ROCHEFORT.

The Political Victim En Route to New York.

How He Quitted the Cliffs and Sharks of New Caledonia.

MACMAHON CRITICISED.

Communist Life in the French Penal Colony.

Petty Tyranny and Semi-Starvation.

PLANNING FUTURE OPERATIONS.

Interview with Rochefort and His Companions.

THE ARRIVAL IN CALIFORNIA

NIAGARA FALLS, May 29, 1874.

Henri Rochefort, *ci devant* noble, enemy of the Empire, exile of the Marshalate, condemned felon of New Caledonia, is seated before me. He talks sharply, bitterly, sarcastically and pleasantly by turns, following his mood. He is tired and travel stained, with little inclination to submit to the torture of an interview in form, so we chat indifferently of all things as our carriage rolls along to the hotel, where we are to snatch a hasty lunch before setting out on the voyage to New York. Contrary to what might be expected, the escaped prisoner looks hale and hearty. This he attributes to the exercise and constant sea bath which were adopted as a preparation for the attempt to escape, a feat which in daring resembled the escape of Monte Cristo from the Chateau D'If. No traces can be discovered on the strongly marked brow and browned cheek of the pale, delicate, lantern jawed man who chopped with the merciless ferocity of a famished wolf at the throne of Napoleon III. He is about five feet ten inches high, large-boned and nervous, brows heavy, and pronounced eyes, not large, but in expression intense, so that when he speaks you feel the man opens his heart without heeding what may be thought by the world of what he chooses to say. There is about him a power of exciting sympathy that tells he is no ordinary man. Not that he always impresses one as over frank, for he appears to attach some subtle meaning to the biting sarcasms he utters on men and things—some hidden meaning which he does not expect the vulgar world to catch or appreciate at once. He believes the world wants his lamp, the famous *Lanterne*, to throw light on the humbugs of the age. Neither is he conceited. He speaks little of himself except in connection with the important events of his life. These he reviews with well conversed pleasure.

THE WAR OF THE JOURNALISTS

against the Empire of Napoleon the Little, the smallness of the means which sufficed to overthrow that greatest of modern shams, and the pride with which he repeats Napoleon's famous confession of imbecility to Ollivier—"*Impossible de gouverner pendant que Rochefort est là!*"—call up the latent enthusiasm of the man, and as he speaks his face glows with animation and satisfaction. The most flattering moment of his life was when the modern Cæsar, hedged round by prætorian legions, trembled behind his boasted 500,000 bayonets at the power of one man who wielded for all an arm and a pen; and as he leans towards me to assure me that this Napoleonic confession is beyond doubt authentic, because Ollivier told it to him personally, he chuckles with delight and satisfaction. It was to Ollivier the humiliating confession was made. But I am desirous of knowing about the penal colony of New Caledonia. *C'était affreux.* (It was horrible.)

LIFE IN NEW CALEDONIA.

Fortunately the vivandières had some money. They had little luxuries; but for the poor, who had not a *sou*, it was a miracle how they lived. A little meat, often not fit to eat, issued by the authorities, and a little bread and water enabled the unfortunate convicts to exist. The government nominally gave land to be cultivated, but it was a sham. The portions of land were mere plots, and then the convicts had nothing, and were given nothing except this diet to keep them from starvation. Besides the land is barren and the climate detestable. Four months of the year the sun scorches the vegetation, and during the remainder of the year tropical rains are almost constant. For fifteen months the other convicts had suffered the horrors of this exile, but when I (Rochefort) arrived, I said to some of my fellow convicts, "I am not going to stay here." The cliffs were high, and the sea at their base swarmed with sharks. The government thought there was no possibility of escape. If death was not encountered among the rocks the voracious sharks kept watch over the victims of MacMahon. A few comrades resolved to brave this danger, and at last the opportunity came, and, in spite of the sharks and the close watch of our jailors, we reached a British vessel and found ourselves in comparative safety.

POISONED DARTS FOR M'MAHON.

When MacMahon and De Broglie heard that I had escaped they said it was impossible. The news was, however, true. De Broglie fell sick, and MacMahon tried to conceal the fact as long as possible. Poor Marshal! he has a mortal dread of me. He thinks I wield some occult power. It is ridiculous that such a man should rule France. He was put forward by the Right to advance the interests of Henri Cinq, but the Left will never submit to his rule. They have too many able men, real statesmen, to oppose this bungling General. What could be expected from a man who had spent thirty years in the Bureau Arabe? Then Rochefort laughs at that absurdity—France governed by MacMahon! He checks himself, and, with an expression of concentrated passion, he says:—"Events, it appears, are marching rapidly in Europe. Within three months MacMahon shall be overthrown. France cannot continue to be ruled by that stupid soldier."

THIERS' TYRANNY.

Then he stops to rail at the military executioners who showed themselves so impotent and stupid before the Prussians, so cruel, inexorable and bloodthirsty with the unfortunate prisoners of the Commune. Never was such turpitude seen in all history. These men were not alone beaten, but they seemed proud of their defeat. They had the look of saying, "Behold me, I am one of the capitulated, one of the heroes of Sedan." Whenever an unfortunate *Garde Nationale* came before the military tribunal, if he had been decorated for valor in defending Paris against the Prussians, or wounded, he was immediately sentenced to transportation, as though they desired to punish courage and patriotism as a crime. It is a noteworthy fact that an immense number of the men transported to New Caledonia had been made chevaliers of the Legion of Honor for valor during the siege of Paris.

ROCHEFORT'S FUTURE ENTERPRISES.

Much interest has been felt as to what course M. Rochefort will pursue on his return to Europe. Will he light his famous *Lanterne*? Perhaps so; but it is not certain. The difficulty of introducing any journal edited by him into France would prevent the enterprise from succeeding. He will, however, continue to war on the Versailles government. Letters and *brochures* will rain on the devoted head of MacMahon, for whom Rochefort entertains a most decided hostility. He will support Thiers and Gambetta, notwithstanding his personal griefs and misunderstandings, because they can help better than any others to establish the Republic definitely. "If the government would permit me to circulate my journal in France I would take up my pen again; but, living in England or Switzerland, the circulation would be very small. As to Belgium, I do not intend to trust myself there. MacMahon has too much influence with the clericals who rule that country now." This conversation suggested the necessity for a closer alliance between the republican party of the various nations for mutual succor and support.

ANXIOUS CONCERNING CUBA.

Rochefort asked anxiously about the chances of the recognition of Cuban belligerency by the European Powers. As the answer was not satisfactory he expressed the opinion that an international revolutionary junta should be organized for the purpose of aiding all struggling nationalities to achieve their independence.

It is most amusing to watch the arrival of swarms of country editors, who come to interview Rochefort, and only remember that they do not speak French when they are helplessly huddled on the platform, gazing speechlessly at their intended victim. Before his departure for Europe M. Rochefort will probably deliver a lecture in New York to the French speaking part of the population. Offers made to him by enterprising managers for a course of lectures through the country have been declined. No consideration seemed capable of delaying his departure for Europe, where he is called by the desire to meet his children, and by the threatening aspect of affairs in France. He will make war to the knife on the present government of compromises.

EXPECTED ARRIVAL IN THE CITY.

For the last two or three days considerable excitement has prevailed among the French population of this city in consequence of the expected arrival of Henri Rochefort, the escaped Communist prisoner. Two committees have been formed for the last week, composed each of five delegates from the different French societies, one to receive him and offer him the hospitality of the French residents of New York, the other to get up a banquet should he choose to accept it. These Committees have been holding nightly meetings, but in consequence of the lack of exact information no definite arrangements have been made further than to appoint delegations to watch the trains coming from the West and notify the committees of his arrival. Much discontent is expressed by a great many Frenchmen at what they consider unnecessary exclusiveness on the part of those who have undertaken to get up the reception and banquet, who are for the most part refugees of the Commune or belonging to societies professing similar principles. The latter consider they have the best right to receive him, and take great care to point out that it is the "principle" that Rochefort represents they wish to honor, and not the man; and they look on those who grumble as *petits bourgeois* who are not thoroughly identified with his principles. They are perfectly willing to allow them to take part in the demonstration, but reserve the management for themselves.

Delegations were sent yesterday evening to the different railway stations in full expectation of his arrival, and large crowds were assembled at the different French houses of resort in Prince, Houston, Wooster and Greene streets anxiously awaiting the arrival of news and discussing the probabilities with an animation peculiarly Gallic. However, a telegram was received late in the evening from a friend of the Communist cause at Niagara announcing his passage through there at twenty minutes past six P. M. on the Great Western Pacific and Atlantic Despatch, so that he must arrive here to-day. A committee has been appointed to meet him at the station and offer him a welcome to the city. As soon as his decision is known as to the hotel he wishes to stop at, the banquet arrangements will be made at once to make the demonstration worthy of the occasion and the man.

The principal societies associated in the affair are the Union Republicaine, the Refugees of the Commune, the French sections of the International and the Société Française des Travailleurs. The most prominent members of the committees are MM. Pelletier, Millot and Hubert.

HIS ESCAPE TO AUSTRALIA.

A Surprise for New South Wales.

ALBURY, New South Wales, April 8, 1874.

The principal item of news during the month is the landing of the chief members of the Communists who were deported by the French government to the penal colony of New Caledonia and who were landed in Newcastle, near Sydney, in the colony of New South Wales. Subjoined are the particulars:—

Considerable excitement was caused in Newcastle on the morning of 27th ult. by the announcement that the P. C. E., bark, from New Caledonia, had brought a number of escaped prisoners from the convict settlement at that place. Upon inquiry our correspondent ascertained that the report was well founded. Further confirmatory evidence was furnished by the following telegram, which reached this office on Friday afternoon, addressed to the editor of the Sydney *Morning Herald*:—

SIR—M. Henri Rochefort and M. Paschal Grousset, as literary brothers of yours, beg to present their compliments on their arrival at the free land of Australia, and beg you to communicate the following despatch to Reuter's agency:—"Six of the most important Communists—Henri Rochefort, ex-member of the Government of the National Defence; Paschal Grousset, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs; Francis Jourde, ex-Minister of Finance; Olivier Pain, ex-Secretary of Foreign Affairs; Achille Ballière, ex-aide-de-camp to General Rossel, and Caven Grant Achille, ex-commandant of the National Guard, escaped from the peninsula Ducos, New Caledonia, and arrived safely in Newcastle." They will be in Sydney to-morrow.

The French Consul Attacks the Refugees—The Biter Bit.

NEWCASTLE, April 6, 1874.

The manner in which the French refugees escaped is a mystery at present in Newcastle. It is the general impression that the authorities at New Caledonia winked at their escape. The vessel is said to have been searched at 4 P. M., but it did not sail until the next morning. At that time two French men-of-war passed the P. C. E., but did not again search the vessel. It is supposed that the fugitives came on board at night, and stowed themselves away with the knowledge of persons on board.

M. Henri Rochefort (ex-member of the Government of National Defence), accompanied by the five celebrated members of the Paris Commune now in Sydney—M. Paschal Grousset, M. Francis Jourde, M. Olivier Pain, M. Achille Ballière and M. Caven Grant Achille—visited the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday night, and were accommodated with seats in the Speaker's gallery. They remained about an hour.

The following is the letter of M. Simon, the French Consul at Sydney, to which reference has been made in our telegrams:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

SIR—As some of the inhabitants of Sydney, carried away by their generous impulse, appear to be mistaken as to the real position of the men who have been sentenced to transportation and detention from France to New Caledonia, I consider it to be my duty to let the public know the truth concerning them.

Far from being only "exiles or political offenders," in the ordinary meaning of these terms, they have been sentenced to transportation and detention for offences punished at all times by the criminal laws of their country.

They have been tried under the special jurisdiction of the military tribunals because Paris and a portion of France were at the time under the "*état de siège*," and none but military tribunals could try prisoners accused of crimes such as those for which these men were convicted. They have never been considered in the light of ordinary political offenders, and they have no right to assume that name, which, in any case, would not palliate crimes such as plunder, arson, murder of hostages, &c., which have been committed under the temporary rule of the Commune in Paris, and complicity in which, however indirect it might be, these men cannot now repudiate.

I shall feel obliged by your inserting this letter in your paper, if you think it necessary in the interest of truth and justice. I have the honor to be, sir, your very obedient servant,

G. EUGENE SIMON, Le Consul de France.

CONSULAT DE FRANCE, SYDNEY, April 2, 1874.

The following letter in reply to the communication of M. Simon appeared in the Sydney *Empire* of the 4th inst.:—

[Translation.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EMPIRE:—

Several honorable citizens of Sydney are inclined to believe that my intention is to prosecute M. Simon for libel, in answer to his letter this day about us.

Please be perfectly sure, Mr. Editor, that although we are not to bring such a man before any court of law, still we intend offering him our most disdainful contempt. M. Simon, Consul for France at Sydney, knows better than anybody else the weight of the imposure of which he is guilty.

He knows well enough that we have not been sentenced as ordinary convicts, but as political offenders, on which account we are to-day on the same footing as Ledru Rollin, Louis Blanc, De Gent and many others previously sentenced, and who are at the present moment the most honorable leaders of French democracy.

M. Simon, who was a consular agent at the time I was a member of the Government of National Defence, has been under my control. He is now under M. MacMahon's, and he only obeys his master.

He will be, perhaps, to-morrow an official under M. Gambetta, and will do then what he is doing to-day to keep his appointment.

It is not the first time we see such things from French officials; but this fact will certainly look rather strange in the free land of Australia, where we hope that political offenders will feel safely protected, notwithstanding the dissatisfaction and angry tone of administrative time-servers. Thankfully and truly yours,

SYDNEY, April 3, 1874. HENRI ROCHEFORT.

HOW THEY ESCAPED.

The same paper gives the following version of the escape:—

"We are in receipt of papers from New Caledonia from the 11th to the 25th of March. The *Moniteur* of the 25th of March, in its shipping news, notifies that the three-masted British vessel P. C. E., 291 tons, D. Law, master, left Nouméa for Newcastle, in ballast, with one passenger, a Mr. W. Sutherland. No mention is made of the six Communist stowaways, whose escape would appear, up to the 25th ult., to have been still unknown to the colonists at large. At the time of the departure of the P. C. E. the Governor was absent from the *chef lieu* on one of his official visits to the penal establishments at Narai, Bourail and Canala. He came back to Nouméa in the transport Cher, on Monday, the 23d ult., after having been away from Nouméa for twenty days. The P. C. E., in which the six Communist prisoners escaped, put to sea on the Friday before Governor de la Richerie's return to Government House. The Commissary of the Marine, M. Le Clos, accompanied the Governor on this official visit to the outer penal stations, during which the State prisoners escaped. The steam transport Vire, which had been despatched to give assistance to those who were shipwrecked in the Catherine Lord, had come back into port the very day before the P. C. E. left for Newcastle; and on the same day, the 19th, the steam gunboat Rapière had returned to Nouméa from the northwest coast of the island. The Vire left Nouméa again for the Isles Pines on the 20th—the day the P. C. E. sailed for Newcastle—the Rapière also leaving for Uomo, Bourake and Uarai on the day after the escape of the prisoners. The sailing transport Cyclope and the Rapière gunboat appear, therefore, to have been the only war vessels in the harbor when the P. C. E. left Nouméa. The gunboat Bayonnette was absent from the port at that time, and did not come back from Canada until the 22d of March. A French merchantman, named the Coq du Village, came to anchor off Nouméa on the 19th, and two other merchant vessels (English) were also in the harbor when the P. C. E. left. The *Moniteur*, which reports the departure of the vessel in which the prisoners escaped, also published the announcement that Governor de la Richerie (by an ordinance of the 7th of January, 1874) has been promoted to the grade of Commander of the Legion of Honor. A person who has made several visits to Nouméa in vessels trading to that port states that when the government are informed of the escape of Communists (which he says is a very common occurrence) the authorities report that "they have not missed any."

So far the escapees have kept their future movements with the greatest reticence from the public.

Interview with M. Henri Rochefort.

SYDNEY, April 11, 1874.

Profound astonishment, coupled with considerable incredulity, was occasioned in the community on the 27th ult., when rumors became current that several French prisoners, escaped from Nouméa (New Caledonia), had that morning arrived at Newcastle in one of the cattle ships trading between the two ports. The first intimation as to the important character of the escapees was supplied by themselves in a brief telegram to the Sydney *Herald*.

Simultaneously with its receipt arrived another message from the French Vice Consul to his *chef* confirming the news, and upon this I at once made arrangements to proceed to Newcastle and learn particulars of the escape. From this I was deterred by learning that if I went I should probably pass them on the voyage. Altering my arrangements accordingly, I was patiently awaiting the arrival of the regular passenger steamer, by which they were expected, when I discovered that three French gentlemen, supposed to be of M. Rochefort's party, who had come in by one of the outside boats, had proceeded to Courvoisier's Hotel. Hailing the first cab, I drove to the well known French *café*, inquired if M. Rochefort was in, received an affirmative reply, asked the proprietress to send up my card, to which she replied, "It is no use, sir, they have already refused to see the newspaper people, but intend next week setting apart a day for receptions." Next week, thought I, they may be 1,000 miles away, either on their voyage to Europe or the still worse alternative—again in the hands of the French authorities, *en route* for their late island prison. No, I was not to be bluffed in that way. Pulling out my card case, I supplemented my name with the affix NEW YORK HERALD correspondent, and, again facing the worthy lady, asked if she would "hand that in." Twisting the card nervously, she blandly told me, "It is no use, sir; they won't see any one." My rejoinder—"Perhaps so, but you can hardly refuse sending in my card"—induced her to call a waiter and forward it as desired. An instant after a foreign looking gentleman came from their room, and grasping me warmly by the hand, said, in good English, "M. Rochefort will be delighted to see you. Come this way." Following my guide, who for prudential reasons, desires to remain *incognito*, until he has finished his business at Nouméa, I was ushered into the presence of three distinguished looking foreigners. Taking the situation at a glance, I instantly selected M. Rochefort as the most remarkable looking of the group. My guess proved correct. Introductions were followed by my warmest congratulations upon their escape, and their expression of obligations for the interest Mr. Bennett had previously taken in obtaining for the readers of the NEW YORK HERALD particulars regarding the new home of the Communists. When I said M. Rochefort is the most remarkable man of the three I did so simply from a physiognomist point of view. He is a man slightly above the middle height, spare, but powerfully framed, with a splendid head, upon which confinement and anxiety have sprinkled numerous gray hairs. A high, prominent and round forehead rises over a pair of deep-set, large grey eyes, very quiet in repose, but sparkling with nervous vivacity upon the least excitement. Nose prominent, terminating in a peculiarly curved point, heavy mustache, small goatee and general expression sarcastic, yet conveying the impression that he is as warm a friend as he is a dangerous foe. M. Jourde is about the same height, of slighter build, has a thoughtful, intellectual face, to which a light, full beard gives a Teutonic rather than a Gallic cast. M. Grousset is shorter, darker, and apparently possessed of a calmer, more weighty intellect than his *confrères*. A man who is particular in costume, but in council would form his opinions more leisurely, adhere to them tenaciously, and is the only one of the three who knows anything about the English language. M. Rochefort having informed me that the only interview he would give the press was that to your representative, and finding our *tête-a-tête* disturbed by some visitors from New Caledonia, as well as hearing that from the time of leaving Nouméa until then their only repose was such as could be obtained in a sail locker, I arranged for a private interview next day. Punctual to appointment, I met M. Rochefort with his Nouméan friend, whom for the nonce I shall term his interpreter, as, in fact, he is only known as such to the outside public. MM. Grousset and Jourde joined us in a few moments, and, after exchanging the compliments of the day, I said to M. Rochefort:—"From your experience of the voyage out and at New Caledonia how do you consider the *déportés* are treated by the French government officials?"

M. ROCHEFORT—Personally I have been well treated, but that is not the general rule. Food bad, long voyage, in cages made with iron bars. M. Grousset was 162 days on the passage, including four weeks anchored at the Cape of Good Hope, and during all that time the *déportés* were never allowed to leave their cages for exercise or air. At New Caledonia they get very small rations of bread and meat now. At first they were allowed to work and were paid for it. They could then buy what they required. About six months ago a despatch, sent from Versailles in April, was received at Nouméa informing the Governor that 600,000 francs, granted in 1872 as payment for work done by the *déportés*, would not be allowed any longer, because the government would not renew the scandalous *ateliers nationaux*. That despatch I have seen. The statement that the *déportés* will not work, made by Ministre de la Marine Amiral de Dampierre d'Hornoy is not true (emphasized). They are not permitted to work, and are now actually worse off than *des forçats*. Supplies of meat, being only imported from Australia, often run short when sailing vessels make long voyages. Then the *déportés* get no meat. For three or four months they only got salt pork and scurvy broke out. Since then they were for three weeks without meat of any kind.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—Where were you domiciled?

M. ROCHEFORT—With about 800 other *déportés* at Peninsula Ducos.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—Are there any other prisoners of note there?

M. ROCHEFORT—Oh, yes; Assi, Arnold, Renard, Regère, Henry, Wolowski, nephew of a member of the present Assembly, and others.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—How long were you at New Caledonia?

M. ROCHEFORT—Three months and ten days. We left there on the 20th.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—Would you oblige by furnishing me with some details of how you escaped?

M. ROCHEFORT—I prefer not, as it may be useful to some of our friends who are still there not to disclose how it was managed. It might also implicate others.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—It is rumored that the French government connived at your escape. Is that so?

M. ROCHEFORT—Most ridiculous; nothing of the kind.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—Had the influence of the Internationals anything to do with it?

M. ROCHEFORT—Nothing whatever.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—What are your intentions as to the future?

M. ROCHEFORT—To proceed direct to England.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—When do you propose leaving here?

M. ROCHEFORT—Next month.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—Do you propose residing in England or on the Continent?

M. ROCHEFORT—Partly in each for a time. Shall be guided by circumstances.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—M. Rochefort, regarding you as the embodiment of modern republicanism in Europe, I should like to know your opinion as to the future success of the movement.

M. ROCHEFORT—Monsieur, the position of affairs in Europe is so changed since I left, and having received no political correspondence in the interval, I am unable to give a correct idea and should prefer not expressing one.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—I have heard that M. Brissac, an ex-member of the Commune, is confined at Ile Nu, chained to a convict of the worst class. Are you aware if it is true?

M. ROCHEFORT—M. Jourde, having been living at Nouméa for some time, can give you most information about Ile Nu.

HERALD CORRESPONDENT—I should feel obliged if you would do so, M. Jourde.

M. JOURDE—Certainly. I will this evening write you some of my experience. It will be at your service if you call to-morrow.

He has kept his word, and I now enclose you the statement of the ex-Minister of Finance. The royalists of Sydney have treated their visitors with decided coolness. The French Consul has endeavored to prejudice public opinion against them by publishing a card charging them with being convicts instead of mere political offenders, besides insinuating that they were guilty of murder, arson and the assassination of the hostages, statements fully disproved by reference to the London *Times*. The first courtesy shown M. Rochefort, who was then joined by the whole of his *compagnons de voyage*, was in the name of the NEW YORK HERALD, placing at their disposal a steam yacht for a trip round the harbor and up Parramatta River to the orange groves. They thoroughly enjoyed the excursion, and from one and all it elicited the response "*Charmant!*"

Movements of M. Rochefort in Sydney, New South Wales—The Story of the Escape.

SYDNEY, N. S. W., April 11, 1874.

The event of the month has been the escape of M. Rochefort and his *confrères*, a fact so unpalatable to the Versailles government that when a telegram from the French Consul at Sydney was received there the reply was, "Repeat your telegram; cannot believe it." At first sight it must have looked like a canard, from the fact that as these escapees were the most important political prisoners deported to New Caledonia the surveillance upon them was of the closest kind; and how they could all have got away in the same vessel appears so extraordinary as to induce the belief that they were permitted to escape. They are not in anywise indebted either to the clemency of MacMahon or the kind offices of the officials at Nouméa, and, although they have declined to furnish information to the press, I have in course of conversation obtained such scraps of news that, when I connect them with what I received from Nouméa subsequent to their escape, I can supply the only correct narrative likely to meet the public eye until after M. Rochefort reaches Europe, perhaps not even then. The *grand coup* was planned by a friend who was careful not to intrust his secret to any person except those directly interested, thus preventing the chance of having a leaky accomplice. The prospect of being sentenced to ten years for aiding the escape of a prisoner was quite sufficient to inculcate the strictest secrecy. M. Jourde had received permission to accept a clerkship in Higginson's stores, Nouméa; Ballière had also a situation in the town. Bastiat Granthilde, another of the party, was working for a storekeeper at the peninsula, and a portion of his duty was to pull a boat with supplies daily from Nouméa. Grousset, Rochefort and Pain being in durance at Ducos, regular communication could thus be kept up between the two parties. The time for attempting the escape was fixed for the date of the Governor's visit to the station at Bourail and Canala, and accordingly they were fortunate in finding a vessel ready to leave at that period. On March 18 the P. C. E. cleared out for Newcastle, with one passenger, a Mr. Sutherland. By a strange coincident, on the same day Ballière and Jourde got leave to go fishing with the ci-devant boatman from Ducos, where the prisoners' roll is called over every alternate day, and, having answered, they are comparatively free for forty-eight hours. That the fishing party did not return to Nouméa in the evening occasioned no remark there at the time, though it subsequently led to the discovery that Rochefort was missing. About nine that evening the boat silently embarked its living freight, crept stealthily from the shore with muffled oars, and, keeping the hull of the P. C. E. intervening with the outlook on board the war steamer Vire, gained the side of their ark. The captain and mate were ashore, the crew enjoying the blessings of an anchor watch as, one by one, the refugees gained the deck and descended into their hiding places. To leave the boat alongside or allow her to drift ashore would have furnished a clew to how they escaped. If she disappeared the first inference might be that the fishing party had insanely put to sea in her or were capsized, and drowned. Her best anchorage was clearly at the bottom, and she was speedily consigned to a resting place "full fathoms five." The morning broke without a ruffle on the water, the watchful passenger eagerly scanned the shore for any indications of missing friends, the Vire got up steam prior to leaving for the Ile de Pine, the pilot comes on board, and at last the ship heads for the Dombea passage with a light wind. With nerves stretched to their utmost tension the stowaways listen for any signal of danger. It looms astern in the approaching form of the Vire. Has she heard the news already and is she in pursuit? Quickly she gains on the slowly moving bark, she is alongside as they pass the reef, then, starboarding her helm, heads south, and the most imminent danger is past. Speed on, good bark; place three miles between yourself and the reef, and if the British flag is worth as much as when it covered the Trent the safety of the fugitives is secured. The rubicon is passed, and then, while the sails are idly flapping without a breath of wind, with land still in sight, Nouméa breaks out into a ferment of excitement. The fishing party are missed, perhaps drowned. Perchance they have remanded at Peninsula Ducos. The town is searched; they are not there. Now for the peninsula. The cordon of sentries guarding its land side are interrogated. No one has passed that way. The roll is called, when oh! worse than all, Rochefort is *non est*. Armed guards are sent to search the vessels in harbor, with orders to shoot the prisoners at sight, if, when arrested, they made the slightest resistance. Gendarmes and native police scour the bush all night. Still no recapture. If any suspicion that they were in the P. C. E. arose on the morning of the 21st, it was not until the steam gunboat Rapiere had left port bound north, and there was no other war vessel there until the afternoon, when the Governor returned to the *chef lieu*. The P. C. E., though visible that morning, was then flying before a fair wind and the excitement became intenser than ever, as various little facts cropped up and proved almost positively that she had borne away the chief of the *déportés* "*Sacred!*" what a report to have to send to France! The time for further concealment having terminated, the refugees emerged from their hiding places and are introduced to the Captain under fictitious names, which are carefully maintained until an accident shows that one, at least, has assumed a *nom de guerre*. Among the Captain's stock of light literature is a number of *Bow Bells* (April, 1870), containing a portrait and biographical sketch of Comte Rochefort-Lucay. The resemblance between the picture and one of his passengers strikes the skipper so strongly that he calls attention to it, and the original instantly accepts the responsibility, with "*Je n'est pas remarquable, c'est moi, Victor Henri de Rochefort-Lucay.*" A few hours adverse wind changes to a favoring gale, before which the vessel flies to her destination in six days—the fastest passage ever made by a sailing ship and rarely equalled by a steamer. On their arrival in Sydney Rochefort at once telegraphed to a member of the French Parliament who has the control of his financial affairs to provide funds for the passages, &c., of the entire party. The requisite arrangements were promptly made with the Oriental Bank, London, intimated by telegram to their branch establishment here, and at once decided Rochefort to leave by the first and speediest mode of transit. During his stay here he and his *confrères* have declined all attempts to being brought prominently before the public. Unfortunately for the honor of the country he represents, M. Simon, the French Consul, with more zeal for his present employers than regard for his own reputation for veracity, wrote to one of the daily journals asserting that "these men are not mere political exiles—they have been convicted of offences punished as criminal offences." The retort of the refugees assumed six different shapes, each bearing the signature of the writer. All were brief and sarcastic; but the most pointed of all was that of Paschal Grousset, who, starting with the assumption that the Consul is either a liar or a fool—a liar in stating that they were transported instead of being deported, and a fool in not claiming their extradition if they were criminal offenders—challenged Simon to do so, but the rash official had not even the manliness to do it. In justice to Rochefort, it is only right to say that he denies in the most positive manner having had any sympathy with the extreme Reds, known as the Communists. Their leaders signed a warrant for his arrest a week prior to the murder of the hostages. He then instantly left Paris and was captured by the Versaillists several days before the massacre. That he has always been a bitter anti-Bonapartist is to him a source of pride, believing that no honorable man could do otherwise than revile the author of the massacres which followed the *coup d'état* and the unrighteous edicts by which the flower of France found early graves in Cayenne and Algeria, or eked out an existence far from friends and home. To him the pen is mightier than the sword, and he feels more proud of being a member of the press than of being a scion of one of the oldest families among the noblesse of Europe. His wife died three months after his conviction, leaving three children, two of whom are in their native land, the third in Switzerland. Bastiat Granthilde was the first to leave Australia. He has an uncle in San Francisco, and has gone there by a sailing ship to settle down. Ballière, who has been an architect of repute in Paris, remains here for a time to practice his profession. Rochefort and Pain sail to-day for San Francisco per mail steamer. Grousset and Jourde are yet undecided whether they will go to-day or not. Pain informs me that he and Rochefort purpose writing a series of articles on New Caledonian affairs, and if time will admit of a stay in the Empire City they will publish the first in your columns.

The arrival here at any other period of the British discovery ship Challenge, on her mission in the cause of science, and the German frigate Arcona, *en route* to interview Cacobau on the subject of German claims on Fiji, would have excited some interest. Now they are hardly noticed. The Challenger has made some wondrous revelations from ocean depths. Hundreds of new specimens have been sent home from Melbourne, where she first called, and her temporary museum is at present bare. On leaving Sydney she will proceed in a direct line to the coast of New Zealand, taking soundings along the route of the proposed cable now in course of manufacture at London. The Arcona's mission is spoiled by Cacoban's cession of his quondam kingdom to England. Perhaps John Bull may foot the bill. A new form of government, arranged temporarily for Fiji by two representatives of the King party, the British Commission, the United States and German Consuls, gives the latter gentlemen seats in the executive, pending the formal possession of the group by England. The special auditors have confirmed the charges of malappropriation made against the late government by the planters' committee. Woods and his fellow adventurers have within two years got rid of $620,000 as best suited their own interests. They obtained $210,000 by taxation, pledged the public credit for the balance and now owe an additional $25,000 for interest. Wagga Wagga has supplied a sequel to the Richbone romance by a startling case of will forging. A wealthy illiterate settler named Buckley died intestate, and a former acquaintance of his produced a will, dated thirty years ago, by which a shepherd named Maher was bequeathed the estate. The latter cunningly kept in the background until advertised for, then appearing quite ignorant of his good fortune. The government, as heirs at law, disputed the claim, proved conclusively that it was in Maher's handwriting, and purpose providing him with free apartments during the few remaining years of his life.

Green's trial for the murder of Maxwell Reynolds by means of an infernal machine has been postponed to enable the police to complete their evidence. They have made very little progress up to the present, and will probably have to enter a *nolle prosequi*. The Victorian elections are progressing in favor of the Francis Ministry as representing the protectionist party. Sir James McCulloch, the late Premier, is reported to have split and to be organizing a free trade party in opposition to the policy of the government. The strongest plank in the ministerial platform is the reform of the Upper House, and, as in this the general voice of the people accords, McCulloch appears to head a forlorn hope. From Northern Queensland there are warnings against any further rush of miners. The new diggings are fully occupied, food is at famine prices and hundreds are returning. Meantime the government are doing what they can to alleviate the distress, and traders are pushing forward live stock, &c.

South Australia adds to the news of the month an extensive strike among the copper miners, of whom 2,000 are out. Their wives and children have assumed the offensive by assaulting the officials at the great Wallaroo and Moveta mines. The authorities have not interfered and the directors of the various companies interested now decline to make the slightest concession.

Dr. Lang, the veteran historian of Australia, with the frost of three score and ten thick upon him, leaves for Europe by this month's mail. One of his last public acts here was to sign an address to Rochefort and his companions congratulating them upon their escape.

P. S.—I have just learned from M. Grousset that he and M. Jourde, having completed their arrangements here, sail this afternoon for San Francisco.

SKETCH OF HIS CAREER.

The escape of Comte Victor Henri de Rochefort-Lucay from the penal colony of New Caledonia and his passage through the United States, on his way to Europe, have brought him so prominently before the American public that a great deal of curiosity is naturally excited as to the character, principles and antecedents of the man. No small amount of speculation is indulged in as to his future movements, and therefore a glance at his past history and political career may be useful as serving to indicate the course he will be likely to pursue and the influence he may be able to exert in the politics of France. He is the son of the Marquis Claude Louis Marie de Rochefort Lucay, a strong legitimist, who in early life married a wife from one of the most republican of republican families. He was born on January 30, 1830. By both he inherits the almost irreconcilable principles of absolute monarchy and free republicanism. Six months after his birth came the downfall of the Bourbon monarchy, leaving his father to struggle in hopeless antagonism to the declared will of the people. Rochefort was sent to the College of St. Louis to study medicine and prepare himself for a great career in what is considered a high profession in France. But his genius took another turn. Instead of a close application in class and in the dissecting room he chose to scribble verses of poetry in his dormitory, carrying his fancy in this direction so far that when the examination day came he was most ingloriously "plucked." In 1851, after failing as a teacher of Latin to juveniles, he secured a position in the Hotel de Ville as a copying clerk, at the same period indulging in occasional poetic freaks. Leaving the employ of the government in 1861, ten years later, he gave all his time to writing, contributing to the "Dictionnaire de la Conversation" and occasionally assisting as an editor in the office of the *Charivari*. Between 1856 and 1866 he wrote a great many vaudevilles, chiefly in collaboration with other authors, and finally he became one of the editors of *Figaro*, with a handsome salary. His leading contributions to literature were published under the name of "Eugene de Mirecourt," which *nom de plume* was appended to "La Marquise de Courcelles" and "Le Roman d'un Jeune Homme Pauvre," the latter well known by its having furnished Sothern with one of his best characters, that of Victor in "The Hero of Romance." His articles in *Figaro* were republished in three separate annual instalments. The first, in 1866, was entitled "Les Français de la Décadence;" the next, in 1867, "Le Grand Bohème," and the last, in 1868, "Les Signes du Temps." By this time he had, however, become notorious for the constantly increasing virulence of his attacks upon the government and for the unscrupulous abuse he levelled against the personal characters of the members of the imperial family. The patience of the Ministry was speedily exhausted, and the proprietors of *Figaro* were subjected to repeated and costly prosecutions. Several judicial condemnations followed, and at last the sale of *Figaro* was prohibited. That he has exercised a considerable influence in the course of events in France for the last seven years, and largely contributed to the fall of the Second Empire, there can be no reason to doubt; but he must be a superficial observer indeed who would rank him among the able men of the republican party, such as Gambetta, Favre, Grévy, Picard and Louis Blanc. Rochefort is not a great man in any sense of the word, but he is none the less one of those men who are bound to make their mark in history. Judging from his character, temperament and attainments, nature never intended him for a leader of men. A ready and brilliant writer, he is too prone to descend to scurrility and coarseness, and his powers of sarcasm are almost unrivalled. He is doubtless a valuable acquisition to a party aiming to pull down a tyrannical government, but, unless experience has considerably changed him, a positive obstruction to the building up of a free one. His faults are more errors of judgment than the result of a vicious disposition; for the number and extent of the sacrifices he has made for republicanism leave no room to doubt the earnestness and sincerity of his motives. His hatred of tyranny and injustice is so intense and overpowering as to lead him to extremes that are often as unjustifiable as the acts of the despots he condemns. During the agitations previous to the Franco-German war he was the embodiment of the popular hatred to Cæsarism, and bespattered every member of the imperial family and the chief supporters of the dynasty with the grossest abuse. His famous *Lanterne* and the *Marseillaise*, a daily paper which he afterwards established, were the true exponents of the reddest shade of the Parisian irreconcilables, and held an immense sway over the minds of the inflammable and fanatically republican population of the capital.

There seems to be no doubt that Rochefort in early life was an Orleanist. Many men of far higher pretensions in other respects have changed their convictions, but Rochefort was evidently ashamed of the fact and strenuously denied it. On being reproached with his presence at the funeral of ex-Queen Marie-Amelie, in London, he said he was there merely by accident, but in his book, "La Grande Bohème," he admits he went by design. However that may be, he is now, beyond doubt, a republican of the reddest hue, as few who know anything of the man will be inclined to question.

He appeared on the political arena at a time when a man of his character and temperament had every opportunity to acquire notoriety. France had submitted quietly for sixteen or seventeen years to the personal rule of the Third Napoleon; but a new generation was fast springing up that chafed under the yoke, and ominous mutterings of discontent were heard, that competent judges pronounced to be the sure prelude to revolution. Gradually, but surely, a strong phalanx of republicans were being sent into the Corps Législatif; republican newspapers were established and were obtaining a wide circulation, and the long forbidden "Marseillaise" was chanted defiantly in the streets. Louis