COLONEL H. W. BUNBURY, C.B.
IN LATER LIFE

Early Days in Western Australia

Being the Letters and Journal of

Lieut. H. W. BUNBURY

21st Fusiliers

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

THE writer of these letters and notes on Australia in the eighteen thirties was a young Lieutenant in the 21st Foot, the Scots Fusiliers—Henry William St. Pierre Bunbury. Born in 1812, he was the son of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Bunbury, K.C.B., 7th Baronet, who had served with distinction in the campaign in Holland in 1799, and had, from 1805 to 1809, been Quarter-Master-General in the Mediterranean, and who was from 1809 to 1816 Under-Secretary of State for War.[1] His mother was a daughter of Lieutenant-General the Hon. H. E. Fox, younger brother of Charles James Fox. Sir Henry Bunbury had been at Westminster, but his experiences do not seem to have imbued him with a very high opinion of the advantages of a public school education: H. W. Bunbury was educated partly at home, partly abroad, and at the age of eighteen was commissioned as an Ensign in the 43rd Foot (now the 1st battalion Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry).

Promoted Lieutenant in August 1833, Bunbury exchanged, or was transferred, within less than a year—for reasons which do not appear in his letters—into the 21st, which was then stationed in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) and furnished a detachment also for the protection of the settlers in the 'Swan River Colony'. He was rather more than three years in the Australian Colonies, visiting New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, and Western Australia in succession.

On his way back from Australia to England Bunbury spent some time at the Cape of Good Hope, of which his step-mother's brother, General Sir George Napier—

[1] Later, from 1830 to 1833, he was M.P. for W. Suffolk.

afterwards his father-in-law—had just been appointed Governor. The length of his stay at the Cape is uncertain, but it was there, perhaps, that he wrote up the note-books which form the most substantial portion of this volume. He was promoted Captain in August 1838, and a year afterwards, when the 21st went to India, exchanged into the 33rd (now the 1st battalion Duke of Wellington's Regiment).

A fresh series of letters (not printed here) begins in June 1840, from Gibraltar. Early in 1841 Bunbury's regiment went to Barbados, where they suffered very severely from yellow fever. Bunbury himself was on the staff as A.Q.M.G. from October 1841 to December 1843, when the regiment was transferred—with unfortunate results, once again, to the health of the troops—from the tropical heat of the West Indies to the almost arctic cold of Fredericton, New Brunswick.

By 1848 Bunbury had returned home and was serving with his regiment in Scotland and—later—on the staff in Dublin; but he was soon outward bound again. Sir Charles Napier was appointed Commander-in-Chief in India, and Bunbury went out in 1849 as his A.D.C. He saw active service in the Kohat expedition; but, when promoted Brevet-Major in November 1851, he almost immediately purchased an unattached majority and went on half-pay. In 1852 he married Cecilia, daughter of General Sir George Napier.

Bunbury's last period of service was his severest. He rejoined the army on the outbreak of the Crimean War, and served throughout the campaign in the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, commanding his battalion from October 1855 to the end of the war. He was made Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel for distinguished service in the field in December 1854, and three months later received the

substantive rank. After holding a staff appointment in England, he retired with the rank of Colonel and of C.B. in 1862. In 1875 he died.

Whatever his reasons for going, Bunbury's visit to the Australian Colonies occurred at a most interesting period in their history. In 1829 Gibbon Wakefield had written in Newgate Prison his *Letter from Sydney*, which brought Australia more prominently before the British public than it had ever been before, profoundly influenced British policy towards it, and was in no small degree responsible for its ultimate transformation from a mere penal settlement into a group of free self-governing colonies. It was in 1836, while Bunbury was in Australia, that the Wakefield Colony of South Australia was founded. Meanwhile the explorations of the 'twenties had set the squatters marching into the interior of New South Wales; and, again while Bunbury was in the colonies, squatting was officially recognized as being what indeed it was—the dominant activity of Australian life. The unprecedented influx of immigrants from England which set the seal upon these changes and removed the imprint of convictism from New South Wales was just beginning.

It would be going too far to say that Bunbury appreciated the significance of these events. He travelled through some of the new squatting country, but the atmosphere in his letters is still that of the convict colony. The picture that he gives us of New South Wales, however, slight though it is, is of no little interest when we remember that a new era was about to open. When he moves on to Van Diemen's Land we get but a fleeting glimpse, and an unpleasing one, of Governor Arthur's island prison—though Arthur's régime, contrary to the traditional view, does not appear in these letters as excessively severe, except as

regards the re-convicted criminals. It is on the last of the three Australian colonies he visited—Western Australia—that Bunbury has most to say. The colony, it is clear, interested him, and he was destined to leave his mark upon it. He played but an inconspicuous part, perhaps, in its history, but there is the flourishing little port of Bunbury to perpetuate his name.

The western coast of Australia, though its general nature had been known with some degree of accuracy since the middle of the seventeenth century, was not settled until some forty years after Phillip and his 'First Fleet' had landed their convicts at Botany Bay in 1788. The coast had been explored by the Dutch, always rather traders than settlers; and neither the geographical features of the land nor its primitive inhabitants gave any promise of the lucrative trade which had been hoped for there and which in the Indies to the northward was being realized. Colonization was indeed foreshadowed in the Instructions for Tasman's voyage of 1644, and advocated by Purry, a servant of the Dutch East India Company, in 1717–18, but there was never any real chance that these ideas would be acted on; and after the great discoveries of Cook attention was concentrated on the more inviting eastern coast, or 'New South Wales'. Captain Phillip's commission as Governor of New South Wales in 1787 only extended as far west as the 135th parallel, and no claim was set up by Britain to the possession of the whole continent: indeed, until Flinders proved the contrary in 1802, it was believed by many that New South Wales and 'New Holland' were not part of the same land mass at all, but were separated by a strait.

The decision to claim Western Australia as British was due to the fear that it might be claimed and settled by

France. French interest in the Pacific went back to the days of Cook and earlier: the expeditions of Dentrecasteaux in 1791–3 and of Baudin in 1800–4 made valuable contributions to the knowledge of the Australian coast-line: and the suspicion, not perhaps entirely unjustified, that Baudin's voyage had ulterior political objects, was a principal motive in inducing Governor King to make a settlement on Van Diemen's Land. After the Napoleonic Wars France resumed her activities: Freycinet visited Shark Bay in 1818, and in 1824–5 three French vessels, the *Astrolabe*, the *Thétis*, and the *Espérance*, were dispatched to Australia. The professed objects of these voyages, as of the earlier ones, were purely scientific; but the British Government had its doubts. Rumours—afterwards admitted to be unfounded—reached it of an intention on the part of the French Government to establish a colony on the west coast. Any such designs could only be effectively countered by immediate occupation, and by dispatches from Lord Bathurst of 1 and 11 March 1826 Governor Darling was instructed to prepare for the formation of a settlement at Western Port, near Port Phillip, and to have an examination made of the country around Shark Bay and King George's Sound, with a view to the establishment of a penal settlement at one or other of those places. The outcome of those instructions was the hoisting of the British flag by Major Lockyer, in command of a small party of troops and convicts, at King George's Sound on 26 December 1826.

Shortly after Lockyer's departure the *Astrolabe* reached Sydney after spending the greater part of October at King George's Sound, and Governor Darling thought it would be wise to make assurance doubly sure. Captain Stirling of H.M.S. *Success* offered to make an examination of the

Swan River, which had been surveyed by Baudin and which seemed a decidedly possible site for a French settlement. The proposal was accepted: the examination was duly made in March 1827: and within little more than a month Stirling was himself conveying to England a dispatch from Darling recommending the immediate establishment of a settlement on the Swan. The first verdict of the Colonial Office and the Admiralty, by whom these proposals were considered, was unfavourable; but in July 1828 Captain Stirling, who now had a friend at court in the person of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Mr. Horace Twiss, renewed the appeal, and this time the Government listened. A recrudescence of the fear of French annexation, and an offer by a syndicate to undertake the work of colonization, induced the Colonial Office, in November, to give definite instructions that formal possession be taken of 'the west coast of New Holland'. On 2 May 1829 Captain Fremantle of H.M.S. *Challenger* landed at the mouth of the Swan and took possession of the country accordingly, and the ship remained on the spot until the arrival of the first settlers and of Captain Stirling as Lieutenant-Governor made the 'Swan River Colony' a reality.

The new interest in emigration and in the possibilities of the colonies felt in Great Britain after the Napoleonic Wars had already begun to affect Australia, as the formation in 1824 of the Australian Agricultural Company and in 1825 of the Van Diemen's Land Company bore witness. Stirling reported that there was in the west land as favourable for settlement as any in the east, and the offer of the syndicate already mentioned was the natural outcome of those reports. Their scheme, however, was too ambitious for the Colonial Office, which spoke of one million acres

where the syndicate spoke of four million, and of 400 emigrants where the syndicate spoke of 10,000. All of the members but one, Mr. Thomas Peel, refused to accept the suggested modifications, and under the new conditions the scheme became merely a part of the main plan of colonization. There was to be no Government emigration, but all settlers were to receive grants of forty acres for every £3 invested in equipment, in stock, in the payment of labourers' passages, or other capital expenditure: Mr. Peel was merely given priority of choice of land to the extent of 250,000 acres if he landed 400 settlers by 1 November 1829, and exempted from the condition that land grants must be improved, under pain of forfeiture, within ten years. No convicts, it was announced, would be sent to the colony. There was no lack of persons desiring to emigrate upon these terms. On 6 February 1829 the ship *Parmelia* sailed from Spithead with the first party of emigrants, chiefly officials and their families: a detachment of troops was sent out on another ship: and on 18 June the colony was duly inaugurated by proclamation of Captain Stirling.

The first essential to settlement was the exploration of the districts in the immediate neighbourhood of the Swan River, and whilst temporary buildings were erected on Garden Island, parties under Lieutenant Henry of the *Challenger* and Commander Currie, harbour-master of the new colony, examined the country between the mountains and the sea, and Stirling and his officers fixed on the sites of Fremantle, the port, and Perth, the seat of government. By this time new colonists were arriving; but the Surveyor-General and his assistants pressed on fast enough with their work to enable the first land regulations of the colony to be issued by the end of August, and the first allotments

of town and country land to be made shortly afterwards. By the end of the year, in spite of the complications due to the proportioning of grants to capital expenditure, 525,000 acres had been granted, including 100,000 allotted to Stirling, as the 'discoverer', and 250,000 to Peel—who, however, had arrived too late to claim priority. There were 850 settlers in the colony. The grants were large; more settlers were arriving; and further explorations were necessary. Lieutenant Preston and Dr. Collie examined the coast-line southwards of the Swan—for Stirling had been advised to extend his settlement to the southward rather than to the north—and Lieutenant Dale explored first the Helena River and later the fertile 'York' district beyond the Darling Range. In consequence of these explorations it was possible in 1830 to open for settlement the district of Port Leschenault, the mouth of the Blackwood River, and the neighbourhood of Northam, York, and Beverley; and the King George's Sound district—from which the convicts were shortly afterwards withdrawn—was thrown open similarly. Relations with the aborigines were on the whole friendly. The colony in fact had taken root.

The worst days of a colony, however, come when the first enthusiasms have exhausted themselves. Western Australia slowly grew, but its growth hardly realized the expectations of its colonists. Undoubtedly many of the first settlers were but ill prepared for the work of pioneering and had the haziest ideas of what colonies were really like. The most unpractical of all, perhaps, was Thomas Peel. He arrived with a party of some 300 immigrants and servants in December 1829, but, as Bunbury explains in his notes, he seemed to be totally incapable of establishing himself or them upon the land, and the scheme which had

been launched with so much parade came to total and irreparable shipwreck. Peel, however, at least stayed in the colony: a few months' experience was enough to induce others, grantees of land as well as landless labourers, to abandon it for the more settled communities of those regions, and in particular Van Diemen's Land. They did not conceal their disappointment with the country; and in Van Diemen's Land, and in New South Wales and Cape Colony as well, many men were only too ready to listen to and spread unfavourable reports of this upstart colony, whilst at home in England there was Gibbon Wakefield, anxious to point the moral that colonization on the West Australian plan was bound to fail.

The complaints and misrepresentations of the disappointed, however, were by no means the only reason for the slow progress of Western Australia. In 1831, and until the middle of 1832, visits of ships with provisions were so infrequent, and the colony was so far from being able yet to raise its own supplies of food, that actual famine came within measurable distance. The most hopeful line of advance, the development of the pastoral industry, was barred by the shortage of live stock and the inability of the colonists to purchase any. There was an acute shortage of ready money also: Stirling declined to advance money from the Treasury, and an attempt to raise funds by subscription for the establishment of a bank was unsuccessful. In New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land there had from the first been a Government establishment with Imperial money at its disposal, for they were convict colonies: in the free colony of Western Australia the Imperial Government had from the first emphasized its disinclination to incur any expense, and the colonists were left to face these difficulties unaided. 'Sydney', writes

G. F. Moore ruefully in 1832, 'in the sixth year of its establishment cost the Government £161,000. . . . For this colony £18,000 per annum is the allowance.' The penal colonies had another advantage. The presence of convicts, whatever the evils it entailed, was a great alleviation of the labour problem: the colonists of Western Australia were soon complaining that they lacked the labour necessary to put the land to profitable use. Many of them had brought servants with them: but although servants under indenture were not (as Wakefield supposed) allowed to obtain grants of land, and breaches of those indentures were liable to be punished by the courts, few if any of the masters had realized how greatly circumstances differed from those in England. Indentures would expire ere long, and they were not likely to be renewed; but that was not all. 'Masters here', complained G. F. Moore, one of the leading settlers, 'are only so in name; they are the slaves of their indentured servants.' Servants could be, and sometimes were, sent to jail for refusing to work; but service enforced by methods such as these was no solution of the labour problem. In Moore's words, they soon found out their value, and acted accordingly: they expected 'to live . . . as well as their masters did at home': and as soon as they could they let it be known that they would work for high wages or not at all. They could not, after all, be blamed for appreciating the fact that in Australia they had opportunities such as in England they had never dreamed of, though there is evidence enough to prove that some of them were inefficient and intemperate ne'er-do-wells. In any case the shortage of labour imposed a decided check upon the progress of cultivation.

Another cause of complaint was the land system. According to Gibbon Wakefield, indeed, this was the source

of all the troubles of the colony, and of the labour difficulty in particular. Large tracts had been granted, but by no possibility could they at that early stage be cultivated or improved. There were, no doubt, provisions in the original land regulations delaying the grant of the fee simple until 1*s.* 6*d.* per acre had been expended on improvements, and imposing a fine of 6*d.* per acre unless one-fourth of the land had been reclaimed within three years; but prevention would have been better than cure. Furthermore, the grant of land in proportion to capital expenditure encouraged men to invest their capital in outfit beforehand and deprive themselves of the means of developing the land when wanted afterwards. In July 1830 the Colonial Office sent out new regulations diminishing by half the quantity of land obtainable in return for proved expenditure, but these regulations remained in force only a year and probably had not much result. Thanks to the advent of the Whigs to office and the influence of Wakefield, in March 1831 an entire change of principle was resolved upon: land was to be granted no longer, but sold by auction at an upset price of 5*s.* per acre and in lots of not more than 2,560 acres. The harm, however, had already been done; and the colonists complained that the chief effect of these price regulations, which came into force on 1 January 1832, was simply to encourage capitalists to prefer the eastern colonies, where land could be had on the same terms. For many years, certainly, only a negligible quantity of land was sold: indeed, even land under execution sale far below the Government price could hardly find a purchaser.

Finally there was the native difficulty. The first friendly relations with this primitive race of hunters and fishermen did not last long. The settlers gave them food and clothing, but the more they were given the more they wanted, and

they soon began to help themselves. Thereupon the settlers, judging the aborigines by their own standards (and perhaps, in these early stages of racial intercourse, nothing else could be expected) defended their property by force; the natives in their turn revenged themselves; and by the end of 1831 there was definite hostility between the races. Property, it is true, was in more serious danger than life, but in June 1832 a meeting of settlers declared that, unless decisive measures for the protection of property were taken, the colony must inevitably be abandoned. Two natives in particular, Yagan and Midgegoroo, distinguished themselves by the boldness of their attacks. Yagan was captured but escaped, and a brutal murder in April 1833 led the Government, which had hitherto been loth to take extreme measures, to offer rewards for the apprehension, dead or alive, of the native leaders. Midgegoroo was captured and, after some hesitation, publicly shot, and Yagan was engaged in conversation by two young settlers and killed in cold blood. Moore was shortly afterwards shown his head, 'which one of the men had cut off for the purpose of preserving'. Relations became still worse before they became better, and the skirmish of October 1834 near Pinjarra was, perhaps, the first occasion on which the natives were brought to realize the white man's power. But that was followed by a civilizing experiment conducted by an enthusiast, Mr. Armstrong, and by painfully slow degrees, in spite of many sporadic outrages, the situation became easier in the settled south-west portion of the colony, and the principles of humanity for which the Government and the best of the settlers had stood were vindicated.

We are anticipating, however. In 1832, so overwhelming were these various troubles felt to be that, at the united request of the colonists, Captain Stirling went home to lay the

case before the Secretary of State for the Colonies in person. In particular it was hoped that he might induce the Imperial Government to give more substantial financial assistance and perhaps to reverse its new land policy. His mission was only partially successful, but he secured at any rate a liberalization of the land regulations, permitting the issue of an immediate title for part of the original grants in return for the surrender of the rest, and an annual grant-in-aid from the Imperial Treasury. In 1834, the year of his return, there was a definite revival of hopeful feelings in Western Australia. The natives were still aggressive; labour was still hard to come by, and immigration had ceased; there had been little more exploration since Bannister's journey from Perth to King George's Sound in 1831; but the capabilities of the country were better understood, the acreage under crop was approaching the amount necessary to feed the population, and the possibilities of pastoral expansion were coming to be favourably thought of. The colony was beginning to make headway at last.

It was at this stage that H. W. Bunbury visited Western Australia: he arrived in March 1836 and left in November 1837. He was only in his middle twenties, but he combined with the restless curiosity of youth a reflectiveness and a maturity of judgement rare in one so young. On most of the vexed questions of those early days—the land and native questions in particular—he has something interesting to say; and his experience, brief though it may have been, of the eastern colonies gives him a useful standard of comparison. He is scornful of the Secretary of State who would expect to sell land in Western Australia for the price that it fetched in New South Wales (though still more scornful of the theorists who expected to sell it in the new

South Australian colony at prices higher still). He attempts, not unsuccessfully, to find a middle course between the indiscriminate shooting which was in effect the native policy of the more unscrupulous and unreflecting of the settlers and the indiscriminate forbearance which was the native policy of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He gives us many a glimpse also of the mode of life of the early settlers and of the manifold activities of Governor Stirling. Stirling was not merely the Governor but the father and founder of Western Australia. His Governorship, though it lasted until the end of 1838, was, curiously enough, a mere episode in his career; for, like Phillip in New South Wales before him, and Hobson in New Zealand after him, he was a naval officer, and after this colonial interlude he went to sea again, eventually attaining to the command of the China and East Indian station and the rank of admiral. But so long as the interlude lasted it engrossed all his interests; and although his energies were erratic and his enthusiasms unstable, his devotion to the welfare of the colony was unwavering. He appears and reappears in these letters and journals—interesting always, not only on account of his station and his policy, but also as a complex and rather baffling character.

Bunbury forgot few, if any, of the ingredients that went to the making of the West Australian colony, but his notes are more than a mere essay on its colonization. He was a military officer; and the detachment of one hundred and fifty troops then stationed in the colony was chiefly, of course, designed to protect the colonists in case of need against native attack. But the natives were unorganized; there was no native 'war' in Western Australia, nor was there likely to be; and Bunbury was determined not to waste his time in the ordinary round of military duties in

the 'town' of Perth if he could help it. It was not his fate to have his name inscribed upon the roll of explorers of Australia like Sturt, who first went out to Sydney as a military officer on a convict ship; but he was anxious to 'see the country'—and on more than one of his journeys he had the satisfaction of breaking some new ground—and was keenly interested not only in colonial society but in the natives of the country, their language, and their customs, the birds and animals, the plants, the nature of the soil. Thus he was not merely an observer of others' colonizing efforts; he was one of the many thousands of 'pioneers' who, following up and consolidating the work of the great discoverers, have by persistent and co-operative effort converted the potentialities of the British Empire into realities.

These letters and journals are, in the main, printed as Bunbury wrote them, but with certain stylistic alterations such as he himself would doubtless have made if he had ever prepared them for the press. The spelling of proper names and native words, which sometimes varies, has been adhered to. The originals are in the possession of Lieutenant-Colonel W. St. Pierre Bunbury, of De Braye House, South Farnborough, Hampshire. He has supplied the biographical information relating to H. W. Bunbury. The rest of this introduction is based mainly upon the following books:

J. S. Battye, *Western Australia: a History from its Discovery to the Inauguration of the Commonwealth.* Oxford, 1924.

R. C. Mills, *The Colonization of Australia, 1829–42.* London, 1915.

S. H. Roberts, *History of Australian Land Settlement, 1788–1920.* Melbourne, 1924.

G. F. Moore, *Ten Years' Diary of an Early Settler in Western Australia*. London, 1884.

F. C. Irwin, *The State and Position of Western Australia*. London, 1835.

E. O. G. Shann, *Cattle Chosen: the Story of the First Group Settlement in Western Australia, 1829–1841*. London, 1926.

References have been made on some points to the original records and Parliamentary Papers, but they have not been systematically studied.

Information with regard to certain of the place-names mentioned in the journals has, through the kindness of the Hon. Sir J. W. Kirwan, M.L.C., President of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, and Mr. F. I. Bray, of the State Archives Committee, been supplied from the records of the State of Western Australia: this has been incorporated in the notes. The Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, kindly supplied information regarding certain plants.

LETTERS AND JOURNALS

I

OUTWARD BOUND: NEW SOUTH WALES: VAN DIEMEN'S LAND

The first introduction of Mr. Bunbury to Australian society took the form, not uncommon in those days, of a voyage in a convict ship. An account of the voyage, and of the ship's company, is given in the letters which follow.

Freshford, I. of W.
Feb. 3rd 1834.

I have not known anything about my embarkation till yesterday when Sir John Macdonald[1] wrote me word that a ship sails on the 8th inst: for V.D.L., but I have declined going in her, preferring to go by one sailing on or about the 15th direct for Sydney. Going by Hobart's Town would have put me to considerable expense and if Col. Leahy[2] had once laid his paw on me I might not have got away again easily. The man who goes in the first ship to H.T. is about the most odiously disagreeable person I ever met. I knew him well formerly and am very glad to avoid his company.

Off Sheerness. Mar. 7th 1834.

Although my Regiment is in Van Dieman's Land, I go first to Sydney on speculation, hoping that General Bourke[3] will employ me in some way on the Staff so that I need not join my Regiment at all.[4]

[1] Sir John Macdonald, one of the ablest staff officers of his time, was Adjutant-General at the Horse Guards from 1830 to 1850.

[2] Lieutenant-Colonel J. T. Leahy, of the 21st Fusiliers, apparently retired shortly afterwards to reside at Illawarra, New South Wales. He is mentioned in a dispatch of Bourke in 1835 as a possible member of the Legislative Council.

[3] Bourke's name will appear not infrequently in the following pages.

[4] This short note is to his brother, Charles Bunbury. The other letters printed are all to his father.

On board the *Susan* Convict Ship.
Off Sheerness. Mar. 7th 1834.

Here I am at last embarked in a 'Bay Ship', as the Convicts call those bound to Botany Bay, and very uncomfortable it has hitherto been; but, now I am settled on board, by far the worst part of it is over. I embarked at Deptford on the 22nd Feb. without having to do a single day's duty at Chatham, which was a great comfort.

I am now going out with Gunton of the 50th and 29 men of his Regiment. Our Cuddy party on board consists of us two, the Captain and Surgeon; of whom the former appears to be a good seaman and inclined to make us comfortable, and as he has already been out six times with Convicts he is likely to understand the business well. The latter, who is, I am sorry to say, the Commanding Officer on board,[1] having the whole power and arrangement of everything, is a very improper person for such a situation. He is an old Navy Surgeon who has ruined his health and constitution in hot climates and attempts to remedy the loss by constantly stimulating the system with ether and brandy. The consequence is that he is always in a state of great excitement, and generally quite drunk, so much so that he has already killed a child on board by giving it improper medicine, a quantity of James's powders shaken out of a bottle without being weighed: the dose was enough

He was Governor of New South Wales from 1831 to 1837, having earlier been Lieutenant-Governor at the Cape. He was one of the most popular and liberal-minded Governors that ever went to Australia—a striking exception to the rule that military men made bad Colonial Governors.

[1] The system of 'Surgeon-Superintendents' was extended in 1835 from convict transports to ordinary emigrant ships. It continued for many years, and, in spite of occasional unfortunate experiences like this, was considered to be on the whole the best way of managing such ships.

to have killed a man. The same day he made the wife of our first Mate very ill by giving her Calomel in the same way because she was seasick. It is really a very serious affair going to sea with such a man in a ship crowded like ours, as we have above 400 souls on board, of whom 300 are Convicts confined below in a close prison.

March 8th.

We have just left Sheerness and are anchoring at the little Nore to wait for our sailing orders which we hope to get tonight and sail at daylight tomorrow. It still blows a heavy gale from the S.W. and we cannot get further than the Downs if it lasts, which there is every appearance of. It will be dismal work windbound in the Channel as all the outward bound have been this winter. The *Moffat* Convict ship sailed *four months* ago and is not yet clear of the coast of England, and Sir John Keane[1] who is gone to Bombay in the *Upton Castle* was *three months on board* before he could get to sea.

Susan. At sea. Mar. 21st.

We are now in sight of Porto Santo, the northernmost of the Madeiras, and tomorrow early we hope to reach Funchal. It is contrary to orders and to the wishes of the Captain to touch anywhere, but we are in search of a Doctor, as our Surgeon, of whom I think I said something in my last letter, died on the 17th, and it is rather unpleasant with 400 people on board to have no Doctor. His death was neither a loss nor a surprise to us. He had existed, ever since we left the land, solely on brandy, ether and opium, and had scarcely left his cabin, except once

[1] Sir John Keane, later Baron Keane of Ghuznee and Cappoquin, had just been appointed Commander-in-Chief at Bombay. He was in command of the invasion of Afghanistan in 1839.

when, two sailors being sick, he bled the wrong one. He was intoxicated the whole time, and even when sensible was utterly incapable of attending to his duty, which is both arduous and responsible. He died evidently from the effects of a tremendous dose of opium he took, not being able to measure the quantity when drunk, at night and in the morning he was found dead.

We live very well on board and get on pretty well with the Captain in general. Gunton and I, pulling well together, do not mind his getting in a rage, as he does occasionally. The chief cause of disagreement is the accommodation of our men, who are not half so well treated and have not half the comforts that the Convicts have. Government in making contracts with the owners of these ships appears to think that anything is good enough for the soldiers, and the owner of this ship, one of the meanest of his trade, takes very good care that they shall not have an article more than he is forced to find them. The convicts are extremely well fed and clothed, and every comfort and even luxuries found them. As long as they behave well they have a great deal of liberty on deck allowed them: some are employed to help the sailors, others the carpenter, and there are many odd jobs for them that amuse them and keep them out of mischief. Just fancy, each of the 300 convicts is allowed two gallons of Lisbon wine during the voyage. I am quite certain that the greater part of them were never half so well off and comfortable at liberty as they are now in the *Susan*. The boys, who are kept in a separate prison, are the worst behaved and the most difficult to manage. They are mostly Londoners, either housebreakers or pickpockets, and they continue to keep themselves in practice by stealing from each other what little property any of them possess.

On board the *Susan* Convict Ship.
At sea. April 19th 1834.

Things don't look quite so cheerful on board now as they did a fortnight ago; we have been now becalmed, or very little better, within four degrees of the Line since April 7th and we are still half a degree from it without any chance of crossing it for some time yet, if the wind continues as light and variable as it has been of late.

We have seen two or three homeward bound ships but not near enough to speak them and it is difficult for us to communicate with ships in the offing when some days we do not go more than two or three miles in the twenty-four hours.

Our Convicts are much less troublesome than I expected, and as they are extremely well treated and fed they can have no cause of complaint. If they infringe any of the rules about smoking, cleanliness etc., we can punish them in a summary fashion by flogging, handcuffing or double ironing them.

By the bye, as I believe you have never had anything to do with a Bay ship I will endeavour to describe the arrangements to you.

The whole of the lower deck is fitted up as their prison, with the exception of the after part under the Cuddy where the Soldiers and Sailors sleep. Of course the hatchways are left free, to communicate with the hold, and have strong bars studded with great nails all round. There are two entrances to the prison, at the main and fore hatchways, which are always kept locked. In the after part of the ship the hospital and boys' prison are separated from the main one; the latter, I suppose, for fear they should corrupt the men, as they are a good deal worse in every way and more difficult to manage.

The 300 Convicts are divided into Divisions of fifty, over each of which a Boatswain's Mate is placed, who is the best behaved man who can be found among them. They are then sub-divided into messes of six, with a Captain over each who is answerable for the cleanliness and regularity of his mess. Each man is supplied by Government with a cap, neckcloth, jacket, waistcoat, breeches, one pair of white trousers, two shirts, a pair of stockings and shoes for the voyage, and then another complete suit to land at Sydney with. They get Bargoo for breakfast, biscuit, beef or pork, pea-soup or pudding, for dinner, and six pints of water a man, and there are two gallons of wine allowed each man during the voyage besides limejuice which they now get every day. I am sure if it were known in England how much care is taken of Convicts going out it would lead to a great increase of crime, as they could then emigrate free of expense. When out there, with proper conduct they can soon obtain a ticket of leave, which enables them to work for whom they please and to profit by their labour.

The next letter completes the story of the voyage. We are in Sydney, a town of twelve thousand inhabitants or more, and the metropolis of the Southern Seas.

Sydney. July 21st. 1834.

I take advantage of the first ship for England to send you word of my safe arrival here—after a voyage of nineteen weeks and a half, so you may imagine I am not at all sorry to be ashore again. We were exactly three months out of sight of any land. I think there is very little of interest to tell you about in the latter part of the voyage—we had the usual allowance of gales of wind and calms. Once we were completely pooped, a sea breaking through the stern ports,

playing the devil in the after cabins and cuddy and carrying away one of the quarter boats, but luckily no one was washed overboard. From off the Cape to the land about Bass straits we had a very good run, but after that we had long calms and baffling winds that delayed us several weeks close to our destination.

We landed with the Guard ten days ago and I presented my credentials to the Governor. They have procured me two invitations to dinner and a ball, with permission to remain here for the present to see the country before joining my Regiment. Indeed I am not at all sure whether I shall join them at all. General Bourke, it appears, is a person who never says a word of his intentions before carrying them into effect, but I hear that when he received your first letter he said he would try and find something for me to do. Campbell of the 21st Regt. who is his extra A.D.C. is going to be married and will leave him and he tells me he thinks the Governor intends me to succeed him; however I am not at all sanguine. If I am ordered to my Regiment I will bury myself in the Bush and study drawing and natural history for a year or two. Some of the Detachments in the back settlements here are left in the Bush for two or three years, with rations found by Government and no further luxuries to be obtained except by shooting Kangaroos and Parrots and digging the ground for cabbages and potatoes.

Sydney is rather a large town, with many good houses but most of them very square and formal and nothing at all picturesque about them. Round the little cove are extensive wharfs and warehouses belonging to the Commissariat and Merchants, and the water is so deep that the largest ships can lie within a few yards of them. As for the streets they are just as Nature made them, with the

addition of all sorts of dirt and rubbish thrown into them to fill up the holes. When the weather is dry the dust is suffocating, when wet one is up to the knees in mud.

I have hitherto made no acquaintances except the Macleays, who have asked me twice to dinner, but I have not been yet as I was in the country. Campbell is to marry one of them, and there is another daughter for anyone inclined to matrimony, but she has no *sheep*. There is no conversation in the Colony except about sheep; a man who does not understand the management of Merinoes and wool is quite unfit for society here. Girls' fortunes are counted by them. Ten thousand is good but twenty thousand makes quite a rich heiress.

The state of society appears to be anything but good. Perpetual warfare and jealousy exist between the factions and everyone occupies him or herself in enquiring about their neighbours or anyone who arrives fresh. Where they dine, who they are, how much money, how old, who their grandfathers were etc., etc., are the usual topics of conversation among the women. I am reckoned rather a great man among them at present, dining twice at Government House, and at the Ball not showing any desire to be introduced to the Colonial Belles, the fact being that I was so stiff and weak from being cooped up so long on board ship that I could not dance.

There are three or four parties in the Colony: first, the people attached to Government, who look down on everyone else; then the free merchants, who are occasionally asked to Government House for want of better society; then the emancipist settlers who have served their term of punishment and are many of them very rich and some of them the most enlightened men in the Colony:[1] and

[1] Since the time of Governor Macquarie (1810–21) the 'emancipists' had formed a regular party, with which an increasing number of free immigrants of liberal views were also identified. Under Macquarie's successors there had been a distinct reaction against them, but they returned to favour under Bourke. It was under his administration, with the recognition in August 1834 of the right of emancipists to serve on juries, that the party began to lose its *raison d'être*; but until the great free immigration of 1838–42 and the stoppage of transportation in 1840 the old distinction was the most important social fact in the colony.

then there are sub-divisions of all these parties according to their several interests.

I hear that Van Dieman's Land is a very much nicer country than this, both in climate and scenery, but ruinously dear, even in the essential articles of meat and bread. Here meat is five farthings a pound and bread nearly as cheap, but vegetables, forage for horses, house rent and all luxuries are very dear. You may imagine the average of House rent when a Subaltern is allowed a guinea a week lodging money. Horses are tolerably cheap: a very fair hack costs about twenty five pounds: but then his forage is as dear as in London, about a pound a week.

In the three following letters Bunbury gives us several interesting glimpses of New South Wales in the eighteen thirties.

Sydney. August 14th. 1834.

As I am just returned from an excursion up the country as a juror at the Maitland Quarter sessions and start again for Windsor the day after tomorrow on the same service, I may as well begin this letter to you, writing from time to time like a journal until another ship sails for England, so that at least I may have something ready to send you whenever an opportunity offers.

To explain to you how I come to be a Juror, you must know that here there are always two Juries, one Military,

the other Civil, and a prisoner has the option of choosing which he will be tried by.[1] I think in general we are favourites—amongst the women invariably.

At the Quarter sessions we can only try cases not capital, but at the Supreme Court here the duty is more important as it has unlimited power. Prisoners of the Crown, or Government men as they are here called, can be tried by the summary jurisdiction of a bench of Magistrates in all cases not affecting their lives. When there are many various cases to be tried at a distance from Sydney a special Military Commission is appointed, and it is generally a very hanging matter indeed. I am now on Guard, writing this, and when visiting my Sentries at the Gaol I found no less than nine prisoners in the condemned cells and certainly some hundreds in the prison for various offences. It is quite frightful to see the amount of crime there is here, though it is nothing more than natural amongst the weedings of our English blackguards.

My trip to Maitland is the most interesting I have yet made as I went overland a four days trip, most part of which was thro' a mountainous country. Another Officer and I travelled together *with* a gig but not *in* it as the road, or rather track, was generally so bad that we were obliged

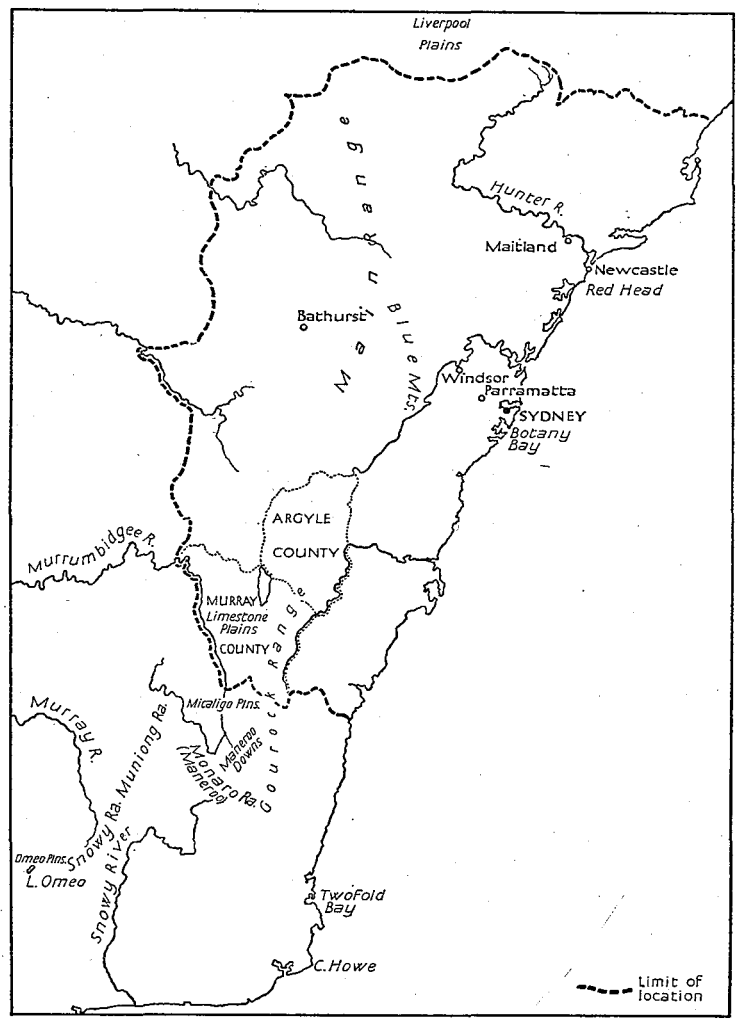
[1] At the foundation of New South Wales, the colony being purely penal, the only judicial tribunal set up consisted merely of a Judge Advocate and a body of six military or naval officers. Despite the growing feeling in favour of trial by jury, this continued until the New South Wales Judicature Act 1823 provided for the establishment of a Supreme Court, to try criminal cases with a military jury of seven officers and civil cases with two assessors or with an ordinary petit jury if desired by the parties. The Act also provided that trial by jury might be further extended by Order in Council. Bourke, being authorized by such an Order, introduced a Bill into the Legislative Council in 1833 providing for ordinary juries in criminal cases, but it was amended so as to leave the accused a choice between civil and military juries. Military juries were abolished by Act in 1839.

to walk. On the whole the Bush is not interesting, a most tiresome sameness existing through every part of the country I have yet visited. In fact one day's journey is enough to give one a thorough idea of an Australian forest, that is of the high or flat plains and hills: the low country near rivers is much more beautiful, with enormous trees of a most luxuriant growth and foliage. Generally the brush is so thick as to be nearly impervious, being filled with creepers and a kind of Briony that tears one's clothes and often holds one so fast that a knife is necessary to extricate oneself.

In the interval between this letter and the next—on 1st October to be precise—Bunbury became extra A.D.C. to the Governor. The path of Colonial Governors was certainly not strewn with roses.

Paramatta. Decr. 14th. 1834.

General Bourke is not popular and has met with a great deal of vexatious abuse and opposition from a certain party, especially the great landholders on the Hunter, who think he treats the prisoners with too great favour and lenity. The best proof to the contrary consists in the great decrease of crime, by reference to the Records of the Criminal Courts, during the last four years, and the superior state of discipline and the improved temper and general behaviour of the assigned servants in the Colony. These enlightened and patriotic Gentlemen of the Hunter regret the loss of the power they formerly exercised without restraint of mercilessly flogging their own or their friends' servants by the sentence of a single Magistrate. Now it requires a Bench sitting in Petty Sessions, and General Bourke, by appointing Stipendiary Police Magistrates to the different Districts, keeps these worthy Gentlemen in



SOUTH-EAST AUSTRALIA

check, and obliges them to administer Justice in their several Courts according to law instead of their own private interests.

The duties of A.D.C.'s also were at times arduous.

Government House. Sydney. April 2nd. 1835.

I have returned but a few days from the country where I have been for six weeks in attendance on the Governor in his trip to Twofold Bay, which is not far from Cape Howe, the S.E. extremity of this country. He went by sea but I was sent in charge of baggage and horses overland. I had a very pleasant journey, in some respects. It took me fifteen days to get down. During the greater part of the time the weather was intensely hot, the thermometer by day usually mounting to 100° in the coolest places, but the nights were cooler and very pleasant for sleeping under a Gum tree or a rock which were my resting places for the greater part of the time. With my saddle and valise for my head, and wrapped in my cloak, I could sleep as sound and comfortably as in a bed, in spite of fleas and mosquitos, which swarm in the Bush, the former especially growing to a much greater size in this genial climate than at Home. However the heat broke up and was succeeded by heavy and constant storms of thunder and rain, when I was very glad to take to the tent which I had with me.

I passed through a great deal of country that I was very much pleased with, especially beyond the boundary of the located Colony.[1] It has been discovered within the last few years and is far superior to anything before known.

[1] In New South Wales settlement was for long limited within 'boundaries of location' prescribed by the Government. The last limits so assigned had been those of the 'nineteen counties' proclaimed

By referring to the map you will see Argyle and Murray as two of the Southern Counties: they are both very valuable, both for agriculture and sheep feeding, but there is a tract of country southward of Murray, just beyond the boundary of the Colony, that is far more beautiful than anything I have seen elsewhere. The ground is very rich and covered with fine grass; it is part plain and part fine undulating hills with groups of trees sprinkled over them in a most picturesque manner. This country is bounded by the river Murrumbidgee on the West, beyond which rises a chain of wild rugged mountains. It is very well watered, and from the picturesque forms of some of the hills, dotted with groups of weeping Gums, it bears a most park-like appearance, particularly striking after the deep gloom of the usual Australian Bush.

Beyond that is a vast tract of country called the Manero Downs, bounded on the West by the Murrumbidgee and the Snowy Mountains and on the East by the Coast Range. This is a fine sheep country, especially the higher parts, while the valleys and flats, as they are called here, feed thousands of cattle. Although the land cannot be sold, as being out of the Colonial limits, it is all occupied by sheep and cattle stations belonging to great or little stock-owners. It is a curious system and the selection of a stockrun requires a good deal of judgement; some people in Manero have monopolised as much as twenty to thirty *miles square* by establishing stock huts at the only places where water or wood can be obtained, so that no other persons, though with an equal right to the land, can establish themselves

by Governor Darling in 1829. The authorities, however, were in effect conniving at pastoral occupation beyond those limits, and shortly after this Bourke, with his squatting licence system, inaugurated a change of policy. On this see below p. 41, note.

for want of those necessaries. The station usually consists of a miserable log or bark hut inhabited by a stockman and two or three assistants, all prisoners, who have the whole management of some thousands of head of cattle or sheep.

The security of property is surprising with such people in charge. A London pickpocket or Smuggler seems a person ill adapted to take care of a flock of sheep, or drive in from their run some hundred head of half wild cattle.

The loss of sheep is rare, as they are regularly folded and watched; the native Dogs occasionally eat or worry a few. But Cattle are stolen in great numbers, and no wonder, as the herds run wild over miles of country and are seldom driven in above twice a year, when they are hunted into a stockyard with horses and dogs and sorted for sale and to brand the calves.

Across Manero I had an easy and prosperous journey, but crossing the Coast range and the route down to the Bay was more difficult. However I accomplished it in safety and joined the Governor, with whom I returned by the same route.

We reached home after six weeks in the Bush and I shall be very glad to go away again, as I hate the dull life at Paramatta, and now the gay season is approaching when we move into Sydney and we have three months of constant worry and torment. The A.D.C's have the full benefit of everything that goes wrong, and here everyone abuses them and finds fault with everything they do. I am now writing in the waiting room with about a dozen people talking at once and I am half bothered amongst them all. One thing I can say of them, which is that there are scarcely two people in the Colony who agree together; their great pleasure is to tell lies and try to foment quarrels

amongst any persons who are inclined to agree together if let alone. I never met with such a spiteful malicious set as the people of Sydney, especially the Women.

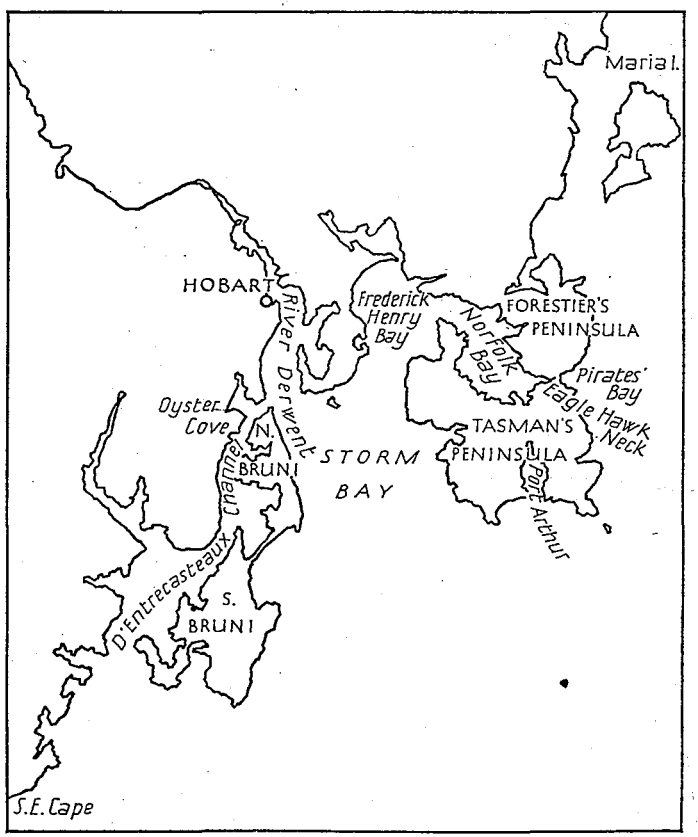
The next few months saw a sharp change in Bunbury's fortunes. Early in May he was dismissed from his position of extra A.D.C. and sent to join his regiment in Van Diemen's Land. The reasons for this step are discussed below. He found Hobart even less congenial from many points of view—society, climate, expenses—than Sydney, and took the earliest opportunity of escaping from it by volunteering for duty with an outlying detachment at Eagle Hawk Neck. The nature of the duty he himself explains.

Eagle Hawk Neck. Van Diemans Land.
16th August. 1835.

In May I sent you a letter from Launceston announcing my safe arrival in VAN DIEMAN'S LAND and this is the next. Eagle Hawk Neck is a very odd name, and it is a very odd place which would not suit most people as a residence. I, however, like it extremely. It is a very narrow sandy Isthmus dividing Tasman's Peninsula, on which is a penal settlement, from another Peninsula which communicates with the main land, about fifteen miles off, by another nearly similar neck. I am under the orders of the Commandant of the Settlement—Port Arthur—but still as the Commandant of the neck I am a great man entirely.

My sole employment is to amuse myself as well as I can, in which I have hitherto succeeded admirably, though I am quite alone, barring my dogs.

I have a Sergeant, who is paid for his duty (which I am not), and 25 men under me, besides a chain of eleven Watch Dogs who, with two sentries, watch the Isthmus to prevent the escape of any of the twelve hundred convicts



SOUTH-EAST TASMANIA

at Port Arthur. These are all men colonially sentenced, in addition to their former transportation, so are the very *élite* of the English blackguards.

The only things I have to do are to write my name on the back of letters leaving the Peninsula and not to leave home when any prisoner has absconded: just what any sensible man would wish, as he might chance to be murdered if he met the ruffian in the Bush.

I live in a rickety little wooden house at the foot of a gloomy, thickly wooded hill, within 200 yards of the sea which nearly always breaks with a heavy surf on the fine sandy beach of Pirate's Bay. On my right is the long narrow Eagle Hawk Bay and beyond it rise the high rugged hills of Tasman's Peninsula, covered with wood and a thick scrub impervious to anything but the beasts we call Badgers.

I have a whaleboat and convict crew at my command, so that I can go anywhere I like and can have excellent Kangaroo hunting about ten miles off, but my chief amusement is my garden, which I have considerably enlarged. I am now engaged in clearing some more ground to take in. It is very hard work, but I am now quite used to it and can dig or cut trees all day without fatigue. The soil is excellent and as the spring is approaching I am very busy getting in seeds. I am vulgar enough to grow potatoes and cabbage and onions, but I think the salt rations are a sufficient excuse. One pound of salt meat, $1\frac{1}{4}$ lbs of flour and $\frac{1}{2}$ a gill of Rum is the daily ration. Nothing else whatever is to be had for love or money unless I am successful Kangaroo hunting, but as I have some very good dogs I have hitherto generally been able to get three or four fresh meals in the week. I never feel dull or lonely but find the days too short for all my various

employments and in the evening my books pass the time pleasantly.

I disliked Hobart Town very much and am glad that I am not to be quartered there again, partly on account of the irksomeness of the duties and partly because I was never well during my stay there. Col. Arthur,[1] I think, was inclined to be very kind to me and I was assured that I was to be appointed a Police Magistrate whenever a vacancy occurred. I am very glad I was not, as I should have refused it, not choosing to have anything whatever to do with the Colony or its penal discipline; I hate the very name.

I have not been making any collections of Natural History: in New South Wales I thought I should have plenty of time hereafter and in this miserable Island there is hardly any thing to collect. No shells, at least none worth anything; a few fossils impossible to get out of the stone; and the flowers do not blossom in winter, which season I have been unlucky enough to begin with in this cold Island. It is not nearly as cold here by the sea as in Hobart Town, but even here the change from the heat of New South Wales is very unpleasant.

I have, as usual, been very lazy about drawing.[2] In N.S.W. I never took up a pencil except once, and then to a bad purpose, which you had warned me against: if I had taken your advice I might still have been A.D.C. I made some foolish caricatures of a new chain gang, a special hobby of the Governor's. I took the idea from their in-

[1] Colonel (afterwards Sir) George Arthur, an able and resolute if rather narrow-minded administrator, was Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land from 1823 to 1836.

[2] Clearly Bunbury inherited some of the talent of his grandfather, who was well known as an amateur artist and caricaturist: see the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

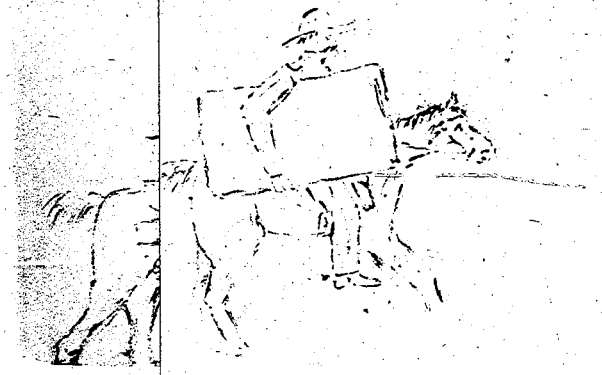
structions, which I had had the task of writing six different times. No one ever saw them, with my knowledge, except Westmacott; but it has since appeared that the Governor's valet, whom by the bye I had repeatedly reported for insolence and once threatened to thrash while travelling from Twofold Bay, had found them among my papers in my desk and had shown them to the Governor. This is the only reason that has ever been assigned for my dismissal, and that of course not publicly but to a person in his special confidence. Now, although I may have been to blame for making the sketches, as they were never shown or out of my own drawer, there was little harm done, and I cannot but rejoice at leaving the Staff of a General Officer who would so disgrace the character as not only to permit but encourage such a system of espionage by his servants.

Perhaps, however, Bunbury had been a little unfair to General Bourke, as he admits in a later letter, which may be quoted here.

Hobart Town. 27th Jan. 1836.

Col. Arthur told me a few days ago that he was anxious to give me a good civil job, as I had been so strongly recommended to him by Genl. Bourke; so I suppose that the principal reason for my dismissal from his Staff was really unconnected with my conduct whilst there. The most likely cause was that assigned by Mr Macleay; that the Governor wished to save as much money as possible during the short time remaining of his Government, which was not likely to be extended after his five years expired, the Tories being at that time in office.[1] At the same time

[1] This of course refers to the brief interlude of Tory government from November 1834, when King William IV dismissed the Melbourne



THE GOVERNOR ON TOUR

A CARICATURE BY H. W. BUNBURY

General Bourke, Governor of New South Wales, in centre. The other figures are probably Capt. Westmacott, A.D.C., in front; Lt. Bunbury, extra A.D.C., behind

take them before a Magistrate residing at a distance. By law an assigned servant cannot work on his own account, nor can any prisoner, without indulgence, hold any property whatever, but they do to a great extent.

At Port Arthur, however, the case is different. The Commandant, Capt. Booth, is extremely strict, and during the two and a half years he has ruled has brought them to a perfection of order and discipline that is quite wonderful, considering that he has twelve hundred most atrocious scoundrels to rule over.

He has only done it by keeping a steady tight hand over them, never relaxing in the least, but, by hard work and certain punishment for the most trivial fault, forcing and holding them down in a state of servility and subjection from which they have no hope to rise except by long continued good conduct. Their rations are small, and nothing extra is on any account permitted, their labour constant and severe, their constitutions are generally much shattered and their spirit is soon broken, so that they become as submissive and crouching as a well licked Spaniel. Tobacco is almost the only thing they will willingly risk punishment for: it is strictly forbidden and I am certain I am within bounds in saying that at Port Arthur there are at least 200 men who would readily receive 100 lashes to get a fig of tobacco apiece. A short time ago a prisoner here murdered another with an axe having had no quarrel whatever with him: his only reasons were 'that he had rather be hanged than remain at Port Arthur' and that he 'understood that men under sentence of death were allowed indulgences and he wanted some tobacco and tea and sugar'. Tobacco appeared to be an absolute necessary with him, more so than his dinner.

The Port Arthur discipline is carried as far as human

nature can endure and Medical Superintendance is constantly necessary to release men from confinement or exempt them from the hardest work lest they should die outright without the Doctor's assistance. So much for Port Arthur discipline.

The next three letters (not printed) are written from Hobart Town. Bunbury was recalled from Eagle Hawk Neck in January 1836 'for the purpose of sending a scamp there to get him out of the way'. He at once volunteered to go to Swan River in place of a brother officer who had been detailed to go and who, holding an appointment as Police Magistrate, would have lost heavily by the move. He sailed from Hobart Town on the 2nd February, and Van Dieman's Land saw him no more.

II

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: PERTH, YORK, AND PERTH AGAIN

In March 1836 Bunbury arrived in Western Australia; and it is with his doings there that the remainder of the letters and journals are concerned. They give, if not a complete, at least a tolerably full account and may be allowed, with only the briefest comments, to tell their own story.

Perth. Swan River. May 6th. 1836.

As a vessel is about to sail for V.D.L. I will not lose even this indirect and tedious means of communication, since there appears to be no chance of writing direct to you, no ships touching here on their way home, and indeed scarcely any coming here at all. I hope soon after this time you will receive my letter of January from Hobart Town telling you of my coming to this Colony.

Leaving George Town on the 14th Feb. we took sheep across to Port Philip, a very large bay or harbour on the south coast on Bass' Straits, on the entrance to which, running through the narrow passage by night, we were very nearly wrecked on a reef and escaped death by the merest chance. It was blowing very hard, we were close to a lee shore and obliged to run for the very narrow entrance on an unknown coast during a very dark night, with the Captain quite drunk. You may imagine our situation was not a pleasant one and I for one was very glad when we got inside. After that we had various misfortunes in the bay, losing an anchor, a cable and the windlass, and then getting aground three different times, till I began to think the vessel would never be got in safe. The Harbour is so large that in some places the opposite shore is out of

sight, but numerous sandbanks and flats render the navigation dangerous till it is better known.

The country is the richest I have seen in the Colonies, with extensive plains of thick grass. I walked thirty miles into the interior and came to a most beautiful spot, at the junction of two rivers in a rich grassy valley lightly timbered. Settlers from V.D.Ld. are taking their sheep over from there to Port Philip where they have plenty of space and a most excellent country. I have no doubt before long it will become a place of importance:[1] at present, until application is made to the Home Government, the land is not open for sale.

From Port Philip we had a passage of three weeks to this place which is the most dismal looking coast to approach that I ever saw. Long sandy beaches backed by low hills of very white sand stretch as far as one can see and several low sandy islands are scattered along the coast.

At the entrance to the Swan is the town of Freemantle where there are some good houses which were built in the first days of the Colony but are now rapidly going into decay: many of them are half buried in the loose white sand which drifts with every breeze and smothers the fences and even walls in the town. The anchorage is nothing but an open roadstead exposed to all the fury of the W. and NW. winds which come sweeping across the Indian Ocean with terrific force in the winter season but during part of the year the roads are safe in consequence

[1] This prediction was shortly afterwards verified. Settlement had only begun at Port Phillip in 1835 but a magistrate was sent there by Bourke in September 1836. Early in 1837 Bourke visited the settlement and gave Melbourne its name, land sales commenced a few months later, and before long there was a land boom in full swing.

of the fineness of the weather and the certainty of particular breezes. Across the entrance of the river is a bar which can only be crossed in a boat in moderate weather. At other times a cargo must be landed at Freemantle, carried about a mile across a sandy isthmus and then put again into a boat to be brought to Perth which is the capital of the Colony and about 12 miles up the river.

From Freemantle to Perth and again as high as Guildford, 8 miles higher up the Swan, the country is all a most wretched sand covered with stunted prickly scrub and small timber.

But I must defer my account of the Colony until another time as I am writing in a great hurry, being about to start on an expedition to the S.E. this afternoon, and I fear the vessel will have sailed before my return. I am going down with ten men to assist in establishing a settlement in a country which has only been visited by White Men during the last year and of which scarcely anything is known; but two adventurous Settlers are going to establish themselves on the banks of the 'Williams' river and my party go down for their protection against the natives of whom we know nothing as yet. I shall return in about three weeks time, by which time I shall be pretty well tired of the bush and of sleeping by a fire under a tree. It is getting rather late in the season for an expedition of the kind, as the rainy months are approaching, but certainly at this time of year the climate is delightful and exposure at night of very little consequence: I am now quite used to it and delight in exploring in the bush and visiting new country.

Perth itself is a most dismal place, duller than anything you imagine, but as I came here of my own accord I have no right to grumble.

York. Western Australia.
July 10th. 1836.

I wrote to you last in May by the 'Sally Anne' via V.D.L., since when no vessel has been here till now and I do not know when an opportunity of writing direct may occur as so few vessels come here at all. The ship just arrived is going to Batavia or anywhere else for a cargo, but I will not lose the chance of sending a letter and hope you may receive it some time or other.[1]

When I last wrote to you I was just starting on a journey to the southward to establish a new station at the 'Williams' river which took me five weeks. A few days after my return I was ordered over here with a detachment to make war upon the Natives, who have been very troublesome lately, robbing farms and committing other depredations, even attempting to spear White people.

My duty is very fatiguing and disagreeable, as my men are stationed at the different farms on the 'Avon' through a district nearly fifty miles in length, and my constant occupation is patrolling from one end to the other. I have no fixed residence or Quarters, but live sometimes at the Magistrate's house here, or else anywhere I may happen to find myself towards night, and in the middle of winter with a pleasing alternation of rain and frost I do not find the life very pleasant. I hope, however, it will not last very long as the Natives seem inclined to be quiet since I shot a few of them one night. I have no doubt, however, that ere long they will revenge the death of those we shot by spearing some White men when they can meet them alone and unarmed.

They are extremely cowardly, but very revengeful, never forgiving an injury; they take life for life but are not

[1] It was actually received on 18 January 1837.

particular whom they spear. Any White man will do or else a Native of another tribe. But in all their own quarrels their unfortunate women are sure to suffer in the end.

The spears which the Natives use are about eight feet long, slender and tough, sharp pointed and either barbed or else edged with sharp stone or glass near the point. They throw them with great precision by means of a throwing stick.

Many White people have been speared by them since this Colony was established; their usual way is to lie in ambush in the bush until the person has passed and then throw their spears into his back. They always run away from the soldiers and are so active and, from their colour, so difficult to see that they easily elude our pursuit.

York is a town in embryo; it contains two houses, a barn, a barrack and some outhouses, with about fifty acres of cleared land. It lies about fifty eight miles east from Perth across the coast range of barren hills and is the only good sheep country yet settled or known. The Avon river, running through the district from SSE. to NNW. for above fifty miles, has been discovered to turn to the southward of west in the hills and to be in fact the upper Swan.

There is a great deal of good sheep pasture and some good light loamy soil for wheat or barley, but still the District generally is poor and the best pasture will scarcely feed a sheep on three acres through the year.

You must not suppose that the Avon, Swan, Williams, or other rivers in the Colony are running streams; none of them run except during flood; for the rest of the year they form chains of ponds, generally few and far between, and towards the end of the summer the pools in the Avon and Williams are very brackish—in the latter especially the water is quite salt.

I will send you home a copy of my report to the Governor of my late journey to the Williams, together with the sketch I laid down of the country, when I get back to Perth and have time to do it. I hope this will be before the spring when I expect I shall have to make a long journey towards King George's Sound to open a communication with a military station about to be formed on a river not far from there.

It will certainly be eventually beneficial to this Colony if a road can be opened to the southward to the excellent harbour at the Sound, but the distance is great and, from the want of water and feed during the dry season, no communication is likely to be kept up at present, and neither cattle nor sheep landed at the Sound can be driven overland with any prospect of their ever arriving at Perth.

When Sir James Stirling[1] first caught the idea he was quite mad about it and he seemed to think no difficulties would be encountered in carrying his plan into effect. Even before I started to form the settlement he wrote to the other Colonies that the communication was already opened, that stations were formed and that settlers were about to locate themselves on the excellent land at the Williams. He has found himself wofully deceived. I passed through a wretched country with neither water nor feed: on the Williams the land is generally very bad and the water brackish. Great difficulty was experienced in getting down any provisions for the troops and, as the winter was setting in, the country would soon become impassable for carts. The soldiers have been withdrawn and the only settler who went down is nearly ruined; his stores are in one place, his cart left in another, and those that remain alive of his team of bullocks are unable to

[1] On Sir James Stirling see Introduction, p. xx.

move. Such has been the result of the Governor's wonderful settlement at the Williams which has engrossed the whole attention of the Colony for the last year, and it is only what might have been expected from the hurried and imperfect arrangements. The season was the worst that could have been chosen, when there was neither water nor grass for the cattle, and no sufficient means were forthcoming of sending down stores or provisions.

I think I shall go down again to explore in September and make my way to the Sound if possible, as I cannot bear to be idle, and I may just as well be of some use to the Colony as not, but I wish to have nothing to do with either the Colonial Government or the Governor, so I shall take two or three soldiers and make my way as I can.

Not the slightest reliance is to be placed on the Governor's word: he changes his mind and his measures ten times a day and it is notorious in the Colony that except in writing no promise of his is worth anything. I do not say this from any personal dislike, or that the failure of the Williams expedition has caused a quarrel, because I am in favour with him and have received a letter of thanks for my exertions and personally I like him, but his public character is in many respects open to censure and his weak vacillating conduct has done much harm to the Colony.

I do not see any prospect of this Colony's rising to any importance while the present system continues in force, as the Home Government by putting the same price on land as in Sydney[1] has thrown this infant Colony into direct competition with its more mature neighbours,

[1] On the motives and effects of this measure, communicated by the Secretary of State to Sir J. Stirling on 28 April 1831 and adopted from the beginning of 1832, see Introduction, p. xvii.

where likewise the settler has the advantage of plenty of cheap labour, and where stock of all kinds and most provisions can be purchased at one third the price they cost here.

During the last summer flour has been cheap, wheat selling at 6/6 to 8/0 a bushel, but that low price was rather the consequence of the necessities of the settlers compelling them to take their grain to market at any price, than to a superabundance; indeed, although when I first arrived people talked of exporting wheat, it now seems doubtful whether the supply is sufficient to last till next harvest. A horse or mare here costs £50 to £80 and many cost more; a cow £25, a working bullock £30 (in Sydney £3), a ewe sheep £3 or if in lamb £3 10*s*. The contract price of fresh meat is 1/3 a lb. and salt pork sells at about £5 per cask. You may imagine from this that the first establishment of a young settler is almost ruinous when besides his stock you must take into consideration his purchase of land, farming instruments, etc., and the erection of a house and barn and the wages of labourers. A farming man costs about £70 to £75 a year and a carpenter or other mechanic much more.

This was not, it would appear, Bunbury's only visit to the York District: some notes which he made upon it are dated October 1837, just prior to his departure from the colony: but as this was certainly his longest stay, and there is little or nothing referring to the other visit, the notes may perhaps be suitably inserted here.

This District, lying to the eastward of the Darling Range, was first discovered by Lt. Dale, 63rd Regt., in August 1830, at which time he also found the Avon River a mighty stream overflowing its banks and inundating the adjacent flats. Since then, however, it has never risen to near the

same height and has never commenced to flow before August; the two winters I have been here it has not flowed through the whole District until the very end of that month, and then it has been always easily crossed on horseback at the usual fords. Very little water falls into the Avon from the eastward: the great body of water comes down the Dale, which joins the Avon at Addington from the southward, and other streams that flow from the mountains to the westward. After these brooks run in the winter several weeks elapse before the large pools, which are diminished during the summer by drainage and evaporation, become filled so as to cause the River to run through its whole course.

Towards the end of the summer many of the pools, especially in the Dale and upper Avon, are so brackish as to be unfit for use. About York the water is always good, but it is very indifferent about Northam, where however there are fortunately many fine springs on most of the grants.

From near Mt Bakewell, about three miles to the northward of York the river's course is considerably to the Westward of North and after passing Northam, which is about twenty miles lower down, it turns still more to the westward and enters the hills about Mr. Whitfield's grant, which is about twelve miles N.W. from Northam. Winding its course through a high rugged country it debouches again from the hills under the name of the Swan, a little above Coulston[1] where it divides the grants of Messrs P. Brown and Bull.

[1] Coulston was a farm belonging to Mr. Brown (who later resumed, with his family, the name Broun), Colonial Secretary of Western Australia. It was so named after the Broun family estate of Coulston or Colstoun in Midlothian. (From information supplied by Mr. F. I. Bray, State Archives Committee, Western Australia.)

The climate of York differs slightly from that of the Swan, there not being near so much rain in winter, the contents of the clouds appearing to fall principally on the coast and amongst the hills. It may be fortunate that it is so, as, if the same quantity had fallen here last winter as on the Swan, there would have ensued such a flood as to render the whole district impassable and, perhaps, to give rise to serious diseases amongst the flocks. On the other hand the frosts are more severe and continue later than near the coast so that such crops as Potatoes cannot be put in before August with safety, while on the Swan they are grown through the winter. If, however, the winter is colder, the spring and summer are decidedly hotter than on the Swan, principally owing, perhaps, to the absence of the regular sea breeze.

The crops of corn ripen three weeks or a month earlier; here the harvest commences about the latter end of November, barley and rye sooner, while on the Swan and Canning it is near Christmas before the crops are ripe. This year there are about 330 acres of land sown with corn, being about 80 more than last season, and there is every appearance of a plentiful harvest; last year the winter and spring were so dry that none but the very early wheat, sown in June, yielded a profitable return. From the two seasons I have seen I have no hesitation is saying that the sooner the seed is in the ground the better, after sufficient rain has fallen for the land to be broken up with the plough. Both wheat and barley should be in the ground in June or the first week in July at latest. Here it is too much the habit to defer the sowing until July or even August when it is evident, as little or no rain falls after September and the sun immediately parches up the land, that the crops must be very light and short in the straw,

and the grain small and badly filled out. On the Swan, especially on the alluvial flats, the sowing may be deferred until considerably later without loss, as the land is naturally moister, and retains moisture better, than the York lands, and moreover the rains continue later in the season. Rolling the corn after it is up is attended with great advantage in York, making the corn tiller well, and pressing down the soil preserves the moisture beneath from the heat of the sun.

Nothing can be more slovenly than the farming in this district and, instead of wondering at the short crops that some of the farms yield, I am only surprised that the returns are as good as they are. In many instances the seed is broadcast over the land as it was left after the last harvest, and then ploughed in and harrowed once across. It is very objectionable leaving the old stubble on the ground. It not only impedes the plough or harrow dragging the seed into heaps, but, when ploughed in, opens the land in the same manner as long manure, rendering it too pervious to the rays of the sun for so hot a climate: if the land is dried by this means, the crops are invariably light and short. The stubble should be burnt if it can be done with safety; or the land may be folded, for then the trampling of the sheep destroys it. Folding sheep certainly manures land better and cheaper than anything else, but it should not be done until near seed time as the heat of the summer sun dries up and destroys the virtue of the manure. One night's folding is sufficient for most land—two for poor land—but care must be taken in wet weather to shift the fold daily, and to the driest land, to avoid footrot amongst the sheep.

I think in this district the best plan of sowing wheat hitherto introduced is to broadcast it on folded or other

land free from stubble or long straw manure, and then plough it in, especially if it is sown early; the wheat being deeper buried than by the harrow is perhaps a little longer in coming up, but its roots retain the moisture longer and it is comparatively safe from the attacks of the crows which collect in great numbers about seedtime and do great damage to the seed.

This bird is rather smaller than our Rook and is not gregarious, except when numbers collect to eat wheat; at no other time have I seen many together, and they build separately. In habits they resemble the Carrion Crow and have, like it, black legs and beak with strong hairs at its base. The bird has a greyish white eye like a Jackdaw. When watching for food it makes a most dismal cawing, or rather croaking. One singular habit it has, which I have repeatedly observed both in this colony and in Van Dieman's Land: one or a pair of these birds will follow one a whole day when Kangaroo hunting, as if knowing by instinct, or possibly by experience, the use for which the Dogs are taken out, and moreover, that when a Kangaroo is killed the paunch is usually extracted and left on the ground, to become the immediate prey of these indefatigable followers.

No drills have yet been introduced into the Colony, so that all the corn is broadcast. The usual quantity used is two bushels per acre, sometimes rather less—Barley usually about three bushels and the same or more of Oats, except of a new kind introduced by Capt Meares lately, a skinless oat which yields an immense return and weighs upwards of 60 lbs per bushel. One bushel, or a little more, of this oat is sufficient to sow an acre, as it tillers out and covers much ground; it is advantageous to sow for hay and there is certainly no oat to equal it for oatmeal; for feeding horses

I do not think it is adapted, as a hungry horse would bolt it whole, or it would clog his teeth if masticated.

Horses decidedly prefer green barley to green oats, consequently I infer that barley hay would be better liked than oat hay which is the usual kind grown here. A cheap and nutritious hay might be made of what is here called Drake, a noxious weed too common in the Colonial wheat; it is not indigenous but was imported with the wheat; and in it it still remains in most objectionable quantities, in consequence of very little care being taken in cleaning the grain for seed. Drake is unwholesome, causing headache, drowsiness, and a feeling of intoxication in any person who eats bread made from flour containing much of it, but horses are very fond of it in its green state.

In the York District there are at present the following farming establishments; their numbers are likely to increase rapidly, but at this time, Octr 1837, those I mention are the only grants of land actually located.

To commence with the upper end: near Beverley there is a farm established by two young men named Barker and Sewell on a large grant belonging to Mr Lennard, one of the most considerable settlers in the Colony. They have about twenty acres of land sown with corn this year, most of which looks very well, but this land, like most in the district, requires some sort of manure to yield a good crop of wheat. There is at present no permanent house built, as they are about to remove the farm to a very fine spring, distant about a mile and a half from their present establishment. They have a considerable quantity of cattle and about a score of horses, most of which belong to Mr Lennard; they have the use of them for ploughing and carting and the milk from the cows for making butter and cheese, together with a fourth of the increase of all the stock.

Hard working settlers of the middle class like these, who are both able and willing to work hard and live frugally, are much more likely to succeed than gentleman settlers who know nothing of farming practically, and who have not the inclination, or perhaps the strength, to labour hard themselves. The latter class of settlers can succeed very well in the eastern colonies where labour is abundant and cheap and where it is sufficient for the master to overlook the work going on without labouring himself. Here however it is very different; no one can afford to keep many servants and when one comes to consider that each costs fully £70 per annum and even then is generally an idle good for nothing vagabond, the labour of the master himself is that sum saved annually to the farm. Few there are who like to undertake so laborious a task or who have the resolution to persevere in it; but those who have done so in this colony are now reaping the benefit of it, while many or even most of those who commenced with many servants and as gentleman settlers are now reduced to labour harder and struggle against greater difficulties and privations than if they had boldly put their shoulders to the wheel in the first instance.

There are, at present, no sheep at this farm of Mr Lennard's, the small flock of imported merino ewes that he sent over here about a year ago having been lost in the bush and afterwards eaten by the natives who subsequently brought the sheep bells back to the farm.

About six miles lower down the River there are nine or ten acres of land broken up and partly sown with wheat this year. Messrs Isaacs and Johnson established themselves here last year to do the location duties on the grant of Mr Stone, which being completed, Mr Isaacs removed across to the left side of the river on to his own land,

where he has this year sown several acres of wheat on a piece of land newly broken up, about a mile back from the river, in a pretty situation on the hill side close to a spring of water. There is here a considerable flock of sheep belonging to Mr Carey and other individuals, and some cattle. Both Mr Isaacs and Carey are very religious—the latter I believe sincerely and conscientiously so; the former a thorough rogue and hypocrite.

Two miles lower down, on the right bank of the Avon, at the confluence of the Dale and Avon, is the farm of Mr Pratt, better known by the name of Solomon's, a Mr Solomon having formerly been the proprietor. There are here but 4,000 acres of land, which formerly belonged to Mr Walcott. He gave up this quantity to Mr Solomon in consideration of the location duties being performed for the whole of his grant, so that he could obtain the fee simple without settling upon it himself.

The grants of land which were made to settlers in the early days of the Colony, that is, previous to the Regulations of 1832 compelling everyone to purchase land at 5*s* an acre instead of getting free grants in proportion to the property imported, were only, in point of fact, location orders giving the person authority to settle on a certain tract or grant of land which was eventually to become his on the fulfilment of certain conditions within a certain time: thus, an Emigrant had a right to take up an acre of land for every 1/6 worth of property (this was afterwards raised, I believe, to 3/0) which he brought into the Colony, on condition that within a certain time, I think seven or ten years,[1] he was to effect improvements on the land to be valued by two Magistrates to the amount of 1/6 per acre.

[1] The period was ten years.

There has of course been a great deal of favor and leniency shown to settlers in estimating their improvements, too much so I think.[1] The example has been set by the local Government who allow the making of roads i.e. cart tracks through the bush to be very highly estimated as improvements effected by the settler. Temporary buildings, barns, stockyards, garden fencing, ploughed land, cleared land and stock of all descriptions are counted as improvements and estimated high. Ploughed land with a crop is reckoned at £15 an acre and 25% on the value is allowed for all stock which has *bona fide* been kept, pastured, and folded on the land for at least three months previous.

Since 1832, a settler purchasing land by public auction gets it at once in fee simple, but purchasers from an original grantee render themselves liable for the performance of location duties on the land they purchase, or to have it resumed by the Government at the expiration of the time allowed.

It has been a great and increasing evil in this Colony that individuals have been permitted to change repeatedly their grants, as new and better Districts have become known.[2] That it should have been allowed once to those persons who received their grants in the very early days of the Colony, before the country was explored, was only fair, when they had no opportunity of visiting and examin-

[1] The system of 'improvement conditions', though often tried, then and later, in colonial land legislation, was always difficult to enforce strictly. Fines and resumptions were threatened by Sir James Stirling and his successor Mr. Hutt in 1838–40, but it was found necessary to make generous allowance for extenuating circumstances.

[2] This was not officially sanctioned, it would appear, until Lord Glenelg's dispatch of 7 March 1837. Settlers were, however, even then only allowed 30 acres of their own choice for every 100 acres surrendered.

ing the tract of land which was selected and marked off for them on the map. But when they had an opportunity of choosing land for themselves and there were no longer any impediments to their exploring the country and fixing on land, they ought to have been compelled to abide by their choice, or, if they were too indolent or insouciant to go and look at the land allotted to them within a reasonable time, they ought not to have had the right of again changing their grant. Nevertheless, it has been allowed even to the present day, partly, perhaps, because the Governor, having 100,000 acres to take up for himself, found it convenient to do the same and could not refuse the privilege to others. The uncertainty of where he had or would take up the large quantity of land allowed him has been a great drawback and check to the exertions and enterprize of individuals, who after exploring some part of the country at their own risk and expense were naturally vexed and disappointed at finding, on application at the Surveyor-General's office for some good tract of land they had discovered, that the Governor intended to take it himself on the faith of their favorable report. If Sir J. Stirling had been compelled to take up the whole of his land in one block, or to have settled some years back where it was to be, I am sure more of the interior would have been discovered by private persons exploring in search of good land than now is, or likely to be, by Govt expeditions. Look at New South Wales: how many hundreds of miles of country have been discovered and rendered available and valuable by the formation of roads, rough ones to be sure, without a farthing's expense to Government by individual settlers gradually pushing their way further and further from the located country to establish new stations for their rapidly increasing flocks and herds.

Squatting, i.e. forming a farm or stations of Govt land beyond the limits of the country open to purchase and location, was tacitly allowed by Govt, when I left N.S.W. in 1835, but not countenanced—consequently there were no police and the stockkeepers lived in a most lawless and semi-barbarous state. Since then, however, a law has been passed rendering it necessary for every one to get a lease from Govt of the land he wishes to squat upon.[1] By this means for a low, or I believe nearly nominal, rent, he has a certain tract of country guaranteed to him from the intrusion of others for a term of years, and the Govt, having official cognisance of these out stations, grants them the protection of the Mounted Police who visit them frequently, keeping them comparatively free from the depredations of runaway convicts, and checking a widely extended and serious evil formerly existing, which was the traffic carried on by itinerant vendors of spirits.

These men travelled round the different stations with a large cask of rum in a cart, and knowing well that few of the stock keepers had any money, they received in lieu either calves or lambs of which the men robbed their masters and always with impunity: the young stock not being branded or marked, the rum dealers put their own brand upon them, and it became impossible for the rightful owners to identify them. Cattle stealing to an immense

[1] This is not a strictly accurate description of the new system. The squatting law of 1836 provided not for leases but for annual depasturing licences, without limitation of area, for a fee of £10 yearly. Nor did it guarantee the squatters from intrusion for a term of years: no doubt this was ordinarily its effect, but it was within the power of the Governor to refuse a licence, and in such case the squatter had no claim to compensation. Finally, not until 1839, when a border police was set up, to be supported by an assessment on stock, was the licenced squatter effectively protected. Nevertheless Bourke's Act did of course greatly strengthen the position of the squatters of New South Wales.

extent was thus carried on in the distant parts of the Colony and almost without risk of detection. The receivers especially made large fortunes in a surprisingly short time, but in case of conviction no mercy was shewn them, the whole of their property being forfeited to the Crown. I knew of one case of a man supposed to be very respectable, near Bathurst, being convicted of receiving stolen cattle: he was sent for life to Norfolk Island, while the cattle which were sold brought to the Crown above £2000, to say nothing of other property which he possessed.

But to return to Mr. Pratt's farm—there are nearly 30 acres of land in cultivation sown with wheat, barley and oats. Last year this farm and Mr Bland's at York were the only two which yielded a profitable return, owing to the wheat being put in early, when rain was abundant, to allow the young corn to get a good hold. The end of the winter was dry, and this checked and impoverished the late sown corn. Twenty to twenty five bushels of wheat per acre is reckoned a good crop, but little of the York land will yield that without being folded or otherwise manured. Mr Pratt has no less than three teams, two of very fine bullocks and one of horses; he has also a considerable flock of sheep, but this property will be of very little value whenever Mr Walcott's grant becomes located as the 4000 acres which compose the property are quite inadequate to maintain any quantity of sheep.

I mentioned that this farm is situated at the junction of the Avon and the Dale; the latter river comes from the southward where it is principally fed by tributaries from the hills to the westward. It always runs early in the season and with considerable strength, while the upper Avon rarely runs during any part of the winter.

In the height of summer the water at Addington, Mr

Pratt's farm, in the Dale is rather brackish, as it is in most of the pools higher up (though in some it remains fresh): higher up the Avon the pools are so salt as to be useless, except the one where Messrs Isaacs and Johnson established themselves last year.

The next farm, following the course of the Avon, is one belonging to Mr G. F. Moore the advocate general.[1] It is on the left bank three miles below Addington, situated on a very fine pool with ten acres of good land in corn on the bank, but behind it is a cold wet plain of York Gums in which large pools of water stand in the winter: this is very injurious to sheep, causing foot rot, and altogether I do not consider it a good grant, but the hills at the back I believe to have good feed on them. Ben Robins, Cook, Flay, and Walter Heep, four working men, have taken this place for a term of years, during which time they are to effect certain improvements and have a fourth of the increase of the sheep for taking care of them. Mr. Moore is, I believe, the largest flockholder at present in the Colony, having about 800 fine wooled sheep.

The next farm on the river belongs to the Revd Mr Wittenoom, the Colonial Chaplain, and has lately been established by his sons and a Mr Carter, one of the most laborious and active settlers in the colony. A large quantity of land has been broken and sown with corn this year and appears likely to yield a good return; the buildings are progressing rapidly and are being built of rammed earth, or Ramjam as it is called, a mixture of clay and sand, which being properly moistened is well rammed down between

[1] Mr. G. F. Moore, a member of the Irish Bar, was appointed to be the first Commissioner of the Civil Court in 1832, and afterwards, from 1834 to 1852, was Advocate-General. His letters and journals, published in 1834 and republished in an enlarged form in 1884, give the fullest account of the early years of the colony.

parallel boards, kept in their places by light iron bolts which are removed with the boards as the wall dries, round and round the building, a fresh layer being formed as soon as the last is sufficiently solid. This is a very cheap, substantial and durable way of building, the principal difficulty being the mixing the earth, which must not be too stiff: the common fault is to put too great a proportion of clay with not enough sand, when it is sure to crack very much as it dries.

All Mr Wittenoom's buildings are covered with grass tree tops, which form the best possible rough covering for houses, especially at first, when shingle cannot be obtained and no straw is yet grown on the farm. This thatch though rough and unsightly in appearance is thoroughly impervious to any rain and does not, like straw, ever become sodden or soaked through, turning off very quickly any wet, and, on the other hand, I do not think it is so inflammable as dry straw in a hot climate. Wheat straw, especially, makes but bad thatch after being threshed, as it is very brittle, breaking short or crushing under the flail, which renders it more susceptible of the wet which always penetrates more or less into it in this Colony. I have seen this season in Guildford a new thatch of wheat straw bearing a luxuriant young crop of green corn, which shows the extreme damp in it, the sudden transition from which to long drought will assuredly quite rot the straw in a short time.

Rushes of a kind growing on open flats inundated in winter, which have a number of long straight stems growing from a large bunch of root and which bear a number of flowers on a brown drooping head, are, when obtainable, much the best kind of thatch, being longer, more regular, and less inflammable than any other I know,

but I have never seen them to the eastward of the Darling Range; they occur in great abundance in the flooded plains with a hard sandy bottom all the way south from the Canning by Pinjarrup on the Murray to Port Leschinault, the Vasse, etc.

Mr Wittenoom has no sheep of his own, but Mr. Carter, from the high character he bears for industry and integrity, has got charge of flocks belonging to different individuals; many are Mr Lewis's who is fast acquiring a large flock without knowing anything on the subject or having the trouble of looking after them. In a similar situation is Capt Armstrong, who by my advice purchased a few sheep in 1836, which are in Mr Carter's charge and doing very well. He is paid £25 per hundred sheep per annum, for which he looks after them entirely and pays all expenses, except shearing and carting the wool down to Perth. The price is high, but I think it is a better plan for persons having a regular income to pay that than to give a share of the increase, say one third, usually, or sometimes only one fourth, which opens a door for fraud and prevents the rapid increase of the flock. Of course, the keeper in these cases is liable for any sheep missing for which he cannot satisfactorily account, or which have been lost or have died through carelessness or neglect. Thus, lately, Mr A. Trimmer, who is fast drinking up what little property he has remaining, having had the charge of Mr Yule's sheep, could not, when the flock was counted, account for the absence of eight wethers; these he must pay the value of, as well as of a Ram which was killed at a farm whither it had been sent by him without authority. Thus it is evident that keeping sheep on these terms can only answer when constant care and attention is paid to them, and I must say for Mr Carter, that after being in the

almost daily habit of seeing all the various flocks from Beverley down to Mr Neale's for some months past, I have seen none in finer order or cleaner than his.

There is, generally speaking, a great improvement in the state of the sheep in this District since last year; much more attention being paid to keeping them free from scab. In the last season the large flock of Mr Burgess was absolutely rotten with it, this year they are almost free from it. Mr Bland's flock is also much improved, and the only places where I have seen much of it this season are at Mr Neale's and Mr Agett's, and some, though not much, at Mr Morell's.

The situation of Mr Wittenoom's farm is picturesque, on a flat between a very fine pool, nearly a mile in length, and the Cave hill, as it is called on account of some singular caverns in the granite rocks, great shapeless masses of which protrude in all directions, mixed with Jam trees, the bright green and delicate foliage of which contrast well with the gloomy color of the York gums and rocks. In these caves are some curious specimens of native drawing such as men's hands, evidently traced from the original, and other things the meaning of which is unknown to us.[1]

All these hills about York are in the early part of the spring, i.e. September and October, covered with extensive patches of a delicate rose pink star shaped flower,[2] growing low with scarcely any leaves; it is a kind of everlasting flower with rigid unfading petals, until the hot summer sun actually parches it so that it crumbles away to nothing. For some time it presents to the eye a rich carpet of beauti-

[1] These cave paintings were discovered by Ensign Dale during his expedition to the east of the Darling Range in August 1830. The spot appeared to him to be used by the natives as a place of worship.

[2] Probably *Helipterum manglesii*.

ful pink, spreading over the whole hill side except where the bare rock refuses it nourishment. It affords a pleasing variety to the usual monotony of the Bush scenery, especially when contrasted with the bright green foliage and quantity of yellow blossoms of the Jam tree, and with the whitish green foliage of the Nut tree. The latter is a species of Sandalwood with a very sweet scent; it does not grow to any great size and is very seldom sound. The wood is light in color with no beauty of grain or other good quality to recommend it except the fragrant odour. I could not find out the flower, but it bears a number of nuts, about the size of a Cherry, enclosed in a smooth husk or covering. It is nearly round in form, indeed the nut is quite so, but the outer coat or rind has a mark round the segment of it, like a Medlar, or rather like a Eucalyptus nut. I have never eaten them ripe, which they are in November, but in October I found them very nice; when I could crack the nut, which is very hard, the kernel, though unripe, was very white and crisp with a pleasant flavour but rather oily. The natives do not eat them, but they seem to be the food of field mice, Bandicoots, and Wullioo,[1] by the marks under the trees. If sufficiently abundant, I think a valuable oil might be expressed from them. These trees only occur in the grassy country on the east side of the Darling Range, and are not found near the coast or on sandy or ironstone soil. The wood is very pleasing to burn in the open air at a bush encampment, but the scent is overpowering in a room. The wood of the Jam tree likewise emits a strong and pleasant scent and when dry burns extremely well with a clear steady light and lasts for a very long time.

It is said that by the plan of giving sheep to keep on thirds the keeper in the course of seven years has more

[1] *Wullioo* or *wal-yo*=kangaroo rat.

sheep than his employer, so that at all events it answers well for him, but I think myself it is too high a price to pay and that one fourth is ample remuneration. To get a fair selection, at the time the lambs are marked, the owner chooses two first, if they are thirds, then the other party picks out the next best, and so they proceed through the flock.

Sheep naturally engross a great part of the attention of Australian Settlers and there is no doubt it is very profitable, but, like everything else, it is liable to be carried too far and much individual distress has been caused within the last three years in N.S.W. by persons engaging in it too deeply without sufficient capital to bear any temporary loss. Thus, in 1834 the accounts received in England of the high price which Australian wool fetched in the market rendered every one very sanguine; the cry was that a flock of sheep was a sure foundation for a fortune. The great demand of course raised the price of ewes materially, since people continued to buy, borrowing money at a high rate of interest for the purpose. Well! a couple of years of drought ensued, bringing sickness and disease among the flocks, which carried off great numbers; in consequence of the want of grass and water on the roads there was difficulty and additional expense in conveying the wool to the port of Sydney for shipment; in addition to which the price fell on the London market, not owing to any inferiority in the article, or superabundant supply, but from various causes which have depressed trade in general for some years past, and have had fully as bad an effect on other articles as on wool. All this, from whatever cause arising, had a ruinous effect on many individuals in New South Wales who had speculated largely and they found, too late, that not only was it not as profitable as they expected, but they had difficulty in finding the interest on the purchase money.

Since then, naturally, sheep have fallen very much in price, and as there is undoubtedly a vast extent of fine sheep country sufficient for any demand that may possibly occur in our life time, in the eastern part of the continent of New Holland, where the climate is mild and healthy, the grass and water abundant, and where there is no apparent cause for disease in flocks, it cannot be doubted but that sheep farming is and must be profitable for many years to come. As yet the supply of wool from Germany exceeds by much that from Australia, but, as it is proved that it can be grown and delivered in England cheaper and of finer quality than from Germany, there is no doubt but that by degrees we shall have no occasion for the Continental supply.[1] By finer quality, I only mean to say that many years' experience has shown that all wool improves in New Holland: that in three years or four the fleece of coarse woolled sheep becomes much finer, and even the finest imported Saxon or Merino visibly improves in the delicious climate with the wholesome and nutritious food. As yet the wool is not sent to market so clean or so well got up as the German, but the quality is not the less superior, although the expense necessary to put it into good order prevents it fetching as high a price.

The next farm, following down the left bank of the Avon River, is Grassdale. It was lately the property of the

[1] In 1834 the imports of wool into the United Kingdom from Australia amounted to 3,558,091 lb., the imports from Germany to 22,634,615 lb. In the ensuing years the imports from Germany declined somewhat, the production of the Australian colonies all the while increasing. By 1845 the imports from the Australian colonies, and by 1846 those from New South Wales alone, passed the German total.

Governor but I think Major Irwin[1] has bought it, at least he was in treaty for it when I left the Colony. This is but a strip of land lying between William Stirling's and Mr Bland's, with very little water frontage. It is four short miles lower down than Mr Wittenoom's, and for it's extent contains a great proportion of rich grassy land, but for a farm for sheep it would be found much too confined, if the grant of Mr Stirling were settled on. A small batch of land is in cultivation on the edge of the river by the side of a fine fresh pool, but the farm and most of the ploughed land are up a narrow valley on the south side of Mt Matilda. This is a fine granite hill covered with rich soil and grass except where the rugged bare rocks protrude, and lightly covered with York Gums and Jam trees: it is situated about two miles South from York, and is one of several picturesque and remarkable hills in this neighbourhood which deserve notice, and are good landmarks for any one astray in the bush.

Close above the farm in the gulley is a spring of very fine water, sufficient for all purposes, if a dam were constructed to form a pond lower down for the cattle, by means of which also the garden and part of the ploughed land might be irrigated, though the supply in the summer is inadequate to do that to any extent.

A substantial rammed earth house with two rooms has been erected (in 1836), as well as a well built stone stable with cart shed and a good wall round a kind of sheep yard. I doubt however the policy of keeping sheep in a fixed yard at any season. In the winter it is impracticable unless fresh dry litter be brought in for them daily. That would lead to much trouble and expense, and besides, the wet decaying bed of litter underneath would infallibly

[1] On Major Irwin, see below, p. 192 and note.

give the sheep the foot rot. In the summer, although of course moisture is not to be feared, yet the dry pulverized dung and dust keep the fleeces always dirty, and I think it is clear that the flocks thrive best when the fold is daily or at least very frequently changed. In wet weather a dry sloping bank should be chosen where the wet runs off quickly, and with light soil; in clay the rain soon poaches the ground which soon causes foot rot if the sheep are not moved. If the sheep are kept in a yard they should be kept under cover, which perhaps will be found the best plan of all, but at first it will be found too costly and laborious for settlers.

About fifteen acres were in cultivation at Grassdale in 1836 when Mr Elliott was the occupant, but this year it is tenanted by Mr Whitfield who has not ploughed any land or done more than inhabit the house, feeding a flock of sheep on the hills around. This flock consists partly of Mr Waylen's and the rest of Mr or Dr Giustiniani's.

This person has rendered himself notorious rather than celebrated in the Colony since he arrived in Sept 1836: he came out as a Church of England Missionary chosen by Major Irwin and other friends of the Colony in England to preach the Gospel to the Aborigines, and, by attending to the education and Spiritual wants of the white settlers within his reach or circuit, to prevent their falling into as great a state of ignorance and barbarity as the natives themselves. To effect these desirable objects he had great credits given him and it was hoped that great good might be done to the natives through his means. However, it soon appeared that his primary objects were to squander the funds of the Society as much as the Trustees, Messrs Mackie and Moore, would allow him to, and to make himself comfortable—which he ought to have been able to

effect, having an ample salary allowed him, £200 per annum besides £60 for a clerk or assistant schoolmaster. He soon turned his attention to exciting discord and quarrels among the settlers, writing violent articles in the newspapers, grossly abusive of the Government and still worse of his patron and friend Major Irwin. Luckily he had neither talent nor art enough sufficiently to cloak his evil practices, as to hide them from the eye of the public, and his character being soon known, he was unanimously scouted from society and cut by every respectable person. Even his church at Guildford was deserted, and I think very properly, since no good could be obtained from listening to the doctrines of such a man as this, who had been bred a Jesuit, and had turned Lutheran, and then Methodist; who had preached from a cask in Whitechapel; and who had proved himself odious and disreputable in every relation of life.

As for the instruction he imparted to the natives, he fed them for a time, without any discrimination, with flour at the expense of the Society, often for jobs done for himself, but useful knowledge he gave them none of, nor was he likely to, as he knew nothing of their language and did not attempt to learn it. Surely it is useless to attempt to make Christians of a race of Savages who have no idea of the existence of any Supreme Being, until we have rendered them somewhat more civilized. Would it not be a far better plan to commence by attempting to give them habits of industry, to teach them honesty and love of truth, to induce them to learn to cultivate the earth for their subsistence, acquire simple kinds of manufacture, and make clothing, such as most savage nations are acquainted with and practise, rather than to send Parsons among them to teach them to sing Psalms and Praises to

an Omnipotent Deity of whom they are unable to comprehend the attributes or the power?

These Missionaries moreover, to whichever sect belonging, whether Church of England, Methodist, Wesleyan, or other, are in nine cases out of ten much more intent on attaining their own ends and prosperity in this world than upon following themselves, or pointing out to others, the way likely to lead to Heaven. Dr Giustiniani, however, is now so well known that his intrigues and love of making mischief are no longer to be feared and he is treated with the contempt he merits. Even in private life his atrocious character appears, and his wife, a German, has more than once been compelled to seek the protection of a neighbouring Magistrate against his violence.

Grassdale is the lowest farm on the left bank of the river above York; on the other side are two, or perhaps three, viz: Parker's and Mr Hardy's, besides a small place called Ginger's on Capt Gregory's grant, which is not deserving of the name of a farm. On the other side I have, however, omitted mention of a small farm on a back grant about three miles back from Grassdale, belonging to a man named Knott, whose Father was killed by the natives in Septr 1836, under the following circumstances, whilst building his farm.

A short time before, a native had been most wantonly shot in Mr Bland's farm at York by the order of Mr Arthur Trimmer, whose character never could recover from this foul stain, even if he had nothing else to answer for. This native with others had been stealing wheat out of the barn for some days past during the time the men were away at dinner. Mr Trimmer, in Mr Bland's absence, having found this out, goes with a man named Ned Gallop, each armed with a loaded gun, and lies *perdu* in the straw.

After a time, Mr T. being tired of waiting goes to the house leaving his confederate in the barn; several natives soon after appearing and proceeding to bundle up the loose wheat in their cloaks, Ned Gallop waits till two or three are stooping down close together and then fires his gun loaded with shot, one man falls who subsequently dies and two others escape badly wounded. This was all done by the orders and almost with the aid of Mr T. who never attempted to deny it until he found it was likely to be taken serious notice of. However, the Governor did not think proper to pursue the matter against him.

Well! very naturally, the friends and relatives of the murdered native eagerly sought for revenge, and according to their custom, not particularly against the individuals who had committed the crime: they looked out to slay in return the first white man whom they could put an end to without much risk, and soon met with an opportunity, as two brothers of the murdered man observed old Knott going out to his lone hut in the bush with his food and tools but no arms, he having foolishly left his gun in his hut before going into York. A party of natives was soon collected and by their own account afterwards it appears that several of them approached the door of the hut unperceived by the old man, and all flung their spears into him at once as he stood just inside the hut with his back towards them. He appears to have died almost immediately, when they cut off his legs and otherwise mutilated his body and after carrying off his gun, blankets, axe, etc., set fire to the hut in which the body lay, in hopes that the white people would suppose, when his death was discovered, that it had been caused by accident and that he had been burnt to death while asleep. Some days elapsed before anything was known of the murder in York; indeed

it was afterwards proved that the murder was committed on Wednesday and we did not know of it till the following Monday, when Mr Bland and I were told that it was feared that something must have happened to old Knott as he ought to have come in to York on Saturday for flour, of which he had none in his hut. Mr Bland and I rode out in consequence, in the course of the day, to look for the old man, whom we found lying stretched on the ground in a dreadful state of decomposition, amidst the burnt and charred remains of his hut. Some few vestiges of his clothing remained on his person but it was quite impossible to recognize him, all traces of features having disappeared leaving nothing but a skull and skeleton full of a live moving mass of most disgusting appearance.

A small dog belonging to the deceased was lying near, having subsisted by feeding on his dead master, and so gorged was he with his horrible banquet as to be almost unable to move. The thigh bones were laid bare by the knawing of the dog, but as I have before mentioned the legs were missing and could not be found about the hut; they were possibly dragged off into the bush by the dog as some of the toes were afterwards discovered at some distance away.

After a careful investigation of the state of the body, the hut and all the circumstances that could be ascertained, it appeared impossible to fix the crime upon the Natives. There were strong grounds for suspicion, but rain having fallen in the interval had obliterated all traces of their footsteps round the hut, and there was no proof that could be brought against them, although the disappearance of the gun, known to have been in the possession of the deceased, led us to infer that they were the perpetrators of a crime the commission of which we fully expected.

Deeming it impolitic to make known our suspicions, which would increase the dislike of the settlers for the Natives, and being quite unable to prove the crime, we thought it best to report it as apparently an accidental death by fire. The following day we interred the remains of the unfortunate old man near the spot where he died, reading the funeral service over him, and made an inventory of his effects which were taken charge of for his heirs. Thus died an innocent individual, a victim to the natural revenge of the natives for the wanton and cold blooded murder of one of their tribe by a settler of good property and education.

A few days afterwards some natives related the whole affair to Mr Parker at his farm on the other side of the river—how the brothers and other relations of the man murdered at York had watched around the settlement for an opportunity of revenge, and had at length met with and followed this unsuspecting old man on his return from York and had killed him as he entered his hut. They had taken his gun but soon threw it away as useless, having no ammunition. Although the parties were perfectly well known no steps were taken to arrest and bring to justice the perpetrators of this crime, and, I think, very properly, since in justice they ought not to be punished whilst Mr Trimmer and his agent Gallop escaped with impunity the punishment due to their unprovoked aggression in the first instance.

Mr Parker's farm is situated about three miles on the east side of the Avon and a little to the southward of the Mackie, which falls into the former river about four miles from York, dividing the grants of Mr Hardy and Mr Gregory. A substantial but rough stone house has been erected on this farm and several acres of land brought into cultivation besides an extensive garden. The corn looks

well for the first year's crop, though the land does not appear to me to be of very good description. As Parker has a large grown up family and his sons are industrious hard working men I have no doubt they will go on prosperously. They have a considerable flock of sheep, partly their own and partly on shares, besides several horses and young colts which promise well.

On Capt Gregory's grant a man known in the Colony by the name of Ginger has partially located himself, having built a hut and broken up a small plot of land behind it; but his principal occupation is sawing timber, and he works at different settlers' farms most of his time.

The next farm on the right bank of the Avon and two miles above York is Mr John Hardy's, prettily situated between a mass of rocky hills bearing his name and the river, at a spot where a large deep pool furnishes abundance of good water for all purposes. The soil around is light though fertile, but the first year the wheat crop was by no means very good, owing I think principally to it's being sown much too late. Potatoes have been found to yield abundantly on the slope around Mr Hardy's house when well manured. The rock of the hills about this part of the country is all granite, with a good deal of quartz, and the coarse decomposing granite forms on the slopes of land between the rocky hills and the river a coarse gravelly or gritty soil which in my opinion is too light and porous to suit wheat but is better adapted to the growth of barley, oats, and rye.

Mr Hardy has, like a wise man, built his house gradually, and has as yet only put up two large rooms with smaller ones dependent, which are divided by a little paved court or passage; eventually these are to be offices and the house itself is to be built in front of them, facing the river and

overlooking the fine pool fringed with large trees of the flooded Gum species, and beyond that an undulating open forest of York Gums and Jam trees to the fine bold form of Mt Matilda.

Hardy has broken up and brought into cultivation between twenty and thirty acres of land, and has a very considerable herd of cattle, and a flock of sheep; most of them are very coarse, some being from Van Dieman's Land and others half Leicesters, but he is gradually improving them with Merino Rams. Many of his cows are very small and of doubtful breed, and, having been half starved when young on the confined farms of the Swan, have been stinted in their growth and are really scarcely bigger than yearling heifers, but, still, cows are cows in the present state of the Colony and as they are good milkers it answers to keep them. He has also one very fine pure short horned cow, brought out from England, and as there are two or three short horned bulls in the Colony I hope the breed is likely to increase. I am not sure if I mentioned that Mr Lennard has at Barker and Sewell's farm on the upper Avon two very beautiful cows and a bull of this breed which he took out with him.

Mr John Hardy well deserves to succeed as a settler from his industry and perseverance. He and his brother Joseph, both practical farmers from Lincolnshire, although not among the very first, were amongst the early settlers and obtained a grant of land now called the Peninsular farm, on a promontory formed by a bend in the Swan about three miles above Perth. Here they fixed themselves and commenced operations whilst most of their fellow emigrants were thinking about it on the beach at Freemantle and wasting their time and money in idle amusements there from indolence and lack of courage to set their

shoulders to the wheel and commence the arduous task before them. At a later period John Hardy, having obtained this fine grant in York, moved over and is now establishing himself comfortably and substantially, having not only his own stock but much of that of his brother, who cannot feed it on the Peninsula, and intends shortly to move over also to York, where he has a very fine grant adjoining his brother John's, and extending down the river as far as the township of York, so that it is very valuable from it's situation close to the town as well as from it's fertile character. Joseph Hardy erected on his Peninsular farm a substantial windmill with four sails, using the trunk of a large Gum tree to fix it upon, and it grinds exceedingly well but not a great quantity.

Two letters will serve to carry us from York to Pinjarra and the coast.

Swan River. August 26. 1836.

I am just returned from York where I was for two months on detachment keeping in order the Natives who had been very troublesome for some time past, robbing the settlers, spearing their stock, and even in one case severely wounding a soldier. The Governor here appears to wish to employ me in exploring in the interior in the spring, as I gained some credit for my report and plan of my last journey; and I am very willing to undertake anything of the kind, as it will give me occupation and I may be of essential service to the Colony in discovering new tracts of country for settlers. I am a pretty good bushman and a good walker so that I could go out for three weeks or a month at a time, but it will be necessary for me to buy a horse to carry provisions.

I believe I told you something of this Colony in my last letter and I will defer any further account until I have done and can send you my plan of the Williams River journey, when I will try to write at length about this wretched Colony, which certainly has nothing to recommend it to emigrants. I think the truth regarding it is now tolerably well known in England, in spite of the repeated puffs and exaggerated reports concerning it made by interested persons, especially Sir James Stirling, who I think has done the Colony a vast deal of harm in many respects, more particularly by representing it to be in such a flourishing state as to induce the Home Government to put the same price on the land as in the older and penal Colonies.[1] No emigrants now come out here, but disappointed settlers, tradesmen and labourers leave it by every vessel and more would do the same did not their heavy debts and want of money compel them to remain.

There is rather better shooting in this Colony than I have before met with in Australia; there are a good many quail and in the summer thousands of a beautiful Pigeon, called the Bronze Winged Pigeon, which is rather larger than the Turtle Dove and very good eating. They are very swift on the wing and living in thick brushwood near swamps or rivers are not very easy to shoot, except sitting which is the usual way here: shooting for the pot is more in vogue than for sport here where fresh meat is scarce and dear. On the other side of the coast range of hills, about York, I killed a great many Ducks of three different kinds. Quail are abundant but not worth powder and shot when it has to be carried over the hills.

[1] The change was not in reality due to Sir J. Stirling's representations: see Introduction, p. xvii.

Fremantle. W. Australia.
Nov. 8th. 1836.

I am just come down here from York in time to write you a few lines by the 'Champion' which sails today.

Sixty eight miles of bad Colonial road through mountains is a pretty good day's ride in hot weather, and fifty six of it I rode on my own horse. I am always wandering about the Colony or making excursions into the bush to explore new parts of the country; as long as I can do that I am contented but if I were obliged to live here or at Perth I should be very miserable. This town, which is a sea port, is nearly deserted; built on a narrow strip of loose white sand, with many of it's houses falling into decay, it is the most dismal looking place I ever saw. Perth is better in appearance but lamentably dull, and the society being small every one is engaged in abusing and slandering their neighbours. I am always delighted to get away from it and live in the bush or over the hills, which I have hitherto done for nearly two thirds of my time.

I am now going on Detachment to 'Pinjarra', which is a town in embryo upon the Murray river, about forty miles south from Perth. There are no inhabitants except five soldiers who live in the only house in the town, but two small settlers reside at no great distance.

I cannot conceive any sufficient reason for sending an Officer there, but the Governor says it is a very important District and I am made a Magistrate, to keep in order, I suppose, the Natives and the Kangaroos, as the country contains no White settlers and is very little known; indeed most of the district has never been explored at all. Fortunately I am not obliged to stay much at Pinjarra but can move about as much as I like and visit two other Detachments, one about seventy and the other sixty miles off.

One of these, at the Vasse river, has never yet been visited by land, so I hope to be the first to go there, as I have been the first to cross the mountains from Pinjarra to the eastward and ascertain the course of a considerable river.

I am just returned from that part of the country after a very severe journey on foot of about 100 miles. My party consisted of two soldiers and myself. We had to carry our provisions ourselves as a horse cannot cross some of the swamps and rivers we met with.

Some day or other I mean to send you home my journals and eye-sketches of the country I have visited, but at present I am so constantly on the move that I have not had time to finish them.

At my new station I shall get forage allowance for a horse, 3/6 a day, in consideration of my having to visit distant detachments, but I am not likely to keep it long as economy is much in fashion here and Government expects people to work hard for nothing.

A vessel has just arrived from England, which it left on the 1st July, and I am very much disappointed at not hearing from you. So few ships ever come here now that one bringing no news or letters is a cruel disappointment as probably we shall not have another for three or four months.

It seems probable that I may yet have a long time to spend in these Colonies, which is not a pleasant prospect; still I do not regret having come here from Van Dieman's Land as I have now plenty of occupation travelling about, so that time does not hang heavy on my hands, and I can be of essential value to the Colony, opening new lines of communication and exploring new districts for future settlers.

But I confess I am not at all sanguine as to the ultimate

success of this Settlement. It has had great difficulties to struggle with, and although they are now in great measure overcome by industry and perseverance, still it is only on a small scale and from the general barren nature of the country I cannot see any opening for more extended enterprise, or any inducement to settlers to flock to this Colony as they do to Sydney. By putting the same price upon land here as in the Eastern Colonies Government placed this infant Settlement in direct competition with those enjoying the advantages of an unlimited supply of forced labour and a large expenditure of Government money. Here everything has been done by private capital and exertion. The Parliamentary grant of about £7000 per annum is spent on the salaries of the civil Officers etc., and the Commissariat for two companies of soldiers is not on a very large scale. Still the contracts, small as they are, are the only means by which a Settler can get money for his produce. There is a general system of barter existing here that would appear most ridiculous at Home, but still I would rather take the wheat or sheep of a Settler than his Bills—it is a very common practice here to draw Bills on England which return at the end of the year protested, with heavy expenses; to satisfy the holder of this the Settler borrows money on the mortgage of his land at 15 to 25 per cent. He thus defers the day of his ruin, which is none the less inevitable, as often he cannot pay the interest and is at length brought into court and his property sold by the Sheriff. Still, he cannot be imprisoned and begins again borrowing money and running the same course as long as any one will trust him.

There is scarcely a property in the Colony free from mortgage and every day the Settlers seem to be getting into greater difficulties, labour is very dear and the price

of necessaries of life high but very fluctuating. Wheat is now 10/- a bushel; in two months it will be only five as the Settlers are so poor that they must bring it into the market and sell it for what it will fetch immediately after harvest. Meat is lower now than it has ever been before, the contract price is only 11½*d.* a pound. Imported salt meat, tea, sugar, and everything in the hands of the dealers is ruinously dear, but they have some excuse for charging high prices as they seldom if ever get paid.

The most singular thing is that these very people, whom we all know to be deeply involved, their property mortgaged and themselves without a sixpence, live on apparently perfectly happy, give dinners and parties, buy the finest clothes that come to the Colony and live at great expense as if they were really well off, with ruin staring them in the face.

Continued at Perth Novr 24th. 1836.

As usual the ship has not sailed on the appointed day and I have got back from Pinjarra in time to add a few lines though I cannot find much to say likely to interest you. I am about purchasing eight acres of land at Pinjarra. I shall build a house there and intend to make a nice place of it. I have already got a temporary hut erected in which to live for some months and I mean to form a garden and fence and a little paddock for my horse. Constant work will prevent my feeling so dull as I otherwise should in so lonely a place where I shall have no one but the soldiers to speak to within thirty miles. I do not at all like the prospect before me but as it cannot be avoided I must make the best of it. I shall have the consolation of knowing that in another year we shall be on our road to India, if you cannot get me home before.

The situation I have chosen is very pretty, with the Murray river making a sharp bend and flowing close under the bank on which my house is to be built, and then winding away so that I see it both coming and going. Opposite to me is a low thickly wooded island covered with luxuriant creepers; on each side of me is a rich grassy flat, which I can either cultivate or leave in grass, while behind me is an extensive plain with scattered clumps of very large straight Gum trees. I imagine that the river, which is now running strong, will cease to flow perceptibly in the heat of summer, but I shall always have abundance of good water and firewood close at hand.

I have to keep a horse while on detachment, but as usual with Sir John Stirling when it came to the point he declined to fulfil his promise of giving me forage allowance, so I am £60 a year poorer than I expected to be. However I am grown very philosophical since I came here and take everything that happens with stoical indifference and never annoy myself about anything, but endeavour to get rid of the time that intervenes before I go home or to India with as little trouble or annoyance as possible.

At this point the sequence of letters must be interrupted. The travel diary which occupies the greater part of the next two chapters—clearly written up after the event, but from notes taken at the time—deserves to be reproduced in full.

III

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: A JOURNEY FROM THE MURRAY TO THE VASSE

In December, 1836, I crossed the country from Pinjarrup, a township at the head of the boat navigation of the Murray, to the Vasse, a small settlement near the head of Geographe Bay; this was the first time that any white person had traversed the bush in this direction, or had opened a direct communication with the Vasse from the Swan.

I first made Port Leschinault, being guided thereto principally by a Native, who took me by the best route to cross the Harvey River. From there I proceeded, partly by compass and partly by information derived from the Natives, to the estuary; whence Natives guided me to the fords of the different rivers and finally to the settlement at the Vasse. It took me four days to perform the journey the first time, but since then I have done it in three with ease: the distance is, by my reckoning, about eighty miles, with four considerable rivers to cross.

Leaving Pinjarrup early in the morning of the 16th December we pursued about a S.S.W. course, deviating occasionally to avoid the numerous swamps in the country between the Murray and the Harvey. My party consisted of my servant and another soldier, together with a Native named Monang, who had lived a good deal with me, and whom I always found honest, but, like most of them, lazy and gluttonous, and by no means so good a tracker or so intelligent in the bush as many I know. However, he was willing and anxious to go, a point of some importance where most were afraid of going so far from home amongst

strange tribes. I had two horses, one to ride and the other to carry provisions for ten days and the blankets; my stock of grub consisted of biscuit, about one pound each per day, two or three pieces of pork, some tea and sugar, tobacco, pipes, and each man a tin pannikin to serve as cup or glass. Each of us, except the Natives, had a gun with ball cartridges and I carried a little shot besides.

One's wants in the bush are few and the lighter one travels the better; for cover one small blanket or cloth cloak is quite sufficient, as in case of rain one can in a few minutes make a hut of boughs or grass tree leaves, the latter of which, properly made in the native fashion, is impervious to any rain, as it throws off all the water even when so thin that the light is seen through. In the summer time it is even an unnecessary luxury to have a blanket; my usual plan was to have a few boughs behind me to break the wind, and with a fire in front, I could alternately warm each side as it became cold. It is a bad plan to lie with one's feet to the fire as the heat dries up and destroys one's shoes, besides heating one's feet, previously wet, so as to make them swell and become tender whilst one's head and body, too far from the warmth, are chilled. Lying sideways to a good cheerful fire, with a good bed of Grass tree leaves under me, I envy no man his soft bed and curtains, even in frosty weather, and in rain ten minutes work will put me under shelter. Bread, tea and tobacco are the most necessary articles in the bush. I care very little for salt meat and only eat it in the evening, as it makes one too thirsty in the day time, when above all things drinking water should be avoided if one has a walk before one. The man who drinks at every brook he crosses will never stand hard work in a hot climate: it makes him perspire and weakens him. Moreover it becomes a necessary,

and when deprived of it, as frequently happens in the Australian bush, he knocks up.

From Pinjarrup we proceeded through a low flat country to the Harvey River, the exact course of which was not hitherto known. The country we had traversed varied very much in character and quality of soil, sometimes being sandy with Banksia and other low trees or stunted Mahogany, some times stiff clay plains without any timber, except occasional Red Gums, and covered with broom and other low bushes and blackboys; this sort of land which occurs frequently in the neighbourhood of the Murray Country is impassably wet and deep in the winter. It is full of small patches clear of blackboys or bushes, which a little experience shows to be most dangerous quagmires in winter though in summer perfectly dark dry clay. These plains, covered with grass and good feed for cattle and horses towards the end of the wet season, dry up and parch much sooner than lighter qualities of land which imbibe the dews and other slight moisture, while the stiff clay dries and cakes to the hardness of rock so that in it the roots of plants can neither force their way or find sustenance. At other times we skirted extensive Tea tree and Spearwood swamps near which the Red Gum trees attain great size.

We halted to rest at noon at one of these swamps, called Meealup, but the water was bad and difficult of access for horses and feed scanty. We proceeded in the afternoon across some alternate strips of sandy Mahogany land and open flats covered with dwarf tea tree, and water standing on a hard black sand bottom, and then came on an extensive low plain covered with scrub and abounding in Kangaroo: crossing this, where the white washed sand and stunted spearwood and tea tree bushes indicated that it

was flooded earlier in the season, we came to some very thick spearwood and tea tree thickets, round the skirts of which the natives took us, by a very tortuous track used by them, to a small flat on the right bank of the Harvey at a native ford where they have extensive weirs (Manga) for taking fish and crayfish (Gonak), which are also caught in great numbers by them in their holes as the waters recede.

It is curious where these creatures can go to in the dry season. They abound in the clay plains, where their holes are met with in thousands when the waters are out, yet how they can exist during the long drought is inexplicable to me, as these plains, although impassable during the winter on account of their wet rotten nature, dry up entirely at the very commencement of summer, and the vegetation upon them shrivels up and disappears long before it turns brown on the lighter and looser soils.

We halted for the night on the small flat before mentioned, on the right bank of the Harvey, about fifty yards above the ford, by the side of an excellent pool of deep still water: the banks were rotten and swampy on the opposite side, and it was evidently a difficult stream to cross except at this particular point. Monang described the river as running N.W. by W. and said that it was a long day's journey to Coljerinup where it falls into the southern estuary of the Murray; the river appears to be very tortuous in it's course, flowing through extensive and impenetrable swamps. He told me there was but one crossing place between this and Coljerinup fit for horses, and, by his account, I should say this must be at the head of the salt water, but a few miles from the mouth.

At my present halt feed was scarce for the horses, but there is more than anywhere else I know of in the neighbourhood, and the only wood within reach was the tea

tree, which is a very bad kind for burning, as it burns with difficulty, black and dim, and goes out readily.

We here passed the night and a magnificently fine one it was. I know nothing that conveys such a pleasing sensation of thorough liberty and independence as a bush life in fine weather, stretched on the ground by the side of a cheerful fire, beneath the mild clear light of the moon or twinkling of myriads of stars; one feels the gentle cool breeze from the hills to the eastward stealing over the plains heated by the sun of the past day, and, refreshed by a bath and a tinful of tea, one forgets the heat and fatigues of the day, and feels no care for the morrow as long as one's havresack contains some biscuit with a little tea and tobacco. One's pipe gently soothes one to sleep, which is unbroken through the night, save by the necessary care of the horses, or when a Kangaroo or rat rustling in the Bush awakens one for a moment. The cares and anxieties of the world are banished far from one's thoughts, one can travel free from the fear of brigands or the constantly recurring vexation of *Douanes* and tavern bills, and with the first light of morning a tinful of tea and a crust of bread prepare one for the day's work.

Early on the following morning, the 15th December, we crossed the ford of the Harvey and proceeded on our course, varying from S.S.W. to S. by W., crossing strips of sandy land covered with Mahogany, Banksia, et ctr, divided by numerous open spaces covered with dwarf tea tree and thick low scrub and rushes, and in part inundated but not to any depth, with a hard sandy bottom.

After crossing several miles of poor useless country we came amongst low hills of barren sand covered with Mahogany of considerable size mixed with a few of the coast White Gum which indicate the presence of lime-

stone. Leaving on our left Cannarup, an extensive swampy lagoon with pretty good feed round it, and thickets of large tea trees and high spear rushes on the borders, we crossed the range of hills diagonally to the right and then proceeded along the western edge of a long but narrow belt of swamp running between the parallel ranges of hill and containing immense Tea trees with flooded Gums and a large quantity of large and beautiful Grasstrees under which was abundance of good grass.

We halted at length in this hollow at a place where feed was abundant and by making a small well we obtained water, but Monang was now out of his reckoning and fairly stated that he did not know where we were as he had always kept nearer the coast. The day was very hot and in the low confined spot we soon found ourselves tormented by myriads of musquitoes, and still more by clouds of sand flies, which soon drove not only us but our poor horses to the protection of our large smoking fire, round which we all crowded close, finding even the suffocating smoke preferable to the stings of these minute but formidable insects. We made but a short halt, and then, crossing the swamp to the right, steered a little more to the westward than we had done in order to reach if possible the northern end of the Port Leschinault Estuary before dark.

We now came into a more open country with a good deal of grass growing on a light soil under very large White Gums, called by the natives 'Tooats'—the soil evidently fertile, though sandy, and free from the sharp prickly scrub that had annoyed us during the forenoon, tearing our trousers and legs. It was quite refreshing to get into this fine open forest country through which the travelling was quick and easy.

Before we had gone very far we came upon a nearly circular lagoon of considerable extent bordered all round by high spear rushes, and on the bank of it within about a hundred yards I perceived a small party of natives assembled round their fires. There was a terrible outcry immediately they saw us and the men, seizing their spears, advanced towards us with violent gestures and exclamations, while the women and children collecting their cloaks and bags, their 'Booga' and 'Cotto', proceeded to decamp with the utmost speed.

Halting my party, I sent Monang to the front to parley with them. He advanced, with his spear fixed in the 'Mero' and presented, shaking it at them; but approaching nearer he was recognised by an acquaintance. The points of their spears were instantly lowered and they crowded round him; and he was regularly introduced by those who knew him to the others, who embraced him, throwing their arms round him whilst he stood quiet holding down his head and looking remarkably sheepish.

After this ceremony the whole party came to me, men women and children, and endless were the questions asked by all and to be answered by Monang, concerning us, our horses, arms et ctr before we could proceed. At length, Monang telling them we came from Pinjarrup and were going by Port Leschinault, called by them Gomborrup, to the Vasse (Yundorrup), the whole party volunteered to accompany us to the estuary and we moved on round the left or eastern side of the lagoon, from whence we came almost immediately upon the western border of another lagoon of vast extent, by far the largest I had yet seen, and probably five or six miles in length, but all covered with the high Spear Rushes.

This lagoon, called Miellup by the natives, is said to be

one of the principal resorts of the black swans for breeding, which they do about the latter end of the winter, when the water is out to a great extent. Building upon these high rushes on the surface of the water they are comparatively safe from the natives who can only take those which incautiously make their nests where the water is shoal enough for the natives to wade out, which they do willingly up to their necks, though they will not go out of their depth. They say, however, that during the breeding season they succeed in taking a good many swans (Cooljaik), both old and young, as well as eggs (Nooro).

Along the edge of this great lagoon is found a good deal of feed for cattle or horses and the soil though light is fertile. Here I saw for the first time the Peppermint tree growing to a large size. It is an extremely graceful tree with a very rough deeply grooved bark on the thick stem, which soon branches out into many boughs supporting long pendant branches drooping all around like the weeping willow. This tree is common near the lagoons and near the coast all the way down to the bight of Geographe Bay, and I think is about the most picturesque tree in the Colony.

Inclining to the right from Miellup we followed our guides along Native paths, visible to none but themselves, through an undulating country timbered principally with Tooats, with some Red Gum and Mahogany, and thick with the Furze tree or Stinkwood and other bushes. Passing a small swamp surrounded by very rich soil covered with luxuriant rank vegetation, where we watered both ourselves and our horses, we soon got into a more open flat country lightly timbered with Tooats, with abundance of grass and not many bushes, and saw a thick Tea tree swamp about half a mile on our right, forming the

head of the estuary, upon which we soon arrived ourselves by a well beaten path through a most rich and luxuriant crop of grass and sow-thistles. The tide was out and a considerable extent of sand and mud was left bare round the head of the estuary upon which were congregated to feed immense flocks of Brown Ducks and Teal, while the water was equally covered with Swans and Pelicans. The mud was too soft and deep for us to approach any of them or even to leave the solid ground along the banks.

A beautiful scene now presented itself as we looked down the estuary to the southward. The vast extent of water before us lay smooth and still like a glassy lake, the sea breeze having fallen with the setting sun which threw out in dark relief the pointed and steep sandhills on our right, over which were sprinkled a few large Gum trees and Peppermints, and the shadows of these hills, gradually lengthening, stretched across the estuary, on the left bank of which appeared a dense thicket of Tea Trees and Spearwood fringed with very large Grass trees and backed by a well wooded range of sandy limestone hills. Ahead of us point after point of land appeared jutting into the Estuary, or 'Derbal', becoming gradually more and more indistinct until lost in the dim distance, while beyond, a little on the right, appeared a high remarkable hill or promontory forming the south head of Port Leschinault Inlet, now glowing with the warm tints of evening.

The Natives with us kindled a large fire on the bank to announce our coming to the tribes in the vicinity and it was speedily answered by several fires from different spots, the smoke of which, undisturbed by any breeze, rose high and straight into the air in a thick white column, contrasting in a most picturesque manner with the dark foliage behind.

We pursued our course along the low bank with a dense

thicket on our left, through a rank and rich growth of grass and sow-thistles for about three miles, anxiously interrogating our guides as to where we could obtain sufficient water for tea. At length we found some at a low promontory in a small native well amongst the Tea trees, but it was exceedingly bad, brackish and stinking. The horses having already been watered in the afternoon they luckily required no more but were soon employed eating the sow-thistles, half buried in the luxuriance of the feed. The smoke of our fires attracted rather a large party around us before dark, but they were civil and peaceable though very curious, and most of them retired to their own fires at a little distance, leaving us to repose after the fatigue of a long and hot day's journey.

I reckoned that we had gone over about 25 miles today, much of it through a very scrubby country which is particularly unpleasant to walk through, but it gave me pleasure to find myself on the Port Leschinault Estuary with so little difficulty or trouble, as also to find that the natives received us so amicably, though I anticipated some annoyance from their numbers on the morrow. There were several signs of their being very numerous in the neighbourhood, principally owing to the facility of obtaining fish, a wholesome and plentiful food which evidently much encourages the increase of population amongst these tribes. The numerous and well beaten paths near the bank of the estuary indicated the constant presence of considerable numbers. Indeed, nowhere had I hitherto seen, even on the Murray, where the natives are numerous, such distinct paths as here or so many deserted huts, some of them made with some care of the paper bark, i. e. the bark of the tea tree, others of the leaves of the Zanthoriza, which afford excellent protection from rain but are not so warm.

Soon after dark I was attracted by the appearance of numerous lights, gleaming and flashing in various directions along the borders of the inlet, and was at first somewhat startled, but I well knew that if the Natives intended any mischief they would carefully conceal their lights. They would not dare, it is true, under any circumstances to move at night without a firestick, except on a very clear moon-light night, for fear of the 'Granga' or evil spirits, or Ghosts, and also of the 'Wow', a bird of the genus Podargus, or Hawk Goatsucker, which flies by night uttering a note extremely like our Cuckoo and of which the Natives stand in great awe, ascribing to his malice any pains they may suffer at night, cramps, boils, or tumours. When they hear him they cover themselves as well as they can with their cloaks and crouch close to the fire, which they will on no account leave whilst their enemy is in the neighbourhood; but they will not for a moment scruple to eat him if they can catch him by day. I soon discovered that the numerous lights I saw along the water's edge were for the purpose of attracting the fish, which are speared by this means in great numbers both in the shoal water on the flats, where the natives wade out carrying firesticks to spear Mullet and Cobblers, and also on the banks of the river, where fires on a large scale are made where the water is deep close to and several natives watch the approach of the fish with their spears. Cobblers especially are thus taken in great quantities as well as larger fish such as Jew fish, Taylors and Black Snappers.

As the night advanced the vivid flashes of light disappeared and I went to sleep in full security, although aware that I was completely in the power of the natives if they wished to injure me, as our place of repose was clearly defined by the bright flaming fire of the Blackboy logs we

had heaped up to counteract the effects of the fog rising with the night from the low wet swamp on our left, and the stinking mud and seaweed on the edge of the Estuary on our right.

These natives retained a remembrance of white people having been located in their neighbourhood years before, when a detachment of the 63rd Regt, under the command of Lieut Macleod, had been stationed on the north shore of the estuary for nearly six months during the year 1830. This party had been left here by the governor Sir James Stirling as a focus to attract and afford protection to any Emigrants inclined to settle in the neighbourhood, much land on the rivers Collie and Preston having been assigned to different parties—all of which remains to the present day unimproved and uncultivated. But, as if to render the Detachment perfectly useless and nugatory, it was established on the north shore, a long narrow strip of sand varying from a quarter to one mile in breadth and entirely cut off from the main except by the long circuitous route of following the beach or bank of the Estuary some twelve or fourteen miles to the northward, then crossing the coast swamp if practicable and returning on the other side. Not even a boat was left with the party but by hard labour the Officer and his men formed a canoe by hollowing out and shaping with an axe the trunk of a tree; in this rude machine they used to cross the Estuary, fish and hunt Swans. After being left alone about half a year in this lonely and unenviable situation, the plans of the Government altering, they were removed to Augusta, but in such haste that most of the stores, such as salt meat, rum, and a cask of port wine, a bullock cart et ctr were abandoned. The natives stole the meat, the rum was broached and drunk by a party of runaway convicts from King George's

Sound, but the port wine is supposed to be still forthcoming underground, though those only who hid it can tell where to find it and they are now far away in India.

The only reasonable plea for placing the detachment in such a barren, dismal and useless situation was that the natives could not get at them, but it was soon found that though the white men were prisoners at their posts the blacks could cross over to them in several places both on the Estuary and at the outer bar at Didunup, as they call the place where the waters of the inlet discharge themselves into the sea: the ford is easy at low water though during the ebb the stream rushes out with irresistable rapidity. To Mr. Simmons, the surgeon with the detachment, we are, by all accounts, indebted for the good feeling and friendship evinced by the natives towards me on this and subsequent occasions. This kind but eccentric gentleman appears by conciliatory and friendly conduct towards them to have kept on good terms with all who visited the party, and no outrage was committed until the pork was carried off, and small blame to them for that.

On the following morning after swallowing a tinful of exceedingly bad tea we proceeded along the edge of the Estuary for some miles, partly along the sand which was here hard and firm, and partly along a native path near the edge. The swamp on our left terminated before long, giving place to a range of low hills covered with small White Gums, Banksias et ctr, at the foot of which near the water were very thick Furze trees, Wattles, Banksias and other small trees and shrubs.

As we advanced party after party of Natives joined us, hallooing, screeching, and receiving us with most boisterous symptoms of joy, much of which I would willingly have dispensed with, as every accession of numbers occasioned

a halt to explain who we were, where we came from, where we were going to, what we had in our bags et ctr et ctr. The latter question was the most frequent and the most unpleasant, as if they took a fancy to my provisions and blankets they were the strongest party and able to take them if they thought fit. While Monang was on foot progress was hopeless, so, mounting him, I endeavoured to proceed, which I did not accomplish until he had displayed his horsemanship to the envy and astonishment of his compatriots by lashing into a sorry canter the jaded and leg weary police horse, and then, assembling the whole party, had made them a speech promising our speedy return. He also distributed amongst them his Kangaroo skin cloak, spears etc: these were not quite gifts, as he received inferior articles in exchange, nor were they wholly voluntary, as he afterwards explained to me, but his friends and relations were too numerous and too pressing for him to refuse them anything. By relations I mean Fathers, Mothers, Brothers, Uncles etc by adoption on the occasion, and certainly in this way Monang met, during this journey, more near relations whom he had never seen before than any one else ever did in so short a time.

My story seems to be as much stopped by the natives as I was myself, but as I was from daylight till one o'clock p.m. going nine miles, it is only fair that my narrative should be detained, since it is from the same cause. Seldom during the day had I fewer than one hundred Blacks about me, and often nearer two hundred. I remarked that there was not amongst them a fair proportion of fighting men, most being either elderly or lads, but those I did see were tall, athletic, stout fellows in very good condition and covered thick with red earth, though grease to make good 'Wilghi' was scarce.

At this season food was plentiful—both fish, the favorite of which seems to be the Mullet, and 'Munghites' as they call the flower of the Banksia, from which they extract by suction a delicious juice resembling a mixture of honey and dew. Two kinds are commonly used, one the ordinary species with rather smooth bark, and leaves but slightly serrated, the other the large oak leaved Banksia Gigantea. The former is the sweetest and easiest for a beginner to suck, the latter flower contains most juice if one can get at it; but without habit one only hurts one's mouth and gums: in both of them beware of ants—the taste is horrid.

About five miles from where we slept we came upon the Collie River which flows into the Estuary at a low flat point, in two branches of considerable depth and width, the only way of crossing which was by the bar formed at it's mouth, where the bottom is of hard sand. It is necessary to keep well out and make a considerable détour to keep on the shoalest part: farther in the bottom is soft with weeds and grass and more water. A long and tiresome wade brought us to the little island in the centre of the river from whence we again struck out into the Estuary and passed to the left bank by the sandy bar; nowhere was the water over our hips, but still I know nothing more tiresome or fatiguing than a long wade and it hurts one's feet for walking.

This is the only place where the Collie can be crossed for at least ten miles up, with the exception of a native ford I had pointed out to me on another occasion about two miles higher up, where, descending a steep bank, they wade across to a long low island and again cross the remainder of the river by rather a deep and hazardous passage, the water up to a moderately tall man's neck, and the banks quite impracticable for horses.

On the left bank of the Collie I found about 150 natives assembled to receive us, belonging to another tribe. These, in addition to about a dozen followers from the former party, all joined me and we advanced towards the Preston together. Amongst them was a very fine-looking tall man. I measured with him, but found him only six feet high though he looked much more; indeed I never saw a Native exceed this height and only knew two come up to it, this man and old Querrup on the Murray.

After following the edge of a bay for about a mile and a half, we turned into the Bush by a well beaten path a little to the left, leaving the point where the Preston debouches to the right: this river has not, like the Collie, a bar at it's mouth and we had to seek a ford higher up. Our path was winding like all those made by Natives, since they never attempt to remove obstacles, but go round every fallen tree or other impediment, and follow the tortuous course of a brook or swamp without any idea of cutting off angles. We passed through a magnificent tract of land for above two miles, abounding with most luxuriant grass, growing under flooded Gums, Stinkwood and Broom, on a soil rather light in places but in others black and rich. I have as yet seen no place better calculated for a dairy or arable farm than this, lying between two considerable rivers, both navigable for boats, especially the Preston, which, although neither so wide or deep as the Collie, has no bar at it's mouth, and good pools of fresh water throughout the year about three miles from the mouth by river and about one by land. Through this luxuriant meadow country we passed, coming several times upon the Preston which winds very much, nearly enclosing in it's bends some large and rich alluvial flats.

The Natives showed me a small swamp of red ochreous

or irony earth, destitute of vegetation but full of holes containing brilliantly clear chalybeate water beneath a thick sediment. Here they obtain in a natural state particularly fine red earth for 'Wilghi', which in most parts of the country they have to burn and take some trouble in the preparation of. A few old Tea trees grew in this swamp but no grass or other vegetation was visible. The Natives drink this water willingly notwithstanding it's strong irony taste and I have no doubt it is very wholesome.

A little above this the path we were following through the rich low flats brought us to the native crossing place, the lowest on the river above salt water; but this being only a bridge formed by an immense tree which had fallen across the stream, was of course impracticable for horses, and as the water was quite salt and influenced by the tides, it was evident that I must ascend higher up to be able to cross. About a mile higher up the country becomes more sandy and barren, with Mahogany timber except near the river where there are rich grassy flats. Here I found a crossing place: it was a very bad one, the banks being high and steep with fallen timber and other impediments, but I succeeded by dint of perseverance, pulling down the bank I had to ascend, unloading the horses and making the Natives carry all the things over. To their credit be it said, they did not attempt to steal anything, though there were several loose things of which they well knew the value. The only accident, and that luckily without serious consequences, was that my mare, in attempting to mount the bank, fell over backwards into the river. The water was about three feet deep, very sweet and good, being out of reach of the tide, which however flows very nearly to this spot. The bottom is hard sand except at the edges where there is some soft clay and mud.

I halted for about an hour and a half on the left bank of the Preston, in a rich flat where my horses soon filled themselves with grass, but the musquitoes and sandflies were dreadfully annoying, as indeed the former had been all the preceding night on the Estuary. The latter, fortunately, only tormented one during the day, disappearing with the sun; but while they last the annoyance and pain is much greater than that caused by the musquitoes, whose humming noise is worse than their bite, in my opinion—though they do not hurt me as much as they do some people, who swell and suffer great pain from them.

A large party of Natives collected round me during my halt and sat down in circles round the fires they had kindled, watching all my movements most carefully and making at the same time an overwhelming noise, talking and laughing most vehemently. As I could spare but a very small piece of damper, my stock being barely sufficient to last till my return, I boiled them a piece of pork and gave them what pleased them still more, the greasy water in which it had been boiled; skimming the floating fat off with their hands they mixed a large quantity of Wilghi with which they smeared not only their heads, but faces, bodies and legs. The Wilghi, which is a preparation of red earth and grease, constitutes their favorite ornament and covering: when smeared with this they consider themselves particularly handsome and discard the Booga, the small apology for clothes they usually wear. I observed at Port Leschinault that most of them used the red earth alone, fat being difficult to obtain, so they appeared particularly delighted to get some.

The Natives here do not differ either in manners or appearance from the tribes further north; they are like the Murray men, stout and generally well made, having

apparently plenty to eat, and many of the young women are extremely good looking, with particularly fine teeth and an open pleasing expression, but as scantily clad and as dirty as usual.

The only clothes worn by any of the Natives of Western Australia that I have seen, is the Booga or cloak, made of Kangaroo skins. They generally use and prefer the skin of the female Kangaroo, 'Waroo', as being softer and closer in texture than that of the male, 'Yowert', and I have also, though very rarely, seen skins of the Brush Kangaroo and Wallaby used by them. These are the prettiest by far, of a soft grey colour inclining to white at the tips, which gives them a silvery hue. The skins are first pegged out on the ground, fur undermost, to dry, and then the fleshy and greasy parts are scraped off by the women with small tools made for the purpose, consisting of a short stick tipped with the hard 'Beeber', or Grass Tree gum, in which is inserted a fragment of glass or quartz with the necessary shape and edge. With this instrument they scrape the skin all over several times, crossing the former marks diagonally, until the skin is sufficiently soft and pliable. Four to six skins are necessary to make a cloak, each one being cut obliquely from the head, increasing in width very gradually to the hind quarters, and they are sewn together with the sinews extracted from the tail of the Kangaroo, holes being made with a sharp pointed bone or stick, as they have no needle. The sinews, which must be drawn from the tail of a Yowert or male Kangaroo as being the largest, are obtained by cutting round the skin about two or three inches from the extremity, sufficiently to obtain a hold, and then twisting and turning until the joint of the bone is separated, when by a strong pull the sinews of the whole length of the tail are drawn out. They

must be wound diagonally round a spear or 'Wonna' to prevent their shrinking in drying, and they then form the best material that can possibly be obtained for strong sewing. The cloak is fastened round the neck by a bit of grass, or, more often, by a little stick or bone, thrust through two or three holes in the front, and a narrow cape or collar above hangs over in an irregular manner, as the skin of the head is often left on and not cut square.

It is worn in different ways, but oftenest over the left shoulder and back, hiding the hand which carries the spears and 'Mero', and the knife (Dabba) and hammer (Kadjoo) stuck in the belt, or 'Noolaban'. If it is very cold, however, when walking they jerk their cloak forward, so as to cover their chest and belly, and with the disengaged hand carry underneath it the firestick, which is as constant a companion as the spears. These, grasped by the middle, are usually carried with the Mero in the left hand with the points to the rear, or, if likely to be wanted, one of them in the right hand, fixed in the throwing stick and the point upright or leaning against the shoulder. A man never carries more than one cloak and often not even that, but the women have frequently more skins, and on their backs they carry one or two bags (Cotto) of Kangaroo skin slung round the neck and shoulders, containing the child and any tools, spare skins, roots, or other provisions or stores they may possess. In travelling or moving their camp, the young children are always carried by the women in these bags, and one frequently sees another somewhat larger child seated astride on her mother's shoulders. The men also will sometimes condescend to carry a boy, if he is tired, on their shoulders, where he sits quite at his ease grasping tight by their hair: this is the only burden, except their spears, that the men will ever carry, the women

being not only compelled to carry everything but to make the huts and fires when they halt for the night.

The belt or 'Noolaban' consists of a very great length of roughly spun Opossum hair, but slightly twisted and not strong; this is wound round and round the body, even many dozens of times, and it's beauty is estimated according to it's length; it is usually made tight and seems equally prized for supporting the stomach when empty or confining it when full, and in it are stuck the hammer and knife, the former generally behind with the head in the small of the back and the handle sticking straight down.

Their hair is often confined by a piece of Noolaban, in which are stuck the Manuite tufts, or bunches of white Cockatoo feathers, which are highly prized as ornaments, as, indeed, are all white or gay coloured feathers; these are prepared by tearing the feathery parts from the quills and tail and fastening them together on a little bit of stick, so as to form a little bunch drooping all round and really very picturesque, sometimes white, sometimes black with red stripes (the tail of the black Cockatoo) or, at other times, reddish brown—when saturated with Wilghi. The feathers are worn on the head, or as armlets, and occasionally, when plentiful, in the belt: well adorned with these and smeared with grease and red ochre a warrior is fully dressed, and a grotesque figure he certainly appears.

The natives about Gomborrup are not so well supplied with Kangaroo skins as on the Murray; possibly the latter have got many of theirs from the white people, any way they are particularly well furnished. I also observed that the spears here were neither so long nor so heavy as those of the Murray men, who certainly carry by far the finest and heaviest I have seen any where in the Colony, and greater numbers of them too. But I here saw a spear that

I never met with elsewhere, one eleven or twelve feet long and used without the Mero to kill fish like the Taylors and other large kinds that frequent the deep water close under the banks of the rivers.

The usual fishing spear is lighter than the war one and generally without a barb, and it is very interesting to watch a party of men pursuing a shoal of Mullet in shallow water, endeavouring to cut them off from the deep parts and following with unerring sight the course of the fish under water, until they get within reach to throw the spear, which they generally do without the Mero and with excellent aim. It is an exhilarating sight and a favourite sport with the young men, the mullet being considered by them the best fish they have, being very fat. They also spear on the flats great numbers of cobblers, a kind of slimy fish without scales, something between a loach and an eel, with long beards round the mouth and a sharp sting at the back of each gill, with which it inflicts painful and festering wounds on the unskilful fisherman. The fish is very good to eat.

Mullet are also caught by the Natives in immense numbers at the mouths of the little salt water creeks by means of weirs which are left open for the tide to rise. With the tide vast shoals of Mullet, principally small fry, enter, and, the weir being suddenly stopped up, they are either caught as the water filters off with the ebb, or, more often, the women are sent in to drive the fish with their hands into corners where they are easily taken. I know nothing sweeter than these fish are in April or May when they are caught in this way and cooked, native fashion, on hot ashes, the small fry bolted whole.

About Gomborrup I remarked the way a large fish is cooked by them, such as a Taylor or Jew Fish, and a

capital way it is. The fish, having had it's scales scraped off, is wrapped up in thick folds of Tea tree bark, which should not be from the outside so as to burn readily; this is then covered up in warm sand and ashes, not too hot, or with any lumps of live fire, and left to bake, when it comes out beautifully cooked and with a very agreeable acid taste imparted by the bark.

The more common and simple way of cooking fish, is, like the plan they pursue with any meat, to throw it on the fire and cover it with hot ashes till it is done enough, which in most cases means half raw. But two or three turns on the fire are sufficient to loosen the scales which then come off with great ease and the fish is then thrown back to cook *tant bien que mal*.

With an Opossum or Kangaroo Rat, the plan adopted is somewhat less simple as it is previously opened and the gall, bladder, and parts of the entrails are extracted, the aperture being closed with a plug of the animal's fur and stitched up with a piece of stick; the fur is then singed in the fire and scraped off with the hand, or a knife, and the animal returned to the hot ashes where, if the heat is not too great, the skin does not crack until it is well cooked, by which plan all the blood and gravy are preserved.

The Opossum is very white but has a very strong aromatic taste from the leaves of the Eucalyptus on which it feeds; the Kangaroo Rat is much better, even if not equal to the little Bandicoot, which is delicious; though, to my taste, none of them are often sufficiently cooked by the Natives, who are too impatient to allow their food to be more than just heated through.

All this time, however, I am left sitting on the left bank of the Preston half devoured by sandflies, and it is high time I should get along on my road to the Vasse, or

Yundorup, as the place where Mr Bussell[1] has fixed his farm is called by the Natives.

About 3 p.m. I proceeded in company with a large party of Native men, the women and children remaining on the right bank of the river; the men were going several miles in my direction to a great meeting or Corroborree with some other tribes, whither they asked me to accompany them.

I did not find the good land extending any distance from the river on the south side, as we soon got into a very sandy country, undulating, with some low flats with scrub and blackish sand, but mostly high land with very large Mahogany and White Gum and prickly scrub underneath.

About seven miles from the Preston we came upon the edge of the coast swamp which is here very wide, partly thick Tea tree and scrub, with grass trees etc on the edges, and partly lagoons of fresh water with spear rushes and reeds. Across this we looked to the sand hills just over the beach which are here very high and pointed with deep gaps between, indicating that the coast here is very much exposed to the winter gales from N.W. and W. A good Native path follows the hill side on the inner or S.E. side of this line of swamp, which extends, with little or no interruption, from the Murray as far south as Toby's inlet in the bight of Geographe Bay, about nine miles beyond the Vasse.

We now fell in with a tall wild looking Native, who, standing on the trunk of a fallen tree, with his long black hair streaming over his neck and shoulders, and his eyes rolling in a strange insane kind of manner, favoured us with a long speech delivered with much energy and gesticulation in a wild irregular chant or song, unlike any thing I had heard from a Native before. The upshot,

[1] On the Bussell family, see below, p. 97, note.

however, was that the grand meeting we were going to was to be held at a swamp about two miles to the eastward, where I resolved to accompany my friends, as they assured me most earnestly that there was abundance of 'Batta quabba', good grass, for the horses on the edge of the swamp or lagoon where the Corroboree was to be held.

Monang evidently did not at all like the company we had got into, but I determined to see the matter out and to show no signs of distrust, since we were quite in the power of the Natives if they wished to injure us. However, on arriving at the swamp, I found to my annoyance that there was no water accessible for the horses and not the least sign of grass, the prickly scrub and sand extending to the very edge of a large spearwood swamp. I therefore explained, with Monang's aid, to my black friends that I could not stay with them but must return to the coast swamp immediately, as it was getting very late. They seemed angry and annoyed but we parted amicably, and one lad returned with me, promising to guide me the next morning to Yundorup, as to the distance of which the different Natives varied much in their statements—indeed, I doubt if any of them had ever been there.

I reached the coast swamp and fixed my camp just before dark with plenty of feed for my horses, but we had some difficulty in keeping clear of the ants which swarmed around. Musquitoes also were very numerous and persevering in their attacks, but still the relief from the constant clamour, noise and annoyance of such a multitude of Natives was very agreeable and we soon fell asleep, having nothing to break the stillness of the night but the eternal harsh croaking of the frogs and the occasional note of the Hawk Goat sucker, or Cuckoo, which could almost make one fancy one's self at home, did not the clear dry

atmosphere and the brilliancy of the heavens mark too clearly the difference between England and Australia.

In the morning I fed the lad who remained with us well, in hopes of inducing him to continue with us, but in vain; indeed it is a bad plan to reward a Native with food until his work is done; when hungry he will do what you require to get food, but when 'moorat' or 'full belly' as they call it, no promise of future reward will overcome his natural indolence.

Thus we were left to get on the best way we could, much to Monang's horror and dread. He did not know where he was, he could not understand my steering by the compass, and he was in a perfect agony of fear lest some strange Natives should attack us. However, I determined to follow for the present the well beaten path along the inner bank of the coast swamp since that must take us right at last and I did not apprehend any difficulty in reaching the Vasse Estuary.

After a time I got into a lower country with better soil and some very large Tooat timber, with furze and broom rushes and Peppermint trees of a large size. Here we met several Natives who accompanied us a little way and then dropped behind, and soon afterwards I found the path I was following turn more towards the sea. Before long I found myself close to the back of the beach, where the swamp was very narrow, with very rich grass and sow thistles growing within reach of the sprays in a gale. The sand hills are here much lower than further north, and they evidently decrease in height and size from Port Leschinault towards the Vasse, where there is nothing but a high sandy beach covered with low bushes, which clearly shows that there the winter gales never blow home with any violence.

From the beach I could see the extremity of Point Naturaliste bearing about W. by S., and I found I was still many miles from that part of Geographe Bay where I expected to find the Vasse. The beach being bad travelling I kept along a Native path inside or at the back of the swamp through very thick bushes; after a time, emerging from this, I found myself bewildered amongst an infinity of paths leading through thick spearwood swamps and open spaces covered with grass and rushes, with a deep black soil, evidently flooded in winter and even now hardly dry from the October rains.

Although the traces of Natives and their huts of Tea tree bark were numerous, we did not fall in with any to assist us in getting out of this difficult country, so intersected with swamps and thickets as to render my further direct advance difficult and doubtful. I therefore decided on turning to the left inland, to get into a drier country, which I accomplished with some trouble, after floundering along a path through a thick swamp with deep black mould covered with luxuriant vegetation; the path was evidently only adapted for the passage of black people and never intended for horses, who crossed with great labour and difficulty, sinking nearly to their bellies at every step. After reloading them, we soon got into an undulating Tooat country of considerable extent, with plenty of grass and good though light soil, but here the thickets of broom and furze and occasional patches of swamp were so thick as to impede my progress very much, rendering it difficult to keep anything like a straight course. Monang, being quite beyond his knowledge and ignorant of the real distance to Yondorup, now began to grumble very much, there being no paths to follow or other signs to guide us. However, after struggling through the bushes and round

the swamps which caused frequent deviations, crossing my course at right angles, I got at length into an open sandy Mahogany country through which we advanced rapidly, steering S.S.W.

About two miles further on we fell in with two Native lads, sucking Munghites, but it was with great difficulty that we could persuade them to approach us, as they were very much alarmed and had no arms. Monang, however, though at first equally, if not more, frightened at length took courage and leaving his spears held a long parley with them, each party gradually approaching each other, but conversing from behind the shelter of a large tree to guard against treachery; showing how suspicious they are of strangers and how cunning they are in their attacks. I must mention that they will frequently pretend to be unarmed when their spears are resting against a tree close at hand or lying along the ground held between the great and second toe.

The youngest of the lads, a fine good humoured looking boy, soon informed us that his name was Tom, which had been given to him by the 'soldierman' at Yondorup, and with much persuasion he agreed to show us the way, and lucky it was that he did so, as I soon found that I was near a river traversing my course at right angles, which there were but two places to cross at. At first Tom proposed turning to the right to cross low down, but on our explaining that horses could not go in 'Buggia windi', he faced to the eastward and travelled along through the bush at a capital pace.

I have since crossed at the lower ford later in the summer, but at no time is it very good and it must be totally impassable, as well as much of the neighbouring land, in or soon after the winter. It is called Mallocup and

near it is much most excellent land, and a good site for a dairy farm, but I must reserve a description of it for the homeward route.

Tom's road led towards the hills and, crossing a small swampy brook running to the southward, we inclined more in the same direction ourselves along a gently sloping hillside, with large Red Gums and dwarf grass trees, Kangaroo grass and various prickly shrubs and plants, with abundance of purple and brick coloured creepers, all now however out of blossom. It was a very good stiff soil, apparently resembling that which is turning out so well as arable land on the Canning River and about Pinjarrup.

About a mile further on, following a well beaten path, we came upon the edge of a high steep bank down which we looked upon a considerable river, perhaps about two thirds the stream of water there is in the Preston, running about E.N.E. at this point,[1] between high banks, but with small patches of alluvial soil between them so far up as this. The land on both sides is rich and fertile and well timbered with large Red Gums, which are perhaps the most useful trees in the Colony for a new settlement, splitting freely for fencing or shingles. This stream, unknown to the Colonists hitherto, was afterwards named the Capel by Mr Bussell, and the discovery of it gave me the more pleasure from the great extent of good land I met with in the vicinity. It is well adapted for the establishment of water mills, as the fall is very considerable and the body of water quite sufficient throughout the year to turn several, either for grinding or for sawing timber, which appears to be abundant in the neighbourhood and of good size and quality.

We now proceeded more to the westward, the path pursued by Tom, in parts well marked, leading rather to the westward of S.W. through a rich good country, with fertile soil and abundance of cattle feed. About four miles more brought us to a brook containing water but not running, called, after the first discoverer of it, the Ludlow: it runs to the N.W. through a good country with large timber.

[1] This must surely be a slip for WNW.

After a short halt here, we proceeded rapidly along a belt of open country without large timber, running parallel with the coast and varying in width from a quarter to one, or one and a half, miles. On the left is a rising sandy country bearing Mahogany, Banksia, Honeysuckle and other trees, and on the right appeared a thicker country with enormous timber, principally Tooats, mixed near the edge with Red Gums. The plains, or clay plains as they are called at the Vasse, extend more or less from the Capel to the westward, considerably beyond the Vasse river, varying in width and quality of soil, but with no timber except a few scattered Red Gums. In places they are very bare and in others thick with broom and other bushes and shrubs, with occasional patches of spearwood swamp, and, what I never saw before, large spearwood bushes growing to a considerable size with a thick stem and separately, with abundance of grass and feed covering the ground. The soil on these plains is dark stiff clay; at this season, December, it is as dry and hard as possible, with the vegetation rapidly parching up, but evidently, from the description of shrubs on it and the very deep tracks of Kangaroo, in the winter it must be impassably wet and rotten, abounding with 'Gonak' (Crawfish).

I here fell in with the two largest Emus I ever saw, and got to within twenty yards of them without their taking alarm, but they did not wait to be shot at. They were of great height and size and probably weighed nearly 150

pounds, to judge by their appearance. The largest I ever killed weighed something under 100 lbs and he was quite a small one compared to these.

About three miles from the Ludlow we crossed a brook, very similar in character, called the Abba, and a mile and a half further on another called the Sabina; of these more hereafter.

The clay plains swarmed with Kangaroo but this time I found but few together; they were lying amongst the bushes in pairs, or single does with their young. Between the Ludlow and the Sabina my poor dog Hero killed two singlehanded, the first he had ever killed alone, but not the last by many. At length, however, the tables were turned and a Kangaroo killed him. Poor fellow, he was such a faithful and attached companion and friend of mine during the six months he was in the Colony that he deserves more notice, which he shall have when I get to the Vasse where his bones rest under a large tree.

The Sabina has a larger bed than the Abba but does not contain so much water, the latter running low down all the summer. From the former we turned more to the right, about W. or W. by N., through the clay plains which here widened considerably; the same belt of large thick timber continued on the right, until after about two miles we entered it, but there were no Tooats here, nothing but Red Gums and Mahogany with abundance of stinkwood or furze underneath.

We at length found plenty of cattle tracks, much to our delight, as the whole party, especially the horses, were very much tired; we had been pushing forward the whole day as constantly and rapidly as possible through a great deal of thick difficult country and the sun was getting now very low. Hearing a shout of 'Cooee' ahead we answered and

soon met Mr A. Bussell looking for his cattle, and very soon after, about three miles and a half from the Sabina, we came upon the right bank of the Vasse river and in sight of a large two storied house, well situated close to the stream in a clear space, with a few of the finest Red Gums both in size and form that I have ever beheld scattered around.

I was most kindly and hospitably received by the Bussell family [1] who were not a little surprised at my visit, no one having ever penetrated before to their little settlement overland from the Swan.

[1] An account of the early experiences of the Bussells in Western Australia will be found in E. O. G. Shann, *Cattle Chosen* (London, 1926). In addition to the wise and kindly leader of the family group, John Garrett Bussell, three brothers—Charles, Vernon, and Alfred—had been in the colony since May 1830; in 1833 they were joined by another brother—Lenox—and two sisters, and in 1834 by their widowed mother and the one remaining sister. Until 1841, when the ties between them began to loosen, the family was a perfect example of the 'group settlement'. See also below, p. 109.

IV

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: RETURN TO THE MURRAY

On the morning of Decr 18th, the day following my arrival at the Vasse, just after breakfast, the Governor arrived in the colonial schooner the *Champion*, on his way back from King George's sound with Capt Molloy, Mr Lewis etc, forming a large party and creating quite a stir in the little Vasse community.

Sir James was much pleased at the report I gave him of my journey, and the result of his visit was the formation of a military post about five miles E.N.E. from Yondurup station, between the two estuaries of the Vasse, about two months afterwards.

Like all his plans, it was changed several times before being carried into effect, and various were the places fixed upon for the station, and at last, instead of a useful and important post of communication near Port Leschinault being formed, I was sent to build barracks and form a township on a presq'isle more fit for Dutchmen or frogs than British Soldiers; where there were no settlers and no land to be taken up, and where in fact we were as utterly useless as it was in the Governor's power to render us.

There I remained about three months, till, having completed a plan of the township, I rode up to Head Quarters to show His Excellency that the Surveyor General, through ignorance of the locality, had placed the town of Wonnerup where mud and water were far more plentiful than dry land.

The river called the Vasse was discovered and named by a French expedition which surveyed the coast and named

Cape Naturaliste, Geographe Bay, Port L'Eschinault, etc.,[1] but it is not a stream of any importance, having but a short course and not running throughout the year. It comes from the southward, rising in the ranges of ironstone hills between Geographe Bay and Port Augusta, a small settlement close under the lee of Cape Leeuwin, which is the south western extremity or promontory of New Holland. The river is fresh during the winter and early part of the summer at Mr Bussell's house, up to which there is plenty of water for boats from the 'B' tree near the beach, but instead of falling into the sea it discharges itself into the more western of the two estuaries, where it is extremely shallow and even dry quite across in the summer.

These two estuaries, which were hitherto very imperfectly known, extend between them about nine or ten miles from E.S.E. to W.N.W., and are divided about half way by what is usually called Wonnerup Island, but it is not entirely surrounded by water except in the wet season or at spring tides. Here are the inlets or communications with

[1] Mr. E. O. G. Shann in *Cattle Chosen* (p. 51) has fallen into some curious errors regarding the Vasse River. The Vasse was named by Baudin on his voyage of 'national curiosity' with the ships *Géographe* and *Naturaliste* in June 1801, after a sailor of the *Naturaliste* who was swept away by a heavy sea when a shore party was being taken off at night, in stormy weather, by the ships' boats. His death was morally certain, but not proved; and after the return of the expedition to France an article appeared in the Press asserting that Vasse had escaped death, had lived for two or three years with the aborigines, had been rescued by an American ship, and had later been taken prisoner and carried to England by an English cruiser. Inquiries by the French Minister of Marine, however, revealed the article, which had excited considerable public interest, to be a fabrication. Probably it had originated in the fact that the expedition, returning to this coast in March 1803, had seen fires on the shore but had not landed. G. F. Moore in his *Diary*, indeed, says that the man had been saved, and that some natives of the neighbourhood still recollected him, but that he had died of disease some time afterwards.

the sea, two in number, with bar entrances frequently changing both in depth and situation, the sands at the mouth constantly shifting and being in some places quick and very dangerous. A boat can usually cross the bar, but once in the month of April, with low water at spring tide, we did not find it more than ankle deep and had to unload and drag the boat over upon skids. The two inlets are united by a narrow creek but the inlets or creeks communicating with the estuaries run in different directions, winding very much, with a tolerably deep channel all along, and sandy banks in most parts, though here and there stone appears of a sandy soft nature cemented with lime, too soft and crumbling for building purposes.

A considerable portion of the island is low and wet, covered with Samphire and flooded as early in the season as May, but all the remainder, except that part near the sea, consists of good but shallow black earth, resting on a bed of white sand and shells and covered with most luxuriant grass. There is great abundance of good feed for horses and cattle all about Wonnerup and the grass appears to me to be richer and more succulent than in any other part of the Colony I know, making excellent hay and keeping stock fat throughout the summer.

Between the estuaries and the sea runs a belt of land varying in width, of a sandy nature but fertile, bearing luxuriant grass, furze trees and small Peppermints which are the only trees growing very near the sea; on the southern or inner edge of the estuaries a narrow strip of tea tree swamp, thick with tangled creepers, coarse grass, reeds and rushes, and composed of rich black vegetable mould, extends along the whole of their course, and within that is a strip of Tooat country, varying from one to two miles in width, bounded by the estuaries on the one side

and by the above mentioned clay plains on the other, and extending in an uninterrupted line from the south bank of the Capel to the Sabina, to the westward of which stream I have never seen any, except one small group on Mr Bussell's land.

I don't think there is much difference in size between the two estuaries and they are both very shallow in most parts, though there are places where the Natives can cross either of them by wading in the dry season.

Into the Wonnerup estuary fall two streams, the Capel and the Ludlow, the former of which enters at the north east extremity, running through the tea tree swamps and spearwood and across a hard sandy flat where there is a very good ford. From what I know of this stream, it runs to the north west towards the coast from the weirs where I first saw it as far as Mallocup, where it enters a vast swampy lagoon at the back of the beach and then, turning at a right angle, runs about four miles S.W. parallel with the sea, through a very rich country, until it enters the estuary. The Ludlow is but a small stream, a salt creek extending about half a mile up, and then water occurring only here and there in pools.

Four streams fall into the Vasse estuary, viz: the Abba, Sabina, Vasse and New River; the first of which falls into it from the S.E. at the head, close to the salt creek which runs up to the N.E. and, nearly joining a similar one from the other estuary, cuts off the Wonnerup Island from the main. The Abba is fordable at the mouth and is salt about three quarters of a mile up; there a little fresh stream constantly trickles down and there is a crossing place over a fallen tree, or Waddi bridge as it is called in New South Wales. There is a constant succession of pools above this, though small ones, for about a mile and a half, when,

having crossed the clay plains and got between gently sloping banks of sandy soil with Mahogany trees and scrub, one finds two considerable deep pools of excellent water, full of Cobblers and Unios and swarming with Ducks and Teal. Above this I know of hardly any water in the dry season.

The next stream is the Sabina, distant about a mile and a quarter at the mouth, where a low spit of land projects out into the estuary. The salt water extends very little way up, but, the banks being in many parts steep and broken, it is a more difficult brook to cross than the Abba, although in summer it contains less water.

The Vasse is the principal stream falling into this estuary, but is much inferior in importance to the Capel, except in point of situation, where it has the advantage of being near a good anchorage in the bay for the shipment of produce; vessels may come within three quarters of a mile of the beach in the fine season with safety, and the water is always smooth with no surf to land through, the bottom hard sand, holding well and gradually shoaling from 6 to 3 and 2 fathoms. A signal is erected by Mr Bussell to mark where boats should land to be near the road to the settlement, in the shape of a cask painted white and placed on a pole. From this, commonly called the 'Tub', it is a mile and a half to Yondorup; one can either cross by the ford over the Vasse near the estuary or else in a boat at the B tree a little higher up.

Close above this the New River joins the Vasse: it more deserves the name of a creek or a swamp than of a river. It comes from the westward, having run parallel with the sea bank for seven or eight miles, it is in most parts swampy and muddy, so as to be difficult to ford: in general I have found it impassable for horses, except a little above it's

mouth, where one can cross by some flat lime stones dry footed in summer. The soil on this river is light but fertile with abundance of grass, stinkwood, and Peppermint near the sea. I have been told that the clay plains extend along the back or south side of this river and are of considerable width, behind which again appear, as usual, Mahogany and sand.

The land near the sea is evidently the most fertile and valuable along this part of the coast, which is rare, but at the same time most desirable in a young Colony, where the expense of transport is naturally very heavy, from the scarcity of hands and teams.

There being as yet but little to attract vessels in Geographe Bay it is very imperfectly known, but I feel confident that hereafter it will become a thriving and important part of the Colony. The climate is both milder and moister than at Swan River, there is abundance of excellent land, water to be obtained in plenty by digging only about three or four feet down, even where there is no stream (and these are very numerous all round the Bay), timber is abundant, large and of good quality, potatoes thrive remarkably well, and certainly cattle and horses look better and fatter than anywhere else in the Colony. The anchorage at the Vasse is safe during the fine season, and from the absence of sand hills and the marks along the beach, I doubt if the winter gales ever blow with any violence into the bay, and, even if they did, on the weather assuming a threatening aspect, as the wind draws round to the northward any vessel could stand across to a beautiful little bay under Castle point[1] where she could ride out any gale in perfect shelter, and obtain wood and water

[1] This is presumably Castle Rock, in Geographe Bay. (Information supplied by Mr. F. I. Bray.)

from the shore. Probably hereafter a village will be formed here, or it would be a most desirable situation for a whaling station; there is plenty of good land about it to grow corn and to feed cattle for the establishment, or for the support of a population attracted by the resort of vessels.

But all these schemes for the formation of new settlements and towns are very visionary, and, however much I have been at times pleased by the discovery of fertile tracts of land and valuable streams, and, reclining by my bush fire, have pictured to myself the establishment of flourishing farms and villages, where now the Emu and Kangaroo feed in safety and peace, the difficult question constantly recurs of where the population is to come from.

It is evident that in England a strong prejudice exists against Swan River, the very name of which is become a bugbear sufficient to prevent emigration. Various are the causes that have occasioned this feeling, most of them utterly unconnected with the soil, climate or capabilities of the Colony itself. The measures of the Home Government have checked the settlement in its infancy; the failure of many of the early emigrants, from various causes, the Land Regulations of 1832, the exaggerated abuse lavished upon it by disappointed adventurers, and the false and malicious reports industriously circulated by speculators, by interested persons at the Cape of Good Hope, and by the agents of the colony in South Australia, have all contributed to throw a damper upon the prospects of the colony, and, if it had not been established from the first upon the firm basis of great natural advantages, it would ere now have become extinct.

Swan river, like the new settlement in South Australia, was formed under false pretences; it was represented by interested parties as an El Dorado where it was only necessary to go to become immediately rich. When the truth became known the parties were proportionately disappointed and vented their spleen in abuse of the Colony, instead of on those who had deceived them, and on their own folly in believing every absurd and exaggerated report, and rushing blindly into difficulties they ought to have foreseen, but did not, and knew not how to overcome. I am certain that in no country in the world can a settler become rich without much active exertion and perseverance; those who think otherwise had certainly better not go to Australia, but wherever they settle they will be disappointed and will fail, unless prepared to struggle and bear up against numerous difficulties and privations. The natural capabilities of the Colony, however great, are not likely to be soon developed for want of population and capital to turn them to profit, but still, I have no hesitation in saying that considering the difficulties with which she has had, and still has, to struggle, the Colony of Swan River is prospering and advancing much more rapidly than any English settlement in any part of the world.

It cannot be denied that Western Australia, as far as it is known, is generally of a rather sandy barren nature, partly owing to the constant dryness and clearness of the atmosphere and climate and to the periodical extensive bush fires which, by destroying every two or three years the dead leaves, plants, sticks, fallen timber etc prevent most effectually the accumulation of any decayed vegetable deposit, which would in time, otherwise, form a rich and fertile superficial soil.

By these fires, on the other hand, the country is kept comparatively free from under wood and other obstructions, having the character of an open forest through most parts of which one can ride freely; otherwise, in all

probability, it would soon become impenetrably thick, and, although the soil would be improved, yet the labour and cost of clearing would be so greatly increased as to take away all the profit, and it would change the very nature of the country, depriving it of the grazing and pastoral advantages it now possesses. This has already been proved in the case of Van Dieman's Land, where, in consequence of the transportation of the Natives to Great or Flinders Island,[1] and the consequent absence of extensive periodical fires, the bush has grown up thick to a most inconvenient degree, spoiled the sheep runs and open pastures and afforded harbourage to snakes and other reptiles which are becoming yearly more numerous. It is true that we might ourselves burn the bush, but we could never do it with the same judgement and good effect as the Natives, who keep the fire within due bounds, only burning those parts they wish when the scrub becomes too thick or when they have any other object to gain by it. Upon the burnt ground they can easily track the Opossums, Kangaroo Rats, Bandicoots, Iguanas, snakes etc which can elude their search in thick scrub—which moreover is very painful to walk through, being generally, especially on the sandy lands, of a harsh rigid nature with sharp pointed leaves which

[1] It was decided by Governor Arthur in 1828 that the only way of putting a stop to the war of extermination against the Tasmanian aborigines was to remove them in some way from the neighbourhood of the white settlers. After efforts to round them up by force had failed, a Hobart bricklayer, George Augustus Robinson, undertook to bring them in by peaceable means. In 1832 Flinders Island—a rocky and mountainous island in Bass Straits, 130 miles in circumference—was chosen for the reception of the blacks. Gradually Robinson won their confidence, and by the end of 1835 there were 203 natives settled on the island. Another small party, the last to be seen at large, was transferred there later. They pined away, however, and in 1847 the 44 survivors were removed to Oyster Cove, near Hobart: they were almost entirely neglected there, and in 1876 the last Tasmanian native died.

prick and cut one's legs severely, even through trousers, which it is advisable therefore to have covered with soft leather nearly as high as the knees.

But, although the general character of the country is sandy, yet there is so large a quantity of good land of various qualities, that there is no fear of any want of it being experienced for many years in those parts of the Colony already known, even if a considerable number of fresh settlers could be induced to emigrate there; and it is evident from the example of New South Wales that the best and cheapest way of exploring the interior is to let those who want more land go and look for it themselves.

In New South Wales, by gradual though rapid advances, the sheep stations have spread from Argyle, which a few years ago was the extremity to the S.W., many hundred miles down the Murrumbidgee, over the Limestone and Miccaligo plains, beyond the limits of the Colony, to the southward, to the extensive Manero plains; and when I was there in 1835, a few adventurous individuals had even driven their flocks across the Snowy River to the Obbio [Omeo?] plains which were known to exist only from the report of those few persons. Soon, there is no doubt, the stations will extend as far as Port Phillip, where many of the Van Dieman's Land sheepowners, attracted by the reported fertility of the soil and abundance of fine pasture, had sent their flocks which were rapidly spreading into the interior.

There is reason to believe that the South Eastern corner of New Holland, comprising that portion to the southward and eastward of the Murrumbidgee and the counties of Argyle and Murray, will ere long become the most flourishing portion of the continent. Generally well supplied with water, both from springs and from the numerous

streams having their sources in the Snowy Mountains, the soil is more fertile than to the northward, and the climate is infinitely superior, being less hot and moister; the country, open and grassy, will afford range and pasture for an almost unlimited number of sheep, upon which must, in great measure, depend the wealth of the Australian farmer on a large scale. It is very well for the small settler, the hard working man with small capital, to grow wheat and other corn, and it will pay him to cultivate them for market, but the capitalist seldom does or ought to grow more than is necessary for the consumption of his own establishment.

But I have wandered a long way from the Vasse, where I had just arrived at Mr Bussell's house on the 17th of Decr.

I mentioned that this was of two stories, but it is as yet in a very unfinished state, only one room on the ground floor being habitable which serves as both kitchen and parlour in bad weather, when the cooking cannot go on in the open air. The large chimney is made of rammed earth, but all the rest of the building is of what is colonially termed wattle and dab, the quickest and easiest method of building, but not very substantial. The plan is to fix small uprights between the strong corner and other upright posts of the house and between them to weave wattles, or in fact sticks, the best of which for the purpose are of spearwood: this forms a very strong kind of basket work, the interstices of which are filled up with a plaster of sand and clay which may be smoothed on the surface or covered over with lime plaster at leisure. The dab generally cracks as it dries, which makes the house very airy and pleasant in summer but in winter too much so, but the chinks can be filled up. Shingles are the universal

covering of houses by all advanced in civilisation in Australia. In some respects I prefer thatch, which keeps out the sun best in summer and the cold in winter, but it is dangerous in so dry a climate and invariably lets in the wet when the first rains commence.

A great deal of care is bestowed upon the garden at Yondorup; it is very well situated upon the banks of the river and is extensive, with a strong high wattled fence to keep out the cattle. It grows excellent vegetables, especially potatoes, and, what is a great point in a dry climate, produces a constant succession of crops throughout the year, the part next the river being sufficiently moist to yield abundantly in the very height of summer.

There is no land in cultivation for corn at the Vasse except a few acres in the township, the Bussells having hitherto confined their attention to their garden and dairy, getting their supplies of flour etc from Freemantle. The family consists of old Mrs Bussell, the widow of a clergyman, with five sons and three daughters all grown up. Some of them came out in 1830, when they took land and established themselves at Augusta; as they could do nothing there, they moved up the Blackwood river and formed a farm which did not succeed, and, their house being burnt, they looked out for a better country to take land in, when luckily for them they found out the Vasse district. They moved thither in the end of 1834, with their whole establishment and cattle, the latter of which have thriven and increased rapidly since, while at Augusta so scanty was the feed, it was found difficult to keep them alive.

Captain Molloy on the h.p. of the Rifle Brigade, who came out at the same time and was appointed Resident Magistrate at Augusta, has also taken up a considerable

tract of land adjoining the Bussells on the western side of the Vasse; his selection is particularly good, and he intends building a house and removing to it immediately, as at Augusta so little can prosper. Not that the land is very bad, but the timber upon it is so large and extremely thick that a settler's means will not allow him to clear to any extent, not more than enough to build his house and form a small potato field, and that only very partially cleared.

Besides the Bussells there are no inhabitants at the Vasse except three brothers of the name of Chapman, labouring men, one called Layman with his wife and one man to work for him, and Dawson, an old soldier of the Rifles, who is constable of the district and cultivates potatoes etc on his allotment. These all have a few cattle and at present the whole are herded together with the Bussells' and they subsist upon the produce of the sale of their potatoes and butter, and on the payment they get for work done for the Messrs Bussell.

A colonial cutter, belonging to a man named Curtis, trades constantly between Freemantle and King George's Sound, touching at the Vasse and Augusta, where he buys all the potatoes he can obtain at the rate of £12 a ton. He pays principally with his own stores, upon which he makes at least 100 per cent profit, and then sells the potatoes at the Sound for £28 to £30 a ton: a tolerably profitable speculation, but of course it is only on a small scale. The butter, for which there is a great and constant demand both at the Sound and the Swan is worth from 1/6 to 2/. a pound at the Vasse and about 3/. in the market: hitherto the supply is not nearly equal to the demand, and much is sold imported from England and the Cape, but that is not likely to be the case after another year.

Many of the Colonists look forward to making a profitable speculation by sending wheat to the Isle of France,[1] but it is impossible that they can compete with the growers at the Cape while labour is so dear, and indeed, although the grain is certainly much superior, they cannot hope to sell it to advantage while it costs them as much as 6/. a bushel to bring to market—and that is the very lowest calculation at present, most people saying 7/. Besides this, so few vessels touch at Swan River that freights are high, and the only way in which it could possibly answer would be on a small scale, by individuals sending a cargo of wheat and receiving in exchange articles required in the Colony, such as sugar, tea, coffee, rice, and any other things wanted at Swan River and cheaper in the Mauritius market.

After the harvest in December 1836 the settlers on the Swan were wild to send their wheat to the Mauritius, because, being poor and wanting money, they were obliged to bring their wheat into the market immediately, thereby causing a glut and reducing the price to 5/3 or 5/. per bushel; however there was, luckily, no vessel to take it away. One or two monied men bought up a large quantity at the low price, but many settlers preferred feeding pigs and poultry on the wheat to selling it so low. Gradually it rose in price, the small settlers sold their remaining stock, and at seed time had to pay a most exhorbitant price to the few monopolising holders for what they absolutely required to put into the ground. When I left the colony in Novr 1837, wheat was very difficult to procure even at 22/6 per bushel, and bread was 1/2 for the two pound loaf, the grain etc remaining being in the hands of Mr Leake and Mr W. Brockman who found it to their interest, having mills, to sell it as flour rather than as wheat. Neither barley nor oats could possibly be procured, hay

[1] The Isle of France is, of course, Mauritius.

of the last year was very scarce and bad at £10 per ton, and even the new, which was just coming in, would be worth £4. 10. 0 on the spot or £6 in Perth; so the keeping of horses was attended with no trifling expense at Head Quarters.

The principal evil of all this and the cause of the successive fluctuations in the price of grain, is, evidently, the want of capital on the part of settlers, who are compelled to thresh out their corn as soon as possible and bring it to market to pay debts previously contracted, such as for their seed wheat and necessary household stores, or to meet bills becoming due after harvest. Thus, a man incurs a debt in June for, *par exemple*, 100 bushels of wheat for which he pays 10/0 a bushel at a moderate computation; to repay this after harvest, the price of wheat having then fallen to 5/0, he has to sell double the quantity, supposing he has no interest to pay in the mean time, and he is moreover compelled to bring much more to market at the same price to provide necessaries for his family.

From the scarcity of mills in the Colony grinding is dear, 2/. per bushel on the Swan and 2/6 at York, so that, taking into consideration the loss of a man and team taking wheat to a mill and another trip to bring it back, often many miles, I am inclined to think it better for a settler to sell his wheat and buy flour instead. He should do it at once and lay in a stock for a year while it is cheap, but again the want of capital interferes: the money received for the wheat is immediately spent in the payment of pressing debts and flour is purchased on credit little by little as it is wanted, and every week at a higher price. Thus the settler with small means having once got into debt finds it next to impossible to extricate himself. His land is generally mortgaged to its full value, and he drags on

a miserable existence dependent on the mercy of his creditors. They, however, find it much more to their interest to receive a high rate of interest for their money than, by foreclosing their mortgage, to beggar the individual, by doing which to any extent they would lessen the demand for their own stores, injure the credit of the Colony and probably ruin it entirely as well as themselves.

Mr Leake, at the present time, has it in his power to ruin two thirds of the settlers at Swan River by foreclosing his mortgages, and getting a judgement in the courts against them and having their property sold by the Sheriff. But he well knows that by so doing he would also ruin himself, as there would be no buyers for so much land, and he would get nothing for his debts but extensive tracts of land without value in the market, and would materially lessen the consumption of his stores, upon which he makes an immense profit. Instead he pockets the annual interest, generally twenty per cent, to pay which his unfortunate debtor sells his crops, goes on tick to the store and yearly gets more and more involved.

Thus, with all the natural advantages of the Colony, many of the early settlers have failed or are gradually doing so. But this, I believe, has always been the case and it may almost be laid down as a certain rule that the greater part of the first settlers are ruined in the establishment of a Colony. It stands to reason that it must be so, when we examine the characters and qualifications of the persons who go out.

Very few practical farmers go, and even those are so wedded to the old established English or Scottish rules of farming that they will not make any change to suit the climate or soil they settle on. Then there are halfpay officers of the army or navy, or worse still those who have

sold out; with wives and daughters who can play the pianoforte or harp, net purses and embroider, and are acquainted with many other elegant accomplishments, but who consider it vulgar to make or mend clothes and are totally ignorant of the management of a dairy, cannot make butter or cheese, rear calves by hand, cook, or do any of the hard work about the house. I certainly recommend such fine ladies to avoid Swan River; they can do no good there and only swell the number of the disaffected. Then there are Cockneys, Grocers, Tailors, Chandlers, Waddlers from the Stock Exchange, West Indians with extravagant ideas and scanty means, and many men with no means at all. These and many others of various professions and trades went to settle at Swan River, a line of life they were totally unfitted for. They could have done only one thing more foolish and that is to have hung themselves—and perhaps to some of them that would have been a preferable fate. Finding themselves disappointed and that they could not make money as fast as they expected, they raised an outcry against the Colony which was by no means to blame for their failure.

Of the various liberal professions it has been often observed that Sailors make the best settlers. Why I know not, as the habit of ploughing the deep can in no way fit them for ploughing the land; perhaps it is that they are most used to rough it and to struggle with difficulties during their naval career. Soldiers, from living in Barracks, without care and with their mess to sit down to daily, are less in the habit of shifting for themselves and do not generally succeed as settlers where constant hard work is necessary. The Middle class however, or that of the small farmers and yeomen in England, is that which produces the best settlers. Not above working themselves,

they understand what they set about; their own labour saves them the hire of a man; and, content with more frugal fare and fewer luxuries and comforts, their household expenses are far less than those of a Gentleman Settler. With active regular habits they may soon obtain ease and even opulence in the Colony, if they avoid the too general vice of drinking, which is the bane of the lower orders of Europeans in Australia. In New South Wales, amongst the convict population, it is not to be wondered at, but it is lamentable at Swan River to see not only the labouring classes but many men, gentlemen by birth and education, degrade themselves below the level of brutes whenever they have an opportunity.

There are instances in the Colony of men who had gone out under the most favourable auspices, with ample means, who ought to have done extremely well, having through their habitual intemperance wasted and squandered their property until they are now becoming beggars, scorned and avoided by everyone, since nobody can pity those who have reduced themselves to distress by their own vice and intemperance. On the other hand, there are cases of failure where the individuals are sincerely pitied and meet with much kindness and sympathy, mismanagement and ignorance of farming having reduced some to indigence who still retain their moral and honourable character uninjured in adversity.

I do not think that the account I can conscientiously give of a settler's life is likely to induce anyone to emigrate to Swan River, and I should be sorry by garbled statements to mislead anyone to his future loss and disappointment. It necessarily must be for many years a life of continual toil and hardship, and it remains doubtful whether the end repays one for the laborious means by which it is

attained. On the other hand, there is thorough independence, a large estate, extensive flocks and herds, a good house and garden, with homestead and numerous teams. But, on the other hand, this is all in the wilderness, far from one's friends and relations; if one is married one's wife is deprived of the society of her equals and of the comforts and luxuries of a more civilised life; worse than all, one's children are brought up as demi-savages, and, without the care and attention, which one has no time to bestow, become scarcely more civilised than the young blacks with whom they associate. This evil is, however, not nearly so great at Swan River as in New South Wales, where the association with the convict servants, the refuse of mankind, soon contaminates and corrupts the minds of children and often horrible is the result: here, want of education and coarseness of manners are all that need be feared. Still that is more than sufficient to make parents pause before they expose their children to such evils.

I should not hesitate to settle in some part of Australia rather than proceed with my regiment to India with the prospect of remaining there for many years. Without any prospect of getting rich I am certain I could maintain myself in comfort and independence in either of the Colonies. In some respects I should prefer Swan River, although, from it's present state of infancy and the exhorbitant price of the necessaries of life, one must expect to meet with far greater difficulties and hardships than in the more advanced and penal Colonies. As for the new one in South Australia, I put that quite out of the question, as I can not imagine anyone in his sober senses going there to buy land at the exhorbitant price, while he can get it cheaper in New South Wales where labour is comparatively cheap and plentiful,

and cheaper still in Swan River where labour is high but not more so than where they pay four times the price for the land.[1]

It is a palpable absurdity, to begin with, for persons to buy land at £1 an acre, situated in South Australia, before they leave England, on the report of persons who were never there. Would anyone in his senses purchase an estate in Great Britain without further information than the *ipse dixit* of the agent for the sale? Would he not examine it himself or depute a trustworthy friend to do so? Instead of which, in this case, he marks off on a map, or rather blank sheet, the allotment he purchases, ignorant of it's locality and soil; it may be a salt lagoon for anything he knows, and he cannot move to the right or left, having neighbours adjoining.

Again, the projectors state that this high price is set upon the land to prevent individuals possessing too extensive tracts and to promote concentration (a favourite term with them at home), and for mutual protection and assistance. They state in their prospectus that it is owing to the departure from the principle of concentration that

[1] The remarks which follow show that Bunbury, like many others in Australia, misunderstood the aims of South Australian land policy. The object of the high price was precisely to overcome the labour difficulty by discouraging purchase by men with insufficient capital to utilize the land and by using the proceeds of sales to introduce fresh supplies of labour. It is true that surveys were not pushed forward sufficiently; true also that the importance of concentration was over-emphasized by the founders of the colony, not excluding their master Gibbon Wakefield; and true, finally, that Wakefield's theories never gave to the problem of pastoral occupation the attention it deserved. Nevertheless, despite the prophets of disaster, despite even the severe economic and financial crisis of 1840–42, South Australia did on the whole get its colonists settled on the land within a reasonable time, and without abandoning the main principles of its land system, emerged from depression to prosperity again.

the Swan River colony has failed; assuming, without a shadow of proof, two things; first, that the Colony has failed, secondly, that it is owing to the settlers having too large grants and being widely separated. The first assertion I deny *in toto*, and consequently the second dependent upon it, though I am ready to admit that much distress has been caused by individuals taking up large grants of land, foolishly supposing it to be property, and finding too late that, owing to everyone having plenty of land, it was not saleable and consequently valueless. But anyone at all acquainted with Australia knows that it is, and always must be, a pastoral country, and that, owing to the great drought in summer, it requires a large extent of country to feed a flock of sheep, at the most moderate calculation three acres per sheep, not of average but of good land. Who can buy land enough at this rate to feed many thousand sheep and how can they keep sheep when crowded together on small allotments? All this time they are holding out wool as so vastly profitable, and as the future staple commodity for exportation from their Colony. They seem to forget that the profit from the wool naturally diminishes in proportion to the expense of producing it, which includes the price of the sheep, cost of keep, and of course the price of the land on which they are fed. But mark the practice in Adelaide as compared with the theory in London: one of the first acts of the local Government was to grant to any applicants the lease of any Crown lands they required the use of, at a mere nominal rent and to any extent, for the purpose of feeding sheep; what then becomes of their principle of concentration? Do not their own acts at first starting declare their principles to be erroneous and inapplicable to the country they are settling? Yet they boldly declare that all former systems were wrong and put

forward a Colony going forward steadily, though slowly, as a proof of the consequent failure.

But one material error was committed in founding Swan River, and these wise and notable projectors have fallen into the very same, without the excuse of ignorance or inexperience, since the evil was extensive and generally felt. It was that emigrants were carried out in numbers to the shores of the new Colony before any preparation had been made for their reception.[1] There was no land surveyed, and no man could found his farm until he knew where it was, and he could not choose it till the Surveyor became acquainted with the rivers and the other features of the country. Thus the means of the settlers were squandered on the beach at Freemantle where they lived in riotous profusion, regardless of the future, and actually killing for food the live stock they had brought out for breeding, on account of the difficulty of finding pasture in that neighbourhood. Many had exhausted their stores before they had an opportunity of establishing themselves, and, when they got their land assigned, had no longer the means of forming a farm. In the case of Swan River there was some excuse in inexperience and because persons were only entitled to land according to the amount of property they brought out, which must be decided by the Land Board on the spot, but at Adelaide it is different; the error in the other Colony was before their eyes, and here people were fools enough to buy land in London which they knew nothing about. They had at least a right to expect that it

[1] The most recent historian of South Australia, Mr. Grenfell Price, confirms Bunbury's opinion, saying that one of the greatest mistakes of the South Australian Commissioners was that 'they allowed the emigrant vessels to press far too closely on the heels of the surveying party'. The land, however, although sold in England, was not selected there, as Bunbury seems to think.

should be surveyed so that they might know where to find it and settle on it immediately. However, it has not been so, and, with a surveying department infinitely superior in numbers to that of Swan River, the settlers are wasting their time and means on the coast vehemently but vainly crying out against the injustice done them—though they do not impute any blame to Col. Light, with whom they seem to be well pleased.[1]

The fact is surveyors should be sent out to a new Colony with ample means to explore the country, run their base lines and draw their plans before any emigrants arrive. The shortest period required to accomplish all this is at least a year; if too much hurried in their operations they make mistakes in their measurements and surveys which lead to endless trouble afterwards in the office from disputed claims, and give rise to constant litigation, feeding the vagabonds who go out to the Colonies calling themselves lawyers to fatten on the quarrels and misfortunes of their fellow emigrants.

However, I must return to the Vasse, from whence I have wandered over the whole of New Holland, the subject of settlement or colonisation being one capable of long and constant argument, both as to the Government system and the practice, and one which is constantly leading me from my subject, when I think of the absurdities both spoken and written in England by persons who know nothing of the subject practically, but bother their own and every one else's heads with wild theories that are incapable of being reduced to practice.

About a mile lower down the river than Yundorup is

[1] Colonel William Light was the first Surveyor-General of South Australia and the founder of Adelaide. The favourable opinion of the colonists is reinforced by the verdict of the historians.

a small Government reserve for the town of Bussellton, of which a small portion is on the right bank and the remainder between the river and the sea; from the anchorage being good and less open than at the Inlets, or Wonnerup, it is likely to become the principal resort of vessels hereafter, and, if a small wooden jetty were run out, boats might discharge cargo at any time except in a heavy northwester. The road from the beach to the B tree on the river is heavy sand and I do not know of any stone near to improve it: the easiest plan hereafter would be to bring it from the opposite side of the Bay. At Wonnerup there is an excellent landing place for boats in the western Inlet whenever the bar can be crossed by laden boats, but the water is too shoal, with heavy rollers in bad weather, to attempt it when it blows fresh; in that case the Tub is the best place to run for.

There are two ways of going from Yundorup to Wonnerup. One by the shore of the estuary, crossing the Sabina and Abba at the mouths, is the most practicable for carts at present, although it is rough, from the quantity of flat limestone rocks appearing on the surface along the margin of the bed of the estuary. The other goes through the bush, crossing the two streams some way up above the salt water and near the clay plains, but there are many obstacles to the passage of carts. I was however authorised by the Governor to cut a road all the way through and bridge the streams, and should have done so long ago, had not the schooner in which I was failed in reaching the Vasse, whither I was returning, in June 1837. I could have found a good dry line of country all the way through the Tooats to the Sabina and thence through the sandy belt with Mahogany, Red Gums and Stinkwood: the only difficulty would have been in constructing the bridges with my weak party.

Four soldiers are stationed close to Mr Bussell's house, and my party at Wonnerup consisted of six including my servant. Not having found a desirable site for Barracks and the whole township appearing objectionable as a station, I had merely halted my men for the winter on the edge of the Tooat land on a slightly rising ground overlooking the entrance to the Island and over that to the sea. The site was excellent and the ground sufficiently clear to prevent the hidden approach of the Natives too near to the camp, and I should not have hesitated to build permanent Barracks on it had I not found that it lay in the very centre of Mr Layman's land instead of being, as was supposed, in the township: so, having made my men as comfortable as circumstances would permit and surveyed the township, I went to Head Quarters for further instructions. I failed in one attempt to return, and now circumstances have prevented my ever, in all probability, seeing the station again. I have left the Colony,[1] leaving behind at the Vasse Inlet a horse four dogs and a large quantity of stores of all kinds which I had laid in to supply me through the next six months.

Our bush method of building is very simple and expeditious, if one can get either rushes or grass tree tops for thatch; we form what are colonially termed 'V' huts, but they are rather V reversed or 'A' huts. First we cut two strong poles with a fork at one extremity for the ends —the length depending on the height we require—which are placed from 12 to 16 feet apart, a long ridge pole resting in the forks; other poles are placed sloping against the ridge pole with one end nailed or tied to it with rope yarn and the other end buried in the ground; rough wattles as battens are then tied or nailed lengthwise across

[1] See below, p. 192.

these poles or rafters and the whole thatched over; and the back is then fitted up with rushes, and part of the front, leaving a gap to serve as door and window and to admit the warmth of the fire blazing outside. Round the fire congregate the Kangaroo dogs and such Natives as may be with one; it also serves for cooking and boiling the kettle. The battens inside are extremely useful to stick one's tools, tobacco pipes, dressing things etc in between; a hammock slung across forms one's bed and the rest of one's furniture is but scanty:—one or two camp stools, a portable table (or in lieu thereof the tailboard of a cart or any rough plank answers the purpose) supported on four stakes driven into the ground, a small canteen, and a trunk of clothes, complete one's equipment for the bush, besides the necessary supply of stores. In such an habitation did I live for several months at Pinjarrup. I afterwards built a similar one on the Vasse where I resided three months, but as the weather became very cold and wet, I was about to build a chimney to it when I left.

The soldiers had a large hut of similar construction to mine, to which they added a large chimney of turves, I doubt if it would stand through the winter; however it rendered their hut warm and comfortable. My servant had also a little hut built in rear of mine for a kitchen to which we added a stone chimney which answered very well. Thus I was gradually improving on the original plan. It answered very well in summer, but in winter cooking out of doors was impracticable and we found the huts wet and damp without chimnies.

Two days were amply sufficient for the erection of a V hut, even where, as at Wonnerup, we had difficulty in finding straight poles to suit as rafters.

Poor 'Hero' lies interred beneath a Tooat tree near my

hut, having been killed by a Kangaroo in April 1837. He was brought out from England in 1836 in the *Joshua Carroll* when he was quite young, having just attained his full growth, and was a very powerful dog, a cross between a Blood Hound and a Greyhound. No one thought him swift enough to catch a Kangaroo, but I gave £8 for him and he became my most faithful and attached companion. When I left Pinjarrup for the Vasse I had him tied up, as dogs are in the way and delay one much when travelling, but when released later in the day from his chain, he started after me and followed my tracks with the most wonderful precision, overtaking me near the Harvey. He had more strength and bottom than any Kangaroo dog I ever saw and with it great speed and such unconquerable courage that he would face anything and met his death in consequence. Single handed, he brought to bay a Youart weighing above 150 lbs, and seized it by the throat. The big brute gave him such a hug across the loins as to break his spine and rupture his entrails; still the gallant fellow held on, and with my assistance when I could get to the spot, in the middle of a dense spearwood thicket, he killed the Kangaroo, and expired himself shortly afterwards.

With his speed, courage and excellent nose no Kangaroo could have escaped him if he had lived to gain experience; but he had other excellent qualities, being devoted to me and biting most willingly anybody I set him at. He was the terror of the Natives, none of whom could approach the camp day or night without his giving notice; and in all respects he was a most excellent watch dog, hating strangers and black fellows, in short, the terror of every one approaching 'Bunbury Mia' as my hut was generally called.

I never saw so jealous and savage a dog over a Kangaroo.

He would hunt with none but my little bitch 'Fly', and when they had killed, neither man nor dog would he allow to approach excepting myself. He would lie with his paws over the dead game and if anyone came up he would walk round and round and immediately seize the intruder if he came too near. He took naturally to showing what he had killed, or he learnt it from the bitch, but if another dog was present he would lie and watch the game for hours, but would neither break in himself or allow another to do so.

Poor Hero deserves to have his good qualities recorded, especially as Kangaroo dogs generally have very little affection and will follow or hunt with anyone. I lost several at Swan River but none I cared for like him; he was the favourite of the whole detachment (principally I suspect because he kept them in fresh meat) and his death caused universal sorrow in the camp. While he lived, I always brought in two Kangaroos every day I hunted, which was generally three times a week, so I had abundance of fresh meat for the whole detachment, which was very acceptable as we got nothing but salt meat from the Government.

I mentioned meeting the Governor at Yundorup on the 18th of Decr. In consequence of an arrangement with him I started on my return homewards on the evening of the 19th, agreeing to meet him at Port Leschinault. I only got that night as far as the Sabina River, where I had a very comfortable halting place and good feed for the horses; it is a great point for expeditious travelling to get away from a house and sleep out the night before, as one can get away much more expeditiously from a camp fire than from anyone's house, where waiting for breakfast, packing the horses etc always consumes the most valuable part of the morning when it is cool. Some people travel before

breakfast, and so, often, have I, especially when I have had nothing to eat, but it is a bad plan, knocks one up and is injurious to the health. Wake an hour before daylight, shift your horse's tether, or let him run if he is quiet, smoke your pipe while the water is boiling, see that your saddle bags and other gear are all right, that the stuffing of the saddle is free from knots, lumps, bits of stick or anything that can hurt your horse's back; then, by the time you have eaten your piece of damper or biscuit, drunk your tea, and filled your pipe, daylight will have appeared, when you can saddle and be off, taking care that your tether ropes are properly coiled and the saddle well put on. You will thus find yourself well on your way before the sun rises and can get the greater part of the day's work over early in the forenoon, and can give the horses a long rest and feed at midday.

A blanket under the saddle is good in some respects in slow bush travelling; it keeps the back from being galled and is useful to keep the back and loins covered at night if very wet or cold; but it heats the horse's back so much that you cannot venture to unsaddle for some time after you get in, otherwise blisters will form and the skin come off. The best way is, I think, to do without it if the saddle is soft and fits properly, but that no colonial saddle ever does; in that case you may unsaddle at once and let your horse roll, which he is sure to do if the ground is dry. If you are riding a journey fast you should never have a rug underneath as it heats the back and is apt to rumple up and give a sore back sooner than the saddle alone. There is nothing that requires so much anxious care and attention as the management of horses in a hot dry climate where you necessarily travel very slow and the saddles are on their backs for so many hours during the day. The best plan

I can recommend is to get a good saddle, but mind that those of Peat do not answer in the form in which they are turned out, being too flat: they are made for large horses in good condition, when their backs are broad and flat, but a colonial horse on a journey is generally very poor and the saddle rests on his back, injuring him perhaps for life. Get a saddle well stuffed on each side and see it is not too tight in the wither: often the girth buckles will raise lumps on the flank if the flap is too thin, and when you halt in the day turn the lining of the saddle to the sun to dry, and then beat it well with a switch to soften it where it cakes with the sweat.

Your fur rug, blanket or other covering for the night should be rolled in front of your saddle, a bucket for the muzzle of your gun should be attached to the spring bar of your stirrup leather, of such a length that the trigger guard rests against your thigh and the butt comes behind your arm, a short strap or catch secures this to your waist belt. Then, for your grub and clothes, you require either saddle bags or a valise. The former hold most and are perhaps preferable. If you carry the latter you should have a saddle made on purpose with the stuffed part of the saddle projecting behind, instead of a detached pad, which is sure to nip a horse's back; two straps and a crupper are necessary to keep the valise firm in it's place.

Always ride a horse in the bush on a snaffle if possible, as it is easier for him and gives him freedom to pick a bit whenever you come to a halt. Your tether rope should have two swivels, one of them attached to a leather collar round the neck, which is a much better plan than a head stall which is apt to break or come off.

Thus the traveller's horse is fully equipped: for himself I earnestly recommend woollen clothing in all seasons, as

Fustian or Moleskins are very hot in dry weather and bitterly cold in wet. Light woollen things, such as Scotch plaid or something similar, are very light and pleasant to wear and remain warm when wet; they do not last long, but have the lower part of the legs and the seat of the trowsers covered with leather. Take a needle and thread and a little material for patching with you, and you will find yourself much more comfortable than if wearing any kind of cotton things, and not be liable to catch cold even if constantly exposed to wet for days together. Let those who will laugh at precautions or abuse smoking, but I am sure I am indebted to tobacco and woollen clothing for my total freedom from colds or rheumatism when in the bush in wet weather.

On the 15th Octr 1836 I left Perth with the Governor and crossed over the Murray at Pinjarrup on foot; from the time I left the Canning that afternoon until I reached the Williams River on the 23rd I had never once an opportunity of drying myself; frequent soaking rain by day and night and, worse still, wading through rivers and swamps in a country extensively flooded and at a cold season of the year, kept me constantly wet; but I did not suffer in the least from cold. Numerous painful boils, however, broke out all over my legs which laid me up for three days at the Williams, at the end of which time I walked up to York in two days and part of the third morning, getting in to breakfast—sixty four miles of hilly country with my boots worn out, showing my toes in front and full of sand and pebbles. I do not know if these boils are the effect of exposure to wet or to overexertion, but I suffered in a similar manner at Port Phillip after a very severe and wet march into the interior.

The long walk from Perth to the Williams I must give

an account of some other time, but I must now first endeavour to get home from the Vasse, having been left on the Sabina on the evening of the 19th December.

On the following morning we retraced our steps to the Capel where we made a short halt to regale the horses with the luxuriant grass and sow thistles abounding on the banks. I then started and steered about N.N.E., a little northerly, to keep clear of the thick swampy country I had before been annoyed with. I passed rapidly through a country principally sandy, but I could see on the right at times that a considerable belt of clay plains extends far to the northward of the Capel. I then crossed a good deal of good Tooat country, very undulating with low limestone hills and large timber of various kinds, but the bushes not so thick as further to the left. There is evidently a great deal of available land of a generally fertile character on this side of the Capel, but it is in irregular patches mixed with much that is of an inferior quality, and there is also plenty of fine timber within easy distance of the sea.

We came in sight of the coast swamp near a lagoon that we had visited on our outward route, after about two and a half hours walk from the Capel, which showed how much we had been delayed before by the swamps and thickness of the bush. Monang now again got upon our old tracks. We had left them on the Capel, whence I had steered by compass, but it was better now to trust to the sagacity of a Native, especially as we had before been conducted over this route by those well acquainted with the neighbourhood.

The distance now to the Preston was seven and a half miles and we arrived well tired late in the day, falling in on the way with some of our former friends sucking Munghitis who favoured us with their company to camp and assisted in collecting fire wood. As grass was abundant and of

excellent quality on the Preston I did not so much mind making a forced march today as the horses were well supplied with water and food; otherwise, if there is any uncertainty of procuring these, it is a bad plan to press them much and more moderate travelling answers best in the end.

A considerable number of Natives joined me at the camp by the ford and I sent one off with a note (papel wanghi), to the beach to see if the schooner had arrived as I thought I heard a shot. After a time he returned with the note saying that the 'Cuibra' with 'bono coojal' was in the bay and that some white men, or 'Guinga' (ghosts) as they call us, were walking on the beach but he was afraid to go near them. The news of such a great event as the arrival of a vessel spread rapidly amongst the tribes on the Estuary the next morning and a very great number of men collected, but they kept the women and children out of sight.

I did not hurry myself on the morning of the 21st, well knowing that they would breakfast on board before they joined me; but after sunrise I made the Natives carry my traps over the river, and then, crossing the horses, proceeded leisurely through the low rich country on the right bank of the Preston and, coming out on the bay on the Estuary between that and the Collie, turned to the left and halted at the low point of land at the mouth of the former river, where there is no bar or ford but deep water right across. There is a good deal of grass even to the point and a little way back the feed is capital, so, tethering my horses, I lit a fire and sat down to smoke away the time till the Governor joined me. I soon saw him walking on the sandy point called the north shore, near where the former military station was.

It was very amusing to see the delight and surprise of the Natives at finding themselves so suddenly visited by two parties of white people after having seen none for so long. Every thick stunted white oak, of which many skirted the edge of the Estuary, their roots washed by the salt water, was filled with groups of naked blackfellows, many of whom were adorned with abundance of wilghi for the occasion, and whose shouts and shrieks of wonder and delight were echoed back by similar groups stationed on every projecting point within sight. Soon the two boats arrived with the whole party from the schooner and I made Monang announce to the other Natives which was the 'Gubbernor', whose reputation was well known as the distributor of flour and blankets to the Natives about Perth.

While one boat went to fish with the seine, I accompanied the Governor up the Preston through the rich flats to some distance above my ford, and, crossing over, returned by the south bank, where likewise there is, especially low down, a great deal of excellent land.

About three quarters of a mile from the mouth of the River I remarked a most curious native ford, and one that I should by no means like to attempt to cross. The river is broad and deep but several large trees had fallen into it low under water: by walking along the trunk and boughs of these, in some places at least up to one's waist, it is possible to get from one to another and in that manner to cross over. I remarked the tracks to the water's edge but it was some time before I could ascertain how they got over; I have since known the Natives to cross here repeatedly.

Although deep at the mouth the Preston is neither so broad, so deep or navigable so far up as the Collie, but on

the other hand the stream of fresh water is much greater. In the Collie about five miles from the mouth I found the water from 25 to 30 feet deep and nowhere in the Preston above half that depth.

Both of them abound with fish of many different kinds, some of which, such as the Mullet, can never be taken with hook and line, while many others take any bait, such as fish or the entrails of birds, most ravenously. The entrails of a swan or duck are particularly good to catch Black Snapper or Silver Snapper; the Taylors prefer fish, of which a piece of Mullet, if possible, or else of Silver Snapper is best.

During my walk I shot several Ducks and Cockatoos of the black kind with the white bar on the tail, which is usually by far the most difficult kind to approach and is rarely shot. Here they seemed so little to apprehend any danger that they flew close overhead, and the Ducks also, of the large black kind, gazed at us with astonishment but very little fear.

On our return we found that in the boat they had taken an immense quantity of fish of different kinds with the seine. The greater part was given to the Natives, to their great delight, and in a few minutes fires were lighted and fish broiling in all directions. I think I mentioned before the expeditious way they have of scaling fish by throwing them on the fire for two minutes when they can with ease be scraped clean.

Amongst others a good many fish which we call Guard fish in New South Wales were taken: this is the most delicate and best flavoured of any fish I know found in the Continent. It is about the size of a large Smelt, long and slender and, when living, clear and almost translucent; on the under jaw projects a long point something like a narrow

spoon with smooth edges, which probably serves for scooping it's food out of the sand. It's mouth is small and the upper jaw does not project, but the point or snout, if so it can be called, is about two inches long and very narrow. Another fish we took, called here the King Fish, is also long and slender, but very much larger, with a long pointed head and jaws armed with strong pointed teeth above and below. The Natives will not eat either this or the Guard fish, from a superstition they have that all green boned fish are poisonous: the bones of both these, especially the larger one, are of that colour. The Guard Fish appears to frequent all the parts of New Holland yet known. It abounds in Port Jackson and the Parramatta River where it is taken in great numbers and sold as a delicacy. In Van Diemans Land it is also found, as once when I was out with my dinghy at night one jumped into my boat, I believe much to our mutual astonishment. It appears to frequent shallow water and cannot be taken with a hook and line. The great Rock Cod which frequents the Swan River coast, especially in the summer time, is likely to prove valuable as an article to dry or salt for exportation. It is a large fish much resembling the Newfoundland Cod, has a large head and varies from 25 to 40 pounds weight. These fish may be constantly seen making their way up the Inlets from the sea towards the estuaries of the Murray, Port Leschinault etc, and it is there, just within the bar, that they are taken with a hook baited with some small fish; it requires very strong tackle to hold them and they afford very good sport. The Natives also spear them in great numbers as they cross the shoal bars. To them they afford a fine feast, as indeed they do to the detachment at the Murray, who not only use all they can fresh but also salt a good deal for winter use. These and the large Bay

Snappers which frequent certain banks along the coast are the principal kinds likely to be useful as an article of trade. At the Mauritius they will always find a ready sale if properly cured, but hitherto very little pains has been taken, and very little has turned out good of that salted on Rottnest Island, off which Snappers, as well as very large Jew Fish, are taken in great abundance. The Bay Snappers are of a reddish colour with a thick short head and of a very thick deep shape; they vary much in weight from 2 or 3 to 20 lbs. They frequent in shoals certain banks or spits of sand some distance from the shore and appear never to enter the rivers. When they bite at all great numbers may be taken as they appear never to forage alone: their teeth are strong and placed very far forward in the jaws, so that a very strong snood must be used. I have also found them abundant on the east coast of New Holland and further north about Red Head and Newcastle. I do not know if they are found in Van Dieman's Land.

After dinner we again divided, the Governor taking another walk through the low country near the bank of the Inlet towards the South Head while the other party went fishing, not very successfully, as the tide ran too strongly down the Inlet for the seine to be used with advantage.

It is about two miles from the mouth of the Preston to the outer bar and the course of the Inlet is very winding. First it runs about S.S.W., as far as a low flat island with a quantity of dead trees and brushwood upon it, on either side of which is a good channel for boats and the flat shoal places are easily distinguished and avoided; there is then a long wide reach extending to the westward nearly to the foot of the South Head; and the stream then turns suddenly to the northward and north east to the bar, to cross

which no fixed directions can be given as it is constantly changing both in depth and situation. In December there was one narrow but deep channel cut close to the north beach and in the following April another channel had opened some way to the westward through the sand, which was wide but shallow and much more exposed to the surf and rollers.

The anchorage is good for vessels drawing not more than twelve feet of water within half a mile of the bar, and the water gradually deepens further out. A spit of rock and sand extends out from the South Head above a mile to the northward upon which the sea breaks heavily. It protects the anchorage from westerly winds as far as N.W. by W., but it is quite open to gales from the N.N.W. and is by no means a safe place for vessels in winter, when a heavy swell from the Indian Ocean rolls in upon the beach with nothing whatever to check or break its force.

The South Head is rather an abrupt and elevated termination of the coast line of sand hills, and, whilst bare and merely covered with low scrub to seaward, it is richly clothed with wood on the north and east side, and a fertile strip of land, thick with tea tree and luxuriant vegetation, extends along the foot of the hills. Very near the sea amongst the limestone rocks on the west side of the head there is a spring of excellent water, and not far from it appears a singular mass of columnar basaltic rock; this is the only place in the Colony where we have as yet met with any sign of volcanic action, and here it is very clearly marked. The rocks extend into the sea but do not appear to be of any height, here or anywhere else along the coast, except that they form the reef of rocks that I mentioned as stretching out from the South Head.

Along the beach about Port Leschinault, and again on the Vasse Inlet, one finds a quantity of black sand, which, on examination, appears to be a ponderous metallic sand, bright, sparkling and specular, and apparently iron. I have never found it elsewhere, but at these two inlets it occurs in abundance about high water mark.

About thirty miles out at sea a little to the southward of west from Gomborrup, there is a very dangerous reef, apparently entirely detached from the land here or about Cape Naturaliste; I believe no part of it is above water or even awash, but it is clearly defined by the heavy breakers, which have hitherto prevented anyone from ascertaining the real extent or nature of it, whether volcanic, of coral, or only a continuation or reappearance of the range of hills extending from Cape Leeuwin to Cape Naturaliste. The Governor saw it from the *Sulphur* man of war and considers it to be of considerable extent from north to south with very heavy breakers. In all probability this reef serves as a breakwater to prevent the whole force of the ocean rolling into Geographe Bay and accounts for the comparative stillness there and the absence of sand hills.

A township has been formed, or at least laid down on the maps, comprising the southern promontory and part of the north beach at the entrance of Port Leschinault Inlet, which the Governor named 'Bunbury' in compliment to me: it was there that he for a long time intended to establish me with a military post. I have often regretted that he did not, as it would have been a delightful station and an excellent site could have been chosen, where there was every facility for building barracks or any other requisite public buildings. There I intended to purchase some land, build a house, and make a nice place for myself,

and I could afterwards purchase land to settle on one of the rivers where the advantages are in my opinion much greater than on the York side of the Darling Range. Perhaps the country is not quite so well adapted for sheep, still a considerable number might be kept on the grassy whinstone hills, or about the head of the navigation of the Collie.

As the Colony prospers I am certain that Port Leschinault must become a place of importance for the following reasons: first, there is a very good summer anchorage and good shelter near, under Castle Point, against any winds; secondly, there is boat navigation for several miles up two considerable rivers, upon which there is abundance of good land for arable or grazing purposes. Another large river called the Brunswick falls into the Collie about four miles from it's mouth; this is also navigable by boats for some distance, and higher up it, near and in the hills, the Governor has found extensive tracts of fine sheep land. Moreover, Port Leschinault is the natural outlet for the extensive grass districts of the 'William(s)', the 'Beaufort', the 'Cojonup' districts etc, through which passes the newly marked out road to King George's Sound. In a late journey, in which we traversed much of the country to the west of the Cojonup, and even approached Port Leschinault, the Governor found a great deal of fine country which only requires to be better known, and roads to be marked, to become immediately available for settlers; and the outlet for all this country is Gomborrup, whence large decked boats might carry all the wood, grain, cattle, and other productions, at a very trifling expense, to Freemantle, running through the reefs to the southward of Garden Island into Cockburn Sound. These boats might ply with perfect safety from October to the beginning of June, and

the passage would be very short if advantage were taken of the alternate breezes, from the eastward by night and the southwest by day.

Another township called MacLeod, after the officer formerly stationed on the north beach, is laid down at the head of the navigation of the Preston,[1] and a third larger one at the head of that of the Collie river which is to be called Wellington.[2] Thus ample provision is already made for towns in a country where there is as yet not a single white settler, and where most of the land assigned is held by absentees, who appear no longer to have any connection with the Colony beyond holding in an unimproved state large tracts of land, to the injury of those who intend to be *bona-fide* settlers and of the Colony in general. It is high time that the Government should interfere in these cases and resume grants made to the Messrs Henty, Latour, and others who have abandoned the Colony.[3]

Another evil which requires to be immediately put a stop to is the power of the Governor to take up land where and in what manner he likes. At the time he came out in 1829 the Home Government gave him a grant of 100,000 acres of land in the new Colony, in which was included Garden

[1] This would, according to information supplied to Mr. F. I. Bray of the State Archives Committee, be where the town of Picton is to-day.

[2] The word Wellington, which survives as the name of a district, is pencilled alongside the site of the present town of Waterloo in an old plan in the Lands Department, Western Australia. The name of the township was presumably changed before it was actually proclaimed.

[3] The Henty family, finding no land that was to their liking, had transferred themselves to Van Diemen's Land, and from there some of the brothers went on in December 1834 to Portland Bay, thereby becoming the first permanent settlers in 'Victoria'. Colonel Lautour had obtained a large grant in 1829 for the purposes of an emigration scheme, which, like Peel's, ended in failure. He himself never emigrated. Later his grant was purchased for the Wakefield settlement of Australind.

or Buache Island, estimated at 9 or 10000. He at that time proposed, with the sanction of the Government, to take up his land in one block in Geographe Bay; but he has since been constantly changing his mind,[1] and on the discovery of any new or fertile district he has immediately appropriated the best part of it to himself, thus severely checking enterprise and the spirit of exploration amongst the settlers, who cannot afford either the time or the money to explore land for the Governor, when they go out to look for what they require themselves. It is a matter of notoriety in the Colony that several individuals, after having with much cost and pains examined a portion of country hitherto unexplored, and sending the description and all necessary information to the Surveyor, on their application for the assignment or location order, have received for answer that the Governor had taken so many thousand acres at that place so that they could not have it. Thus the matter has gone on from year to year, Sir James changing his land so often that the Surveyor General has told me that he did not know at all where it all was. At the time I left the Colony his claims were under the consideration of the Council and he was anxious to return to England, so that, after the expiration of eight years and a half, there is at length some chance of a final arrangement being made, much to the advantage of the Colony at large.

For a steady practical man with small means a very advantageous settlement might be made for a term of years as tenant on a portion of the Governor's land; he is

[1] One, at least, of these changes we have evidence for. In Irwin's *State and Position of Western Australia* (London, 1835) it is stated that the Governor has taken almost all his grant inland from King George's Sound, but ultimately, as Dr. Battye has shown, he took 'a long strip of land extending from below Bunbury down to Wonnerup Inlet'. Garden Island he kept.

a most indulgent landlord and offers very liberal terms to anyone who will settle on and improve his farms. But beware of trusting him, unless the agreement be made in writing, and properly witnessed; he has a most unfortunate memory and forgets his promises, which he so constantly does not find it convenient to keep as to injure his character materially with the colonists, and he changes his mind so constantly that not the slightest reliance can be placed on his word unless you get his handwriting and signature to produce in the case of a dispute.

At the same time that I feel bound to state this regarding the character of the Governor, as a warning to anyone that may have dealings with him, it is but fair to remark that in my opinion it is more owing to his hasty unguarded disposition and enthusiastic temper than to any want of principle or wilful deceit or misrepresentation. He is sincere in making the promise at the time, when he enters warmly into the business in hand and it engrosses his whole attention. Afterwards other matters occupy his thoughts, his attention and means are directed elsewhere, and he finds too late when called upon to fulfil his promise that he has neither the power or means of fulfilling what he rashly offered in the enthusiasm of the moment. He is then compelled to retract and shuffle out of the business the best way he can, often with very little credit or satisfaction to himself, or any other person concerned.

A man of restless active mind, the trifling affairs of the little Colony are insufficient to engross his attention, and he passes his time in building *Chateaux d'Espagne* for the future, or in trying to apply them to present use, when they crumble away from want of means to sustain them, and he wastes in wild visionary projects money that might be more usefully employed. The constant removal and

exchange of the stations of the Troops, however annoying to us and injurious to the service, does not indeed come under this head, since the expenditure is from the Commissariat and increases the amount of capital in the Colony; but sums drawn from the scanty colonial fund and misapplied are of great importance, however small the amount.

Sir James, probably for the sake of popularity, is unwilling to impose any taxes on the colonists, so that the only means of raising revenue is by the duty on spirits, price of public house licences and sales of land. The first is the most proper and most common way of raising revenue in the Colonies, but the duty is here small, being I think 3/. per gallon on British and 4/. on foreign spirits. The total amount of this for the year ending 31st March 1837 was £2253. 1. 9. Licences to retail spirits came to £603. 10. 0 and other sources to £2856. 11. 9. making altogether the sum of £5214. 18. 0, of which however £1901. 5. 11. was purely casual and varying, probably decreasing annually. It will be seen by the abstract published in the Gazette that the amount realised this year by the sale of land was only £155. 12. 6, most of which was for town allotments; the mere fact however of the Home Government having put the same price on land at Swan River, a Colony in its infancy with expensive free labour, that they have in New South Wales, a penal colony with abundance of forced labour, and established half a century, is sufficient to account for the very limited sale of land and the check that has been given to the progress of the settlement.

I am by no means an advocate for distributing land with the unsparing hand that they did formerly, but it is evident that no man commencing to settle can afford to purchase

land at the present Government price, to a sufficient extent to keep any considerable number of sheep, or to embark in the business on a large scale. In the first place, the land will not return a remunerative return on the money, and, although it may be said that the land must eventually become valuable, yet I should recommend anyone to stay in England who is rich enough to sink a considerable sum of money for twenty or thirty years in the hope of it's ultimately repaying him very handsomely. A fairer plan would be to have a graduated scale of prices for land according to the circumstances of the Colony, so that if the land at Swan River was to be put up at 5/0 per acre most of that in New South Wales would be valued at at least one pound. But a better plan for the Colony, if the Government is inclined to support it, would be to allow *bona-fide* property belonging to a settler, to be valued by a land board appointed for the purpose, to count as purchase money of land, such property to be applicable solely for the maintenance of the settler on his land, live or dead, and not to be for the purpose of traffic. Thus a small capitalist having, let us say, but £500, might take out some breeding stock, or purchase it on the spot, with ploughs, carts, seed corn, and all the numerous articles necessary for a settler, which would both purchase and stock his farm.

Otherwise, if he has to pay 5/0 per acre in money, and purchases, let us say, a section of a square mile, or 640 acres, which is the smallest quantity the regulations allow, this costs him £160, leaving him but £340 with which to purchase utensils, stock, food for a twelvemonth, etc, besides building a house and paying the wages of one man without whom he could not get on. Now, let us see how far this money would go at the price of stock etc at Swan

River in 1837. Flour and meat are likely to fall in price, but not stock for some years, as there is great, and I trust increasing, demand for it. A pair of working bullocks cost £50, or about seed time nearer £60, and no carting over the hills or other road work can be done with less than two pair; a pair of mares to plough, if of good shape, strong and bony, will not cost less than £100, if they can be got so cheap—£70 and even £80 has been given for a cart mare of good shape to breed from. Horses are a little cheaper, but not much if strong and good workers. Fine woolled ewes cannot be purchased under three pounds a head and pure merinos from £3. 15. 0. to £4. Five guineas was given for a lot of very small but very fine fleeced ones imported from England in 1836, the whole of which were afterwards lost in the bush and eaten by the Natives. As I have before mentioned I have seen wheat in less than nine months rise in price from 5/0 to 22/6 per bushel; for such casualties the new settler must be prepared, by not laying out all his means at once in land or stock, but keeping some money for these dear times. It was by neglecting this that so many settlers failed at first. They obtained land in right of certain descriptions of property but not of money. Anxious to become landed proprietors they turned all their capital into stock, utensils, furniture etc and exhausted their store of provisions before they got any return from their land, often before they knew where their land was to be found, and then, being without money, they bartered away their valuable property at a ruinous sacrifice in exchange for the necessaries of life. A cart will cost the settler £20, a plough some £5 to £7: then come a harrow, cart harness, smaller tools of all kinds, entailing endless expense, without counting the erection of a house, outbuildings, barn

etc, or the wages and keep of a labourer who in no case will cost less than £65 for the year, or nearer £70. Then his own living may be estimated at 16/. a week, or £41. 12. 0. for the year without any family. Thus when one enters into the various items of expense incurred at the outset of a settler's career one finds a considerable sum of money indispensable, and, however determined to struggle on, a man is very unwise to embark his whole capital at once in the speculation. A sum, however small, yearly available from home, unaffected by the seasons or prices of Swan River, will often keep a settler's head above water, when he would otherwise be thrown onto the market at a ruinous loss. We consequently see those officers who have retained their half pay in better circumstances than their brethren who have rashly embarked the whole amount arising from the sale of their commissions at once, leaving themselves nothing to fall back upon.

The plan I propose of allowing the property of a settler to entitle him to land should of course be applicable only to a certain extent, say one half or one third of the purchase money, since the funds arising from the sale of land are necessary for Government purposes. In Swan River these funds are reckoned in the Colonial revenue and can be appropriated to meet the general expenses, but in New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land they are appropriated solely to defray the expense of sending out free emigrants of both sexes. Thus, although the amount of land sales would be for a time diminished, yet a stimulus and encouragement would be given to the Colony which is much required and a premium would be offered for the best breeds of cattle, since it would not be worth while to import poor stock, the expense of all being the same.

The settler would, of course, be called upon to bind himself to expend a considerable sum on the land as well as to reside upon it himself, or at least to establish a farm for a certain term of years; the Magistrates of the District to take care that the regulations on the subject be strictly complied with. At present I am sorry to say that too great latitude is allowed and the regulations are not strictly acted up to. A settler who took land under the rules of 1829 got one acre for every 1/6 worth of property he produced to the board, but he could not get the fee simple until it appeared that he had actually expended that amount on the land. Two Magistrates value the buildings, stock, cleared and ploughed land, and other improvements, and generally much above the real value, thus enabling a settler to get a title to his land with too great ease. It is a common thing for small settlers with some stock to do the location duties for several grants one after the other, abandoning them to their original wild state directly the fee simple is obtained.

However, perhaps the most simple and fair plan for disposing of the land would be a Board in England fixing a price in each Colony according to its means, obtaining from the Governors and other official sources all the information necessary for them to decide impartially, and so give each colony an equally fair chance of getting on, instead of giving all the advantages to one at the expense and to the ruin of others possessing equal natural capabilities.[1]

Having described the Inlet and south head or township of Bunbury, it is high time I should proceed on my

[1] It is curious to find that Bunbury is here advocating a plan not unlike that advocated by Gibbon Wakefield before the House of Commons Committee on Colonial Lands in 1836. A Colonial Land and Emigration Board was actually established in 1840, but its powers in this matter were advisory only.

journey, but first I must say a few words about the north beach or point. It is shallow and sandy generally but there are many fertile little hollows and even flats of some extent, with springs of water and well adapted for gardens. Some way up the estuary, nearly opposite the mouth of the Collie, there is a remarkably fine spring where the water is not at all brackish, and the last time I was there I cleaned it out and made an excellent well of good size whence a boat, which can approach very near, could fill her breakers with ease. Near this there is an extraordinary gap in the sand hills, right across the Point, which has the appearance of having been formed by a breach of the sea in a gale. On nearer examination one sees that the wind blowing heavily from the westward has gradually drifted all the sand, which is loose and fine, from the outer side in upon the estuary, down to which there is a very steep slope of bare drift sand; all the sea breezes and winter gales keep on adding to this loose mass, and of course as the mass becomes deeper on the seaward side it forms a more regular channel for a current of air, which carries along it the sand from the beach, heaping it up on the inner side where the declivity is as steep as the sand will lie without sliding down.

In these gaps one finds curious half fossil remains, which I have read occur also on part of the African coast: they are incrustations of the creeping plants which grow upon the sand hills near the sea, which, when they become buried under the constantly drifting sand, are soon covered round with mixed sand and lime—or rather the sand is cemented together by the lime when it finds anything, like these plants, to adhere to and prevent it from shifting with the rest. This is, at least, the idea I formed from examining a number of these creeping calcareous branches,

most of which are hollow and agree exactly in form and growth with the creepers on the neighbouring hills. In many places I could actually see the process going forward as the plants became buried in the sand.

There are three of these sand gaps on the north beach; from the opposite side of the estuary their appearance is very remarkable, the sand being of a very pale yellow, clear and bright, and one's first impression is that the surf from the sea has thrown the mass over to the estuary side of the point; but they are, in fact, far out of reach of the sea.

I slept on board the Schooner after fishing our way down the Inlet, and the next morning, Decr 22nd, we explored various places along the shore in the boats, and succeeded in capturing six swans with the long boat, though it was desperately hard work with such a heavy loaded bad pulling boat.

It is a singular fact that during the greater part of the year, that is all but three or four of the winter months, Black Swans may be taken that cannot fly, either young ones whose quill feathers have not yet grown, or older ones moulting. Amongst the thousands swimming upon the surface of the Estuary an experienced eye can detect a moulter at a great distance, as he swims lower in the water with his head advanced and tail cocked up higher than those which can fly. But they often give one a long chase, as they swim a long distance before getting on the wing, especially a solitary bird. They swim with great strength and rapidity, especially in rough water against the wind when a boat has no chance with them. A smooth warm day is best to hunt them on, but even then it is very hard work, as moulters, although they cannot fly, flap along the water with their wings and feet for a considerable distance,

leaving the boat far behind, just when one thinks one is sure of one's prey: they also double very quickly when closely pursued and ground is lost in turning a boat with full way upon her.

The down of the Black Swan is very close, white and beautiful, and makes very nice ladies' tippets, boas, etc. We eat the flesh whenever we can get it but it requires to be very much roasted to get rid of the oiliness, otherwise it is rank and fishy.

I left the Governor and his party in the afternoon at the well I had slept at on my way to the Vasse, and while he returned on board I proceeded on my homeward route. I did not, however, get more than six miles on my way, that is about three from the estuary, as Hero killed a very large Youart. It was too big to carry far and too good to leave, so, native fashion, we carried it to a small swamp near and sat down to eat it where we could get water, although it was not yet time to halt. We had quite an *embarras de richesses* of food; not a common complaint in the Australian bush, having two swans besides this immense Kangaroo, weighing about 90 lbs.

Having made our fire, Monang commenced operations. I gave him leave to eat as much as he pleased and told him to make haste as I would carry none for him the next day. After feeding Hero and reserving some for his breakfast, Monang had a grand repast and certainly ate more in twelve hours than I thought it possible for a human being to hold. In about an hour he complained of being 'Cobel mendag' although he said that he had had only 'little bit nalgo' which I found to be one entire hind leg, which would have lasted me four days at least; after this he went to sleep but renewed his attacks repeatedly during the night, having some portion constantly roasting on the fire.

In the morning he only carried with him the tail, weighing about nine pounds, for his dinner. He was in high glee, having what is the height of a Native's happiness, 'moorat' or full belly, as they call it.

I got away from my camp at an early hour having a very long day's journey before me to Coljerinup at the south end of the great Murray estuary. I decided upon going this way to vary my route and to examine the mouth of the Harvey. Tho' I considered that I had already set the matter at rest by crossing from Pinjarrup to Port Leschinault, passing over only one river on the road, yet the Governor seemed so convinced of the existence of another stream, that I was determined to leave no doubt on the subject.

I now trusted entirely to Monang's guidance, as he knew the best country to travel through, a great point where there is much broken scrubby ground to be met with, which delays one with horses. It is very difficult, or next to impossible, to form an idea of one's course by compass when under the guidance of a Native, for he turns and twists along, breaking off at every trifling obstacle and choosing the smoothest places even though considerably out of his course; a fallen tree or a prickly bush is sufficient to change his course materially. From what I have seen of their travelling after watching them carefully during many journeys, I feel certain that they depend entirely upon their knowledge of the localities, which their quickness and correctness of sight enable them to recognise immediately if they have once seen them, and that they do not steer at all by the sun, as we do, although they calculate pretty exactly it's progress, being able to tell correctly that they will reach such a place when the sun is in such a position, pointing to where it will be in the sky.

When beyond their knowledge and in strange bush they appear perfectly bewildered and I think could only find their way home by following their outward tracks.

We at first kept a little to the eastward of north through a poor country, partly covered with White Gums and partly with Mahogany, Banksia etc: the travelling was good, as there was but little scrub, and we advanced rapidly. After a time we inclined more to the left, going N. to N. by W. along an open country broken into hills and hollows with but little timber, and that all of the coast White Gum, twisted and stunted, showing our proximity to the sea although similar ranges to the left prevented us from getting a sight of it. We had a good deal of rough travelling through this country, the limestone appearing on the surface in rough lumps and points, painful to us and the horses.

Monang here dug up for me some red bulbous roots, the name of which I have forgotten; they are not unlike tulip roots in size and shape but are of a light clear red colour, formed of distinct layers one above the other and all of the same colour. The leaves are very long and narrow but there are only two or three of them and I have never seen the flower; roasted they are very nice, but when raw they are too pungent and biting, although crisp and with a very agreeable flavour.

After pursuing our course along the open hills or coast downs for several miles we kept a little more inland to avoid the stones and got amongst Mahogany sandy hills with very thick and large timber.

We travelled most perseveringly, although both we and the horses began to feel great want of rest and water, the day being very hot; about half past twelve we got sight of Mount William, to Monang's great joy, as he seemed

doubtful of his course; he now declared a large lagoon to be close by supplying water and food for the horses. We inclined a little more to the right and descending the eastern or wooded side of the hills soon came upon the border of an extensive swamp or lagoon, full of rushes and water, of great length and probably a mile across. It was evidently one of a long chain, as we could see openings for a long way to the right and left. I imagined at first that the Harvey flowed through it, but Monang said no, that it ran on the side of it, but not far and also through impenetrable swamps.

There was but little real grass here, but at this season plenty of green stuff for hungry horses, as good as was generally to be met with in this part of the country, where grass is a very rare production.

We made but a short halt here, as Monang said that it was necessary to proceed again very soon to reach Coljerinup before dark; so as soon as the horses seemed tolerably full, we resaddled and continued to the northward along the slope of the sandy hills, having a constant chain of pools, swamps, and lagoons on the right. After a time we lost sight of these and emerged from the forest into an extensive low plain destitute of timber but covered with low scrub and some bushes in places, from a thicket of which we disturbed two Emus which led Hero a long chase. He lost time scenting them in the thicket at first so that they had a long start; he nearly overtook them in the first half mile, after which they gradually outdistanced him and he at length gave up the chase, being footsore and weary with his long journey.

For the first mile an Emu does not run particularly fast and a good dog has the speed of them, but after that no dog has a chance: their pace increases as they proceed,

and, unlike the Kangaroo, they do not flag after three or four miles, but continue the race for hours. The Natives have told me that they will not stop before the evening when once under way, and when frightened run far away, though at first like the hare they have a decided tendency to run in a circle. They carry their heads low and projecting to the front, their legs thrown well forward, and the constant motion of their little pinions and thick mass of rustling feathers, if such they can be called, appear to assist their speed when once they get fairly off. Their usual stride when pursued is as near as possible nine feet and very regular. I have measured them repeatedly when tracking them or my dogs and have found scarcely any variation.

Their flesh varies much in different seasons and according to the age of the bird. I have tasted it very good with a high flavour and tender, and at other times have found it strong oily and tough. There is a great deal of fat in the inside and about the rump, but none on the breast or legs which are not generally good eating. The rump, hung up for several days and roasted, is the best part and is not unlike beef, with veins of fat in the same way and similar in colour.

After crossing this plain, which was of tedious extent, and, although dry now, evidently flooded in winter, we crossed a narrow belt of timber and came again upon a similar plain of smaller size. On our right, this flat country was evidently a moist district heavily timbered with much swamp and tea tree. Monang pointed out about the course of the Harvey and also described a ford, the situation of which he pointed out, but said it was deep and the 'Boogia'[1] bad for the horses. On our left there

[1] *Boogia*=ground.

appeared to be a swamp, separating the plain from a range of sandy limestone hills covered with Mahogany and Coast White Gums, which extends not only here but further north between the sea and the Murray Estuary past Cape Bouvard to the south head of the Murray opposite Peel Town.

We rapidly traversed these plains, as the travelling was good and the sun getting low pointed out the necessity for hastening forward to the grass and water which Monang said was as plentiful as at Coljirinup. At length we reentered the woods, and the vicinity of a river was at once evident from the soil and the trees and bushes growing upon it; a particular sand with stinkwood in abundance are sure indications of water being near, as well as the flooded Gum.

I found the Harvey a considerable river, quite salt and navigable for boats, being deep and not much impeded by fallen timber, it's course exceedingly winding and tortuous, more so than any other river I know, making sudden short turns in all directions. Inclining to the left to keep clear of it's sinuosities we soon came to a chain of fresh pools coming from a little to the westward of south, that is between us and the coast. We crossed between two of them and encamped on the right bank under an old wide spreading Peppermint tree, the largest and handsomest I ever saw, with it's long slender boughs and twigs drooping gracefully all around, while a bed of dry grass at it's roots seemed intended expressly as a halting place, and formed a most comfortable bivouac. The Natives call the place Dinjim, which name I have given to the chain of pools which are evidently of no great extent but probably form the outlet for the water from the line of swamps I mentioned on the left and the drain of the eastern slope

of the coast range of hills. I had plenty of grass for the horses, who were thoroughly tired with their day's work, as indeed we all were, having made a march of above thirty miles on an extremely hot day and through much rough country with scrub which not only pricks one's legs but obliges one to lift them up so high as to fatigue one much on a long journey.

Ducks were very plentiful on the Harvey, which was here very close to my camp, but my shot having been all expended at Port Leschinault they swam in peace close by me.

While the swan was cooking for supper Monang and I walked down to the Estuary beach, which was not visible from Camp though not a quarter of a mile distant. As I reached it the sun was just dipping behind the hills on the left, that is to the westward, between the Estuary and the sea, and the view for so flat a country was extremely beautiful, the warm bright glow of a summer evening giving rich purple and crimson tints to the otherwise gloomy forest. Numerous little islets were scattered about this end of the Estuary and a rather larger one in the distance stood out in dark relief from the smooth silvery surface of the water, unruffled by the slightest breeze, but disturbed here and there by the movements of flocks of waterfowl which at this hour approach the shore to feed. Numerous Pelicans, some floating sluggishly on the water, others standing in formal rows along the edge, contrasted strongly from their pure white colour with the Swans, which were gradually, in small groups, quitting the Estuary to feed in the various lagoons and extensive swamps during the night, and with the numerous shags of two kinds which came flying in from seaward, either in flocks or singly, to roost on the trees overhanging the river,

where they congregate at night—and from what I have seen of their habits apparently always on the same trees.

The larger kind of shag is all black or dark rifle green, much like our Cormorant but without the long crest of feathers depending from the head; the other kind is about two thirds the size, with a brown mark extending from the beak past the eye and with a white throat, breast and belly. This is the most numerous kind and abounds round all the coast I am acquainted with in the temperate parts of New Holland, and I have even found them high up rivers and in fresh-water pools and swamps. When skinned and soaked for twelve hours in salt water it makes quite good soup (for want of better), and was a valuable resource to me at Eagle Hawk Neck where fresh meat was scarce.

The Southern end of the Estuary is very shallow, and now the sand was dry for nearly half a mile out as far as some of the small islets, which are dignified on the map with the name of the Brunswick Islands: those near the shore are very small and low covered with tea tree and other bushes, the distant and larger one, standing apparently in the very middle of the Estuary, can be approached, so Monang told me, from the east shore at low water by wading, and is the resort of many birds and tortoises.

At some distance on the west shore we could see a column of smoke rising slow and straight into the still air, indicating the presence of Natives whose tracks we also found in the sand when we returned to camp. Not wishing to attract their attention, as, although we were within the territory of the Murray tribes and close to the land of Calyate, Monang's father, we did not wish to meet either him or any of his neighbours, some of whom we had

heard cooeeing and shouting during the afternoon, we kept the smoke of our fire within due bounds.

Calyate is a fine savage looking old man with long waving grey hair and beard, who claims and evidently exerts some authority over the Murray tribe, that is the inhabitants of the borders of the Estuary. He has always shown himself hostile to the White Men, and, altho' afraid, since the affair at Pinjarrup in 1834,[1] to show his enmity in the settlements, he is not at all to be trusted in the bush if an opportunity of revenge presents itself.

He often comes with his tribe to Mandurap or Peel Town, where he gives himself great airs and from fear and policy is well received and fed by Mr Peel.

His proper territory or Boogia extends along the west shore between the Estuary and the sea, but not so far as Dinjim though it was probably his fire we saw. He had not, however crossed at Coljerinup, as Monang searched in vain for his footmarks, and showed not the least desire to see his father but on the contrary much anxiety to avoid him, saying he was 'no good and talky plenty'. Monang has on the other hand some regard for his old Mother to whom I have often known him to give the money and clothes he got from me. On a subsequent occasion I ascertained that although Calyate had no objection to his son going a short journey with me or any other white man, as it gave him importance in the tribe seeing new country

[1] In October 1834, as a result of a series of robberies, culminating in murder, a body of mounted police set out, accompanied by the Governor himself, to inflict salutary punishment on the Murray River natives. Near Pinjarra about seventy natives were encountered, and a sharp encounter followed. More than half the male natives were killed, and the Superintendent of Police was so severely wounded that he died some days afterwards. Some women and children were also killed, but not intentionally. It was one of the most serious encounters with the natives that ever occurred in Western Australia.

and strange Natives, yet he did not at all approve of his remaining long and sent for him several times to Pinjarrup; a summons he was reluctantly obliged to obey. Afterwards when Monang came down to stay with me at the Vasse Calyate sent me word by Wumban that if Monang did not immediately return to the Murray, he would spear him and me too at the first opportunity, a threat that he would have most assuredly carried out if he could: the hint however was enough for his dutiful son.

We made a hearty supper off the swan under the shade of the magnificent Peppermint tree and Monang ate his Kangaroo tail, which would otherwise assuredly have walked off, so rapidly do the flies destroy meat this season when they can obtain an entrance. The only way to keep the swan had been to tie the neck very tight to prevent the maggots from passing down the throat.

Just as we were dropping off to sleep a slight crackling in the bush attracted the attention of Monang, who whispered in a hurried tone as he seized his spears 'blackfellow quibble walk'. I laid hold of my gun immediately and awakened Hero, who was sleeping by my side, but, after arousing himself and looking round keenly, he returned to his lair, which reassured us, although Monang declared for some minutes that he was sure he heard a Native shipping his spear, i.e. fixing it in his Mero. He called aloud several times saying who we were, and that we belonged to the Murray, were friends and must not be speared.

The noise must have been caused by a Kangaroo Rat or a Bandicoot breaking a dry stick in passing, as it proved a false alarm, but the following anecdote will show the keen sense of hearing of the Natives and the advantage of having one with one when travelling. In February 1837

I was ordered to send two soldiers to escort Mr Layman with some cattle across the country from Pinjarrup to the Vasse; they were to follow my old track of the journey above related as near as they could, and I sent therefore as one of the men Allison, who had been with me then, was a good bushman and much liked by the Natives. Finding that Layman was a very bad helpless hand in the bush, I looked out for a Native to show the way to Gondonup and assist them. Monang refused to go without me, and no other Pinjarrup man would at first undertake it unless I went too, but at length, finding that Allison and Keegan were the men selected, two Natives, Denma and Wumban (commonly called Jem), agreed to accompany them as I was to follow in a few days. Denma is a very large stout young man, growing rapidly fat in the employment of the Pinjarrup settlers Oakley and Buglass with whom he principally lives: he is the very best disposed Native I know, active, willing and obliging, with a great deal of fun about him and less indolent and greedy than most. Wumban is a little thickset fellow, rather older than Denma and with some beard and whiskers which the other has not: but is a lazy lying rascal though not by any means sulky or violent in his temper. I wondered at his offering to go, but seeing strange tribes, of which they had heard a great deal from Monang, was a great inducement, and two being together they were less afraid. Well, they went, and I afterwards heard from Denma and also from the soldiers, that one night, which was very dark, being encamped by a brook a little way to the northward of the Capel, they were all sitting round the fire, about nine o'clock, talking and smoking, when Denma suddenly jumped up from the ground exclaiming that blackfellows were going to spear them. He shipped his spear and threw

it in the direction he heard the noise from, calling out to the intruders with perfect good humour and self possession to return in the morning and he would fight them, but not to come and kill them in the dark. In the mean time one of the party had discharged a gun at random into the bush, when they distinctly heard someone run off stumbling over the scrub and then falling into the brook, to the great amusement of Denma, who kept shouting to them in derision. In the morning they found the tracks of two men close up to their camp, and the spears and meros they had dropped in their hasty retreat. If it had not been for the quick ears of Denma it is probable that one or more of the party would have been killed by their unseen enemies, as the fire round which they were sitting rendered them so distinctly visible.

This is the only instance I know of a night attack by strange Natives of distant tribes, as, although on the Swan they will steal from gardens or rob barns by night, I think that there they have learnt from us to overcome their fear of darkness. It is strange that two men should attempt to attack four white men and two Natives; they might perhaps have hoped to injure two or three unseen in the darkness. It cannot be supposed that they approached with any friendly object, since they never spoke or gave any voluntary evidence of their approach, and they invariably either by day or night, in communicating with strangers, use a great deal of caution, cooeeing to announce their coming and advancing under the shelter of trees to avoid spears treacherously thrown. It may be taken as a rule that if their object is friendly they give due notice of their approach.

It is not difficult to surprise them at night or early in the morning, as they are very heavy sound sleepers. Having

had some experience among them I can say that from about ten o'clock P.M. they sleep so soundly that they may be approached within a few yards until about three o'clock, or an hour before daylight, when it is always cold and, their fires being very low, they wake up and lie closer to them. They then again drop asleep and will not willingly move until the sun is well up and the dew off the grass. Of course circumstances occur when they are on foot with the dawn of day, but this is from hunger on a journey, or in case of necessity; willingly they do not stir early.

The last time I was at Port Leschinault on my way from the Vasse to Perth, I left the camp at the Preston ford very early and reached the border of the Estuary about five minutes after sunrise. I there found myself just in rear of a double line of comfortable bark huts about fourteen in number, with thick smoke curling up from before each, showing that their fires had been well renewed, but none of the inmates were stirring, and very rightly too, as it was a cold raw morning late in May with heavy hoar frost. I halted and cooeed to announce my approach but was unheeded and I repeated it several times as I advanced. At length when within ten paces of the rear line of huts I gave a loud shout, and in an instant about thirty men sprang to their feet with their spears shipped and presented at me, and uttered wild and savage cries, while away scuttled the women and children into the thick bush with great speed and address. The name however of 'Bunbury' passed rapidly from mouth to mouth and, throwing down their spears, the men all came forward to greet me. Much to my annoyance, I did not find amongst them the young men I wanted, as I intended to take one or two up to Perth with me, and the elderly men who with their families

formed the party were very urgent in their applications for bread, of which I had not a morsel to spare, being in very light marching order.

It is evident to me that much may be done with the Natives by uniform kind treatment, and this has been shown clearly in several instances in their reception of myself; but it is attended with much expense, much more than a poor settler can afford. He moreover would be likely to feel the inconvenience of encouraging them about him, having a fixed habitation, much more than I did living in a bush hut surrounded by a detachment near whom they dared not take liberties.

In my interviews with the Natives I always attempted to explain my reasons for not giving them food when I had it; thus, on this occasion I pointed out to them that I was going to Pinjarrup, that there were three of us and that we should have 'bidjia coojal' on the road and that if we gave them our bread now we should have nothing for ourselves the next day. This however is an argument only understood by the more civilised amongst them, for in general they have no idea of saving food but trust to Providence for the morrow. I succeeded however in making Denma and Monang not only understand this but also that the soldiers and I had not an unlimited supply of flour, but received a daily allowance and that if we gave this to them we must ourselves go without.

My name became so well known among the Natives from my residence first at Pinjarrup and then at the Vasse and constant journeys to and fro by Port Leschinault that I derived much benefit from their assistance, rendered solely on account of the good name I had got amongst those who knew me. Of this I had another example on the last mentioned journey in May. After leaving Port

Leschinault I had taken a new route to examine the country at the base of the hills to ascertain how many streams there were and if there was any good land in that direction. On the second day from Gomborrup I had got bothered amongst swamps and numerous brooks crossing my tracks, many of which were impassable for horses. After losing half a day in vain attempts to get out again into a flat country I decided on striking into the mountains where I well knew the streams would be easily crossed. I had not however ascended the first range when I heard Natives at no great distance to whom I shouted; to the great terror of Wolgot, a Vasse Native whom I had with me. In answer I heard Cooees in various directions showing that the Natives were numerous and scattered about searching for food. I tried to get Wolgot to talk to them, but in vain; he kept behind me, shaking and almost paralysed with fear. I laid down my gun and advanced towards where the strangers were standing behind trees watching us and afraid to approach. Wolgot immediately scrambled into the saddle, where he somewhat recovered his composure, though he kept entreating me not to go near the strangers as they would spear me. I soon halted and held up my hands in token of amity and to show that I was unarmed, and told them I was Bunbury who had a Mia at Pinjarrup. Upon this the whole party soon collected about us. I then introduced them to Wolgot as a Native from the Wonnerup Derbal and to Parker the soldier. They embraced Wolgot and to show their friendship took his cloak and hammer, giving him much worse ones in exchange, a favourite way with them of showing their love for new comers.

These parleys with strangers are always rather long since, like the Yankees, they insist on knowing where you

come from, where you are going to, the names of your party and of all Natives you have met on the road, before they will assist you. Consequently I had a good smoke while all these particulars were gone into, after which I prevailed upon two men to show us a way across the brooks to Pinjarrup, after many attempts on the part of both men and women to claim relationship with my friends Monang and Denma for the purpose of exciting my charity: but that begins at home, especially in the bush, and I had hardly bread enough for myself for the day and it was evident that we could not reach Pinjarrup until very late, if at all. Although not one of these Natives, who were entirely a hill tribe, had been in Pinjarrup during my residence there or had ever seen me, yet nothing could be more friendly than their reception of me, and they constantly repeated that Bunbury and the Soldiermen at Pinjarrup were 'quabba' and gave the blackfellows 'Marrim boola'. Having bargained to receive bread on their arrival, and leaving their cloaks with their women, our two new guides at length led the way; this I imagine was a cunning way of avoiding making a disadvantageous exchange with the Murray Natives, or in hopes of exciting their compassion to give them cloaks, knowing that Kangaroo skins were plentiful at Oakley mia.

This was even worse than a common colonial trick of exchanging a bad shirt for a good one, which is thus done: a gentleman travelling finds it inconvenient to carry much linen, consequently it is an established custom when one stops at a house, to get a clean shirt from the host leaving one's own in lieu of it. Thus, a knowing hand takes a bad one of his own and, if his host is soft or careless, selects the best he can find and by paying a round of visits he thus gradually acquires a good though miscellaneous

wardrobe. There are tricks in all trades and I have not lived in the penal colonies for nothing.

But I must return to Dinjim where I was left going to sleep after a false alarm.

On the morning of the 24th we got away at six o'clock and issuing out upon the border of the Estuary crossed the mouth of the Dinjim ponds, where the sand appeared to be both treacherous and quick, and it was not without great fatigue and exertion that the horses floundered through it: this made us cautious, and Monang tried the passage of the Harvey in several places before he was satisfied of the soundness of the bottom. At length we crossed the Estuary a good way out without obstacle. It is a good rule to follow, that the safest place to cross one of these bar rivers is as far out as the water is shoal. The further out the firmer the bottom; near in, although the water is shoal there is either mud or quicksand.

From here we followed the course of the Estuary for about two miles, when we turned off on the right bank of a very small brook, where we found a pool of tolerable though rather brackish water.

I forgot to mention that from Coljerinup Mount William showed to great advantage, bearing I think S.E. by S., but I have since lost my book of distances and bearings, or rather left it with many other things at the Vasse.

We had a very rapid but tiresome march of five hours and a half to Pinjarrup through a thick low country, the soil in places good but varying in character and quality, sometimes sandy with scrub and tall Blackboy or Kingria, a never failing sign of execrable land, sometimes clay plains thick with bushes and Grass trees but bare of timber, and sometimes rich low land with immense Red Gums, in other places Tea tree swamps, then Mahogany land, and

in short all the varieties of soil occurring on the coast side of the hills. About nine miles from Pinjarrup we fell in with a party of our own Natives seeking Munghites, viz. Weewa, Doliong, Cavinga, Munjiar, Wumban and others, when we were received with shouts of joy. Endless were the questions asked of Monang concerning the strange country we had seen, and it was evident that he had acquired importance in the tribe by having travelled further than any of them. I was glad to reach home about half past eleven on Christmas eve, but was too tired to seek Kangaroo or any other game for my Christmas dinner and therefore contented myself, as I had done the preceding year at Eagle Hawk Neck with a piece of salt pork.

Christmas Day in 1837 I dined with the Chapmans in the Isle of France and where I shall dine next Christmas who can tell.

Having thus brought to a conclusion my first journey to the Vasse in 1836 I may as well say a few words concerning the Murray District, which would ere now have been the resort of many settlers had not Mr Peel's grant [1] taken up all the available land on the right bank of the river.

The identity of this with the Hotham on the east side of the mountains was ascertained by me in October 1836 when I visited Mount William. Coming upon the left bank a few miles to the Southeastward of the mountain I followed it's course as far as mount Saddleback, within a few miles of where Mr Hillman had traced it to, whence I crossed to the Williams, which is a tributary of the Hotham, or Murray, joining it not far from the westward of the Saddleback.

After much winding through the mountains it issues

[1] On Peel's grant see Introduction, pp. xiii–xiv, and below, pp. 171 ff.

into the level country at a place about ten miles south east from Pinjarrup, where some land is reserved for a future township. There is no great quantity of fertile land about it, but it is well adapted for the establishment of water mills for sawing or grinding.

A powerful stream flows down this river in winter and so late as the end of November; at no time in the summer have I known it cease to run and the pools are large and deep. The Swan, or Avon, does not run much after the end of October and I have seen it cease even in September in York, though it never begins to run until late in August: in the Swan country, however, the water from the hills kept it flowing rather later.

The Murray is evidently the greater stream of the two but it's tributaries are far from numerous: from the place of it's issue from the hills no water joins it from the southward at all, and on the other side only the Dandelup and a few little winter hill brooks. The water at Pinjarrup is at all seasons sweet and good.

This township is situated on the left bank at the head of the navigation for boats, which by land via Jimjam and Colanup is rather more than twelve miles to Peeltown and by water nearly thirty, owing to the sinuosities of the river.

Mr Peel's land terminates at Pinjarrup close to the ford at the southern extremity of the town: that is, his southern boundary or east and west line, leaves the river here and goes away to the hills; while his northern boundary terminates at the sea shore in Cockburn Sound, about half a mile north of Clarence, or eight and a half south from Freemantle.

Oakley and Buglass, two old servants of Peel's, have got from him, for their services, 500 acres of land commencing at the ford or southern boundary and coming down the

river to about opposite the barracks. They have not any, or very little, alluvial flat but all their land is good strong land for wheat, requiring considerable labour and expense to clear but amply repaying it in the crops. This land is heavily timbered with immense Red and Blue Gums with an infinite quantity of Blackboys and dwarf Grass tree which is particularly troublesome to grub out. A good dwelling house of split Red Gum slabs, the interstices filled with clay, and well thatched with grass tree tops has been erected, as well as a good barn of rammed earth, and a most substantial stockyard with Red Gum posts, four rails, and upright paling. Along one side and end runs a comfortable line of sheds for the cattle, who thrive uncommonly well here, continue fat through the summer, and have hitherto not been subject to the internal diseases which have carried off so many every year in the York country, where I think the vegetation becomes much too dry to suit cattle, who get diseased kidneys for want of moisture in their food. On the other hand the Goats have been found to die at Pinjarrup on the setting in of the wet weather, when Oakley lost most of his last year without being able to ascertain the cause; they died in a short time without losing flesh or showing any sign of disease.

This is the only farm in this immediate neighbourhood; though the land on both sides of the river is assigned to various people as far as the hills, yet none of it is settled upon. On the opposite side of the Murray, about two hundred yards lower down, is the Military Barrack, built on a high bank overlooking the river, a small slabbed building capable of holding twelve men, though only five or six are at present stationed there.

About two hundred yards further up is a projecting

point of the bank close above the river, which here winds very much and forms a considerable grassy flat upon each side; in front is a kind of low island, separating this part from Oakley's, under whose house a rude bridge has been formed by felling a large Blue Gum across the river; the island is covered with rich grass with many large trees covered with elegant pendant creepers. On the point of the bank was my residence, and a most beautifully picturesque spot it was. The river underneath was visible both coming on the right and flowing away on the left. In front I had just a glimpse of Oakley's house through the trees, while beyond, the different groups of large Red Gums had a perfectly park-like appearance, and the Darling range, blue by day and purple in the evening, closed the view to the eastward. I cleared the flat on my right and left of the Stinkwood and Broom bushes, leaving underneath a luxuriant sward of grass vying in richness of colour with an English meadow; there my horses fed at liberty. The bank on either side was picturesque from it's amphitheatrical form and the groups of stately Red Gums and rich leaved Banksia Gigantea, with it's long cones and lumps of pale yellow blossom. Behind my hut grew a few large Mahogany trees and Red Gum, while beyond, if I had continued to clear, I should command a view through a fine open country studded with groups of large trees, under which grew a green covering to the ground, looking like grass to the casual observer.

I fixed upon this spot to build a house, as convenient in situation and particularly picturesque, when in company with the Governor in October 1836, and pointed out how much land I wished to have included. This he ordered to be marked off for me. He ordered the township to be surveyed, and I intended to purchase this beautiful spot.

However, when Smythe, a surveyor, was sent by Mr Roe,[1] his instructions from him compelled him to lay out this part of the township in small allotments of four acres each. The quantity I required was about twelve acres, to lessen which would have destroyed the whole thing, and to purchase it I should have been compelled to pay £1 an acre, besides binding myself by the regulations to build a house and fence each allotment, and to make buildings and improvements to the amount of £200 on each. This of course I could not do, and, disgusted with Mr Roe's evident attempt to annoy me, I refused to purchase any or build a house at all, and continued to live all the time I remained there in a little V shaped hut. As there were to be many large allotments laid out in the township they might just as well have met my views by letting me purchase one, upon which I intended to build and make a nice place for which there were great facilities; cut up into small pieces it is worth nothing.

About three miles below Oakley's house a considerable river, the Dandelup, joins the Murray from the eastward, and near the junction there is on all sides an extensive tract of rich valuable grassy land richly timbered with magnificent trees, principally Red and Blue Gums. I do not know in the Colony a finer site for an extensive arable and grazing farm than this corner between the Murray and Dandelup next Pinjarrup.

Our usual ford over the Dandelup is about a mile above the junction, where the good land is on the south side. The first time I was there in company with the Governor,

[1] J. S. Roe, who had been a member of Lieutenant King's expeditions of exploration of the West Australian coastline in 1818–22, held the office of Surveyor-General from the foundation of the colony until 1870. He was one of the most valuable public servants any Australian colony ever possessed.

Mr Peel etc, we halted for midday rest at a swamp within a quarter of a mile of this part of the river where there was no grass and very little water; and the owner of the soil was totally ignorant of this magnificent land until then, when it was found with no thanks to him, for on coming to the bank of the river after luncheon he did not know whether it was the Murray or the Dandelup until told by Glybra his Native who showed us the ford. This was, at that time, waist deep for me and so rapid that I could not cross without a stick to leeward to stem the stream. In the very end of summer it scarcely runs but the pools are always full and sweet.

I do not think from what I saw in my casual visits when hunting that there is much good land high up the river towards the mountains, I believe it has it's rise in the Darling range and does not, like the Murray, come from far east.

This is the only river I know that is a tributary of the Murray on the coast side of the hills, as the Serpentine only falls into the Estuary at Colanup, or Colane, and has no communication higher up.

About four miles and a half below the barracks on the same side of the river is a small but flourishing farm belonging to a sawyer named Brown, but let to labouring men who have no stock and only a pair of ponies for ploughing. The grant, I believe, consists of only about 2000 acres but the greater part of it good arable land, well adapted for the cultivation of grain from the convenience of water carriage, the Murray being wide and deep here. The principal obstacle is at Colane, which, by the way, is I believe a general and not a particular name, since I have heard it used also at Gomborrup for a similar place, the debouché of rivers into an Estuary over flats, which are fordable and

particularly attractive to the Natives from the quantity of Mullet and Cobblers which frequent them. However, this place is known to us, *par excellence*, by the name of Colane, where no less than seven rivers debouch within a mile of each other. These however all belong to either the Murray, Serpentine, or Currie, which latter is rather an insignificant chain of swampy pools than a river.[1]

The Serpentine runs west from the mountains about midway between the Dandelup and Canning, that is, about fifteen miles from each, and good honest miles they are; some people call them nearer twenty five. In the two or three places I have crossed the Serpentine I met with no flats of any extent, though a good deal of valuable Red Gum land is in the neighbourhood, but I heard a person who had lost his way going from Pinjarrup to the Swan, and who got too much to the left or westward, say that he crossed near the river a great extent of very rich black wattle alluvial flats, but owing to his utter ignorance of his own whereabouts he could not give any distinct idea of it's situation. Indeed it signifies little to the settling public, since the whole of this country belongs to Mr. Peel, whose land adjoins, if it does not actually cut into, that of Mr Davies a settler on the Canning; and really, considering the great extent he possesses, 250,000 acres I believe, he has as little good or fertile soil as could be found in any part of the world, barring the deserts of Africa or Asia.

This selection of Mr Peel's confirms my assertion on a former occasion, alluding to South Australia, of the absurdity of any one in England taking up land in a new country of which he knows nothing. The Governor ought by rights to be in the same case, having agreed to

[1] The Currie River is now known as Nambulup Brook. (Information supplied by Mr. F. I. Bray.)

take his land, besides Garden Island, in Geographe bay. His selection would have been far better than Peel's but only by mere luck: they neither of them knew anything about it beyond that Capt Stirling, in the year 1827, I believe, pulled some twelve or fifteen miles up the Swan river in his gig, when in command of the *Success* Frigate, and, on the faith of what he then saw, declared it to be a very fine country and persuaded the Home Government to establish a colony there, of which he undertook the management. Peel took up 250,000 acres and is clearly entitled to as much more, having fulfilled his part of the agreement; what use it could be to him is another question since, as yet, he has not one acre in cultivation, nor a single servant to work for him.

He lives at Peeltown or Mandurup, in a long low thatched cottage built of wattle and dab, white-washed and kept scrupulously clean. There he resides with his wife, two young daughters and young son Tommy, who with his wife's mother form the establishment. Not a single servant, male or female, has he, except generally one or two Natives, young men or lads, who wash the dishes, look after the horses, and assist in various other ways, such as feeding pigs, poultry etc. The old woman cooks and never appears at table; often as I was there I never saw her face. Of course the fare is not sumptuous but depends, as usual in the bush, on native resources.

From being a well known person who began with extensive means and all possible advantages, he has failed completely, and his failure has gone far to ruin the prospects of the Colony. He began under false colours and it is hard that a whole community should suffer for the faults of one individual. He took out with him about four hundred persons of both sexes and every requisite

for an extensive establishment, utensils of all kinds, houses in frames, stock, and in fact everything that could be needed except money, of which it appears he brought little or none, as he borrowed small sums at the Cape from his fellow emigrants. On his arrival he established all his people in extensive barracks at Clarence, on the barren beach with very little water. He appears to have taken no measures for forming farms on the good portions of his land, nor indeed were any attempts made to search for any. He lived himself at Garden Island in company with the Naval Officers of the ships in harbour, for a long time too indolent, and latterly afraid, to go near his people, who from grumbling came to threats as they found themselves starving by inches on an unknown shore, with no occupation and no chance of improving their condition. At length, after many had died of scurvy and other diseases brought on by neglect and want of proper food,[1] the Government was obliged to interfere and cancel the indentures of the greater part of them, leaving them at liberty to seek a livelihood where they pleased. Since then these men, many of them, have done extremely well, and have turned out the best and most industrious emigrants in the Colony, doing credit to their selection in England, whoever made it, and proving that Peel's failure was his own fault and not that of his people as he wishes to make one believe.

He afterwards made some attempts to form farms, but on the poor coast land, instead of on the rich alluvial flats, and from mismanagement, careless habits and want of perseverance, nothing succeeded.

When he settled at Mandurup an Officer and Detachment were sent for his protection, as the Natives showed

[1] This in large measure confirms the allegations of Wakefield, which Captain Irwin, in his *State and Position of Western Australia*, denied.

themselves very hostile: they murdered not only several of his men but also several soldiers and actually blockaded two or three of the latter until a stronger Detachment was sent from Head Quarters to their relief. The Natives speared Peel's horses and cattle and kept the settlement in constant dread and alarm until the Pinjarrup affair taught them our strength. Since then nothing could be more peaceable than they have been, but still they dislike us and very naturally.

The young men, who are very friendly themselves, tell us that we shall never be quite safe or on good terms with their tribes while the old people, that is those who were old on our first arrival, are alive; that they, especially the old women, hate us and are always exciting the younger ones by their discourse, and long songs or chaunts by the evening fires, to do us all the injury in their power. The younger ones, on the contrary, feel our superiority and acknowledge that flour and potatoes are better food than anything they have, that our dogs catch Kangaroos much more easily than they can, and that a gun is far better for killing birds than a spear.

The generation now coming forward may be domesticated to a certain degree and be made useful to the white settlers while their own condition is improving, but a steady uniform system should be adopted towards them and it should not be left to chance. The greatest care also should be taken to keep from them all ardent liquors; if they once get the habit of drinking they soon die off, and degenerate in physical and moral power, besides contracting many diseases they are at present free from.

It is surprising with what philosophy Peel bears his numerous and constant reverses; the whole of his once numerous stock now consists of one horse, a one eyed

Timor pony, an old cow and two or three pigs. Gradually he has lost his horses, cattle etc. by various accidents; some have died in the bush, some have been speared by Natives; he says 'never mind'. A valuable grey horse of his ran away from Mandurup into the bush and never returned; he did not even go to look for it, although the Natives told him some time afterwards where it was. In like manner he has lost other property, such as cattle, Kangaroo dogs, pigs, etc. to my knowledge without appearing to bestow a thought upon them, and continues to vegetate on in the same careless way, bestowing very little care even upon his garden and none at all upon anything else.

The detachment at Mandurup consists now of but four men, and the only other inhabitants are an old soldier of the 43rd named Tuckie with his family, and another man who works sometimes for him and now and then for Peel, who although without money and universally disliked by his old followers still retains some influence over them. They respect and fear him, while they hate him.

From Mandarup there is a horse track to Freemantle passing by Clarence, a distance of about 35 miles, though it is usually called 40; having ridden it many times I am satisfied it is not so much. Water can be obtained at what are called the Waterholes, about 14 miles from the Murray, and again at Clarence; in both places extremely bad and in the former only accessible for horses. There is no inhabited dwelling and no grass in the whole distance, which I usually rode through without a halt in six hours, as one cannot advantageously press a horse faster on such a deep sandy path.

I have ridden from Pinjarrup to Perth in a day several times, both across country and by Mandurup; the latter

route I consider full fifty eight miles, the other way through the bush in a direct line is not more than about 43 miles, but cruel long ones, with the Perth water for one's horse to swim at the end from Steele's mill.[1] For a horse I consider the longer road is the better, since it is always more fatiguing to go through wild uncleared bush than along a beaten track, however narrow, and the long swim at the end is very injurious to a hot tired horse.

I have hitherto forgotten to mention, in speaking of the Murray District, the numerous herds of wild cattle that frequent the plains and banks of the Serpentine, Dandelup and Murray. They are the remains and offspring of those which escaped from the settlers in the early days of the Colony and are of course of mixed breeds, but from the richness of feed and unlimited range they grow to a great size. I have seen great numbers of them, but I do not think there are any very long horned cattle amongst them, Shorthorned, Durham and Yorkshire predominate, with a slight hump on the shoulders from a cross with some Java cattle, once imported, which immediately ran wild. Many are without horns, and black, or spotted with black, prevail. I do not remember to have seen a red bull amongst them. I fell in with them constantly in my rides across country and frequently approached them very near, I certainly never saw finer or fatter cattle anywhere. On the open plains they were difficult to approach but they were generally too fat to run fast, especially the full grown ones, though the young stock were very active. On one occasion I was riding after a herd near the Malloman

[1] This is presumably the old mill at Point Belches, of which the walls are still standing. It was erected by Mr. W. K. Shenton, but according to the *Perth Gazette* of 22 April 1837 had been 'brought to its present state of perfection by Mr. Steel.' (Information supplied by Mr. F. I. Bray.)

admiring some very large shorthorn cows, when two black bulls with slight humps and no horns turned short round and faced me to cover the retreat of the rest—the hint was sufficient. Towards the end of the summer these herds leave this part of the country for the winter, and it is as yet unknown where they retire to, but, having good judgment in grass, I have no doubt they go to a fertile district. They often came down the Murray at night close to my hut and to Oakley's, their bellowings for hours together being answered by the tame cattle in the stockyard.

They might without difficulty be ridden in by well mounted hardy riders, if strong yards were erected for their reception with a high fence converging to the entrance, but many long miles would be necessary to fatigue them sufficiently. At present it is worth no man's while to take so much trouble and to risk the loss of his horse, since Government claims all the cattle. Any that are taken are kept for a year in confinement and then sold, when the captor gets half the proceeds after deducting the expense of keep, which swallows up the greater part of the amount, as it is expensive stall-feeding cattle which, of course, from their wild habits, cannot be turned loose to feed. Besides this, Mr Peel refuses to allow any one to hunt cattle for Government on his land, claiming them, and I think with justice, for himself.

A few further comments on the Vasse District and on the life of the colony are to be found in the letter which follows.

Canning River. March 12th 1837.

A ship called the *Shepherd* has at length arrived from England but does not bring a single line from you or any one else from Home, which has most bitterly disappointed me as at least *fourteen months* have elapsed since I wrote

you word that I was coming to this Colony, and arrivals here are so scarce that I have now no hope of hearing from you for several months more. In this miserable place a letter from Home is delightful and nearly the only thing that can break the dismal monotony and tedium of one's life.

Ever since I have been in this Colony I have constantly been changing my quarters and I am now on my way down to establish a new Military Post about 120 miles to the southward at the Vasse inlet in Geographe Bay where I am to be stationed in future. Two or three settlers live about five miles from where I shall be, but there it is all wild uncleared bush and I shall have plenty of employment at first in getting a hut up before the winter to keep myself and my baggage dry.

The climate at the Vasse is much cooler than on the Swan and there is some good land about there. I rode down to look at it in December, being the first white person who had ever gone down overland, and then I rather liked the country, but how I shall pass the long winter evenings I hardly know.

At Yundorup, five miles off, there is a pleasant family; they are the widow and children of a Clergyman and are doing pretty well as settlers, having some means of their own to assist them, the profits from farming here being extremely doubtful.

I am now writing this from the house of a settler, having got thus far from Perth, ten miles on my way to my new station, and hearing that the *Shepherd* will sail soon I cannot let pass the opportunity of writing a few lines to let you know that I am alive and well, though about as miserable as any subaltern in His Majesty's Army. I do not see a chance of getting a Company in the Regiment until we

get to India whither I hope we shall proceed in a year. I only wish our time were already come. I had rather have a short life and a merry one in an unhealthy climate than linger away my days in a miserable hut in the Bush with very few books, and these read and re-read until I know them by heart, and dependent on my gun and my dogs for food. The only redeeming feature of the Colony is the climate, which is certainly good and healthy; however it is no use grumbling, I must bear it for another year, I suppose, as it appears impossible to get an unattached company now. You may however be able to get me leave from the Horse Guards by the time we go to India.

I have managed by economy to buy two horses which enable me to get about the country more comfortably than I did at first when I had to walk and carry my pack. They do not cost much in the bush as I turn them loose to shift for themselves and only give them a little corn once a day to keep them near home. I think that horses here can do more work than in England; at least I think few grass fed horses with you would travel forty to fifty miles a day without knocking up, here they are so starved and illused that I begin to think that they like it.

This is the worst season in the year for travelling, being the last month of summer; the rivers and swamps are dry so that water is very scarce and the Natives have burnt with fire much of the country, and the sun burning the grass on the remainder there is no food for horses until the rains in May, when the vegetation springs again and the country assumes a different appearance. Now nothing can be more dismal, the country all black and bare of vegetation, while the blackened and charred trunks of trees look particularly horrid. Whole Districts appear in mourning at this season and the burnt ground is particularly hot and

dusty to travel over. I am sure no extra means are required of increasing the heat when the thermometer generally stands at about 90° in the most cool situations exposed to the sea breeze. However the heat of the summer is now nearly over and until May the weather is dry, cool and pleasant: then it gets very cold with alternate frosts and heavy rains for some months. The frosts usually cease in July but the rains continue until the end of October, from which time no more falls, except two or three light showers, until the following May.

V

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: CONCLUSION

Bunbury's time in Western Australia was now almost at an end. But before he goes, let him say his say upon the state of the West Australian aborigines and the relations of the settlers with them. The notes are undated, but it may be presumed that they sum up his opinions on these questions.

It is very easy for the Home Government, led and intimidated by the outcries of the Methodist party which is daily gaining strength and ground in England, to write directions to the Govrs of Colonies about the conduct to be observed towards the Aborigines. Little does the Secretary for the Colonies, seated at ease in Downing Street, know of the difficulties of the subject he so summarily disposes of by declaring that the Australian Aborigines are British Subjects and to be dealt with according to British Law.[1] It would be well for the Emigrants, who are daily increasing in numbers and respectability, if every Colonial Secretary were obliged to make himself at least slightly

[1] This presumably refers to Lord Glenelg's dispatch of 23 July 1835 on the 'Pinjarra affair' (see above, p. 156, note). In it he remarked that 'whenever it may be necessary to bring any native to justice, every form should be observed which would be considered necessary in the case of a white person; and no infliction of punishment, however trivial, should be permitted, except by the award of some competent authority'. This was after all only a development of the principle of Sir James Stirling's early proclamation that the natives were entitled to the protection of the British laws; nor did Lord Glenelg disapprove of the punitive measures taken at Pinjarra. Still, however desirable it may have been to inculcate forbearance, as Lord Glenelg did, the settlers prided themselves on having shown it, and it was doubtless irritating to be treated on such an occasion as this to a general philosophical disquisition on the duty of the white settler to his uncivilized aboriginal neighbours.

acquainted with a subject before he presumes to write his specious and well worded dispatches to the Governor of a Colony. By them he compromises not only the property but the lives of the settlers who, naturally, in establishing themselves in a distant land, and struggling against difficulties and privations, of which persons at home have little idea, look to the Home Government for support and protection against robbery and murder. At present, I am sorry to say, the Settlers in Western Australia look in vain for such protection; the measures of the Home Government lead one to suppose that they consider the life of a Christian Settler as of less value than that of a savage.

Far am I from sanctioning, or supporting, any violence against the ignorant and benighted wretches; I certainly object to the white Settler ever taking the law into his own hands or taking away the life of a Native, except in his own defence in case of attack, when he would be equally justified in killing a white man. But can it for an instant be supposed that a Governor, chosen from the highest grades of the Army or Navy, would permit such conduct by persons under his command? Who can imagine that a British Officer of high rank would sanction, or in any way allow, the Aborigines to be murdered in cold blood or massacred with impunity by the white people? He can have no possible motive for allowing such conduct, and policy, religion and humanity, would all point out to him the necessity of pursuing a different course, of endeavouring, by kindness and a steady adherence to firm and conciliatory conduct towards them, to make friends of them and, by allowing and encouraging them to associate with the white people, to try by degrees to introduce some foundation of civilization, and, it is to be hoped, eventually, of Religion. But, at the same time, in the case of serious

and repeated depredations, especially when accompanied by violence and murder, it is necessary that such an example should be made of the offenders as to deter others from the commission of similar acts. For this purpose the British criminal law is insufficient for this simple reason; that the natives only attack a farm where one or two white men are at a time. The murder of these men itself destroys the possibility of bringing evidence against the natives. For although afterwards other natives will inform us of the names of the offending parties, so as to leave no doubt of their guilt upon our minds, yet the evidence of a savage who not only is not a Christian but is destitute of any idea of religion whatever, cannot be admissible in a Court of Justice, consequently the perpetrators of the most dreadful crimes must necessarily and inevitably escape punishment for want of evidence, although no moral doubt exists of their guilt. In Western Australia we have to deal with a race of savages as subtle as they are cruel and revengeful, who never forget an injury and whose laws or customs compel them to take life for life.

I admit that they would be in some degree justified in taking the life of a white man for one of them murdered by us, but it would be more in accordance with the usual ideas of justice if they were to avenge it upon him who injured them, and not upon an innocent individual. However, even this, being according to their own rules of justice, erroneous as those may be, is more pardonable than that they should revenge the apprehension of any of their friends against whom warrants had been issued in the course of law for serious robberies and who were committed by a Magistrate to jail to stand their trial for these offences; that this act, strictly according to the British law, should be immediately followed by the murder of an equal

number of white Settlers who were utterly unconnected with the affair, and resided some miles from the spot, shows, in my opinion, the impolicy and absurdity of treating these people as British subjects, until they have received sufficient civilization to enable them to understand the penalties they incur by their crimes. While they remain in their present barbarous state, ignorant of any religion or the obligations of an oath, it is idle to treat them as rational civilized creatures worthy to enjoy the benefit of our laws and constitution.

In some of the Colonies, especially the penal ones, I believe the aborigines have really been treated with hardship and even cruelty, which is not to be wondered at when we consider that they first come into contact with a worthless set of men, banished from their native land for their crimes. At the distant stock stations in the interior of New South Wales the natives first meet and become acquainted with Europeans, and bitterly in many instances they suffer for it, the men being shot or driven away by the depraved convicts, or emancipated stockkeepers, who take possession of or ravish the women. In like manner, the natives inhabiting the coasts, especially the south coast, of New Holland and of Van Dieman's Land early learnt to dread and hate the white people, only having seen the parties of sealers who live generally on the different Islands, pursuing their trade by means of boats. It has for a length of time been, and even now is, their custom to carry off women from the different tribes to live with them, and they employ these women to pull their boats and do all the hard work, while they themselves, except on very rare occasions of active exertion sealing, lead the most idle, good for nothing, debauched life imaginable. Such specimens of White Men, the first they met with, of course rendered the

natives hostile and revengeful, as the unfortunate murder of poor Capt Barker of the 39th at Lake Alexandrina too fully proved.[1]

One cannot blame the Savages who had met with such treatment for being desirous of avenging their injuries and sufferings, but such has never been the case in the Swan River Settlement, and we must seek the cause of their treacherous hostility and the cruel unprovoked murders they have so frequently been guilty of, in their own laws and customs, universally acknowledged and obeyed by them, and not in our treatment of them.

I was nearly two years in the Colony, during which time I was in daily and hourly communication with the natives, some of whom I had always about me; part of the time I was employed in checking their attacks and depredations in the York district, and from living nearly the whole of my time on out stations and travelling much in the bush, and mixing among the various aboriginal tribes, I had many opportunities of studying their manners and habits. Feeling an interest in these singular people of whom so little is known at home, I turned my attention often and seriously to ascertaining their motives and the causes of the various extraordinary customs I observed amongst them. As I only understood a little of their language I was of course unable to ascertain nearly all that I wished,

[1] Captain Collet Barker was murdered at Lake Alexandrina, the lake into which the Murray flows, in 1831, whilst examining for the New South Wales Government the coast of what was shortly afterwards to be known as South Australia. It was reported that he was speared by the natives for no other reason than 'curiosity to ascertain if they had power to kill a white man'. But in the opinion of Sturt, the explorer, it was 'much more probable that the cruelties exercised by the sealers towards the blacks along the south coast may have instigated the latter to take vengeance on the innocent as well as on the guilty'.

but I learnt enough of them to know that no reliance whatever can be placed upon them, and that after living for months in one's house and being treated in the most friendly manner a native will treacherously assist his fellows to rob or murder one, taking advantage of the experience he has gained by living with one to do it with the greatest certainty and least danger to himself.

They appear to acknowledge no chief or head of a tribe, but a certain amount of deference is paid to some elderly man, probably celebrated for his daring, success in hunting, cunning or other quality much esteemed by them; their law appears to be that of the strongest, especially in the case of matrimony, that man having most wives who can steal or keep them best by fighting.

In some respects, however, they appear to respect private property and are honest towards each other, whatever they may be towards us. They will steal nothing from each other except women, and in love all is reckoned fair even among more polished nations. They have, of course, to undergo punishment for this sooner or later, but it is generally very slight to the man, the unfortunate woman being always the greatest sufferer, being speared in the thighs or legs and probably severely beaten besides.

The quarrels and fights of the natives are however too difficult and intricate for anyone but themselves to understand, and very frequently end with very little damage done. I have seen tribes meet in Perth for a fight who have passed a whole afternoon in violent altercation, vehement threats, and gesticulations; the friends holding back the more violent by throwing their arms round them and pinning their hands and arms to their sides, while the prisoners pretend to be in a violent and ungovernable rage, which

they evidently are not, since it often happens that a full grown strong man is held by a lad. However, it seems to be a rule not to break away, and they defer their quarrel till a better opportunity. It is an interesting sight, on these occasions, to see a group of twenty of thirty stout natives, perfectly naked and covered with wilghi of red earth and grease, with Manite branches in their hair and armlets, collected in a dense mass, all with their spears erect, generally four or five each, preparing for battle, talking, laughing, shouting, or uttering loud and vehement threats, shaking their spears and evidently working themselves up into a rage, until some one or two break from the group, and with their spears shipped run at full speed in all directions, performing various figures and evolutions or stopping short before the enemy, stamping, uttering loud cries and brandishing their spears. All these warlike demonstrations, however, end usually in one or two men getting speared in the calf of the leg, or often only the women are the sufferers; in all cases they are certain to have far the greatest share of the wounds although they have often nothing to do with the quarrel. A. and B., of different tribes, are going to fight, let us say, for some old-standing grudge between them, which perhaps has been pending for years. Their fight goes no further than abuse or perhaps two or three spears thrown without effect. But in the mean time some brother or friend of A. sneaks off to the rear of B's party where the women are, and spears his mother or wife or daughter in the thighs or legs. This gives rise to fresh quarrels; new parties engage in it and after half a day of wordy warfare, the next day before sunrise a good deal of vicious spearing takes place, though very seldom in the body—they always, unless very determined to kill, aim at the legs.

I have known several natives speared through the body who have recovered in a week or ten days, and I saw a man speared in Perth who had at least three inches of a glass edged spear driven into his head just behind the ear: I saw a friend of his afterwards coolly pick up a little bit of stick from off the sand and deliberately proceed to extract the sharp fragments from the head of the other one, who had a stiff neck and 'catta mendag' for near a fortnight. About the same time Boongabeori, a Perth native, was speared through the stomach, the weapon entering just above the right hip and coming out again close in front of the top of the left hip bone; he was longer recovering, and looked pale, if such an expression can be used, and moved with pain and difficulty for some weeks. Probably he would have died if the white people had not supplied him with food during his illness. Our doctoring they are better without and, except in a case of amputation or extracting teeth, they cure one another in a few days with marvellous simple applications or indeed often none at all, when they linger and die in the hands of a white Doctor. From their total abstinence from ardent spirits, the general scarcity of food, and the consequent poverty of their blood they are not subject to inflammation when wounded and consequently their injuries heal very rapidly unless the bone is hurt, when it takes longer, and some times abscesses form, and the lower part of the limb withers and at length drops off. I fell in with an old man in the Harvey country once, (and I have frequently met with his tracks in the bush) who had lost his right foot, and I learnt that many years ago he had been speared on the shin bone and his foot fell off in consequence together with his ancle bone and about three inches of his leg above. He now goes about with a 'wonna' like an old woman, and has several wives,

whom it appears to be the object of some of my young Murray friends to take from him, venturing to do so, as they say themselves, because he cannot revenge the injury by spearing them.

They are altogether a curious race and do not seem to be governed by the same feelings and affections as ourselves. One morning as I was dressing, in Perth, an elderly man I knew by sight as a native of the neighbourhood passed the gate howling and crying woefully, with tears coursing themselves in rapid succession down his dirty black cheeks, which looked unusually hideous from the long red marks where his nails had torn the skin and brought blood in plenty, both there and on his forehead. I called to him to learn what was the matter, when with much howling he told me that my friends of the Murray who had been in considerable numbers in the town for some days had that morning killed his son a fine lad about twelve years old; they had thrown a very great number of spears into his body and had then run away towards home. After relating his story with every appearance of sincere grief for his poor boy and hatred of his enemies, he stopped and, saying that so much crying made him very hungry, asked for sixpence to buy a loaf. I afterwards watched him making the circuit of the town, stopping at every house where he could get an audience to listen to the details of his grief and wrongs and where he hoped to collect sixpences to enable him to bear his sufferings with resignation. A few hours later I found him seated in the street surrounded by many Perth friends and relations, munching the bread that he had purchased and expatiating with rapture on the size and beauty of the many spears that the Murray men in their hasty retreat had left sticking in the body of his son.

The Murray spears are longer and heavier and straighter than those of any other district I know, and are finished with a great deal of care, so they were an important prize to the Perth man. If possible, the natives always withdraw their spears after killing an enemy, and reckon them of greater value for the act, showing the marks of blood with great glee.

The Perth men often object to the Murray tribes coming into town and have frequently applied to the Governor to forbid it, but he naturally will not interfere, and if they are such cowards as to allow themselves to be bullied on their own dunghill, I think they deserve what they meet with.

A great outcry has been raised by certain soi-disant Philanthropists at the Government allowing the natives to come and fight their battles in and about Perth, and declare that, as they are British subjects, it is the duty of the Magistrates to interfere and prevent these murders from taking place. That these horrid and brutalizing scenes should not take place in the streets of the Capital I entirely assent to, but we have not the power to prevent it, and as to taking cognisance of the acts of one native tribe against another, I doubt the justice of it and am quite certain of the impolicy of it at present. It has not yet been put into practice in N. S. Wales, where from long intercourse with Europeans the natives are comparatively civilized and sufficiently acquainted with our laws in common use to know right from wrong. If they injure us they are dealt with according to our law (I wish I could say as much for our injuries committed against them) but it is a delicate and difficult question to handle whether it is or ever will be wise or just to interfere with their laws and customs amongst themselves, established long before we trespassed on their

territory and forcibly dispossessed them, not only of their land but also of their means of subsistance. I think, myself, that at present, however horrible the exhibition must be of these barbarous and savage fights to civilized eyes, yet it is better that it should take place in the town or it's immediate vicinity, rather than at a distance, since many of the white people have acquired a certain degree of influence over the natives which may be usefully employed in checking their ferocity and preventing fresh quarrels, besides assisting the wounded with food or sheltering them from their enemies. It certainly would be better if we could put a stop to their fights altogether but that is out of the question.

The task of improving the natives is a difficult one and one hardly knows where to commence, except it be by endeavouring to give them some idea of decency, and not permitting them to appear openly in the streets quite naked as they do at present, both sexes without the least scruple. Their cloaks are not intended to conceal those parts usually hidden from view but are solely for warmth; the women are however generally better covered than the men, though not much. I do not know a more disgusting, or to a European more extraordinary, sight than that of a woman suckling her child, (which is suspended in her bag or 'cotto' on her back,) by throwing her long flabby breast over her shoulder to it, where the wretched dirty infant, with it's eyes and nose half closed with filth and flies, sucks out of a thing more resembling the hose of a fire engine than a woman's breast. The white people long resident in Perth have become used to the sight of the naked natives in all parts of the town and they therefore attract no attention, except from new comers, who naturally marvel at such uncommon want of decency as is shewn.

At the end of August 1837 Bunbury heard that his father had obtained for him the leave of absence he desired. His last days in the colony are described in the letter printed below.

Port Louis. Mauritius. Decr. 13th. 1837.

This is the first opportunity I have had of writing to you for many long months, and perhaps you will ask why I write now instead of proceeding home by the ship that is now sailing, so I must tell you something of my movements.

In the first place you must know that it was not till the 30th August that the *Hero* arrived at Swan River bringing your packet of letters which I had been so long and anxiously looking out for. The *Hero* had had a very long passage and brought your letters both of December and January, together with old Irwin[1] and my leave of absence; the latter you may suppose was most acceptable, the former we had much rather have been without.

For some time I was in doubt whether I should return by the *Hero*, as I had nearly all my traps together with horses and dogs at a distant outstation on the Vasse of which I was in command, but being required at Head Quarters for a Court Martial I left my servant in charge of my hut and property, intending to return in a fortnight. Instead, I was sent off to a different part of the Colony on urgent duty and, the wet season coming on, I could no longer cross the country and had to attempt to go by sea

[1] Captain (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel) F. C. Irwin commanded the troops in the colony from 1829 until 1833 and acted as Lieutenant Governor during Sir James Stirling's absence in England until he himself went there on leave in September 1833. While in England he defended the colony against Wakefield's criticisms in his pamphlet *The State and Position of Western Australia.* On his return he resumed command of the troops, retaining it until 1852. G. F. Moore's opinion of Irwin is more favourable than Bunbury's. It is at least clear that he was devoted to the interests of the colony.

in the Colonial schooner. We encountered heavy weather, lost all our sails and great part of our forerigging, and after ten days knocking about in imminent and hourly danger of shipwreck on a lee and rocky shore were obliged to put back. So ended my attempt to get my things from my station: I have now left them to their fate.

As no other vessel came to Swan River I came away in the *Hero* and sailed from Freemantle on the 8th November. After a pleasant though long passage we arrived here the day before yesterday, and I am now taking a roasting until the Brig is ready to sail again, which I trust will be in eight or ten days at furthest.

I prefer continuing in the *Hero* for several good reasons. The first of which is that I go home in her having one of the stern cabins, a large airy cabin, for £55 from here, while if I took my passage in a large Mauritius ship I should have to pay £90 to £100. In the second place I like the Captain and a passenger on board and should be sorry to change. Thirdly there is every probability of our touching at the Cape and perhaps at Algoa Bay. I should much like to see the Cape and your friends there, and after *all I shall not lose much time—perhaps indeed none.* You may expect to see me, barring accidents, at the end of April or in May at latest.

The accidents to be apprehended over and above the usual dangers of the seas, are hurricanes in the neighbourhood of these Islands, and the probability of my being roasted to a cinder before I leave Port Louis. If you have ever passed forty eight hours in a hot oven with the door shut you may form some idea of the temperature here; the town being built in a low hollow on the side of the Island, with a high range of rocky mountains close above it encompassing it in a horse shoe form on three sides.

It is the drollest place I was ever in, the people of all colours, from the thin sallow Europeans who have lost both their colour and their flesh from the heat, to the Negroes of the blackest hue.

The town is regularly built, the houses nearly all of wood, but many of them cool and airy with good gardens containing most beautiful tropical trees and plants.

Everyone speaks French (but very different from that spoken in Paris) and in habits and customs of all kinds the people are still entirely French. French shops, French wines, French cooking, French theatre, French carts and mule harness like that you see between Lyons and Marseilles, and most thoroughly French hatred of *ce sacré John Bull*.

The Governor is in the country, I know no one in any of the Regiments here and altogether I am very like a fish out of water.

To conclude my description of the place, which is undoubtedly a very beautiful Island, and pleasant quarters for a Salamander—everything is dear beyond description; *par exemple*, Breakfast 3/0, Dinner *a la table d'hote* 8/0, Horse hire £1 per diem, a Caleche with two horses £4 per diem and everything else in proportion. The inhabitants vie with one another in imposing on strangers, especially Englishmen, who certainly hold this Island only because the Creoles are afraid of their Redcoats and bayonets, and very justly so.

The stations and plantations on the windward side of the mountains are described as cool and delightful. It is curious that in this large commercial town there is only one Hotel, where I am now writing. It is a thorough French Inn of middling description with fine marble floors, gaudy papers on the walls, a sufficiency of dirt, noise and

discomfort, and plenty of black and brown waiters who attend upon one as little as they conveniently can and make as much noise as possible.

You may suppose that for the first two days in a strange place where one knows no one things do not wear a *couleur de rose* appearance, but I am quite ready to admit from what I see that it may, indeed must, be a very pleasant quarter for Officers who can speak French and are not short of money.

I think I shall pass the English winter and cold spring better at the Cape than in Suffolk and to tell the truth I dread the cold very much. I suffered so much from it in Van Dieman's Land that I will not willingly encounter the worst season on my first arrival. I never wish to be in a climate colder than the Swan River and even there the winter is too cold for me. I like the thermometer to range between 70° and 90° with a few hotter days, but here the heat is really too great to be pleasant, especially as I walk about all day and the nights are very oppressive.

My leave only commences from the 8th Novr so I shall have a long spell with you this time and I assure you I look forward to it with the greatest possible pleasure. I have now passed four long years away from Europe and long to return again. I fear during the time I have gained little or nothing in my profession, but certainly a large stock of experience, and a more determined love of rambling than ever—and a grey head of hair.

APPENDIX I

SOME NATIVE WORDS[1]

Ardenyeena. Sit down.

Baayoo. Red nut of the Zaina.
Babing. Friend.
Bada or *Bader*. Grub, Maggot.
Balgarr. Blackboy.
Ballicoojal. Four.
Bande. Thigh or leg.
Batta. Grass.
Bee. Fish.
Beeri. Blackboy gum.
Belo. River.
Bibbi. Mother or milk.
Bidjia. Sleep, rest.
Bondo. True, certainly.
Bono. Tree, stick.
Booga. A cloak, clothes.
Booggia. Ground, earth.
Boola. Plenty, many.
Boora. Swamp.
Boorda. By and by, to-morrow.
Booye. Stone, rock.

Calla. Fire.
Caram. Formerly, a long time ago.
Catta. Head.
Cattamammerup. Mountain.
Cobel. Belly, stomach.
Coojal. Two.
Cooljak. Black swan.
Cotto. A bag, or sack.

Dabba. Knife.
Dalielle. Lie, to tell a lie.
Deena or *jeena*. Foot.
Derbal. Estuary.
Dombat. One.
Doobuk. Root, potato.
Dora or *Doodi*. Dog.

Gabbe. Water.
Gabbe yulup. Thirsty.
Ghidjil. Spear.
Gianga. Ghost, spirit.
Gilba. A flat.
Gonak. Crawfish.
Gongo. Path, way, road.
Goomal. Opossum.
Gwa. Yes.
Gwabba or *quabba*. Good.
Gwangia. Swamp Banksia.

Kadjoo. Hammer.
Kitkit. Quick, fast.
Kybra. A ship.

Mama. Father.
Manga. Weir for fish.
Mangiara. The hair.
Maraghan. Yesterday.
Marra. To take, seize.
Marrine. Flour.
Matta. Leg.
Mauer. A few.
Meeal. See, to see.
Mendag. Sick.
Mero. Throwing stick.
Mia. House, Hut.
Miki. Moon.

[1] The spelling in this vocabulary varies from that for instance in Moore's *Diary* (Appendix), but the words can all, or nearly all, be identified there.

Moco. Water, rain.
Moolghen. Afraid.
Moolia. The nose, smell.
Mopo. Blood.
Moro. A tail.
Moro dabana, *Catta booge*, or *Goma booge*. A term of abuse, literally 'Bone of Youert'.
Mulgair. Thunder.
Mummerup. Big, great.
Munghite. Flower of the Banksia.
Munyana. To-morrow.

Naga. There.
Nalgo. To eat.
Nanga. Beard.
Nargagli. Blackboy grub, (Murray R.).
Neumap. Little.
Noolaban. Belt.
Noorgo. Egg.
Nooro. Fly, gnat.
Nunga. Sun.
Nungarr. Stars.

Oonana. Brown duck.
Ootan. The sea, ocean.

Quibble. To steal.

Wanghi. Talk, speech.
Warroo. Female kangaroo.
Wedgu, *Wudgu*. Emu.
Widgeebande. A gun.
Wiena. Afraid, frightened.
Wilghi. Red earth and grease.
Windo, *Windong*. Bad.
Wingi. Where.
Womma. Another, the other.
Woneghi. Dead.
Wotto. Walk, to walk.
Wow. Evil spirit.
Wullioo. Kangaroo rat.

Yabre. Fast, Quick.
Yäe. To-day, now.
Yowert. Male kangaroo.
Yuadda. No.
Yulup. Hungry.
Yunga. Give.

APPENDIX II

SOME PLANT NAMES

Black Boy or Grass Tree. Various species of *Xanthorrhoea*.
Broom or Tea Tree. *Melaleuca uncinata*.
Furze Tree or Stinkwood. Probably *Zieria Smithii*.
Kangaroo Grass. Various species of *Andropogon* and *Anthistiria*.
Mahogany. *Eucalyptus marginata*.
Peppermint Tree. *Eucalyptus amygdalina*?
Spear Rushes or Spear Grass. Various species of *Stipa*.
Spearwood Tree. *Eucalyptus doratoxylon*.
'Tooart' or White Gum. *Eucalyptus gomphocephala*.
Zanthoriza. Perhaps *Xanthorrhoea* is meant.

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