce. But he overestimated his powers, and he made an irretrievably false step in trying to persuade Helen to elope with him to avoid her father's anticipated disapproval.

Helen was prepared to go far in her antagonism to her parents' wishes, even to consent to an open engagement, but to fly with her *fiancé* in the fearless, old fashion did not commend itself to her somewhat rigid ideas of right and wrong. She frankly, therefore, told her father everything, and he, prompt to nip this affair in the bud, removed his daughter out of the way of Major Fitzgerald's influence; and, calling upon the Major himself, subjected the latter to an unpleasant quarter-of-an-hour. The result of the interview was that the Major assumed the air of an injured man, whose love had been ruthlessly trodden on, and who had suffered the humiliation of being jilted.

For the space of two whole days the Major was absent from his usual haunts, and when he did appear again he wore a becoming air of dignified dejection.

"Hullo, Major!" said a young fellow named the Honourable George Buzzard, as he familiarly [Pg 5] struck him on the shoulder. "Why these tears of sadness, eh?"

"My boy, I've been badly treated. I've been jilted."

"Jilted, have you! and by whom?"

"Young Trevor."

"What! Helen Trevor! that youngster who is causing all our fashionable beauties to hug the green-eyed monster. Then shake hands, Major. For I met the same fate yesterday."

"You did, George?"

"Yes. I suppose you noticed that I have been paying a good deal of attention to old Browne's daughter."

"Don't know her, George."

"Oh! her father is a squatter in Australia, with millions. She's his heiress, and not a bad sort either."

"She refused you. Eh?"

"Rather, and now she's engaged to the Earl of Bentham."

"It's the title, my boy. Younger sons have no show nowadays; but how those Australians run after titles. Eh?"

"By Jove, they do," said the other. "But now, as we are companions in misfortune, let's [Pg 6] drown our sorrows," and he led the Major in the direction of his club.

Here they were joined by Thomas Thomas, Esq., known to the entire Society world as "Tommy" only. He was one of that common class of young men whom only Society produces. Without any income or apparent means of subsistence he did not work, yet he was invariably well-dressed, and had the *entrée* of the best houses. Welcome there because he could readily adapt himself to any occasion, preserve a constantly agreeable manner, and had the details of the latest scandal at his finger-ends; in fact was one of the parasites that Society creates, and without whom it cannot get along the thorny path of its day's enjoyment. Tommy greeted the two men with a silent nod, and waited, with the caution typical of his species, to discover the subject of their conversation. This did not take him long, as experience in this work had sharpened his wits. Sitting down beside them, he heaved a deep sigh, and said, sadly:

"I have been atrociously treated, you fellows. The little widow has thrown me over."

"What, another!" cried the Major. "Then [Pg 7] sit down, Tommy, and enjoy yourself. By Jove, we ought to start a club for fellows like ourselves, and call it the Jilted Club."

"A grand idea!" said Tommy, rubbing his hands. "Why we can already number five, for I know Watson and Carrington have suffered the same fate."

From that hour the Jilted Club was formed, and as time went on its membership increased. The mysterious title of Detlij Club was agreed on, and, at the time of writing, its adherents numbered some seventy *habitués* of London Society.

The Major was elected President; Tommy held the honourable and lucrative post of Secretary, and a code of rules, of which we quote the principal, was drawn up:

1. This Club shall be called the Detlij Club.
2. None but jilted men shall be eligible to become members.
3. The objects of the Club shall be:

(a). To extend shelter and sympathy in their calamity to all members whose affections have been trifled with.

(b). To assist them in their schemes of vengeance. [Pg 8]

(c). To encourage them to jilt others in return.

4. Each member shall be required to take the oath of secrecy.

5. A gold badge shall be voted annually to that member who shall prove to the satisfaction of the Committee that he has made the highest record in broken hearts.

6. The badge of the Club shall be a heart rent in twain.

There were a great many other rules, but they are of minor importance relative to this narrative.

When Tommy announced at the first general meeting that he wished to propose Villiers Wyckliffe as a member, the announcement was greeted with loud cheers, for that gentleman was a man of town notoriety, popular with all sections of Society, but especially so in the boudoirs. He was immensely wealthy, having inherited a vast fortune from his father, the celebrated Seymour Wyckliffe,

the world-wide known head of the great banking firm of Wyckliffe & Co. Having joined he soon let it be known that he intended making strong running for the coveted gold [Pg 9] badge. He was generally known and addressed as "Wyck."

The fifteenth of July, when the season was well on the wane, was the date fixed on which the first competition for the badge was to be held.

Great preparations were made for a banquet at the Club, on the most lavish and extensive scale.

The dinner over, the President, Major Fitzgerald, formally opened proceedings; and, alluding in felicitous terms to the momentous occasion, announced, amid cheers, that there were no less than nineteen competitors for the badge, who, their names having been drawn from a hat, were to address the meeting in the following order:—

1. Villiers Wyckliffe.
2. Sir Charles Keyning.
3. Thomas Thomas.

and so on until the full list had been announced.

"Gentlemen," proceeded the Major. "We are all anxious to get without delay to the main business of the evening. I will therefore make my remarks as brief as possible—"

A loud "Hear, hear!" from a distant corner [Pg 10] made the Major look round angrily, but without discovering the delinquent.

"Jilted gentlemen, your most sacred feelings have been trifled with by the delicate, the harmless, the innocent (groans) daughters of Eve. They are not to blame, oh no, they could not do such a thing; but we, gentlemen, we know better (hear, hear), and we are here to-night to ratify our bond to stand united against the insidious onslaught of those 'whose fangs,' as an American writer so aptly and so eloquently expresses it, 'drip with the blood of the foolishly fond and true' (loud cheers.) I shall now call upon our esteemed member, 'Wyck,' to relate to us his story of the revenge he has taken upon the sex which has wronged him."

Cheers again greeted the close of the Major's speech, and cries of "Wyck! Good old Wyck," resounded from all quarters of the room.

Villiers Wyckliffe, a young man of about 28 years of age, rose slowly. In his hand he held ostentatiously a small ebony stick, that was his constant companion, and which he handled fondly.

"Gentlemen," interposed a member, "before Wyck speaks I have to ask you to charge your [Pg 11] glasses, and drink to him." A request that was at once complied with.

"Mr. President and gentlemen," he began, in a soft, caressing voice, "I thank you for the kind manner in which you have drunk my health. I will now endeavour to give you a few details of my simple career. I will plead guilty to a sneaking fondness for the fair sex (hear, hear), but I can fairly say I have only yet seen one member of it who struck me as being anything out of the common (oh). I mean by that, one that I should care to marry (laughter). Feeling rather weary of London, I went for a trip round the world, and it was during that trip that I met the uncommon one. At Nice I made her acquaintance. She was the daughter of a retired Colonel with a wooden leg, and she took my fancy. Why, I cannot tell, but there is no accounting for taste. Her manner to me was cold and haughty, which had the effect of making me all the more eager, and after a week's acquaintance I proposed. I offered to make handsome settlements, even to make the one-legged papa a handsome allowance of the most liberal description, but all my offers were received with scorn, as she informed me her heart was [Pg 12] given to another, a beggarly Lieutenant in a marching regiment. I humiliated myself by even proposing a second time, when dear old wooden-leg threatened—the humour was unconscious—to kick me out of the house. Gentlemen, either through disappointment or chagrin, I felt my heart was broken, and I vowed one day to avenge it. That day did arrive, and I took advantage of it. Here is my record," and thereupon he held up to the view of his audience the ebony stick on which was cut a series of notches. "You will see here a number of notches. At present they number forty-eight, and each notch represents a broken heart. Number 1, is that of a haughty young damsel who had cut me on various occasions. Number 2, is that of the girl I loved, now an officer's wife. Number 3, is that of her husband, for

they are separated." He continued to tick them off, giving each a short description with comments of almost diabolical cynicism. "I have two more in view," he continued, "and when I have completed my record of fifty, I intend to take a long rest and go for a trip to the Colonies. I think that is all I can say."

Wyck resumed his seat amid tremendous [Pg 13] cheering, maintained for several moments. His enthusiastic friends surrounded and complimented him.

When silence was restored the President called upon the second candidate, Sir Charles Keyning.

"I beg to withdraw in favour of Wyck," said that youthful worthy. The remainder of the candidates, unable to sustain their own triumphs against such a crushing list, also resigned their claims, and Villiers Wyckliffe was unanimously awarded the coveted badge.

In the small hours of the morning the meeting broke up, and Villiers, the Major, Tommy, and a few more of the choicer spirits adjourned to Wyck's rooms to finish with a few hours' card-playing.

[Pg 14]



## CHAPTER II.

### CONFIDENCES.

Some time after mid-day the next morning, Wyck awoke with the unpleasant sensation that his head was of abnormal size, his throat very dry, and altogether he felt and looked extremely seedy. A brandy-and-soda and a cold tub eased him somewhat, and he managed to get through his dressing and lounge daintily through his breakfast. A knock at the door was followed by the entrance of Tommy.

"How do, old boy; head a bit thick?" was that youthful spark's airy greeting, as he coolly settled himself in an easy-chair.

"A trifle, thanks. How's yours? Help yourself," he said, as he pushed the brandy-decanter towards him.

"Thanks. I feel in want of a pick-me-up," [Pg 15] and Tommy helped himself to a stiff nobbler of brandy.

Wyck and Tommy were fast friends, though of such opposite dispositions. Wyck liked his companion's light and jovial manner, and Tommy liked Wyck's pocket.

"What sort of a cruise did you have, Tommy, while you were away?" asked Wyck.

"Ripping. A month in the Mediterranean is great fun, I can tell you, when you are in good company."

"You're a lucky devil, Tommy."

"Yes, I suppose so. But judging from the charming little history you gave the Club last night you've been going it during my absence."

"Yes, I flatter myself I've had some good fun."

"I say, Wyck, I want to know how you do it."

"My secret; eh, Tommy?"

"Exactly. Now out with it. I swear dumb."

"Then I'll tell you, Tommy. Only mind, should you let it out, I'll kill you," said Wyck, fiercely.

[Pg 16] "It's a bargain, Wyck," answered Tommy, calmly helping himself to a cigar from Wyck's box, and, lounging back, prepared to listen.

"Last night I mentioned an episode with a Colonel's daughter. Well all that is true. Smarting under the slight, and vowing vengeance, I left Nice and travelled to India, where I had plenty of chums. One night I attended a big kick-up given by one of the Rajahs in honour of some affair or other. All sorts of amusements were provided, and amongst the numerous entertainments was one by a mesmerist and hypnotist, who gave very clever manifestations of his skill. I happened to be standing close to him and he begged my assistance in one of his experiments. I, of course, agreed and did exactly what he told me, trying to help him to the best of my power; but to my surprise all his passes had no effect whatever upon me. Another fellow was taken in my place and the feat was accomplished successfully. This puzzled me and the first opportunity I got I asked the mesmerist the reason. His answer was: 'You are as strong if not stronger than I and, unconscious to yourself, you make yourself antagonistic.' I laid awake all that night, his words [Pg 17] running through my head, and when I fell asleep I dreamt I was a great mesmerist. A hunting party was organised for the next day and I was invited. We took the train some distance, and then rode into the jungle. I became separated from the main party and was watching an open space in the jungle when my attention was attracted by a pretty little tropical bird, fluttering round and round a tree. This interested me, and on closer inspection I found a huge snake had coiled himself on one of the upper branches, and was calmly lying with its mouth open, waiting for his prey. Smaller and smaller were the circles the bird made, and weaker and weaker were its efforts to escape the fascination, until it finally fluttered to a limb just above the snake. It seemed to turn its piteous glance for help on me, but not I! I was enjoying it. At length it could no longer resist its fate and it fluttered into its enemy's jaws. Now other men would have let sentiment get the better of them and have shot that snake; but I looked up to it with respect, and it set me thinking.