MILKING IN AUSTRALIA.—This is a very serious operation. First, say at four o'clock in the morning, you drive the cows into the stock-yard, where the calves have been penned up all the previous night, in a hutch in one corner. Then you have to commence a chase after the first cow, who, with a perversity common to Australian females, expects to be pursued two or three times round the yard, ankle deep in dust or mud, according to the season, with loud halloas and a thick stick. This done, she generally proceeds up to the fail, a kind of pillory, and permits her neck to be made fast. The cow safe in the fail, her near hind leg is stretched out to its full length, and tied to a convenient post with the universal cordage of Australia, a piece of green hide. At this stage, in ordinary cases, the milking commences; but it was one of the hobbies of Mr. Jumsorew, a practice I have never seen followed in any other part of the colony, that the cow's tail should be held tight during the operation. This arduous duty I conscientiously performed for some weeks, until it happened one day that a young heifer slipped her head out of an ill-fastened fail, upset milkman and milkpail, charged the Head Stockman, who was unloosing the calves, to the serious damage of a new pair of fustians, and ended, in spite of all my efforts, in clearing the top rail of the stock-yard, leaving me flat and flabbergasted at the foot of the fence.—From 'Scenes in the Life of a Bushman' (Unpublished.)
Article: ‘Milking in Australia’ by Samuel Sidney, John Sidney

From *Scenes in the Life of a Bushman* (unpublished)


Author(s):

- Samuel Sidney
  Writer on railways, emigration, agriculture and livestock; son of Abraham Solomon, M.D. Educated for the law; worked for a time as solicitor in Liverpool; turned to journalism, assuming, in lieu of "Solomon", the name "Sidney"; used it thereafter for all purposes. From 1846 to 1848 published several books on railways and the gauge question. With his brother John Sidney, who had been six years in New South Wales, wrote Sidney's *Australian Handbook*, 1848; book was immediate popular success; sold thousands of copies. Brought out Sidney's *Emigrant's Journal*, 1848-1850 (for first few numbers, John Sidney was co-editor). Made speeches on emigration, wrote pamphlets on the subject. In 1852 published *The Three Colonies of Australia*. Was for many years hunting correspondent and writer on agricultural exhibitions for *Illustrated London News*; for *Live Stock Journal* wrote series of articles titled "Horse Chat". Was one of assistant commissioners for Great Exhibition. In 1860 appointed secretary of Agricultural Hall Co.; organized and managed horse shows at the Hall.

Sidney's acquaintance with Dickens and his connection with *H.W.* resulted from the prominence that Sidney and his brother had attained as authorities on Australian emigration. In a letter to Miss Burdett-Coutts, February 4 1850 (*Heart of Charles Dickens*, ed. Johnson, p. 164), in which he referred to Samuel Sidney merely as "the brother", to John Sidney as "the Bushman brother" and to the brothers jointly as "the writers of those pamphlets", Dickens stated that he had some time before directed a gentleman to "confer with them on the practicability of our doing something useful, in the Periodical, on the subject of emigration". He continued: "In sending me those books, they wrote me a very earnest letter, expressive of their desires to become contributors on that subject". The books, stated Dickens, gave him knowledge of the state of society in New South Wales "of which one could have no previous understanding, and which would seem to be quite misunderstood, or very little known, even in the cities of New South Wales itself". (The Sidneys' *Voice from the Far Interior of Australia. By a Bushman*, 1847, contains such information).

Sidney became a regular *H.W.* contributor, writing first on Australian matters, later on other subjects of his interest. Never in Australia himself, he based his *H.W.* writings on Australia (as he did his other writings on Australia) on histories and other works, statistical and other reports, information from persons—such as Caroline Chisholm—connected with emigration, letters sent to him by emigrants, and information furnished him by his brother.

Dickens's letters contain comparatively few comments on Sidney's *H.W.* contributions. "A Gallop for Life" Dickens found "surprisingly good" (to Wills, August 31 1851: MS Huntington Library). "Lost and Found in the Gold Fields" he thought "very poor"; another of Sidney's
articles was "such careless slip-slop as to be almost unintelligible, and quite unsuitable unless the second part be much better" (to Wills, March 10 1853; August 7 1854). An article on Robert Stephenson that Sidney submitted to A.Y.R. Dickens did not publish, holding that enough had already been written on the recently deceased engineer; Wills was to "Pay well for the article nevertheless" (to Wills, October 30; to Sidney, November 3 1859). One of Sidney's later articles Dickens printed despite its "disgusting snobbery", revising it so as to make the snobbery as little offensive as it could be made (to Wills, August 26 1866: MS Huntington Library).

Wills's chip "Official Emigration", May 1 1852, indicates that one of Sidney's statements in "Three Colonial Epochs" had been called into question. Sidney had quoted Earl Grey as saying that after the cessation of the distress caused by the railroad failures, persons who emigrated under Government auspices were chiefly "the refuse of workhouses". Wills explained that the statement resulted from literary misconception (for which we are in no degree responsible) of a sentence in the minutes recording a conversation of Earl Grey.

For "India Pickle", two names appear in the Office Book author-column: "Capper Sidney" (no ampersand). "Capper" is in part written over another notation or is itself in part overwritten, but the name is not marked out. Payment in one sum, rather than split payment, implies that the article was not a joint writing of the two contributors. Capper, resident in India and Ceylon, would be the more logical author of the item; but Sidney, who had not been in India, also contributed an article (derivative) on India.

Harper's reprinted, in whole or part, six of Sidney's H.W. contributions, two of them acknowledged to H.W.

Author: Anne Lohrli; © University of Toronto Press, 1971.

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
Australian Dictionary of Biography

• John Sidney

Son of Abraham Solomon, M.D. Like his brother Samuel, changed his name to "Sidney". According to A Voice from the Far Interior of Australia. By a Bushman, "arrived in New South Wales at seventeen years of age, fresh from school, with ... the best sort of English and French education that a lad up to that age gets, when he prefers hunting, shooting, and fishing, to prizes and schoolmasters' praise". Stayed in New South Wales for six years, working "in the wildest parts of the colony" at sheep, cattle, and horse raising. Returned to England, 1844. In 1847 Smith, Elder & Co. published A Voice from the Far Interior of Australia. By a Bushman, with prefatory note reading: "To the magistrates and country gentlemen of England, Scotland, and Ireland, these observations are respectfully addressed, by their obedient humble servant, John Sidney." Samuel Sidney stated, concerning the book: "... I wrote [it] for my brother, who was a close observer but no writer" ("Preface", The Three Colonies of Australia, 2nd ed.). Co-author with his brother of Sidney's Australian Hand-book, 1848; co-editor with his brother of first numbers of Sidneys Emigrant's Journal. Returned to Australia "in 1848, before the fifth number was published" (Samuel Sidney, "Preface", The Three Colonies of Australia, 2nd ed.).
In his letter to Miss Burdett-Coutts, February 4, 1850, Dickens stated that the Sidneys (unnamed) had written him "a very earnest letter, expressive of their desires" to become contributors to H.W. on the subject of emigration; by the date of his writing, however, he remarked, "I fancy the Bushman brother has gone back again"—i.e., to Australia. Since John Sidney had returned to Australia more than a year before the date of Dickens's letter, Samuel Sidney must have written the "very earnest letter" in his and his brother's name.

"Milking in Australia" (not listed in the Office Book) appeared, as a "filler" in the original issue of H.W. It was there stated to be "From 'Scenes in the Life of a Bushman' (Unpublished)". In Sidney's Emigrant's Journal, the unpublished "Scenes" is attributed to the Sidneys jointly and, also, to Samuel Sidney alone: In the Journal, August 1849, appeared a chapter from "Scenes from the Life of a Bushman" stated to be "an unpublished Australian Tale, 'Raphael Armorer, the Bushman', by the Authors of 'The Australian Hand-book'". Chapters that appeared in later numbers were stated to be from "Scenes in the Life of Raphael Armorer, the Bushman"; one of these later chapters was indicated as "By the Editor"—i.e., Samuel Sidney, who was then sole editor of the Journal. The "Scenes" was evidently a joint composition of the two brothers in the same sense as was A Voice from the Far Interior of Australia.

Aside from his share in "Milking in Australia", John Sidney appears in H.W. indirectly, as the source of the personal observations, experiences, and stories related in various of Samuel Sidney's Australian contributions. In addition, Samuel Sidney's "Rio de Janeiro and Its Feather-Flowers", stated to be an excerpt from "the manuscript journal of a traveller", may be based on or taken from John Sidney's record of his second voyage to Australia.

Harper's reprinted "Milking in Australia" without acknowledgment to H.W.

Genre(s):
- Prose: Snippet
  Article in any prose non-fiction genre, characterised by its shortness: a 'fragment or scrap of information, etc.' (OED), usually less than 1 page in length.

Subject(s):
- Agriculture; Fishing; Forestry; Gardening; Horticulture
- Animals; Domestic Animals; Pets; Working Animals; Birds; Insects
- Australia—Description and Travel; New Zealand—Description and Travel

Citation (MHRA): Sidney, Samuel, and John Sidney, 'Milking in Australia', Household Words, I, 30 March 1850, 24

N.B. The layout of prose articles exported to PDF follows the two-column format of the original, but does NOT preserve the original line breaks. The layout of poems exported to PDF follows the original line breaks, but does NOT attempt to replicate the original indentation or stanza structure. For all these features please refer to the facsimile pages on DJO.

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