

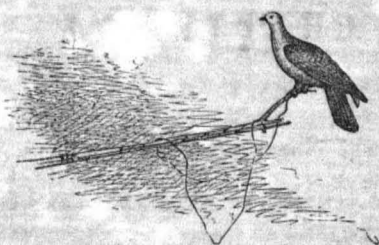
been given, was one of these. He assumed the attributes not only of a king, but of a god, and after conquering a rival district on Savaii, he took, as has been stated, the name, "O le Tupu o Savaii"—the King of Savaii. After he was killed, Malietoa succeeded to the same title; but it now confers no power, and is considered merely as complimentary.

Each district and town has its own government. An elderly chief generally presides, or is considered as the head of the village, town, or district. In these primary fonos or meetings, the affairs are generally discussed by the alii (chiefs) and tulafales (landholders), and what they determine on is usually followed. The great fono, or general assembly, is seldom called, except on matters affecting the whole of the island or district. The subject is calmly debated, and most thoroughly discussed; the final decision, however, is not by vote, but is adopted after consultation, and is governed by the opinions of the most influential chiefs. It thus appears that these assemblies have little influence upon the course the chiefs may have determined to pursue, and serve chiefly to insure the united action of the district in carrying the designs of the chiefs into effect. The tulu-fano or decree, promulgated by the council, is to be obeyed, and those who fail are punished by the Malo, being plundered by them of their lands, &c.

In the descent of the office of chief, the rule of primogeniture is not strictly followed, but the authority and title always remain in the same family.

It is the custom at the fonos to compliment the head chiefs, and invoke blessings on them in prayers, that their lives may be prolonged and prosperous. I was informed that these assemblies were conducted with much ceremony, but I was much disappointed in the one I witnessed. The forms of proceeding may, however, be different when strangers are not present. The fonos generally begin at an early hour in the morning, and last until late in the afternoon. One of the most pleasing of the ceremonies is that in which the chiefs are supplied with food during the time the meeting is in session. After the food is prepared and dished in fresh banana-leaves, the wives and daughters of the chiefs attire themselves in their best dresses. They then enter the fale-tele, and approach their fathers, husbands, and brothers, &c., before whom they stop, awaiting their instructions as to whom they shall hand the viands. When they have obeyed their directions, they retire. The whole duty is conducted with the utmost decorum, and while it is going on, no conversation is permitted except in a low voice. I learned from the missionaries who had attended some of their meetings, that the

manner of speaking was good, and the self-possession of the orators remarkable. The speakers generally have persons near them who act as a sort of prompters, and remind them of the subjects it is desirable they should speak of. The whole proceedings are conducted with the utmost quiet, and no disturbance is allowed.

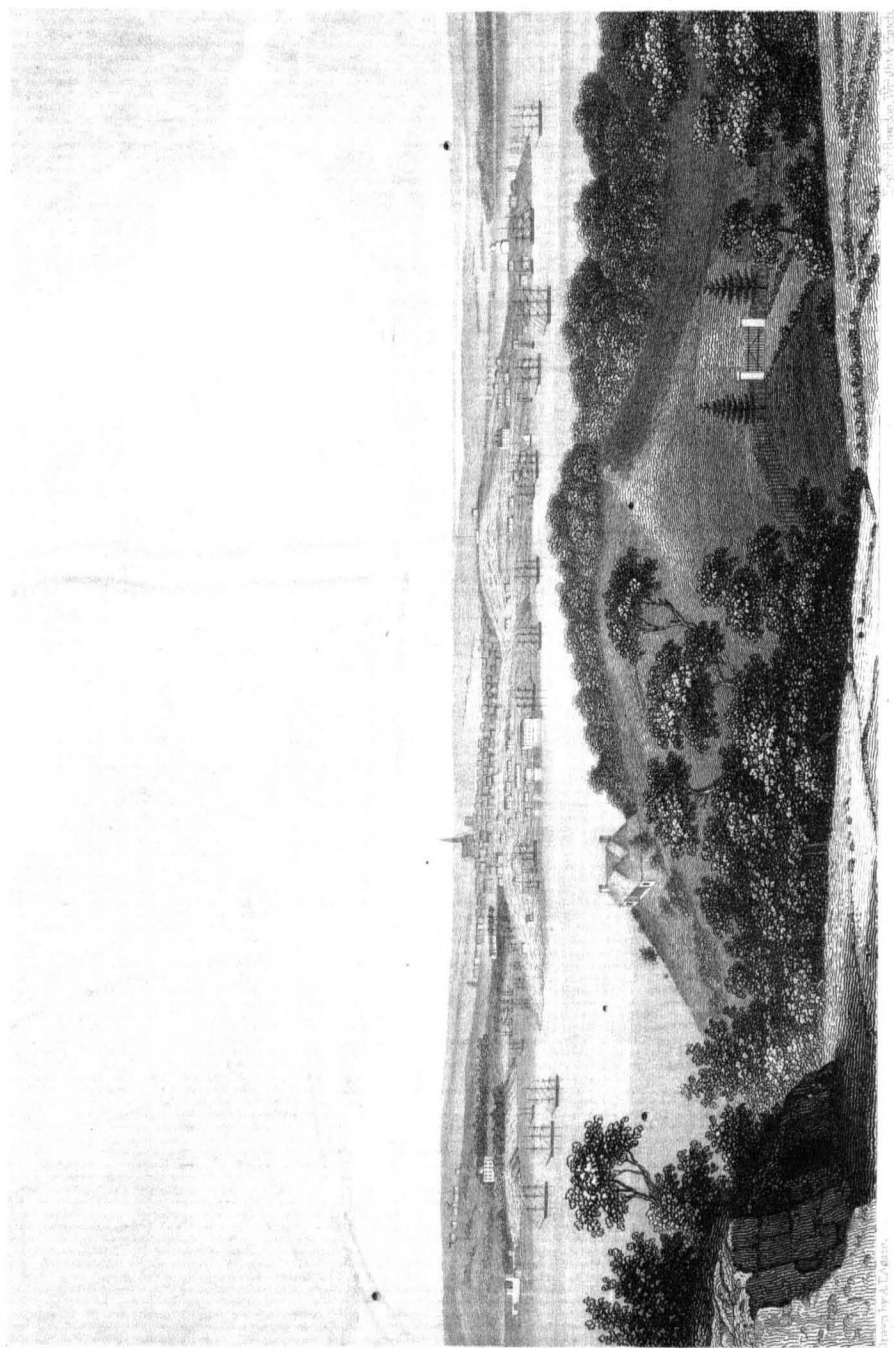


SAMOAN FET PIGEON.

CHAPTER VI.

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THE BRIDGE, THE RIVER & CANAL

Engraved by A. C. Smith.

CHAPTER VI.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

1839.

On the 10th of November we weighed anchor from Apia, and made all sail to the westward; and on the 11th had lost sight of Savaii. Officers were stationed for the three following nights to look out for the periodic showers of meteors, but the nights were cloudy, and none were seen.

On the 12th we made Uea or Wallis Island, and at 3 P. M. were off its southern end, which is situated in latitude $13^{\circ} 24' S.$, longitude $176^{\circ} 09' 22'' E.$ Instead of a single island as might be expected from the name, there are nine separate islands, varying in circuit from one to ten miles, and enclosed with one extensive reef. The land is, in general, high. We made a running survey of this group.

While off Wallis Island, we were boarded by a canoe, in which was a native who spoke a little English. I had thus the means of communicating with the shore, and resolved to take advantage of it by landing the prisoner Tuvai. I conceived that this would accomplish all the ends I had in view in removing him from his native island, particularly as the course of the wind is such, for the greater part of the year, as to prevent canoes proceeding from Wallis Island to the Samoan Group, and there is in consequence no communication between them. His fate would of course remain a mystery to his countrymen, and the impression I had hoped to produce on their minds would be effectually made. My original intention had been to land him at Hoorn Island, which is two days' sail further to the south; but a similar opportunity might not perhaps have presented itself there.

Having decided on this course, I committed him to the charge of the person who had boarded us, and gave particular directions that

he, with his rolls of tapa, should be immediately taken and presented to the chief. The customs of the islanders promised that this would insure him good treatment, by giving him at once a protector; or at least that he would be only robbed by a single person, and not exposed to the pillage of the whole population, who would in all probability have stripped him of his property the instant he landed, if not restrained by the authority of a chief.

Tuvai seemed delighted at being released from his confinement on shipboard, and took his leave by shaking hands with the sentry. Thus, while the culprit has not been exposed to any unnecessary severity of punishment, I feel satisfied that I fully accomplished my object of convincing his countrymen that they could not hope to commit murders upon their white visitors with impunity.

These islands appear to be well wooded, and we saw many large native houses upon them. As we drew near, we perceived upon a rocky flat a few natives waving a white flag. The native who came on board informed me that the inhabitants were numerous, and that among them there were ten white men.

It is said that the Catholic missionaries who were expelled from Tahiti were landed on this island, when, the moment they reached the shore, they were stripped of all they possessed. They, notwithstanding, commenced their good work, and are reported to have performed it effectually.*

The entrance to the lagoon is on the south side of the group, and the pilot, if so he may be called, informed me that there was ample room for the ship to pass within the reef. Wood, water, and refreshments may be obtained here.

Towards evening we stood on our course with a strong breeze, regretting that time did not permit of landing and obtaining a more full account of this little-known land. But the season for operating in high southern latitudes was rapidly approaching, and I was aware that, to say nothing of the extent of sea that was to be traversed, I must spend a considerable time at Sydney in making the necessary preparations for a long and arduous cruise.

Hoorn Island was made the following day. It was discovered in 1616 by Schouten and Le Maire. Its highest point is two thousand five hundred feet above the sea; on its northern side many rocks are visible, and the whole surface appears bold and precipitous, affording, as far as we could perceive, little soil for cultivation. Cocoa-palms in

* While in the Feejee Group, I learned that a Catholic mission had already been established there; that it was prospering, and that it had already been the means of saving an English vessel from capture, by a timely notice to the crew.

considerable numbers, were, however, observed upon a low point projecting from its southern side.

This island is inhabited, and I have been informed that an unsuccessful attempt to establish a mission upon it was made by the Catholics in 1840.

Taking our departure from Hoorn Island, we made all sail to the southward, passing about sixty miles to the westward of the Feejee Group, which was to be afterwards a subject of close examination. On crossing the meridian of 180° we dropped the 14th of November, in order to make our time correspond to that of the Eastern Hemisphere, to which our operations were for some months to be confined.

On the 18th, we saw Matthews' Rock, whose height we ascertained to be one thousand one hundred and eighty-six feet. It is of a conical shape, about a mile in circumference, and principally composed of conglomerate. A dike of basalt was observed occupying about a third of the width of the island. In order to obtain specimens, a boat was despatched to endeavour to effect a landing: the undertaking proved difficult, but was accomplished by Dr. Fox and Midshipman Henry, who swam through the surf. They brought off some specimens of porphyritic rock, and a few small crystals of selenite. Patches were seen on the northern side of the island appearing as if covered with sulphur. As has been so often mentioned in speaking of other uninhabited islands, great numbers of birds were seen upon and around it. This island is in latitude $22^{\circ} 27' S.$, longitude $172^{\circ} 10' 33'' E.$

For several days preceding the 18th, a current had been perceived setting southwest; it was tried here, and found to set in that direction at the rate of three fathoms per hour. The wind began here to haul to the northward and eastward.

We had the misfortune on this day to lose one of our Six's thermometers, after having made a cast of two hundred fathoms with it. The difference between the temperature at the surface and at that depth, was 14° , the former being 76° . The following day (19th), a cast of six hundred fathoms was made by the Peacock. The temperature below was 50° , while that at the surface was 73° .

On the 24th, we had a remarkably severe storm of thunder and lightning; the ship appeared filled with the electric fluids; the points of the conductors, the mastheads, and yardarms were illuminated with Corpo Santos; and several of the officers declared that they had felt electric shocks. The gale blew violently, beginning from the northwest, and then shifting to the southwest. During its continuance the thermometer fell seventeen degrees.

For the two following days we had head winds, and a heavy cross sea.

On the 26th November, we made Ball's Pyramid, which appears to be a barren rock rising abruptly from the sea.

On the 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th, we experienced a current setting at the rate of twenty-four miles a day to the northeast. On the 28th it set east-northeast at the rate of twenty-five miles per day. From the latter date the current began to set strongly to the southwest, showing that we had entered the stream which sets in that direction along the coast of New South Wales.

At sunset on the 29th November, we made the light-house on the headland of Port Jackson. We had a fair wind for entering the harbour, and although the night was dark, and we had no pilot, yet as it was important to avoid any loss of time, I determined to run in. I adopted this resolution, because, although we were all unacquainted with the channel, I was assured that the charts in our possession might be depended upon, and I stood on under a press of sail, accompanied by the Peacock. At 8 P. M. we found ourselves at the entrance of the harbour. Here a light erected on a shoal called the Sow and Pigs, since the publication of the charts, caused a momentary hesitation, but it was not long before it was determined where it was placed, and with this new aid, I decided to run up and anchor off the Cove. In this I succeeded, and the Peacock, directed by signal, followed the Vincennes. At half-past 10 P. M. we quietly dropped anchor off the Cove, in the midst of the shipping, without any one having the least idea of our arrival.

When the good people of Sydney looked abroad in the morning, they were much astonished to see two men-of-war lying among their shipping, which had entered their harbour in spite of the difficulties of the channel, without being reported, and unknown to the pilots. Their streets were speedily alive with our officers and men, who were delighted at finding themselves once more in a civilized country, and one where their own language was spoken.

The Porpoise and Flying-Fish arrived the next day.

The morning of the 30th was beautiful, and the scene that broke upon us was totally unlike any we had hitherto witnessed during our voyage. In particular, the strong resemblance of all that we saw to our own homes, and the identity of language, gave us indescribable feelings of pleasure.

Our consul, J. W. Williams, Esq., came early on board to welcome us. He communicated the information that the Relief had arrived safely, and landed all our stores, which were ready for us and close

at hand; after which, and about ten days before our arrival, she had sailed for the United States.

Our arrival was duly announced by an officer, and through him I was informed that the governor, Sir George Gipps, would be happy to receive me at eleven o'clock. In compliance with this intimation, I had the honour of waiting upon his Excellency at that hour, in company with Captain Hudson, and our consul. I made my apologies for having entered the harbour in so unceremonious a manner, and stated the reasons why I could not tender the customary salutes.

The reception I met with was truly kind: every assistance which lay in his power was cordially offered; and I was assured that I had only to make my wants known to have them supplied. The use of Fort Macquarie was immediately granted me for an observatory, a position which, being within hail of my ship, gave me great facilities for conducting my experiments, and at the same time superintending my other duties.

Fort Macquarie is situated on Bennilong's Point, which forms the eastern side of Sydney Cove; it covers about half an acre of ground, and is twenty feet above high-water mark; it has a few guns mounted, but they are in no condition for service.*

A few days before our arrival, it had been debated in council, whether more effectual means of fortification were not necessary for the harbour. The idea of this being wanted was ridiculed by the majority; but the entrance of our ships by night seems to have changed this opinion. Had war existed, we might, after firing the shipping, and reducing a great part of the town to ashes, have effected a retreat before daybreak, in perfect safety.†

I may in this place acknowledge the open-hearted welcome we met with from all the government officers, military and civil, as well as from the citizens. Our reception was gratifying in the extreme, and cannot be too highly appreciated. The Australian Club‡ was thrown open to us by its committee, and parties, balls, &c., were given in our honour; in short, all our leisure time was fully occupied in the receipt of these hospitable attentions.

The day after we anchored at Sydney, the brig Camden also arrived. By her we learned the melancholy intelligence of the death of the Rev. Mr. Williams, from whom we had parted so short a time before at the Samoan Group. He was then, as will be recollected,

* I understand that since our visit to Sydney, Fort Macquarie has been demolished.

† Since our visit, however, several new fortifications have been erected.

‡ At the Australian Club, I had the pleasure of seeing Count Strezleski, well known in the United States, who was travelling in New South Wales.

about setting forth to propagate the gospel among the savages of the New Hebrides, and was in full health and high spirits, in the ardent hope of success in his mission. My information in respect to this sad event, was derived from his associate, Mr. Cunningham. They had placed native missionaries at Rotuma and Totoona. Mr. Williams then landed at Tanna, which they found in a high state of cultivation, and where they were hospitably received by the natives. These were Papuans, and spoke a language much like that of the Hervey Islanders. At Tanna, Samoan missionaries were also left, and they thence proceeded to Erromango. Here they found a barren country and a different race of men, black, with woolly hair, who did not comprehend a word of any of the languages known to the missionaries.

The natives, although apparently suspicious, exhibited no symptoms of actual hostility. Mr. Williams, with Mr. Harris, Mr. Cunningham, and the master of the vessel, landed, and were strolling about, amusing themselves with picking up shells. While thus engaged, they had separated from each other, and Messrs. Harris and Williams were in advance of the others. On a sudden the war-shout was heard, and Mr. Harris was seen running, pursued by a crowd of natives. He was soon overtaken by them, and killed. Mr. Williams then turned and endeavoured to reach the boat, but he had delayed too long, and although he reached the water, he was followed into it and slain also.

Mr. Cunningham and the captain escaped, although with difficulty, and after some fruitless attempts to recover the body, left the island. Mr. Cunningham was of opinion that the attack had not been pre-meditated, but arose from a sudden desire to obtain possession of the clothes of the persons who were on shore; he was also satisfied that a single loaded musket in the hands of those left in the boat, would have been the means of saving these two valuable lives.

I had, in a conversation with Mr. Williams at Upolu, expressed my belief that the savage inhabitants of the New Hebrides would not be safely visited without the means of defence. He had in reply declared himself averse to the use of fire-arms or any other weapon in the propagation of the gospel; being of opinion that it would be more easily and effectually disseminated without them.

The missionary cause has sustained a great loss in Mr. Williams's death; for in him were united a true spirit of enterprise and fervent zeal, with great perseverance and a thorough knowledge of the native character. I still think with melancholy pleasure of the acquaintance I had the good fortune to form with him.

The town of Sydney may, for convenience of description, be considered as divided into two parts; the line that separates them coincides

nearly with that of George Street, the Broadway of Sydney. The old town lies on the east side of this line, and occupies the eastern promontory of the Cove; it is the least reputable part, and is almost filled with grog-shops and brothels, except at its extreme eastern quarter, where there are a few genteel buildings, in agreeable situations. The streets to the south and west of George Street are well laid out, and are rapidly filling up with good houses.

George Street extends in a direction nearly north and south for two or three miles, as far as Brickfield Hill, which is also nearly covered with buildings. On George Street are many of the public buildings, among which are the barracks, the markets, the post-office, and the banks. The remaining buildings which front upon it are chiefly occupied as shops, in which almost every description of European manufactures may be procured, and some of them at moderate prices. Several streets run parallel, and others at right angles to George Street.

The houses of Sydney are for the most part well built and commodious. On the western side of the town are many handsome buildings and extensive public grounds; towards the eastern side is a large square, called Hyde Park, upon which are situated the offices of the colonial government, the church of St. James, and the Catholic cathedral.

Sydney contains about twenty-four thousand inhabitants, which is about one-fifth part of the whole population (120,000) of the colony; and about one-fourth of this number are convicts. In truth, the fact that it is a convict settlement may be at once inferred from the number of police-officers and soldiers that are every where seen, and is rendered certain by the appearance of the "chain-gangs." The latter reminded us, except in the colour of those who composed them, of the coffee-carrying slaves at Rio; but the want of the cheerful song, and the apparent merriment which the Brazilian slaves exhibit in the execution of their tasks, was apparent.

When viewed from the water, Sydney appears to great advantage. It lies on the south side of the harbour, and covers two narrow promontories, separated and bounded by coves. The ground rises gradually, and thus exhibits its buildings to great advantage, giving it the air of a large commercial city. It is chiefly built of a drab-coloured sandstone, resembling that employed in the new public buildings at Washington, but of a lighter hue. Red brick is also used in building, and the suburbs contain many neat cottages and country-seats. The sandstone is a beautiful material, but is not very durable. The view of the town is diversified with the peculiar foliage of Australian trees, among which the pines of Norfolk Island and Moreton Bay

are most conspicuous. At the time of our arrival, the trees were infested with locusts (*Cicada*), which made a noise absolutely deafening. The sound this insect produces is the same as that made by the analogous species in the United States, but is continued here during the heat of the day, and ten times more deafening.

Handsome equipages abound; and the stage-coaches are numerous. These, with the costume and demeanour of the more respectable part of the population, struck us as being more like what is seen in our towns than in those of Europe. Every thing has a new look about it, and the people manifest more of the bustle and activity of our money-making and enterprising population than are to be seen in old countries. The acquisition of wealth seems to be the only object of all exertion here, and speculation was as rife as we had left it in the United States. Cutting down hills, filling up valleys, laying out and selling lots, were actively going on. There are in truth many particulars in which the people of Sydney resemble those of America. This is observable, among other things, in the influence of the public press. In Australia, however, it is more licentious than any except the lowest of our newspapers; taking unwarrantable liberties with private character, and is far from being remarkable for discrimination.

All the religious sects of the British Islands have their representatives here. Each has its ardent advocates, who appear to be in continual war with those of the others. The contest between them had risen to a great height at the time of our visit, which is probably to be ascribed to the agitation of a question in relation to the distribution of the school-fund.

In one particular, a most striking difference is to be observed between the scenes to be witnessed at Sydney, and in the cities of the United States. This consists in the open practice of the vice of drunkenness, which here stalks abroad at noonday. It is not rare at any time, but on holidays its prevalence surpasses any thing I have ever witnessed. Even persons of the fair sex (if they may be so called) were there to be seen staggering along the most public streets, brawling in the houses, or borne off in charge of the police. However highly coloured this picture may be thought, it is fully corroborated by the police reports of the Sydney papers on Monday mornings. The police-officers themselves are among the venders of the intoxicating liquid.

The facilities for indulgence in this vice are to be seen every where in the form of low taverns and grog-shops, which attract attention by their gaudy signs, adapted to the taste of the different orders of customers, as "the King's Arms," the "Punch-Bowl," the "Shamrock,"

the "Thistle," the "Ship," the "Jolly Sailors." Of these, two hundred and fifty are licensed by the government, or more than one to each hundred souls. Among them a small shop was pointed out, which from the extent of its custom, yielded the enormous amount of £200 for rent to its owner annually, a sum far beyond the apparent value of the whole property. The quantity of rum which is consumed in the colony may be estimated from the facts, that the revenue derived from its importation was in 1838 £189,450, and that the supply amounts nearly to eight gallons annually for every individual in the colony.

This state of things arose, of course, originally from the habits of the abandoned persons who formed the nucleus of the population. It might, therefore, have appeared to be the duty of the successive governors to restrain the vice, or even to render its commission impossible, by prohibiting importation. So far as penalty goes, this has been attempted, and a fine of five shillings is levied on all who are convicted of drunkenness before a magistrate; but, on the other hand, rum was actually at one time the only circulating medium, and in it the prices of land, labour, and food were estimated, and for it they were freely exchanged. Even for the charitable purpose of erecting a public hospital, Governor Macquarie granted to four individuals, who defrayed the whole expense, the monopoly of the right of purchasing all the spirits imported into the colony, and of landing them free of duty, for several years, with the additional consideration of a quantity of rum from the king's stores.*

The old Government-House, where I had the honour of seeing Sir George Gipps, is a low, cottage-shaped building, which has no pretensions to beauty, and appears to have been built at different times, having been enlarged as often as additional accommodation was needed. During the summer months the Governor resides at the Government-House at Paramatta.

A new palace or government-house is at present building, in the public grounds which lie to the eastward of the old one, from which a road extends through them towards the South Head of Port Jackson. This road is the usual promenade and drive of the citizens of Sydney. After leaving the government domain, it enters Woolloomooloo, a region covered with the country-seats and cottages of the higher classes, which although originally little more than a barren rock, has been

* It is related, that a highly respectable individual transmitted complaints against Governor Macquarie to the home government; and that, by way of answering these expostulations, the reply of the Governor was: "There are but two classes of persons in New South Wales, those who have been convicted, and those who ought to be."

brought into a high state of cultivation by its occupants. The drive in this direction may challenge comparison for beauty with any part of the world. It presents innumerable and picturesque views of the noble bay, and of the promontories that jut into it, occupied by mansions and ornamental grounds. On reaching the South Head, a view of great beauty is also seen. The point thus named, is a bold headland, about two hundred and fifty-four feet in height, on which stands the light-house, a fine tower, with a brilliant revolving light.

The public grounds are in part occupied by a Botanical Garden, which was laid out by Mr. Cunningham, the botanist of the colony, to whose memory a monument is about to be erected in the garden, which is itself a memorial of his fine taste, and his successful cultivation of the science he professed. Mr. Cunningham perished by a melancholy death, which is still spoken of with regret. He had, in his capacity of botanist, accompanied Major Mitchell, the Surveyor-General of the colony, on a tour of exploration in 1835. In the pursuit of his researches, he wandered from the party, and did not return. As soon as he was missed, the native guides were sent in search of him, but returned without having succeeded in finding his traces. Major Mitchell then instituted a fresh search, in which the tracks of Mr. Cunningham's horse were found, and followed for ninety miles. Within this space three places were seen where he had stopped and encamped. From the last of these, the tracks of the horse were again followed, until the carcass of the animal was found dead through fatigue and starvation, with the whip tied to the bridle, and all his accoutrements about him. Retracing their steps to his last encampment, they ascertained, on close examination, that he had there killed his dog for food, and his footsteps were seen as if making rapid strides for the bed of a river, which he had followed to a pool, into which he had plunged. Farther down the river, some shells were found near the remains of a fire, which had evidently been kindled by a white man. Here all further traces of him were lost, and the search abandoned in despair.

Some months afterwards, a second search was made by Lieutenant Vouch. In the course of this, some natives were taken near the Brogan river, in whose possession a part of Mr. Cunningham's clothing was found. They stated that a white man had come to them in a state of great exhaustion; that he was hungry, and they fed him, but that during the night they had become afraid, and killed him. The body was never found.

Lieutenant Vouch inferred that Mr. Cunningham had become deranged by the severity of his sufferings, and that this had caused him

to wander about at night, which, with other suspicious movements, had alarmed the natives, who, under the influence of their terrors, had murdered him.

Thus ended the useful life of one who had raised himself to eminence by his own exertions, and had, by his virtues and scientific acquirements, gained the esteem of all the pure and good of the colony, by whom he will be long affectionately and honourably remembered.

These grounds have many pleasant shady walks, and afford an agreeable promenade for the inhabitants of Sydney; and one of them encircles the whole, with occasionally a rural seat and arbour.*

The aspect of the country around Sydney is sufficient to prove that New South Wales is very different, in its general features, from other parts of the globe. This is chiefly owing to two causes: the aridity of its climate, and the prevalence of sandstone rock. This rock may be readily examined at the Heads of Port Jackson, and on the shores of the many coves that surround this beautiful harbour. Its colour is pale yellow or drab, and it lies in beds nearly horizontal and of various thickness, whose upper surface, except where broken by ravines and water-courses, forms a table-land. The average elevation in the neighbourhood of Sydney is from three hundred and fifty to four hundred feet. At this level it extends in gentle undulations to a great distance inland.

This arid soil yields but a scanty growth of vegetable products, which, consisting of burnt pasture, and thinly-scattered trees and shrubbery, give to the whole region a look of desolation. The grass does not every where conceal the bare rock, and the thin soil supports only a few gum trees (*Eucalypti*), and bushes. Throughout the wide plain there is little to relieve the eye, except here and there a small cultivated spot.

As I did not consider it necessary that any of the naturalists should accompany the squadron on its southern cruise, they were left at Sydney, with orders to visit such parts of the country as might appear to offer the best opportunities for making collections in their respective departments.† This enabled me to obtain much information in rela-

* At the end of the walk around the government domain, the following inscription is calculated to excite a smile: "Be it recorded, that this road round the inside of the government domain, called Mrs. Macquarie's Road, so called by the Governor on account of her having originally planned it, three miles and three hundred and seventy-seven yards in length, was finally completed on the 13th day of June, 1816."

Governor Macquarie has literally put his mark on the town of Sydney, where hardly a single street, square, or public building can be passed, without seeing his name cut in stone.

† For orders, propositions of officers, and letters respecting their employment, see Appendix XI.

tion to the interior of this interesting country, its productions, and its original inhabitants. The narratives of several of these journeys will be given hereafter, but so much of what they learned as is general, together with such additional information as was gained from other sources, will form an appropriate introduction to the account of their tours.

The interior of the country, for a distance of sixty or eighty miles to the north and south of Sydney, presents the same characters which have just been described, except that deep gorges are from time to time met with, and that some parts of it are of a more undulating character.

On proceeding inwards from the coast, the country at a distance seems to be traversed by ridges, but on approaching their apparent position, they melt away into rounded elevations, of very gradual inclination. Still farther to the westward, the undulating region is bounded by inaccessible declivities and lofty mural precipices. These are the edges of the Blue Mountains, which are seen from Sydney, skirting the horizon like low hills, which have so little appearance of elevation that it at first seems to be difficult to conjecture how they came to be called mountains, when seen only from the coast. This ridge runs north and south, and rises at some points to the height of three thousand five hundred feet.

It is not many years since this ridge was considered as inaccessible, and the deep gorges which intersect its sandstone rocks as impassable. Its peaks rise in many places abruptly, and present such difficulties, as to have deterred travellers from attempting to scale their summits, or from seeking a passage through the ravines, which in the season of rains are swept by impetuous torrents.

The same description will apply to the mountains which bound the Illawarra district to the west, where sandstone also occurs, broken into precipitous heights, and deep gorges. At the Kangaroo Pass, the Illawarra Mountain is nearly two thousand feet high; its rapid acclivity is covered with a dense vegetation, until within three hundred feet of the summit; whence upwards a perpendicular face of rock is exposed. The path through this pass winds among the narrow breaks of the rock, and is toilsome to both beast and rider.

In one of the gorges which open upon this pass is a beautiful waterfall. The deep narrow glen opens abruptly upon the passenger, and exhibits its bare rocks, and the tiny stream is seen leaping from one projection of the rocky shelves to another, which break its headlong course, until, lost in spray, it reaches the bottom, where its waters collect, at the depth of two hundred and fifty feet below its upper edge,

in a limpid pool. This gorge opens to the westward, and looks out upon a mountain range.

Seven miles further, a descent by a similar path leads into the Kangaroo Valley. This valley is nearly twenty miles in length, and has an average breadth of about three miles; it is surrounded on all sides by vertical precipices, from one thousand to one thousand eight hundred feet in height.

In consequence of the aridity which has been mentioned as a character of the soil about Sydney, and which is also a prevailing character throughout the rest of the country, there are many continuous miles of waste lands, which by the inhabitants are called "forests." These are very different from what we understand by the term, and consist of gum trees (*Eucalypti*), so widely scattered that a carriage may be driven rapidly through them without meeting any obstruction, while the foliage of these trees is so thin and apparently so dried up as scarcely to cast a shade. Thus miles may be traversed in these forests without impediment. A few marshy spots are occasionally seen, covered with thickets of brush; and in other places there are tracts so dry that even the gum tree will not grow upon them, and which receive the direct and scorching rays of the sun.

The exceptions to this general character are found in the occasional rising of basalt in conical peaks. The productions of the soil where this rock prevails, are in striking contrast to those of the arid lands of the sandstone formations; and the geological character of a basaltic ridge can be detected at a distance by the luxuriant vegetation with which it is clothed. These ridges become more and more frequent as the distance from the coast increases, and are occasionally interspersed with granite.

The latter rock is first seen in the Clwyd Valley, near Mount Victoria, and about eighty miles from Sydney. This valley lies in the western mountain range, which separates the waters that flow towards the east and west. The land falls gradually to the westward, until, in the Darling Valley, at a distance of four hundred miles, it is only about four hundred feet above the sea.

For some distance beyond Mount Victoria, granite characterizes some extensive ridges, and basaltic mountains are occasionally combined with those of granite.

Beyond Bathurst, about one hundred and twenty miles to the west of Sydney, a compact limestone, in which there are many caverns, occurs between ridges of granite and basalt; but, according to Major Mitchell, the sandstone reappears on proceeding further west, towards

the Darling Valley, and is accompanied by the same sterility as upon the coast.

Before reaching the western barrens there are many fine and fertile valleys, among which, besides Bathurst, is that of Wellington, distant about two hundred miles from Sydney. Both of these are already settled.

As to the more remote parts of the interior of New Holland, no positive knowledge has yet been obtained. The prevailing opinion appears to be, that an extensive desert extends throughout it; and this opinion is supported by citing the dry and scorching character of the winds which blow from the west. The greatest distance to the westward which has been explored, is only four hundred and fifty miles, which is not a fourth part of the distance to the western coast. It will thus be seen that a vast field of discovery is still open, which will no doubt be ere long explored, under the auspices of the British government.

To the southwest of Sydney the same compact limestone seen at Bathurst makes its appearance at Argyle, also about one hundred and twenty miles distant from the former place. This stone yields lime of good quality, and is also a valuable material for building.

According to the best accounts, the range of granite appears to begin in Van Diemen's Land, and after being interrupted by Bass's Straits, runs through New South Wales in a broad belt. Near Bass's Straits it rises into a lofty group of mountains, called the Australian Alps, the only snowy ridge known in Australia, and continuing thence northward, it forms the dividing range of the waters.

The basaltic ridges of this southern region are said occasionally to reach a height of four thousand feet, and a limestone similar to that of Argyle and Bathurst, which contains many fossils, extends to the "Limestone Plains," where it is succeeded by the usual sandstone. How far this limestone extends to the southward has not been ascertained. The finest districts in this southern section are those of Port Philip, Argyle, Bass, and Bong-Bong.

To the northward, beyond the Hunter river, the country is intersected by basaltic ridges, which increase in number until they merge in the Liverpool Mountains, of which many of them are spurs. Between these ridges, and to the north of the Goulburn branch, sandstone again prevails, and forms a great extent of barren country; but the smaller valleys being generally bordered by ridges of basalt, are for the most part fertile.

The Liverpool range of mountains, although it has been traced for

many miles in an east and west direction, is said by Major Mitchell to be a prolongation of the range which runs parallel to the coast. According to him, at the distance of one hundred miles inland, the range trends to the northward, and thence pursues a course to the northeast.

To the northward of the Liverpool range, plains of considerable extent spread over the country, and form the district of New England, which affords fine pasturage. These plains lie at an altitude of between two and three thousand feet, and from that circumstance enjoy a much cooler climate than Sydney, although five degrees nearer the equator.

The most remarkable part of New South Wales is the district of Illawarra, situated on the coast, about sixty miles to the south of Port Jackson. This is a narrow strip, that seems to be formed by the retreat of the sandstone cliffs from the sea, to a distance which varies from one to ten miles. The cliffs or mountains vary in height from one thousand to two thousand feet. This region is extremely fruitful; its forests are rich with a great variety of foliage, and of creeping plants which twine around the trees. The great size and number of the trees served to remind the gentlemen who visited it, of the vegetation of the tropical islands, luxuriant with tree-ferns, bananas, banyans, &c. This luxuriance is in part owing to a rich and light soil, composed of decomposed basalt and argillaceous sandstone, mixed with vegetable mould, but more to the peculiarity of its climate. The high cliffs which bound it to the west, keep off the scorching winds which reach other parts of the coast from that quarter, and the moisture of the sea-breeze intercepted by them, is condensed, falling in gentle showers. For this reason, it is not subject to the long and frequent droughts that occur in other parts of New South Wales.

These droughts are sometimes of such long continuance, that we at one time read of the whole country having been burnt up for want of rain, a famine threatened, and the sheep and cattle perishing in immense numbers.

These have been succeeded by long-continued rains, which have raised the rivers thirty or forty feet, flooded the whole country, deluged the towns and villages, and completely destroyed the crops. Such floods carry with them houses, barns, stacks of grain, &c., drown the cattle, and even the inhabitants are in some cases saved only by being taken from the tops of their houses in boats.

The year of our visit, 1839, added another instance to the list of disasters of the latter kind; and the published accounts state that twenty thousand sheep were lost in the valley of the Hawkesbury by

the floods. Such evils indeed appear to be of frequent occurrence, and the settler in New South Wales has to contend with the elements in an unusual degree.

Such disasters are equally injurious to the husbandman and the wool-grower; for the same cause that destroys the crops, also carries off the stock, so that it is only the large capitalist who can successfully struggle against or overcome such adverse circumstances. It is some recompense for this state of things, that one or two favourable years will completely repay all former losses; and it is due to the perseverance and industry of the inhabitants of New South Wales to say, that they have already, in spite of the difficulties they have had to encounter, made it one of the most flourishing colonies on the globe.

What these difficulties are, may be better understood by quoting some remarks of Major Mitchell, the Surveyor-General, who has had greater opportunities than any other person of examining the country, every accessible portion of which he has visited.

"Sandstone prevails so much more than trap, limestone, or granite, as to cover six-sevenths of the whole surface comprised within the boundaries of nineteen counties, from Yass Plains in the south, to the Liverpool range in the north. Wherever this happens to be the surface, little besides barren sand is found in the place of soil. Deciduous vegetation scarcely exists there; no turf is found, for the trees and shrubs being very inflammable, conflagrations take place so frequently and extensively in the woods during summer, as to leave very little vegetable matter to turn to earth.

"In the regions of sandstone, the territory is in short good for nothing, and is, besides, generally inaccessible; thus presenting a formidable obstruction to any communication between spots of a better description."

The information obtained from other sources does not, however, sustain so very unfavourable a picture; it may, indeed, be true, when applied to the labours of husbandry alone, but there is reason to believe, on the other hand, that the excellence of the great staple of the country, its wool, is in a great measure to be ascribed to the short and sweet pasturage which these very sandstone districts afford. These lands produce, except during the prevalence of excessive droughts, a nutritious herbage, and form a dry healthy soil, on which sheep thrive particularly well, although it is said that one hundred acres of this description, of average quality, will not support more than five or six head of cattle.

In seasons of drought, the flocks and herds are driven into the interior. The year of our visit (1839) was accounted a wet one, and

some parts of the sandstone district which produced good crops of grain,* in drier seasons would have been dry to barrenness.

In such a climate it is not surprising that there are hardly any streams that merit the name of rivers. It is necessary to guard against being misled by the inspection of maps of the country, and forming from them the idea that it is well watered. Such an impression would be erroneous, and yet the maps are not inaccurate; streams do at times exist in the places where they are laid down on the maps, but for the greater part of every year no more is to be seen than the beds or courses, in which, during the season of floods, or after long-continued rains, absolute torrents of water flow, but which will within the short space of a month again become a string of deep pools. Were it not for this peculiar provision of nature, the country for the greater part of the year would be without water, and, consequently, uninhabitable.

The principal rivers which are found to the east of the Blue Mountains are, the Hunter, George, Shoalham, and Hawkesbury. None of these streams are navigable further than the tide flows in the estuaries, which sometimes extend twenty or thirty miles inland, for beyond them they are usually no more than twenty inches in depth. Each of these streams has numerous tributaries, which drain a large area of country, and during heavy rains the main branches are suddenly swelled, and cause the floods which have been spoken of. To the west of the mountains, the water-courses are of a very different character. The Darling, for instance, through a course of seven hundred miles, does not receive a single tributary, although it is said to drain an extent of sixty thousand square miles. It possesses the other character which has been mentioned, of being frequently reduced to a mere string of pools. The Darling, Morrumbidgee, and Lachlan, unite about one hundred miles from the ocean, and their joint stream is known by the name of the Murray, which after passing through Lake Alexandria, enters the sea at Encounter Bay. The surface drained by these streams is about two hundred and fifty thousand square miles.

Another remarkable occurrence observed in these western waters, is the disappearance of a river in swampy lands, where, as is supposed, it is swallowed up by the caverns in the limestone rocks. This is the case with the Macquarie; which has its source near Bathurst.

According to all accounts, salt is very generally diffused throughout New South Wales, and even all Australia. It has been reported as being found in masses in the sandstone, but no specimens of it were

* In the diluvial flats along the rivers, the wheat crop is usually about twenty-five bushels to the acre. Forty to forty-five bushels have been obtained, but such crops are very unusual.

obtained by the Expedition. Scarcely a well is dug in the interior which is not brackish; and, according to Major Mitchell, Captain Sturt, Oxley, and others, many of the rivers are quite saline in parts of their course. The northern tributaries of the Hunter and Darling are instances of this.

The lakes are also said to be saline, and in some instances sufficiently strong to afford a large and profitable yield of salt; but being very far in the interior, and without the means of transportation, they are of little value. Along the south coast of Australia, such lakes are described as existing near the sea, and may possibly prove of some value to that portion of New Holland.

Lead and iron have been found in small quantities; the deposits of the former are all trifling. Those of the latter afford too impure an ore, and not in sufficient abundance, to be worked.

The minerals stated to be found in Australia, specimens of which were procured for the Expedition, are, chalcedony, agates, jasper, quartz, augite, and stilbite; feldspar, arragonite, gypsum, chlorite, mica in granite; sulphur and alum, galena and plumbago, magnetic iron, iron pyrites, and basalt.

Fossils appear to be confined to particular localities, but are by no means rare.

Columns of basalt of great regularity are found on the coast of Illawarra, but the articulations are all plane.

The water is much impregnated with alum and iron, and its use is avoided by the inhabitants.

Deserts covered with saline plants are said to be frequently met with.

Mitchell, in his travels in New South Wales, speaks of the different heights of the ranges of mountains in this country, some of them in the southern and some in the eastern portion as being covered with snow, and rising four thousand five hundred feet above the sea. To the Blue Mountain range he ascribes a height of three thousand four hundred feet, composed entirely of sand; beyond this the granite or dividing range occurs, which is only two thousand two hundred feet in height. The Canobolus Mountains, further to the westward, are four thousand four hundred and sixty-one feet high, and of primitive rock; beyond these, the extensive plains of the interior, the valley of Millewa or Murray river, seem again to be entirely composed of sedimentary rocks, similar to the sandstone of the coast.

The climate of Australia may be considered generally as very dry; the irregularity of the rains, and the nature of the soil, all prove that it is so; yet the aridity is not marked, as in other countries, by a general tendency in the plants to produce thorns, although the pecu-

liarity of the vegetation makes the dryness apparent in other ways. From all accounts, New South Wales is subject to as great atmospheric vicissitudes, as the middle United States. For a series of years, droughts will occur, which in turn give place to years of successive floods, and these prevail to an extent that can hardly be credited, were it not that the account has been received from good authority. As a striking instance of it, Oxley, in his exploring journeys into the interior, in 1817, found the country every where overflowed, so as to prevent him from proceeding; while Mitchell, in 1835, in the same districts, was continually in danger of perishing from thirst. The latter states that he found unios (or fresh-water mussels) sticking in the banks of rivers and ponds above the level of the water; and also dead trees and saplings in similar situations.

This alternate change must exert a great influence on the productions of the soil; the rivers ceasing to flow, and their beds becoming as it were dry, with the exception of the pools heretofore spoken of, must likewise have an influence. The prevailing westerly winds sweep with force over the whole country, blighting all they touch. The effect of these hot winds is remarkable, for they will in a few hours entirely destroy the crops, by extracting all the moisture from the grain, even after it is formed, and almost ready for harvest; and the only portion that is left is that which has been sheltered by trees, hedges, or fences. They thus destroy the prospect of the husbandman when his crops are ready for the sickle. It is thought, and I should imagine with reason, that were the Blue Mountains a more lofty range, this would not be the case, as they would have a tendency to continue the supplies to the streams throughout the year, by the condensation of the vapour from the sea.

These hot winds come from the direction of the Blue Mountains, and, what seems remarkable, are not felt on the other side of the mountains, or in their immediate vicinity. Yet the extent between the coast and the mountains is not sufficient to produce these winds, being only forty-five miles; and if they proceed from the interior, they must pass over those mountains, an elevation in some places of three thousand four hundred feet. Their great destructiveness is undoubtedly caused by their capacity for moisture, although few observations have as yet (as far as I was able to obtain information) been made upon them, except in relation to the blight they occasion. It has been found that fields which have a line of woods on the side whence they blow, escape injury. The harvest immediately on the line of the coast does not suffer so much, being exempted in part from their withering influence by the moisture that is imbibed from the sea.

There is a portion of this country that is an exception to the general rule of aridity, namely, the district of Illawarra. This forms a belt of from one to ten miles wide, and has the range of the Kangaroo Hills just behind it, of one thousand feet; these are sufficiently high at this distance from the coast to condense the moisture, and also to protect the district from the blighting effects of the blasts from the interior.

One is entirely unprepared for the alleged facts in relation to this country; for instance, Mitchell, in his journey to the south and west, during the four winter months, witnessed no precipitation of moisture except frosts in the mornings, and the thermometer was often below the freezing point. Violent winds occur, which have obtained the name of brick-fielders. They are nothing more than a kind of gust, peculiar to the environs of Sydney, after a sultry day. During one of these gusts little or no rain falls, though the wind frequently approaches a hurricane in force. These winds get their name from bringing the dust from the brick-fields, formerly in the suburbs of Sydney, but which are now almost entirely built over. The temperature during the blow generally falls twenty or twenty-five degrees, in the space of as many minutes; the dust is very great, and the wind so strong, as to cause apprehension lest the houses should be unroofed, or the chimneys thrown down. Our standard barometer was carefully watched during the coming on of two of these gusts, and found to fall 0.200 in., the first time; and the second only 0.020 in.; but the temperature fell each time about ten degrees. They were not, however, true brick-fielders, or such as a resident would so denominate.

Snow has been known to fall in Sydney, but so rarely, that we were told some of the inhabitants were doubtful as to its nature. On the mountains it is not uncommon, and in the winter season is always seen on those in the New England district, which, although three or four degrees to the northward of Sydney, enjoys a much cooler climate.

Major Mitchell often found that the temperature exceeded 100° of Fahrenheit. The heat was, of course, very oppressive, and more so on account of the little shade the native trees afford. The difference of temperature between the day and night is great, but upon this point I was able to get but little information; the meteorological registers that have been kept at Sydney, have omitted the night hours altogether.

I have been favoured since my return with the abstract returns of the meteorological registers during parts of the years 1840 and '41, kept at the South Head of Port Jackson, two hundred and fifty-four feet above the level of the sea. Being kept immediately at the sea-coast, this record does not furnish so satisfactory an account of the climate, as if the place of observation had been farther in the interior.

I have also those kept at Port Macquarie, to the north, and at Port Philip, to the south; the following are some of the results from them.

During the winter months, June, July, August, and September, on the eastern coast, they have the winds from the south to the west quarter, blowing strong and cold, not unlike our northeast winds, accompanied by rain. The quantity of rain which fell in the winter of 1840 was 35·25 inches; in 1841, 45·00 inches. The temperature during this season is from 40° to 78°, mean temperature, 66°. During the summer months, October, November, December, January, and February, easterly winds prevail, and the temperature varies from 56° to 90°; the mean temperature being about 78°. On the south coast, as appears from the tables kept at Port Philip, the winds pursue a reversed order; for during the summer months they are found to prevail from the southward and westward, whilst in winter they come from the eastward. The mean standing of the barometer seems to be higher at Port Philip than at Port Jackson and Port Macquarie; its range is within 0·5 in., and at the two latter places it seldom reached 30·000 in. During our stay at Sydney, the range of the barometer was generally higher than this. The temperature of the winter months varies from 35° to 65°: the mean is about 47°; and that of the summer months from 50° to 98°, the mean being 68°.

The above observations relative to the winds on the south and eastern coast, will serve to explain some of the difficulties that have resulted from vessels taking the southern route round New Holland, to proceed west. These, during some seasons of the year, have met constant head winds and storms. It would seem that the most feasible time to make the southern passage to the westward, is during the winter months. The probable cause of this difference is the immense vacuum which is formed on the vast plains in the interior of New Holland during the summer, that is supplied by these southerly winds. But it is not altogether certain that these winds prevail at any distance from the land. They were described to me rather as regular breezes, prevailing during the day, moderating towards night, and succeeded by light land-winds until the following morning. The intermediate months between the summer and winter, or those about the equinoxes, are attended with variable winds and uncertain weather, but from information I received, they do not appear to suffer here from very violent gales during these seasons. Severe gales are, however, experienced at these seasons at New Zealand, in the same latitude, of which I shall speak hereafter.

Our own results for the time we stayed in Australia will be found under their appropriate head. At Sydney I found a great variety of

opinions existing about the climate. During our stay, the weather was unfavourable for all astronomical observations, and almost the whole time cloudy or rainy. It was amusing to find many of those to whom I had the pleasure of an introduction, apologizing for the badness of the weather. It brought forcibly to my recollection, the fault that Captain Basil Hall finds with the people of the United States, but was far from being annoying to me. I have but little doubt, that the climate is, generally speaking, a healthy one, and not unlike that of some parts of our own country. The colony is subject to occasional epidemics, and from the best information I could procure, it is thought that the mortality is about one in forty-three; this may be called a very small proportion, when one takes into consideration the great quantity of ardent spirits that is consumed.

The general appearance of the vegetation of New South Wales presents many peculiarities. The character of its productions is totally distinct from those of the other portions of the globe. The gum trees, Norfolk pines, and those of Moreton Bay, attract attention from their scattered appearance, and peculiar foliage. All these have a dark and sombre hue. A remark made by one of our gentlemen is characteristic of the former, "that they were ghosts of trees." The leaves being set edgewise causes this appearance, and in consequence give little or no shade. This peculiar position of the leaf is more conspicuous in the *Eucalypti* than in other genera, for in them the leaves are all pendant, while the leaves in the other genera are usually upright, rigid, and somewhat as may be seen in the *acacias* and other tribes. It was observed that both surfaces of the leaves were much alike, having as it were, two upper surfaces. Whether any physiological purpose has been assigned for such an arrangement I have not been informed.

According to observations made by the gentlemen of the Expedition, the great mass of the vegetation of Australia belongs to the natural orders of *Myrtaceæ*, *Leguminosæ*, *Proteaceæ*, *Epacrideæ*, and *Compositæ*.

The most common genera are *Eucalyptus* and *Acacia*. Many trees of one of the species of the former genus were seen one hundred and twenty feet in height, and with a girth, about six feet from the ground, of eighteen feet. This species is called by the settlers black gum, and is much used for domestic purposes, particularly its bark, with which they cover their huts and houses. The dilated foliaceous *acacias* are very numerous, and are objects of attraction from their gay and fragrant blossoms. The trees which present the greatest variety of species, are those known as gum trees, viz.: blue gum,

gray gum, flooded gum, iron bark, and stringy bark. The leaves of these gum trees have a powerful aromatic flavour, and a taste approaching to camphor. They are used in the colony for a variety of purposes, according to their quality. Thus, the blue gum, (*Eucalyptus piperita*), is employed for ship-building; the iron gum, (*Eucalyptus resinifera*), for fencing; and the gray gum and black-butted gum, for boards and plank.

The Norfolk Island pine, (*Araucaria excelsa*), is used for cabinet-work; the swamp oak, (*Casuarina torulosa*), for shingles and cabinet-work, as is the cedar (*Cedrela australis*), which grows to a very large size; the turpentine-wood, (*Tristania arbicans*), for boat building; the pear tree, (*Xylomelum pyriforme*), the apple, (*Angophora lanceolata*), the mountain-ash, sallow, sassafras, and several kinds of wood which they called "Curagong," were also observed in use, but the trees were not seen.

The grass tree (*Xanthorrhœa hastilis*) did not equal our expectations, which were probably too highly raised by the descriptions of those who had gone before us; yet when in flower it must be a conspicuous object, and in all stages of growth suits well for the foreground of a picture.

Among the most singular of the productions of Australia are the wooden pears, as they are called. These have a close external resemblance to the fruit whose name they bear, but are ligneous within. Another of the fruits is a cherry, whose stone is external, and would be similar to our fruit of that name were the kerpel in its proper place. The pit adheres firmly to the pulp, which is of the size of a pistol-bullet, but the fruit shrinks when ripe to that of a buck-shot. The pear grows on a low shrub, the cherry on a large bush.

I have before remarked how different the "forest," so called in New South Wales, is from what is understood by the term elsewhere. The want of close growth is not the only remarkable appearance, but the absence of all decayed foliage is also extraordinary. The ground is clear of any fallen leaves, and every thing betokens that perennial verdure is here the order of things. These two features combined, give the forests of Australia the air of a neatly-kept park. Annual plants, (if so they can be called,) abound in the forest, requiring, it is said, more than a single year to bring their seeds to maturity. There were instances we were told of crops of grain remaining three years in the ground. A few plants found in other parts of the world, are, it is well known, only brought into existence after a lapse of years, and others give repeated crops during the same year. That these types, so rare in other countries, should be abundant in Australia, is not remark-

able, when it is considered that they are but instances of an almost complete diversity between the natural history of this country and that of other regions.

The timber of the Australian trees is generally of greater specific gravity than water.

The remark, that the leaves of the trees are wood, and their wood iron, is not inappropriate to most of the plants of this country. It is not, however, to be inferred that all the plants are different from those of other countries; so far from this being the case, a considerable admixture of ordinary forms was met with. Among these were a great variety of grasses, some of which were before considered to be peculiar to North America. Many other forms decidedly North American were also met with, a circumstance which, from the difference of geographical position, distance, and climate, was not to be expected; but for these details I must refer to the Botanical Report.

All seem to have been struck with the apparent monotony of the scenery, foliage, and flora, although in reality the latter presents great variety. The general sentiment was, that they were fatigued by it, which is not a little surprising, as the Australian Flora rivals in number of species that of Brazil. This feeling may be accounted for by the overpowering impression that is made by the gum trees, whose foliage is of a dark sombre green. There is also something in the general absence of underbrush; and the trees are so distant from one another that there is no need of roads, so that a carriage may drive any where.

The trees are in general tall in proportion to their diameter, with an umbrella top, and have the appearance of being thinly clad in foliage. No woody vines are to be seen, nor any parasitic plants. In many places a stunted growth of detached shrubs, called in the colony "scrub," exists, which might be termed one of their "forests" in a dwarf shape.

In the Illawarra district a totally distinct state of things exists. Here is to be found all the luxuriance of the tropics—lofty palms, among them the *Corypha australis*, with tree-ferns of two or more varieties, different species of *Ficus*, a scandent *Piper*, and very many vines. The forest of this district is thick, and alive with animal life.

This district is about fifty miles long, and forms a semicircular area about thirty miles in its greatest width. The peculiarity of the situation of this district would tend to show what would have been the probable state of New Holland, or rather its eastern side, if the mountains were sufficiently high to intercept the moisture of the ocean, and prevent the access to it of the dry hot winds from the interior. Illawarra may be

termed the granary of New South Wales; here the crops seldom if ever fail, and are very abundant.

I had the pleasure of visiting the seat of the Hon. Mr. M'Leay. It is situated on Elizabeth Bay, beyond or within Woolloomooloo. The house, which displays much taste, is built of sandstone; and is situated beneath a hill, and on a knoll about fifty feet above the water. In front of it is a lawn bounded by a parapet wall, and between this and the water are several acres of land very tastefully laid out as an arboretum and flower-garden. Copses of native trees have been judiciously left on the north and south sides of the grounds, and not only protect them from the injurious winds, but add greatly to their beauty. A splendid specimen of the *Acrostichum grande*, or Stag-horn, from Moreton Bay, was seen suspended from a tree.



ACROSTICHUM GRANDE
N. S. WALES

The garden is intersected by many walks, leading to the best points of view. It contains many rare and fine specimens of plants from

England, Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, the East Indies, and America. The flower-gardens at and in the neighbourhood of Sydney would do credit to any part of the world.

The Norfolk Island pine, and that from Moreton Bay, (the *Araucaria Cunninghamii*.) thought by some to be as handsome a tree as the one from Norfolk Island, were also among the plantations. From the flower-garden a walk leads through a lattice-work bower, covered with native *Bignonias* and passion-flowers, into the kitchen and fruit-garden. These we found well stocked with fruit and vegetables of almost all European kinds, which seem to thrive particularly well here. The kindness, attention, and hospitality, with which we were received and treated, will long be gratefully remembered. To Mr. M'Leay, the Expedition is indebted for much aid, and through him our collections were increased. The English oak thrives well, and many fine specimens of it were seen. From the information I have received, very many of the Australian plants succeed admirably in England.

The soil of Sydney consists of black mould, mixed with a clean white sand. The quantity of sand is such, as in the dry seasons to affect the vegetation. This sand I understood is now exported to England at a great profit, being found a valuable article in the manufacture of plate glass. This soil, however, is made to yield a plentiful supply of fruits and vegetables; and the display exhibited at the Horticultural Exhibition was highly creditable, not only for the perfection to which the productions had been brought, but for their great variety. The exhibition was held in the large market-house in George Street, which was tastefully decorated for the occasion with branches and festoons of flowers. In front of the door was an arch formed of beautiful flowers, with the motto "Advance, Australia!" surmounted by a crown, and the letters V. R. in yellow flowers. Behind this the band was stationed, which, on our entrance, struck up Yankee Doodle. Tickets were sent to the consul for those belonging to the squadron. There were a great many South American plants in pots. A premium was received for *Tropæolum pentaphyllum*, *Maurandya Barclayana*, and for two species of *Calceolaria*. There were likewise *Amaryllis belladonna* and *umbellata*, *Bouvardia triphylla*, *Cobæa scandens*, and several *Passifloras*, and a variety of hyacinths, dahlias, tuberoses, &c., all fine.

The grapes exhibited were beautiful, and some of them in very large clusters. Nectarines, peaches, apples, pears, small oranges, shaddocks, pine-apples, chestnuts, and walnuts, were also in abundance.

After viewing the fruit we examined the vegetables, which consisted

of potatoes, carrots, turnips, very large pumpkins, cucumbers, cabbages of different kinds and very fine, particularly the curled Savoy and early York, tomatoes, celery, squashes, vegetable marrow, beets, capsicums, and beans.

After the vegetables came specimens of native wines, and a silver cup was given as a premium for the best. The white wine resembled hock in taste; the red, claret. The climate is thought to be favourable to the production of the grape. The first wine made in the colony was by Mr. Blaxland, on his estate at Newington.

The premiums were silver medals. A very handsome gold one was exhibited, which was to be given the next year for the best crop of wheat.

There was a large concourse of visitors, all seemingly much interested in the exhibition, which was open from one o'clock until six. The proceeds of the exhibition of the following day were for the benefit of the poor.

There are a variety of other fruits and vegetables grown near Sydney, which, being out of season, were not exhibited; but to show the great variety this climate produces it is as well to mention them, viz.: English cherries, plums, raspberries, figs, water and musk-melons, filberts, citrons, lemons, strawberries, granadillas, olives, and a species of cherimoyer; and for vegetables, asparagus, cauliflower, lettuce, radishes, spinach, broccoli, artichokes, egg-plant, mustard, and capers.

They have many imported varieties of grapes. Sir John Jamison is now making experiments on his estate to effect their successful growth, and manufacture wine. He has obtained cultivators both from Madeira and the Rhine, to superintend his vineyard and vintage. The reports made yearly to the Agricultural Society, hold out well-founded hopes of success.

Several good nurseries of fruit trees exist in the vicinity of Paramatta, and the Botanical Garden at Sydney also furnishes trees to the cultivators.

The grains grown in the colony are, wheat, rye, barley, Indian corn, and oats. The wheat yields from six to twenty-five bushels to the acre, and some low ground as high as thirty-five bushels. Its weight per bushel is sixty-two pounds. The crops of this grain are subject to great fluctuations, and the most promising appearance may in a single day be entirely destroyed.

Tobacco has been cultivated, and it is thought will succeed; but the frequent frosts render it a very uncertain crop.

Cotton has been attempted, but with little success. The value of pasturage, and its profitable yield in sheep-walks, will long be a bar to

the extensive cultivation of any plants that require much labour in their production. Our horticulturist remarks, that cherries do not succeed well, being affected by the dry cutting winds which occur in the blossoming season.

The orange, citron, and lemon trees present a scraggy and yellow appearance, and produce small and insipid fruit, in comparison with that of the tropics. Peaches thrive, and grow in large quantities, and of high flavour. Every farmer has his peach orchard; and the fruit is so plenty that they fatten their pigs on them.

The natives of Australia are fast disappearing. The entire aboriginal population has been estimated as high as two hundred thousand; this estimate is founded on the supposition that the unexplored regions of the country do not differ materially from that part of it which is known, which cannot well be the case. Other estimates, and probably much nearer the truth, are given at from sixty to seventy-five thousand.

The ravages of intoxication and disease, combined with their occasional warfare, will readily account for the rapid disappearance of the native population; and but a few more years will suffice for the now scanty population to become extinct. In 1835, the Surveyor-General, Mitchell, estimated that in about one-seventh of the whole colony, which he had examined, the natives did not exceed six thousand in number; they are in many parts most wretched-looking beings, and incorrigible beggars: the moment they see a stranger, he is fairly tormented to give something; a shilling or a sixpence contents many, and when laid out for rum, or bread, is shared by all present.

The introduction of European arts has caused but little improvement, while the vices which accompany them have been the bane of the native population, which has thus acquired a fondness for ardent spirits and tobacco. The natives usually lead a wandering, vagabond life, hanging about the houses of the settlers where they are well treated, and doing little jobs for a slight recompense in the above articles. Their habitations are mere temporary shelters, formed of boughs and bark piled up against the stump of a fallen tree, rather to shield them from the wind than for a regular habitation; the reason for this may be, that owing to superstitious scruples they never encamp in one spot three nights in succession. At Illawarra, their huts were made by setting two forked sticks upright, on which another was laid horizontally; on the latter, one end of pieces of bark, taken from the nearest gum tree, is laid, while the other end rests upon the ground. A fire is built on the open side, which not only warms them, but keeps off the myriads of musquitoes and other insects. As many as

can enter such a hut, take shelter in it, lying upon the soft bark of the ti tree.



NATIVE HUT, NEW SOUTH WALES.

The natives of Australia differ from any other race of men, in features, complexion, habits, and language. Their colour and features assimilate them to the African type; their long, black, silky hair has a resemblance to the Malays; in their language they approximate more nearly to our American Indians; while there is much in their physical traits, manners, and customs, to which no analogy can be traced in any other people.

The natives are of middle height, perhaps a little above it; they are slender in make, with long arms and legs. From their wandering life, irregular habits, and bad food, they are extremely meager; and as their thinness is accompanied by considerable protuberance of the abdomen, it gives to their figure a distorted and singular appearance. The cast of the face is between the African and Malay; the forehead usually narrow and high; the eyes small, black, and deep-set; the nose much depressed at the upper part between the eyes, and widened at the base, which is done in infancy by the mother, the natural shape being of an aquiline form; the cheek-bones are high, the mouth large, and furnished with strong, well-set teeth; the chin frequently retreats; the neck is thin and short. Their colour usually approaches chocolate, a deep umber, or reddish black, varying much in shade; and individuals of pure blood are sometimes as light-coloured as mulattoes. Their most striking distinction is their hair, which is like that of dark-haired Europeans, although more silky. It is fine, disposed to curl, and gives them a totally different appearance from the African, and also from the Malay, and American Indian. Most of them have thick beards and whiskers, and they are more hairy than the whites. The proportions of two of them will be found in the table of comparative proportions at the end of the fifth volume.

They are difficult to manage, taking offence easily when they are ill treated; and if any one attempts to control, thwart, or restrain their

wandering habits, they at once resort to the woods, and resume their primitive mode of life, subsisting upon fish, grubs, berries, and occasionally enjoying a feast of kangaroo or opossum-flesh. They eat the larvæ of all kinds of insects with great gusto. Those who reside upon the coast, fish with gigs or spears, which are usually three-pronged; they have no fish-hooks of their own manufacture.



NATIVE OF AUSTRALIA.

When they feel that they have been injured by a white settler, they gratify their revenge by spearing his cattle; and it is said upon good authority, that not a few of the whites, even of the better class, will, when they can do so with impunity, retaliate in the blood of these wretched natives; and it is to be regretted that they are not very scrupulous in distinguishing the guilty from the innocent.

The natives of New South Wales are a proud, high-tempered race: each man is independent of his neighbour, owning no superior, and exacting no deference; they have not in their language any word signifying a chief or superior, nor to command or serve. Each individual is the source of his own comforts, and the artificer of his own household implements and weapons; and but for the love of companionship, he might live with his family apart and isolated from the rest, without sacrificing any advantages whatever. They have an air of haughtiness and insolence arising from this independence, and nothing will induce them to acknowledge any human being as their superior, or to show any marks of respect. In illustration of this, Mr. Watson the missionary is the only white man to whose name they

prefix "Mr.," and this he thinks is chiefly owing to the habit acquired when children under his authority. All others, of whatever rank, they address by their Christian or surname. This does not proceed from ignorance on their part, as they are known to understand the distinctions of rank among the whites, and are continually witnessing the subservience and respect exacted among them. They appear to have a consciousness of independence, which causes them, on all occasions, to treat even the highest with equality. On being asked to work, they usually reply, "White fellow work, not black fellow;" and on entering a room, they never remain standing, but immediately seat themselves.

They are not great talkers, but are usually silent and reserved. They are generally well-disposed, but dislike to be much spoken to, particularly in a tone of raillery. An anecdote was mentioned of a gentleman amusing himself with a native, by teasing him, in perfect good-humour, when the man suddenly seized a billet of wood, threw it at him, and then in a great rage rushed for his spear. It was with great difficulty that he could be pacified, and made to know that no insult was intended; he then begged that they would not talk to him in that manner, as he might become wild and ungovernable. They look upon the whites with a mixture of distrust and contempt, and to govern them by threats and violence is found impossible. They are susceptible of being led by kind treatment, but on an injury or insult they immediately take to the bush, and resume their wandering habits. They do not carry on any systematic attacks, and their fears of the whites are so great, that large companies of them have been dispersed by small exploring parties and a few resolute stockmen.

Though they are constantly wandering about, yet they usually confine themselves to a radius of fifty or sixty miles from the place they consider their residence. If they venture beyond this, which they sometimes do with a party of whites, they always betray the greatest fear of falling in with some Myall or stranger blacks, who they say would put them to death immediately.

Their great timidity has caused a false estimate to be put upon their character, by ascribing to it great ferocity; and, as an instance of it, it is mentioned, that if a party of natives be suddenly approached in the interior, who are unacquainted with white men, and taken by surprise, supposing that they are surrounded and doomed to death, they make the most furious onset, and sell their lives as dearly as possible: this arises from the panic with which they are seized, depriving them temporarily of reason.

They have not, properly speaking, any distribution into tribes. In their conflicts, those speaking the same language, and who have fought side by side, are frequently drawn up in battle-array against

each other, and a short time after may be again seen acting together. Their conflicts, for they do not deserve the name of wars, are conducted after the following manner. The quarrel or misunderstanding generally arises from some trivial affair; when the aggrieved party assembles his neighbours to consult them relative to the course to be pursued. The general opinion having been declared, a messenger is sent to announce their intention to commence hostilities to the opposite party, and to fix a day for the combat. The latter immediately assembles their friends, and make preparations for the approaching contest. The two parties on the day assigned meet, accompanied by the women and children. The first onset is made by the oldest women (hags they might be termed) vituperating the opposite side. Then a warrior advances, and several throws of spears take place. These are parried with much dexterity, for all the natives possess great art and skill in avoiding missiles with their shields. This exchange of missiles continues for some time, and not unfrequently ends without any fatal result. When one of either party is killed, a separation takes place, succeeded by another course of recrimination, after which explanations are made, the affair terminates, and hostility is at an end; the two parties meet amicably, bury the dead, and join in the corrobory dance.

These dances are not only the usual close of their combats, but are frequent in time of peace. They appear almost necessary to stir up their blood; and under the excitement they produce, the whole nature of the people seems to be changed. To a spectator, the effect of one of these exhibitions almost equals that of a tragic melodrame.

A suitable place for the performance is selected in the neighbourhood of their huts. Here a fire is built by the women and boys, while such of the men as are to take a share in the exhibition, usually about twenty in number, disappear to arrange their persons. When these preparations are completed, and the fire burns brightly, the performers are seen advancing in the guise of as many skeletons. This effect is produced by means of pipe-clay, with which they paint broad white lines on their arms and legs, and on the head, while others of less breadth are drawn across the body, to correspond to the ribs. The music consists in beating time on their shields, and singing, and to it the movements of the dancers conform. It must not be supposed that this exhibition is a dance in our sense of the word, nor is it like any thing that we saw in the South Sea islands. It consists of violent and odd movements of the arms, legs, and body, contortions and violent muscular actions, amounting almost to frenzy. The performers appear more like a child's pasteboard supple-Jack than any thing human in their movements.

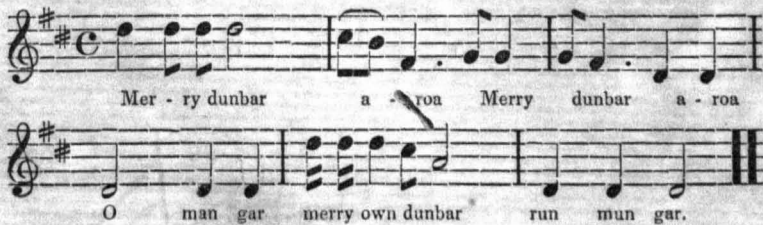


This action continues for a time, and then the skeletons, for so I may term them, for they truly resemble them, suddenly seem to vanish and reappear. The disappearance is effected by merely turning round, for the figures are painted only in front, and their dusky forms are lost by mingling with the dark background. The trees illuminated by the fire, are brought out with some of the figures in bold relief, while others were indistinct and ghost-like. All concurred to give an air of wildness to the strange scene. As the dance proceeds, the excitement increases, and those who a short time before appeared only half alive, become full of animation, and finally were obliged to stop from exhaustion.

These corroborations are the occasion of much intercourse among the tribes, as they frequently make visits to each other for the sole purpose of carrying a new song for the dance. They have several kinds of these dances, which appear to be their only amusement. In their music they do not sound any of the common chords, and the only accompaniment was a kind of bass, as written below, which was in fact only a very deep-toned grunt, sounded, as ho, ho, ho, very deep in the throat. At the end of each dance they finished with a loud whoo, or screech, an octave above the key-note.



The above is thought by Mr. Drayton not to be entirely native music, but the following he has no doubt of; the words are given as he heard them.



The above, as well as those which follow, were obtained from a native who was on his way with the new song to his tribe.

Abang abang abang abang abang abang abang abang a

gumbe - ry jah jim gun relah gumbe - ry jah jim gun relah

bang abang abang abang abang abang abang abang a.

We have seen that the combats, of which mention has been made, are attended with little loss of life; nor are their set battles bloody. In all their contests they seem to act upon certain principles, well established in their code of honour, and firmly adhered to. According to eye-witnesses of their battles, these are conducted with system and regularity. On one occasion, the parties advanced towards each other drawn up in three lines, with the women following in the rear, and when they had arrived within a few rods of each other, they threw their boomerangs or curved sticks. These, as they fell among their opponents, were picked up by the women, and given to the warriors, who hurled them back to their original owners, by whom they were again used. When these weapons were lost or broken, they then had recourse to their spears, which they threw, parried, and returned in like manner. They then closed and fought hand to hand with their clubs, for a considerable time. Their extraordinary quickness of eye, alertness, and agility of movement, protect them from much harm; and their thickness of skull may also be taken into account, for nothing worse than a few bruises and broken limbs resulted. The fight gradually dwindled down to a single combat between two of the most determined warriors, and when one of these was knocked down by a stunning blow, another took his place and continued the fight until one was severely injured. The battle then terminated.

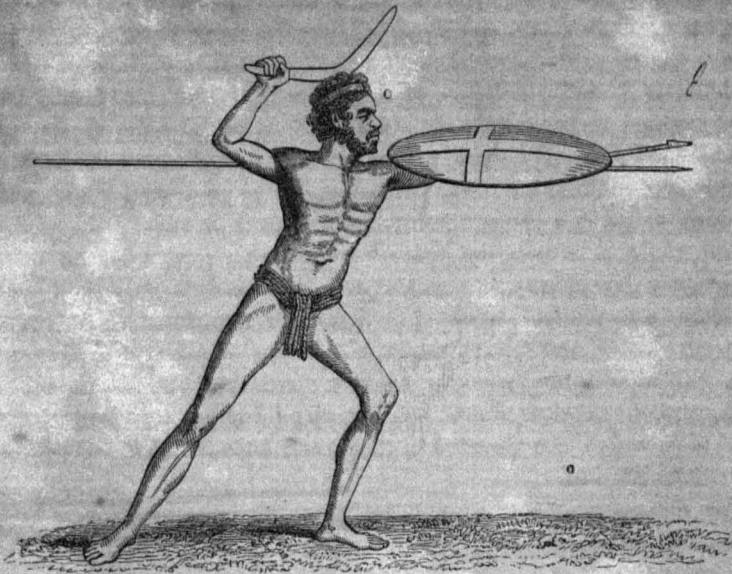
Some of their personal or private quarrels are settled by a sort of duel, or rather a trial of whose head is hardest. The accused or challenged party extends his head, with the crown uppermost, towards his adversary, who strikes a blow with his utmost force with a waddy, which is the weapon they usually carry about them, and with which they punish their wives, who exhibit generally many marks from the use of it. The challenger then presents his head in return, and blows are thus continued alternately, until one or the other is disabled, or both declare themselves satisfied. Those who have witnessed these encounters are quite astonished that every blow does not stun or kill, for each of them would be fatal to a white man; but the great thickness of their skulls enables them to sustain this violence with but little injury.

Their weapons are the spear, club, or nulla-nulla, boomereng, dundumel, and the bundi, of which drawings are given in the tail-piece at the end of the last chapter. Their spears are about ten feet long, and very slender, made of cane or wood tapering to a point, which is barbed. They are light, and one would scarcely be inclined to believe that they could be darted with any force; nor could they without the aid of the wammera, a straight flat stick, three feet in length, terminating in a socket of bone or hide, into which the end of the spear is fixed. The wammera is grasped in the right hand by three fingers, the spear lying between the fore-finger and thumb. Previous to throwing it, a tremulous or vibratory motion is given to it, which is supposed to add to the accuracy of the aim; in projecting the spear, the wammera is retained in the hand, and the use of this simple contrivance adds greatly to the projectile force given to the spear. They are well practised in the use of these weapons.

The nulla-nulla, or uta, is from thirty to thirty-six inches in length, the handle being of a size to be conveniently grasped.

The dundumel is a weapon used by the natives of the interior; it has a curved flat handle thirty inches in length, and terminates in a projection not unlike a hatchet; it is thrown from the hand before coming to close quarters, and usually at a very short distance.

But the most extraordinary weapon is the boomereng. This is a flat stick, three feet long and two inches wide by three quarters of an inch thick, curved or crooked in the centre, forming an obtuse angle. At first sight one would conclude it was a wooden sword, very rudely and clumsily made; indeed one of the early navigators took it for such. It is an implement used both for war and in the chase. In the hands of a native it is a missile efficient for both, and is made to describe some most extraordinary curves and movements.



NATIVE THROWING THE BOOMERENG.

It is grasped at one end in the right hand, and is thrown sickle-wise, either upwards into the air, or downwards so as to strike the ground at some distance from the thrower. In the first case it flies with a rotary motion, as its shape would indicate; after ascending to a great height in the air, it suddenly returns in an elliptical orbit to a spot near its starting-point. The natives in its use are enabled to strike objects which lie behind others with great precision, and to reach those near as if by a back-stroke, by throwing it at a particular angle. The diagram at the end of the chapter, exhibits the curves at the angles of 22° , 45° , and 65° , respectively, which I have obtained in making experiments with it. Some facts which were spoken of in its use, are remarkable. On throwing it downwards on the ground, it rebounds in a straight line, pursuing a ricochet motion until it strikes the object at which it is thrown. Birds and small animals are killed with it, and it is also used in killing ducks. The most singular curve described by it, is when thrown into the air, above the angle of 45° ; its flight is always then backwards, and the native who throws it stands with his back, instead of his face, to the object he is desirous of hitting. The diagram also exhibits its fall in case it loses its rotary motion. It is a favourite weapon with the natives, and is frequently seen ingeniously carved.

As a defence, they use a shield made of the thick bark of the gum tree; this they call hiclemara. It is peculiar in shape, and on the

coast is three feet long by six or eight inches wide, with a handle in the centre; it is made rounding. Those in the interior are only a three-cornered piece of wood, with a hole on each side, through which the hand is thrust. The size of the latter is smaller, being only two feet long and three or four inches broad. It would seem almost impossible that so small a shield should be sufficient to guard the body of a man; and nothing but their quickness of eye and hand could make it of any value as a protection against the spear or club.

The mode in which the natives climb trees was considered extraordinary by those who witnessed it, although they had been accustomed to the feats of the Polynesians in the ascent of the cocoa nut trees. The Australians mount a tree four or five feet in diameter, both with rapidity and safety. As they climb they cut notches above them, with a stone or metal hatchet, large enough to admit two of their toes, which are inserted in them, and support their weight until other holes are cut.

The natives who reside upon the coast use canoes which are constructed as follows.

A gum tree that has a thick and tough bark is selected; this is girdled, and the bark slit so that by care a piece of it may be stripped from the tree large enough to make the canoe, which is usually about fourteen feet long and seven wide. This piece of bark is charred on the inside, after which it is folded in each end, so as to bring the edges of the two halves of the entire circuit of the bark together; in this position these edges are fastened by cords and wooden rivets. The simple canoe is now complete, is usually about three feet wide in the middle, and will convey half a dozen persons.

They use paddles of different sizes, say from two to five feet in length. In using the shorter kind, a paddle is held in each hand.

A fire is commonly carried upon a layer of gravel in the middle of the boat: a custom, which appears to arise either from a natural or superstitious reluctance to be without a fire at any time. In this custom, as will be recollected, they resemble the Fuegians, who, however, far excel them in the art of constructing canoes.

The social system and intercourse of the Australians is regulated by custom alone. As no system of government exists, or any acknowledgment of power to enact laws, they are solely guided by old usage, and can give no account whatever of its origin. The universal reprobation of their associates, which follows a breach of ancient customs, has a strong tendency to preserve a strict observance of them. Many of these customs struck us as remarkable; those that have not been

actually seen by the officers of the Expedition, have been described by persons entitled to the fullest credit.

The custom (to use the language of the settlers) "of making young men," is singular. The object of the institution seems to be to imprint forcibly upon the youth the rules and observances by which his after life is to be governed; and so strikingly are they adapted to insure good conduct, that it can hardly be believed that they could have originated among savages, such as the natives of Australia now are.

When the boys reach the age of fourteen, or that of puberty, the elders of the tribe prepare to initiate them into the privileges of manhood. A night or two previous, a dismal cry is heard in the woods, which the boys are told is the Bùlù calling for them. Thereupon all the men of the tribe set off for some secluded spot, previously fixed upon, taking with them the boys or youths to be initiated. No white man is allowed to be present, and the precise nature of the ceremony is therefore unknown; but it is certain that the ceremonies are designed to try their courage, fortitude, and the expertness of the boys in reference to their future employments in the chase and in war. There is probably some difference in these ceremonies among the different tribes. The Wellington station, or those of the interior, for instance, never knock out a front tooth, which is always done on the coast.

From the time the youths are initiated, they are required to yield implicit obedience to their elders. This is the only control that seems to prevail, and is very requisite to preserve order and harmony in their social intercourse, as well as to supply the place of distinctions of rank among them.

The youths are likewise restricted to articles of diet, not being allowed to eat eggs, fish, or any of the finer kinds of opossum or kangaroo. Their fare is consequently of a very poor description, but as they grow older these restrictions are removed, although at what age we have not learnt; but after having passed the middle age, they are entirely at liberty to partake of all. The purpose of this is thought to be not only to accustom them to a simple and hardy way of living, but also that they should provide for the aged, and not be allowed to appropriate all to themselves. Selfishness is therefore no part of their character, and all observers are struck with their custom of dividing any thing they may receive among each other, a disinterestedness that is seldom seen among civilized nations.

To protect the morals of the youths, they are forbidden from the time

of their initiation until their marriage to speak to or even to approach a female. They must encamp at a distance from them, and if, perchance, one is seen in the pathway, they are obliged to make a detour in order to avoid her. Mr. Watson stated he had been often put to great inconvenience in travelling through the woods with a young native for his guide, as he could never be induced to approach an encampment where there were any women.

The ceremony of marriage is peculiar. In most cases the parties are betrothed at an early age, and as soon as they arrive at the proper age, the young man claims his gin or wife.

The women are considered as an article of property, and are sold or given away by the parents or relatives without the least regard to their own wishes. As far as our observation went, the women appear to take little care of their children. Polygamy exists, and they will frequently give one of their wives to a friend who may be in want of one; but notwithstanding this laxity they are extremely jealous, and are very prompt to resent any freedom taken with their wives. Their quarrels for the most part are occasioned by the fair sex, and being the cause, they usually are the greatest sufferers; for the waddy is applied to their heads in a most unmerciful style, and few old women are to be seen who do not bear unquestionable marks of the hard usage they have received. The husband who suspects another of seducing his wife, either kills one or both. The affair is taken up by the tribe, if the party belongs to another, who inflict punishment on him in the following manner.

The guilty party is furnished with a shield, and made to stand at a suitable distance, and the whole tribe cast their spears at him; his expertness and activity often enable him to escape any serious injury, but instances do occur in which the party is killed. Such punishments are inflicted with great formality, upon an appointed day, and the whole tribe assemble to witness it. The person most injured has the first throw, and it depends upon the feelings of the tribe respecting the offence committed, whether they endeavour to do injury to the culprit or not; and thus it may be supposed that there is some judgment evinced in this mode of punishment.

The following account of the burial of their dead, was received from the missionary who was an eye-witness to it. He was called out one evening to see a native, who they said was dying. On repairing to the camp, he was too late, for the man was already dead, and notwithstanding the short space of time that had elapsed, the corpse was already wrapped up for burial. The legs had been bent at the knees and hips, and tied to the body, and the head bent downwards towards

the legs. In this position the corpse was enveloped in a blanket, and bound round with many ligatures, so as to form a shapeless lump. There were about fifty natives present, seated within a small space in front. The women were raising^d dismal lamentations and cutting themselves with sharp sticks; while the men were engaged in an earnest consultation as to the place which should be fixed upon for the burial. At length it was determined to be on the banks of the Macquarie, at no great distance from the mission station. On the following day the missionary proceeded to the place, and found that the natives had already cleared the grass from a space about twenty feet in diameter; in the centre of this the grave was marked out, of an oval shape, six feet long by three feet wide. After digging to the depth of about a foot, they left a ledge all around the grave of a few inches in width: the excavation, thus diminished in size, was continued to the depth of five feet, the sides not being exactly perpendicular, but sloping slightly inwards. At the bottom of the grave was laid a bed of leaves, covered with an opossum-skin cloak, and having a stuffed bag of kangaroo-skin for a pillow; on this couch the body was laid, and the implements of hunting and war which the deceased had used during his lifetime were laid beside him. Leaves and branches of bushes were strewed over him, until the grave was filled up to the ledge or shelf above mentioned. Across the grave were laid strong stakes, with the ends resting on this shelf, and on these a layer of stones, which filled the hole to the level of the soil. The excavated earth was then put over the whole, forming a conical heap eight or nine feet high. The trees on each side were marked with irregular incisions, but whether intended as symbols, or merely to identify the place of sepulture, was not understood. All the time this was going on, fires were kept burning around the place, to drive away evil spirits, and the women and children uttered loud lamentations, inflicting at the same time wounds upon themselves. When the grave was completed, all the women and children were ordered away, and the missionary, perceiving that it was expected that he would do the same, retired also. His presumption was that they intended to give utterance to their grief, and that they were ashamed to do it in his presence, or before the women and children.

The day after the burial the natives visited every spot in which they recollected to have seen the deceased, and fumigated it, for the purpose of driving away the evil spirits. They even went into the missionaries' houses, greatly to the annoyance of the ladies.

Their style of mourning consists in bedaubing themselves with pipe-clay; and a more hideous object than an old woman thus tricked out can hardly be conceived. The body and limbs are streaked with it,

and the face completely covered as with a mask, in which holes are left for the eyes, nostrils, and mouth. The mask is gradually removed, until the last that is seen of it is a small patch on the top of the head.

They have some idea of a future state, although some assert that the whole man dies, and that nothing is left of him; while others are of opinion that his spirit yet lives, either as a wandering ghost or in a state of metamorphosis, animating a bird or other creature of a lower order than man.

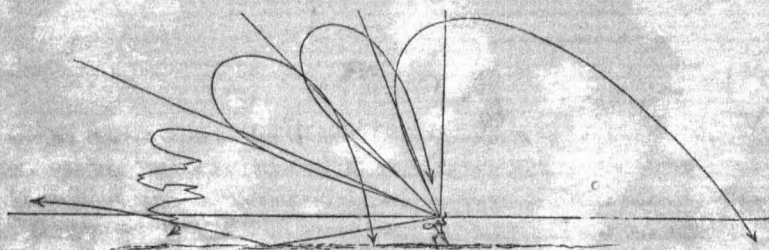
Their opinions on religious subjects generally partake of the same unsettled character, which makes it very difficult to obtain any clear idea of them. The great difficulty is the unwillingness of the natives to talk upon the subject, either from superstition or shame; and it is the opinion of the missionaries that no full account of their religious notions will be obtained, until one of the well-informed adults is converted to Christianity, an event which is not soon to be expected. The missionaries have had little or no success; none of the adults have hitherto shown any desire to embrace Christianity; and it is remarked, that there appears to be a want of susceptibility in their character to religious impressions. Some of their ceremonies which partook of that character have been discontinued of late years, and no others have been adopted in their place. They have, however, some indistinct notions of a Deity. The missionaries at Wellington have heard from them of a being whom they call Bai-a-mai, and whom, with his son Burambin, they deem the creator of all things. To this Bai-a-mai they pay a kind of annual worship by dancing and singing a song in his honour. This song, they say, was brought from a distant country by strangers who went about teaching it. This annual worship took place in the month of February, and all who did not join in it were supposed to incur the displeasure of the god.

Bai-a-mai was supposed to live on an island beyond the great sea of the coast, and to eat fish, which, when he required food, came up at his call from the water. Burambin, others say, was brought into existence by Bai-a-mai, when the missionaries first came to Wellington.

Dararwirgal is a brother of Bai-a-mai, and lives in the far west. To him they ascribe the origin of the small-pox, which has made such ravages among them. They say that he was vexed for want of a tomahawk, and therefore sent that disease among them; but they now suppose that he has obtained one, and that the disease will come no more.

Balumbals are angels, said to be white, who live on a mountain to the southwest, at a great distance. Their food is honey, and their employment like that of the missionaries.

Wandong is their evil spirit, whom they have learnt from the whites to call the "Devil." They describe him as a gigantic black man, always prowling about at night, ready to seize and devour any unfortunate wanderer. So great is their horror of this imaginary being, that they never venture from their fires at night, except under the pressure of great necessity, when they always carry a firebrand to intimidate the monster.

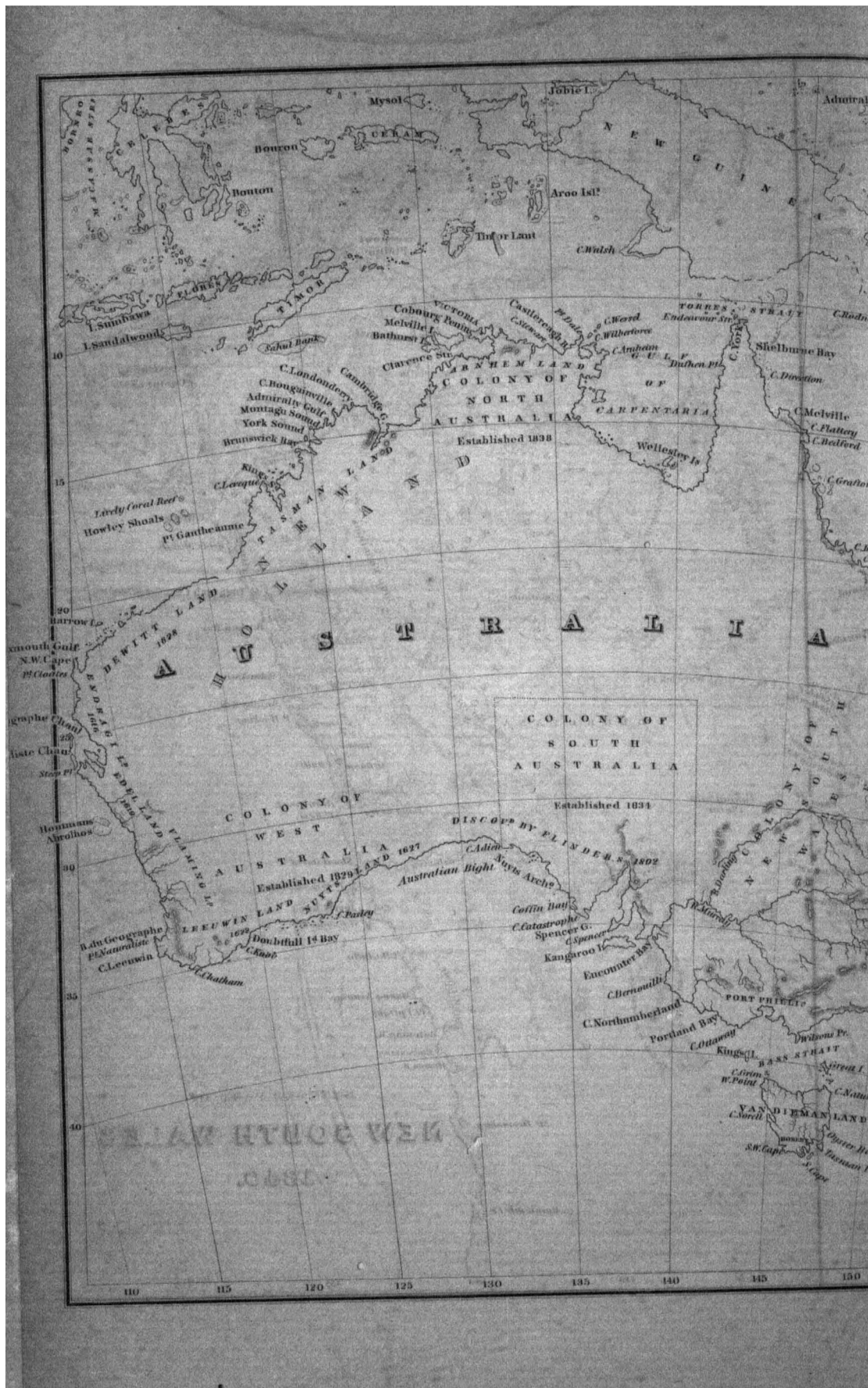


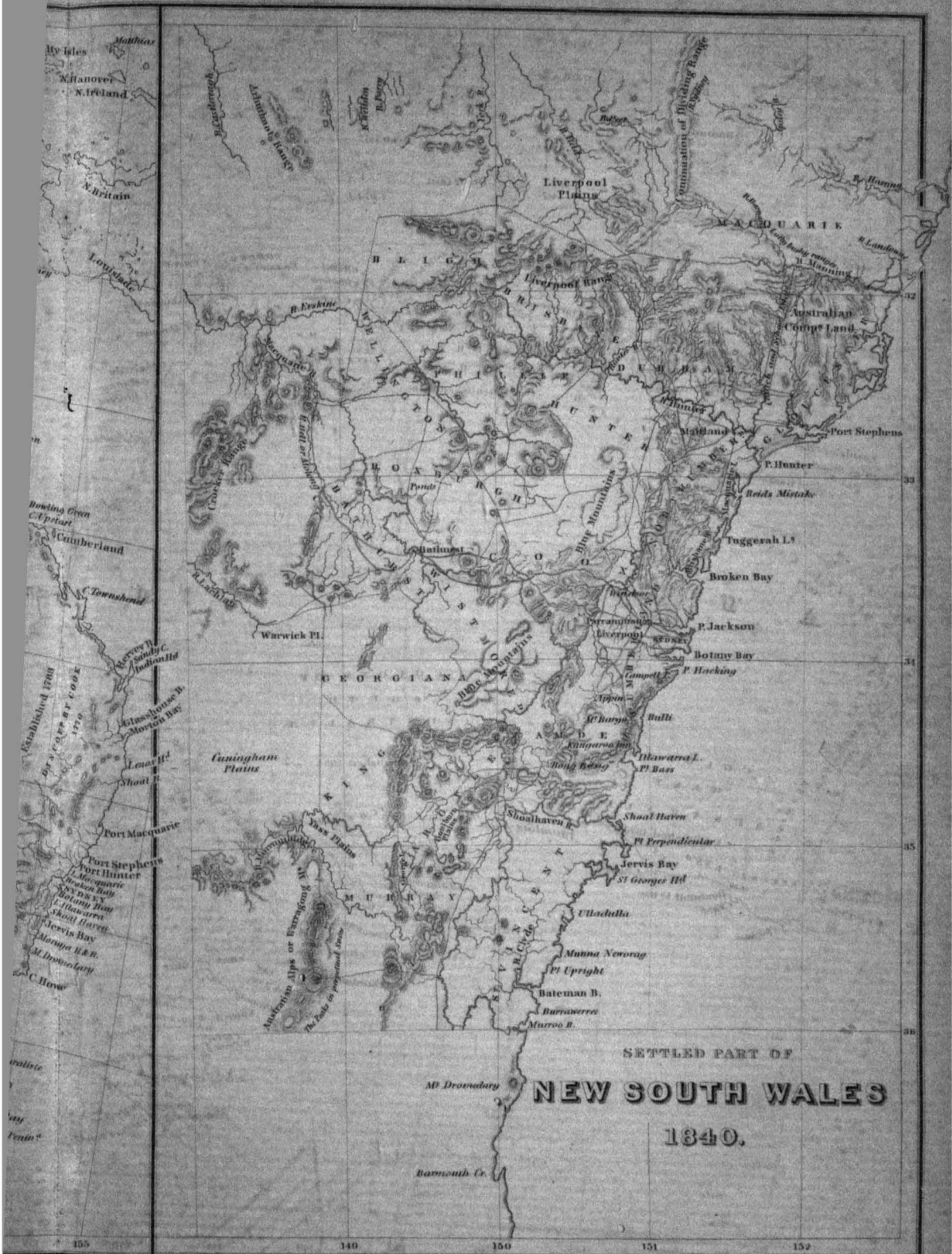
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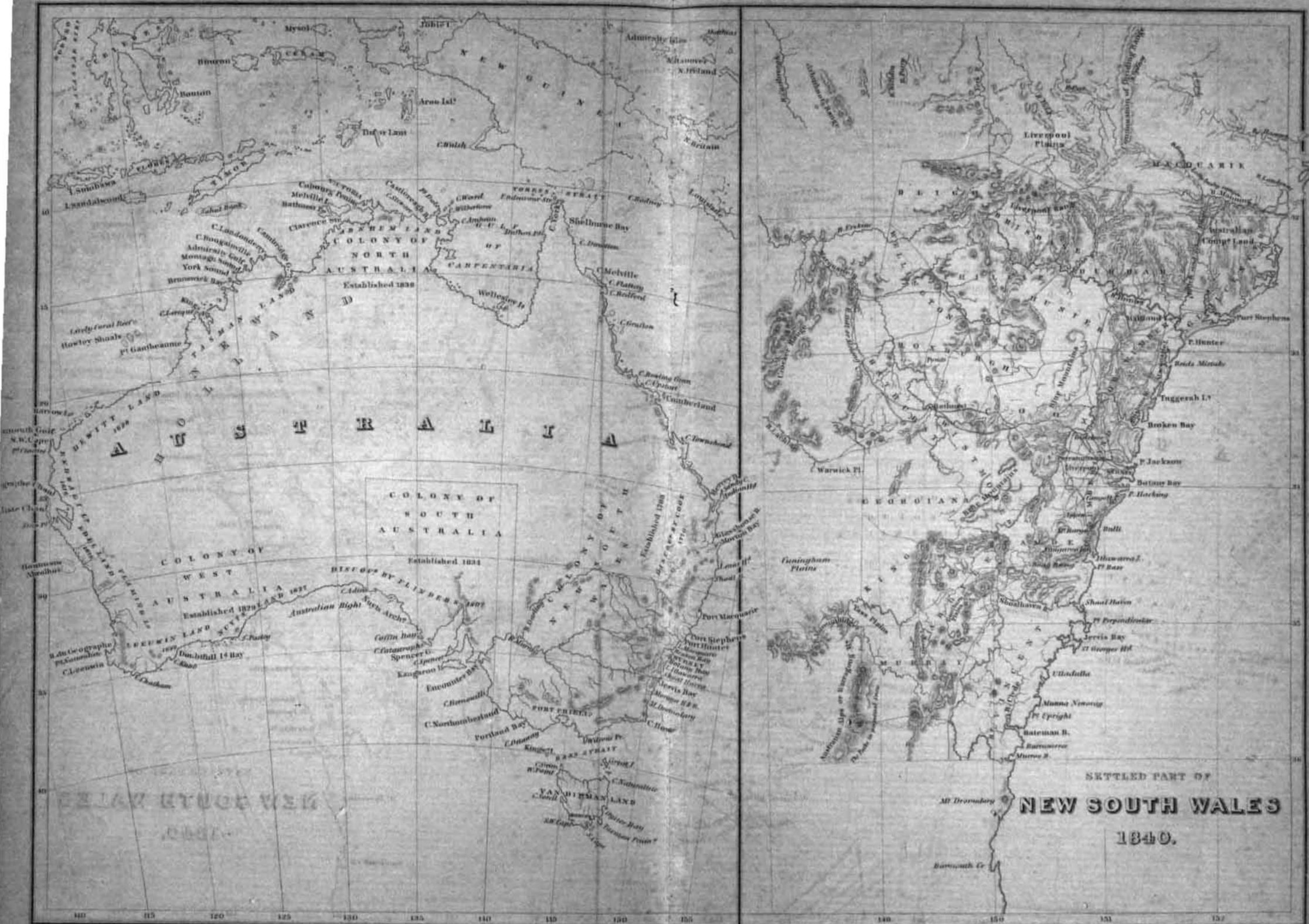
CHAPTER VII.

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CHAPTER VII.

HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, AND SOCIAL STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

1839.

NEW SOUTH WALES is known in the United States almost by its name alone.

It happened from the circumstances of our visit, that we were enabled to obtain much information in relation to this rising colony.

Australia, or New Holland, of which New South Wales is as yet the most important part, requires no description of its dimensions and geographical position. It is sufficient to note the fact that it possesses a sea-coast of the vast extent of eight thousand miles. It was first discovered by the Dutch, while engaged in exploring the coast of New Guinea, who saw the portion of it to the south of Endeavour Straits, and gave it a name from that of their own country, in 1606. A few months after this discovery, Louis de Torres made the north-eastern point of Australia.

In 1616, Theodoric Hartog fell in with that part of the western coast which lies within the tropic and latitude 28° S. This he called Endracht's Land, after the name of his vessel.

In 1618, the coast between latitude 11° and 15° S., reaching from the Gulf of Carpentaria to Cape Talbot, was seen by Zeachem.

In 1628, De Witt and Carpenter discovered that part of the western coast known as De Witt's Land, and surveyed the Gulf of Carpentaria.

In 1667, Van Nuyt sailed along the southern coast, from Cape Leeuwin to Spencer's Gulf; and to this part of Australia his name has of late been restored upon the maps.

Tasman, in 1642, discovered Van Diemen's Land, which was long after considered to be connected with the main land of Australia. Finally, between 1766 and 1770, after an interval of a century, during which no researches had been made, and some of the discoveries

already mentioned had been forgotten, Cook explored the eastern coast, from Cape Home to Cape York, and called its whole extent New South Wales.

Researches were again suspended until after the establishment of the convict colony, and in 1798 Flinders and Bass discovered the straits which bear the name of the latter, which separate Van Diemen's from the main land, and sailed around that island. To the country adjacent to these straits, the name of Bass's Land was given; and in 1803, Grant explored the coast to the west of it. Flinders, who was for several years engaged in making surveys on the eastern coast, also connected the land discovered by Grant, with that of Van Nuyt, and re-examined the latter. It is to Flinders that we owe our most precise knowledge of the general geographical features of the eastern and southern coast of Australia; and since the close of his labours, Captain P. P. King, of H. B. M. Navy, has been engaged, and other officers are now assiduously employed, in surveying the northern coast. The interior, as has been already stated, has been made the subject of numerous exploring tours by the surveyors of the colony, and other persons employed by the British government.

The territory included under the name of New South Wales is the eastern portion of Australia, and extends from the twenty-third to the thirty-eighth degree of south latitude. The power of its governor, however, extends further, and within his jurisdiction are included the whole eastern coast, from Cape York to Wilson's Promontory, or between latitude $10^{\circ} 37'$ and $39^{\circ} 2' S.$; with the country inland as far as the meridian of $129^{\circ} E.$ Moreton Bay on the northern, and Port Philip on the southern coast, with Norfolk Island, and all others between it and the coast, are also placed under his authority.

The epoch whence the history of the colony dates, is the year 1787, when the eastern coast was chosen by the British government as the site of a penal colony. The convicts hold so prominent a part in the events which have occurred since that period, that their history may be almost considered as that of New South Wales.

Botany Bay, in consequence of extravagant ideas formed of its excellence as a harbour, and the fertility of the country around it, was the portion chosen for the settlement. The first gang of convicts sent out was composed of six hundred male and two hundred and fifty female criminals, who were guarded by a body of troops consisting of two hundred officers and soldiers. About forty of the soldiers were married, and had their wives and children with them. The whole were under the direction of Captain Philips, who held the appointment of governor.

The expedition, in conformity to the instructions, proceeded in the first instance to Botany Bay. This, to their disappointment, was found an unsafe harbour; and the country far from suitable for the intended purpose. On exploring the coast, they unexpectedly found, about seven miles to the northward, a capacious and beautiful harbour, which Cook had reported as fit only for boats; this, which they called Port Jackson, proved to be adapted to the intended purpose, and to it they removed. The people of the colony were landed on the 26th of January, 1788. The Governor delivered an address to his settlers on the 7th of February, strongly recommending marriage to the convicts; and in consequence of this admonition, fourteen marriages took place the succeeding week.

In 1790, one of the severe droughts to which the country is liable occurred, and the colony was reduced to great distress for provisions. All the live-stock, which had been imported for breeding, was killed off for food, and the inhabitants were reduced to an ear of corn per day. From the exhaustion which prevailed, all labour was suspended.

In February, 1792, the first lieutenant-governor arrived. He was also commandant of the New South Wales corps. This corps was specially raised for service in the colony, and was one of the greatest evils under which it suffered for many years.

In December, 1792, Governor Philips returned to England.

In September, 1795, Governor Hunter arrived, and assumed the direction of affairs. His administration lasted until 1802.

During the interregnum between Governors Philips and Hunter, Captain Paterson acted as governor.

In 1794, the first free settlers arrived in the colony.

The officers of the New South Wales corps soon became merchants, and dealt in all that was issued from the public stores. Rum was the great article of traffic; and an act was passed, that on the arrival of any vessel with stores, an issue of spirits from her cargo should be made to each officer in proportion to his rank.

The officers also obtained the manifest of every vessel that arrived, selected what they thought proper from her cargo, and afterwards disposed of it to the soldiers, settlers, and convicts, at a large profit.

They claimed the privilege of importing spirits, which was refused to others, and of selling it to the non-commissioned officers, many of whom held licenses to sell spirits by retail. In this way, many of the officers of the New South Wales corps realized large sums by trade, and counteracted all the endeavours of the governor to effect a reform in the colony.

In September, 1800, Captain King assumed his duties as governor,

and during the whole of his administration, which lasted till 1806, provisions continued to be imported into the colony at the expense of the home government, principally from the Cape of Good Hope and Batavia.

The military were gradually acquiring more power, and their officers generally set the laws at defiance, assuming the right of landing spirits from every vessel that arrived. Governor King endeavoured to put a stop to this practice; but the military, who had become powerful and influential, overawed him. In an evil hour, hoping to check their power and influence, he gave licenses not only to the constables, but to the jailer, to sell rum; and the latter, it is said, was allowed to keep a public tap-room opposite the jail door.

In consequence of this state of things, the Governor's power was very much weakened, if not entirely destroyed, and the whole settlement was thrown into confusion. The convicts were under no efficient control, and bands of them, under the name of Bush-rangers,* traversed the country, and entered the houses of the settlers even in the open day, committing the most fearful atrocities. Anarchy and confusion reigned every where.

The Castle Hill convicts now mutinied, but were overcome, and some of them executed.

Captain Bligh, R. N. (who had commanded the *Bounty*), succeeded Captain King. During his administration, rum was the medium of exchange, and the settlers had no other purchasers for their produce but the privileged dealers in that article, who took every advantage of them.

In 1807, two stills for manufacturing spirits were imported by Mr. M'Arthur and Captain Abbot, of the 102d regiment. The Governor seized them, and prohibited distillation in the colony. Much discontent grew out of this prohibition; and other difficulties occurred, which resulted in the arrest of Governor Bligh by the military, and other turbulent persons in the colony, in 1808. The home government now saw the necessity of putting down this lawless spirit, and reinstated Governor Bligh; but although he was also promoted to the rank of admiral, he is said to have died of a broken heart. ²

Governor Macquarie was his successor. He seems to have endea-

* The Bush-rangers are still very troublesome at times. In addition to the runaway convicts, of which their bands are principally composed, they also include soldiers who have deserted. They occasionally commit great barbarities, and are consequently much dreaded. Few indeed of the lonely settlements are safe from their depredations. In order to suppress them, there is a body of mounted police; but its numbers are too small to put an effectual stop to the evil.

voured to build up Sydney and Paramatta at the expense of the morals of the community, and appears to have discouraged free emigration. The emancipated convicts were admitted by him to the same privileges and immunities as the free settlers; and he treated the whole colony as if it were the gift of the mother country to those of her subjects who had outraged her laws. This policy soon had its effect at home, where it is said that crimes were committed in the hope of being sentenced to transportation; and it is asserted that the emancipated convicts, known as ticket-of-leave men, were much more desirably situated than honest persons of their own rank of life in the mother country. Many of these in consequence wrote to their friends to come out to them, and pointed out the means of doing so at the expense of the crown. This state of things was offensive to the free settlers, who opposed the endeavours of the colonial government to break down the distinctions that naturally exist between the polluted and unpolluted. Their repugnance was increased by the attempt, on the part of the emancipated convicts, to make property the only qualification for acquiring civil and political rights. So strongly was the line of distinction drawn by the free settlers at that time, that it remains unbroken to the present day, and affects even the third and fourth generation. From the countenance shown to the convicts by Governor Macquarie, their minds have become impressed with the idea that the colony is intended for their benefit; and they consider that they have the best right to administer the government, while the free emigrants in their opinion are interfering with their rights, by occupying all places of emolument and trust. Sufficient interest was excited by the complaints of the free emigrants to cause a commission of inquiry to be appointed. Much good resulted from its action, and a settled policy was at length adopted in relation to the treatment of the convicts.

Governor Macquarie was succeeded, in 1821, by Sir Thomas Brisbane, during whose administration all restrictions on the press were removed.

In 1824, by an act of Parliament, a Supreme Court was established, having equity, common law, admiralty, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Trial by jury was authorized under certain limitations, and the Legislative Council instituted. This was a great improvement upon the former system, and reduced the power of the Governor, which had before been absolute, while it at the same time gave him the best advisers.

The Legislative Council consisted of the Governor, with three civil officers, and three gentlemen not holding office. The establishment of

this body was a step towards a constitutional form of government. It continued in the original form, until, by an act of Parliament in 1828, it was increased to not less than ten or more than fifteen members, all of whom were appointed by the crown. At the same time an Executive Council was created, and in these two bodies the government of the colony is still vested.

During the administration of Sir Thomas Brisbane and Sir Ralph Darling, many improvements in policy took place. Among them were inducements to free settlers, and many officers of the army and navy, with other respectable persons, received grants of land. The acquisition of a population of a better character furnished the means of enforcing the laws, and removed the necessity of employing those who had been guilty of crime, to effect its suppression. A better state of things succeeded. Agriculture, and particularly the raising of herds and flocks, were promoted by the facilities afforded by the government under the assignment system; and the resources of the colony were developed, particularly in the growth of wool, which has now become its great staple. The success of these agricultural efforts, excited in England, particularly among its manufacturers, a more direct interest in the colony, and attracted much attention to it; in consequence of which the Australian Agricultural Company, in which many influential persons in England became interested, was incorporated under a royal charter. The avowed objects of this association were to further the improvement of the cultivation of land in New South Wales, and the rearing of cattle, horses, and fine-woolled sheep. The capital of the Company was a million of pounds sterling, and government agreed to grant in addition a million of acres of land, in any part of the territory that might be selected.

The agent of the Company, Mr. Dawson, commenced operations in 1826, at Port Stephens, to the north of Hunter's river, on a tract selected by him and the surveyor-general; he continued to manage their affairs until 1829, when, in consequence of a misunderstanding between Mr. Dawson and the Company, growing out of the unavoidable difficulties he had to contend with, and the many misrepresentations made by his enemies, he was removed, and Sir Edward Parry, the celebrated polar navigator, appointed in his stead.

Sir Edward Parry continued in the management until 1836, when he retired, and was succeeded by Captain P. P. King, the able surveyor, and who still conducts the affairs of the Company. I regretted much not having been able to accept of the pressing invitation to visit Captain King. It affords me great pleasure to bear testimony to the

correctness of his charts and sailing directions, which I have on several occasions been called upon to verify and trust to in navigating the squadron.

The difficulties encountered by Mr. Dawson, were chiefly owing to the excessive droughts that occurred in the years 1827, 1828, and 1829. In these years there was in some districts an entire, and in others a partial failure of the crops, while the pasture-grounds were all dried up.

At other times, continued rains would cause great floods; whole districts of country were overflowed; and along the rivers, not only stacks of grain, but the buildings, were swept away. From this it may be easily understood what difficulties the settlers of this country have to contend with. To these also are to be added the contests between the two parties, as to whether this shall remain a penal colony or become a free one.

It is only to be wondered that it should have continued to flourish, notwithstanding all the impediments it has met with from misrule and anarchy, growing out of a neglect to establish any well-combined system of policy in its early stages. The governors, for want of any positive enactments, were left free to adopt such measures as circumstances might dictate, and having their attention engrossed by the difficulties with which they were continually surrounded, were compelled to neglect the improvement of society, and took no pains to frame prospective regulations for the well-being of the colony.

In 1831, Governor Darling was superseded by Sir Richard Bourke. The country had, during the administration of his two predecessors, improved rapidly by the aid of convict labour. When the latter gentleman came into office, the policy of selling lands, instead of making free grants, was adopted; this was considered an important change for the colony.

The money arising from the sales of land was set apart by the home government, to be applied to the immigration of free settlers; but great complaints have been made that this fund has been diverted from the original object, or that a surplus remained in the government coffers unexpended. Labour is, in consequence, in the greatest demand in all parts of the colony, and the inconveniences of convict labour begin to show themselves. From what I could understand, the assignment system is getting into disrepute, and all the respectable settlers are now turning their attention to the moral condition of the colony. Strong representations have been made to the home government, and an act has been passed, by which New South Wales is no longer to be a penal settlement, and transportation thither is to cease. The

only points that are now used for this purpose are Moreton Bay and Norfolk Island.

The principles upon which free grants are made, have been subject to great fluctuation. In Governor Macquarie's time, no grants to a single individual could exceed one hundred and fifty acres. Many of the difficulties and evils that resulted from these free grants, are said to have grown out of his disposition (miscalled humane), which led him to view the convicts as men in misfortune, rather than as the outcasts of society.

His regulations in entering on his duties were explicit, "that a convict should receive a grant of land only, when from good conduct and a disposition to industry he should be found deserving of favour, and of receiving emancipation." In contradiction to the spirit of this regulation, he made grants of land to any emancipated convicts, and even appointed them to office as constables, &c. These emancipations were easily obtained, and transportation became, as has already been stated, rather a reward than a punishment for crime. Instead of bestowing his indulgences only on the deserving, a rule of action which, if strictly carried into execution, would have been productive of good, both to the rising community and the convicts themselves, he dispensed his favours indiscriminately. He committed a double error, when in addition he appointed them to office, thus placing them over their companions in crime. Good could not be expected to result from such a course, and the profusion with which land was distributed among the whole class of emancipated convicts, whether they had been set free before the expiration of their term for good behaviour, or had served their time out, produced positive injury.

During our stay at Sydney, a convict-ship arrived; and being desirous of obtaining a view of her accommodations, and the mode of treating the convicts, I visited her. This vessel was prepared expressly for the purpose. Between decks, a strong grated barricade, well spiked with iron, is built across the ship at the steerage bulkhead. This affords the officers a free view of all that is going on among the prisoners.

Bunks for sleeping are placed on each side all the way to the bow, resembling those in a guard-room. Each of these will accommodate five persons. There is no outlet but through a door in the steerage bulkhead, and this is always guarded by a sentry. Light and air are admitted through the hatches, which are well and strongly grated. The guard is under the command of a sergeant, and is accommodated in the steerage, the whole being under the orders of a surgeon, whose duty it is to superintend and regulate every thing that relates to the

prisoners, inspect the ship daily, and administer punishment, even unto death if necessary. The surgeon also has control over the master of the vessel, and his regulations. The master and mates, on receiving a certificate from the surgeon, are allowed a small sum for every convict landed, in addition to their pay.

The criminals have prison fare, and are supplied with wooden-ware for their eating utensils, which are kept in very nice order. The quarter-deck is barricadoed near the main-mast, abaft of which all the arms and accoutrements of the guard and vessel are kept. The master and officers are usually lodged in the poop-cabin. The prisoners are habituated to the discipline of the ship, on board the hulks, before leaving England. The usual, and most effectual, punishment for misbehaviour is to place the culprit in a narrow box on deck, in which he is compelled to stand erect. This punishment is said to be effectual in reducing the most refractory male convicts to order, but it was not found so efficacious in the female convict-ship; for, when put in the box, they would bawl so loudly, and use their tongues so freely, that it was found necessary to increase the punishment by placing a cistern of water on the top of the box. This was turned over upon those who persist in using their tongues, and acted on the occupant as a shower-bath, the cooling effect of which was always and quickly efficacious in quieting them. I was informed that more than two such showers were never required to subdue the most turbulent.

I was struck with the ruddy, healthy, and athletic looks of the young convicts that were arriving, and from their deportment and countenances I should hardly have been inclined to believe that they had been the perpetrators of heinous crimes.

I am not at all surprised that many of the settlers of the colony should be opposed to the change in the assignment system; for when such a fine body of men is seen, the reason is easily understood, as the possession of such strong and hale persons to all intents and purposes as slaves, and at the expense of their maintenance alone, must be very lucrative to those requiring labourers. I am, on the other hand, at a loss to conceive how the assignment system can be looked upon in any other light than as a great evil, which must be abolished if it be designed to make the inhabitants of New South Wales a moral community, and to reform the convicts. It acts most unequally on the parties, and is a barrier to the reformation that the punishment of transportation is intended to effect.

The convicts on arriving are sent to the barracks at Sydney. The government selects from them such mechanics as are required for the public service, and then the numerous applicants for labourers are

supplied. Those assigned to private employers, are sent to the interior under the charge of a constable or overseer.

They build their own huts, and the climate being very fine, require but little shelter. The hours of labour are from six to six, and the quantity of labour exacted from them is about two-thirds of what would be required in England. They are treated in all respects as if they were free, and no restraint is imposed, except that they cannot leave their masters, who, when they have no further use for them, return them to the government to be reassigned.

When on ticket of leave, they may reside in any place they choose to select.

The convict's time of probation depends upon the original term of his sentence; but on a commission of crime within the colony, it begins from his last conviction. For refractory conduct, they may be taken to the nearest magistrate, who orders punishment on the oath of the master. The magistrate has also power to send them to the nearest chain-gang employed on public works. Here they are worked in irons, and kept on scanty food for a limited period, after which they may be returned to their masters. If badly treated, the convict may have the affair investigated, but redress comes slowly.

One of the great evils of the system is, that many of the convicts on arriving are assigned to persons in Sydney and other towns, the consequence of which is that they are exposed to the contaminations and temptations that are likely to beset them in those thickly-peopled places, and this too only a few months after their conviction in the mother country. This influence removes all hopes of reform, and they are usually soon found among the criminals of New South Wales.

All persons who are landholders may receive convicts as assigned servants, in the proportion of one to every three hundred and twenty acres, but no one proprietor can have in his employ more than seventy-five convicts.

Written application for labourers is made to the Board of Assignment, and the applicants must bind themselves to keep the assigned convict for at least one month, and to furnish him with food and clothing agreeably to the government regulations, which are as follows, viz.:

The weekly rations consist of twelve pounds of wheat, or nine pounds of seconds flour; or, in lieu thereof, at the discretion of the master, three pounds of maize meal, and nine pounds of wheat, or seven pounds of seconds flour; with seven pounds of beef or mutton, and four pounds of corned pork, two ounces of salt, and two ounces of soap.

The clothing for a year is as follows, viz.: two frocks or jackets,

three shirts, of strong linen or cotton, two pairs of trousers, three pairs of shoes, of stout durable leather, one hat or cap, and the use of a good blanket and mattrass belonging to the master.

Custom, however, has extended the above allowances, and the quantity of luxuries added in tobacco, sugar, tea, and grog, makes the amount nearly double. These additions have become absolutely necessary in order to procure work from the convicts, and the free supply of them is the only way in which they can be made to work in the harvest season. I was informed that a settler considered it all-important to have a large stock of these luxuries on hand at the season of pressure; for although the assigned servants do not actually refuse to work, they do so little, that, in order to save his crop, the master must yield them the extra indulgences.

Another evil attendant on the assignment system is the difference in the treatment they receive from those to whom they are assigned. On the arrival of a convict-ship, a large number of persons who have made applications to the Board, are in waiting; they of course know nothing of the character of the convicts, and, as I learned from a good source, no record is kept, or sent with the convicts themselves. The Board is entirely ignorant of their character or crimes, and thus can exercise no discrimination in assigning the convict to the hands of a good or of a hard master. The greatest villains may, therefore, fall into kind hands, while one who is comparatively innocent may suffer much more than he deserves.

The punishment of transportation must continue very unequal until a classification be resorted to. Many convicts, by bad treatment, are confirmed in their vices.

For any misbehaviour, they are, as has been seen, subject to severe castigation upon their master's making oath before a magistrate. This not unfrequently drives the culprit or convict to further crime, and in revenge for these wrongs, he either neglects his master's interest, or has been known to set fire to his harvest when gathered.

The present system appears fitted to entail evil and misery on the colony, and there are few disinterested men who do not view it as calculated to prevent any moral improvement. Murders, robberies, and frauds are brought about by it, for which extreme punishments are of such frequent occurrence that it is a matter of astonishment that a stranger should remark that an execution had taken place. The day before our arrival five criminals had been hung, and more were to suffer in a few days.

These executions take place without causing any unusual excitement. There is little doubt that the convict population contains

among its members many of the most abandoned wretches, and I am also aware that the Governor and Council are making every exertion to put a stop to the immorality and vice which so generally prevail; yet I am satisfied that the convicts who are assigned are, in some cases, goaded on to crime by the treatment they receive from their masters, who hold them as slaves, and degrade them to the level of the beast with whom they are forced to labour.

Although Great Britain has a right to assume a proud pre-eminence in her exertions to emancipate the blacks, yet it behooves her to look to her penal settlements, and examine into the tyranny and degradation that a large number of her subjects are suffering there, many of them for slight crimes.

Few except those who have visited this colony can be aware of the extent to which the lash is administered, and oftentimes on the mere pretence of unruly and bad behaviour to their masters, or for the most trivial offences. So many facts of this sort were stated to me by persons in office, and of the highest respectability, that there cannot be a doubt of their correctness. The following extract from a report of the Committee of Transportation in 1835 will show it in its true light.

"In 1835, the number of convicts in the colony of New South Wales was above twenty-eight thousand, and the summary convictions in that year were estimated at twenty-two thousand. In one month in 1833, two hundred and forty-seven convicts were flogged, and nine thousand seven hundred and eighty-four lashes inflicted, which would make for the whole year two thousand nine hundred and sixty-four floggings, and about one hundred and eight thousand lashes. This amount does not embrace one-third of the convicts convicted summarily, but only those sentenced to be flogged, and there yet remain those to be added who were sentenced to other degrees of punishment: male convicts to the iron-gangs and treadmill, and females to the solitary cells of the factory."

The inquiries that I made in relation to the native-born inhabitants, were universally answered by all in favour both of their morals and habits. Judge Burton bears testimony that the free immigrants and native colonists are as exempt from the commission of crime as the inhabitants of any other country.

The defect in the female assignments is equally obvious. They are assigned only to married settlers who are considered respectable. They are accompanied by their children from the mother country, but immediately upon arriving the assignment takes place, and as the party to whom the convict is assigned does not wish to be encumbered with her offspring, they are at once separated. The child is not unfrequently

removed from the mother when at the breast, and taken to the factory at Paramatta, where convicts' children are nursed and brought up. The mother is thus severed from her progeny for months, and, perhaps, for ever. The scenes that occur, at these separations are often heart-rending, and ought to condemn the whole system. The feelings of the poor creatures may be more readily conceived than described.

Connected with the convict system, are the convict prisons, where the road and iron-gangs are lodged for safe keeping. There is one on the hill at Sydney, which, like most of the buildings at Sydney, bears the name of Governor Macquarie, 1817. In it are shown the guard-room, the working and eating-rooms, and dormitories, all of which are well ventilated. The prisoners sleep in hammocks, swung from parallel bars a few feet above the floor. A whipping-post was shown in an adjoining yard. The older prisoners are kept at work making brooms.

The female convicts who do not conduct themselves well, are sent back to the factory at Paramatta, where they are engaged in prison labour. The practice of keeping them in great numbers there, after they have been sent back, is liable to many objections, and is not calculated to produce reformation. It is very questionable whether their employment in small parties would not have a greater tendency to produce the desired reform.

The factory at Paramatta is situated on the river, about half a mile from the centre of the town, near the place where the steamboats stop. It is a large stone building, enclosed with high walls, and usually contains one thousand inmates. A part of these are those female convicts who have not yet been assigned; and the rest, those who have been remanded for their refractory conduct. Many of the settlers have, from necessity, taken these females into their service, and have been quite glad to get rid of them; for their corrupting influence had often resulted in the total ruin of the male servants who had been assigned in the same family.

It is only lately that good order has been introduced into this establishment, and this is owing to the supervision and care of Sir George Gipps. The accounts of the disorder in it in former times are truly disgusting.

These females are now divided into three classes, according to their ability and behaviour, of which the latter is more especially attended to. The first class is employed in making linen clothing, such as shirts, children's clothes, &c., and do much work for the shop-keepers in Sydney. The second, in making up coarse articles of apparel for

government, and shop-keepers; the third, in picking oakum, washing for the establishment, and plaiting straw.

It would be difficult to imagine a more hideous community; and those who visited this establishment could scarcely realize the possibility that Great Britain could have produced such an assemblage of ugly creatures. It is hardly conceivable that the feminine character could ever have existed under faces, in which all traces of gentle expression have long since been annihilated, and where the countenance now indicates only the prevalence of the baser passions.

Some of the rooms were crowded, the inmates sitting on two rows of benches. Upon our entrance they discontinued their occupations, and saluted us with disgusting leering faces, staring at us with a malignity and hatred that were not soon forgotten.

The rooms appeared well ventilated, and scrupulously clean. I wish I could say as much for the prisoners themselves: they were dirty and slovenly in their appearance, and were clothed in a coarse drugget gown, a cap and neckerchief of cotton.

The discipline is very strict, and maintained by a person who at one time was the most unmanageable convict they ever had confined there. She now holds the place of matron, and has the management of the females, under the supervision of Mr. Bell, who is the superintendent of the whole establishment.

Until she was appointed, no sort of order was maintained. We understood that her conduct has been excellent since she filled the place. She is a tall masculine woman, of some intelligence, and has a watchfulness of manner that shows she is an adept at her business. She told us that the punishment for misconduct was solitary confinement, on bread and water, and for smaller misdemeanours, working at the crank of the pumps which supply the establishment with water.

The children are in a room by themselves, and there are about one hundred of them, from the infant to the child of seven or eight years of age. They all looked healthy, were very playful, and appeared to be well taken care of. There are twenty nurses who attend to them. It gave us much pleasure, when the matron entered with us, to see them all come running up to her, demonstrating her kind treatment of them, and the affection they bear her.

To Mr. Bell, the superintendent, we were much indebted for his civility. He appeared well qualified for the management of so extensive and difficult a concern. He explained every thing to us, answering the numerous questions put to him with great pleasure and