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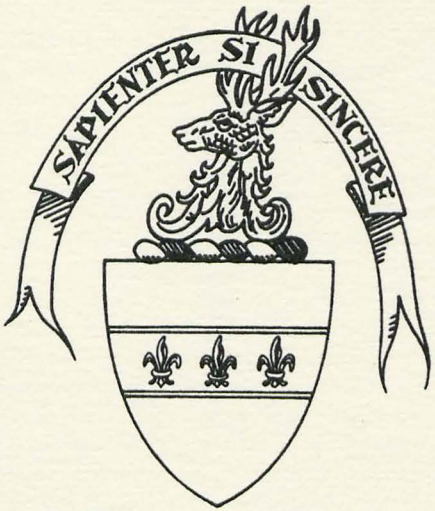

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Rodney Davidson

The Universal Pamphleteer.

EMIGRATION TO THE SWAN RIVER.

A COMPLETE HISTORY

OF THE

SWAN-RIVER SETTLEMENT;

DESCRIBING ITS

Soil, Climate, & Natural Productions,

AND PARTICULARLY THE ADVANTAGES IT POSSESSES, COMPARATIVELY WITH OTHER COLONIES, AS A

PLACE OF EMIGRATION;

WITH

MR. FRASER'S REPORT

ON ITS BOTANICAL PRODUCTIONS,

As Read before the Linnæan Society;

THE OUTFITS REQUISITE FOR EMIGRANTS;

AND THE COST AT WHICH THE NECESSARIES AND COMFORTS OF LIFE MAY BE OBTAINED;

The Terms offered to Emigrants by Government,

&c. &c. &c.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, THE

LATEST AND MOST CORRECT INFORMATION

As to the Progress of the First Settlers, and the Present State of the Colony.

EMIGRATION TO THE SWAN RIVER.

NEW HOLLAND is one of those countries about which a great deal has been written, and very little is known. It is of course easy to state its distance from the other great continents of the world, to inform the reader in what degree of latitude and longitude it is found, and to conjecture pretty nearly the circumference of its vast and varied shores. With the aid of a few intelligent settlers and clever navigators, a tolerably correct picture may be sketched of a small portion of the eastern coasts, with some few points here and there, on the other parts of the shore; but beyond this our real knowledge does not extend, and if we proceed, our descriptions must be grounded in great measure on theory and conjecture. Information, however, is continually on the increase: the courage and enterprise of our countrymen are perpetually conducting them into the unexplored regions of this new world; and the occurrences of almost every day throw some new light upon its singularly mysterious recesses.

The interior being nearly unknown, and as the mouth of no great river has yet been discovered on any part of the coast, the most interesting inquiry appears to be, whether the new settlement on the Swan River, on the western shores of New Holland, possesses any real advantages over the colonies in New South Wales? The best method of determining this point appears to be, to recapitulate concisely the characteristics of both sides of the island, and allow the comparison to be tacitly made by the reader himself.

The "Australian Hesperia," of the Quarterly Review, extending from latitude 31° to latitude 34° 30′ south, is estimated to contain from five to six millions of acres, of which the greater part is supposed to be fit for the plough. On this tract of land it is calculated that a million of souls might find comfortable subsistence. Captain Stirling lately made an examination of the country, which, however, was rapidly and imperfectly performed, and the language in which he describes it is particularly vague.—"We found," says he, "the country in general rich and romantic; we gained the summit of the first range of mountains, and had a bird's eye view of an immense plain, which extended as far as the eye could reach, to the northward, southward, and westward. After ten days' absence, we returned to the ship; we encountered no difficulty that was not easily removable, (and therefore no difficulty); we were furnished with abundant fresh provisions by our guns, and met with no obstruction from the natives."

The climate of the New, or "Australian Hesperia" appears to be somewhat humid. The summer winds are said to be invariably accompanied by rain, and the land and sea-breezes create a moisture in the atmosphere, which renders the climate cool and agreeable. This moisture greatly promotes vegetation, and mainly contributes to the keeping up of that rich and romantic appearance which Captain Stirling so much admires.

Coal has not yet been found at the Swan River, but there appears to be the greatest probability that abundant mines of it exist there. Fresh water is plentiful; and upon the mountains, trees of enormous magnitude were observed. But the

advantages of this colony are thus briefly recapitulated by Mr. Fraser, the scientific companion of Captain Stirling :—

"In giving my opinion of the land seen on the banks of the Swan River, I hesitate not in pronouncing it superior to any I ever saw in New South Wales, east of the Blue Mountains, not only in its local character, but in the many existing advantages which it holds out to settlers. These advantages I consider to be—

"*First*,—The evident superiority of the soil.

"*Secondly*,—The facility with which a settler can bring his farm into a state of immediate culture, in consequence of the open state of the country, which allows not a greater average than two trees to an acre.

"*Thirdly*,—The general abundance of the springs, producing water of the best quality, and the consequent permanent humidity of the soil; two advantages not existing on the eastern coast. And,

"*Fourthly*,—The advantages of water-carriage to his door, and the non-existence of impediment to land-carriage."

Between the two heads which form the entrance into Swan River, there is, unfortunately, a bar, made by the continuity of the limestone ridge. Over this bar, the depth at low water is but six feet, and is, therefore, practicable only for boats or rafts. About a mile inside the heads, the water deepens, and then commences a succession of cliffs, or natural wharfs, with four, five, and six fathoms at their bases. The same depths are extended over a magnificent expanse of salt water, to which Captain Sterling has given the name of Melville Water, and which, in his opinion, wants only a good entrance to make it one of the finest harbours in the world, being seven or eight miles in length, by three or four in breadth, and having a depth of water from four to seven fathoms. This narrow entrance of the river, he thinks, might be made navigable by ships of burden without difficulty or great expense.

When the town begins to rise, and substantial buildings are required, the blocks of stone procured by quarrying this entrance, will go far towards paying the expense of excavation.

Into this expansive sheet of water fall two rivers; one from the north-east, which is properly the Swan River—the other from the south-east, called Canning's River. Captain Stirling examined them both; the former to its source, the latter beyond the point where the water ceased to be brackish. They are both sufficiently convenient for boat navigation, even at the end of the dry season; and any obstruction might easily be removed to make them more so, by which the productions of an immense extent of country might be transported by water-carriage.

Mr. Fraser remarks, that nothing of the mangrove appears along the banks of the Swan River, the usual situation of this plant being here occupied by the genus Metrosideros. The first plain, or flat, as it is called, contiguous to the river, commencing at Point Fraser, is formed of a rich soil, and appears, by a deposit of wreck, to be occasionally flooded to a certain extent. Here are several extensive salt-marshes, which Mr. Fraser thinks are admirably adapted for the growth of cotton. The hills, though scanty of soil, are covered with an immense variety of plants; among others, a magnificent species of Angophera occupied the usual place of the Eucalyptus, which, however, here, as on the eastern side, generally forms the principal feature in the botany of the country, accompanied by Mimosa, Correa, Mela-

leuca, Casuarina, Banksia, and Xantharea. The brome, or kangaroo-grass, was most abundant. On a more elevated flat, a little farther up the river, the botanist observes that the "magnificence of the Banksia, and aborescent Zamia, which was here seen thirty feet in height, added to the immense size of the Xanthorea near this spot, impart to the forest a character truly tropical." He says, that about five miles to the eastward of the river, there is an evident change in the character of the country; extensive plains of the richest description, consisting of an alluvial deposit, equalling in fertility those of the banks of the River Hawkesbury, in New South Wales, and covered with the most luxuriant brome grass. The Casuarina, so common near the limestone ridge of the coast, here disappears, and is succeeded by a pendulous species of Metrosideros, which continues to the source of the river.

"From this point," Mr. Fraser says, "the country resembles, in every essential character, that of the banks of those rivers which fall to the westward of the Blue Mountains in New South Wales, varying alternately on each bank, from hilly promontories of the finest red loam, and covered with stupendous Angopheros, to extensive flats of the finest description, studded with magnificent blue and water gums, and occasional stripes of Acacias, and papilionaceous shrubs, resembling the green wattle of New South Wales."

The animal productions are generally the same as those of New South Wales. The human species, in their physical qualities and endowments, are the same. Most of them wore kangaroo cloaks, which were their only clothing. They carry the same kind of spears, and the womera, or throwing stick, as are used by those in New South Wales. In the summer months they frequent the sea-coasts, where their skill in spearing fish is described as quite astonishing. In the winter they chiefly dwell in the woods on the higher grounds, where the kangaroos, the opossum tribes, and the land tortoises, are abundant. These, with birds and roots, constitute their sustenance. They have neither boat nor raft, nor did their party fall in with any thing resembling a hut. They made use of the word "Kangaroo," and other words in use at Port Jackson. The party saw only the three kinds of animals above mentioned, but heard the barking of the native dog. No other reptiles but iguanas and lizards, and a single snake, presented themselves.

Of birds, the list is more extensive. The emu is frequent on the plains, and that once supposed "*rara avis*," the black swan, was seen in the greatest abundance on the river to which it has lent its name, and particularly on Melville Lake. Equally abundant were numerous species of the goose and duck family. White and blue cockatoos, parrots and parroquets, were every where found. Pigeons and quails were seen in great quantities, and many melodious birds were heard in the woods.

Seals were plentiful on all the islands. Captain Stirling says, that it was not the season for whales, but their debris strewed the shore of Geographer's Bay. The French, it is stated, met with a prodigious number of whales along this part of the coast, and sharks, equally numerous, and of an enormous size, some of them stated to be upwards of two thousand pounds in weight. Vlaming mentions the vast numbers of large sharks on this part of the coast, and he, as well as the French, found the sea near the shore swarming with sea-snakes, the largest about nine or ten feet long. Cap-

tain Stirling's party procured three or four different kinds of good esculent fish; one in particular, a species of rock-cod, is described as excellent.

"The bottom of the sea," observes Captain Stirling, "is composed of calcareous sand, sometimes passing into marl or clay. On this may be seen growing an endless variety of marine plants, which appear to form the haunts, and perhaps the sustenance, of quantities of small fish. When it is considered that the bank extends a hundred miles from the shore, and that, wherever the bottom is seen, it presents a moving picture of various animals gliding over the green surface of the vegetation, it is not too much to look forward to the time when a valuable fishery may be established on these shores. Even now, a boat, with one or two men, might be filled in a few hours."

The Island of Buache is admirably adapted for a fishing-town. The anchorage close to its eastern shore, in Cockburn Island, is protected against all winds; and the island itself, of six or seven thousand acres of a light sort of sand and loam, is well suited, as Mr. Fraser thinks, for any description of light garden crops. The side next the sea is fenced by a natural dyke of lime stone, covered with cypress, and in many places with an aborescent species of Metrosideros; and all the valleys are clothed with a gigantic species of Solanum, and a beautiful Brownonia. The soil in these thickets is a rich brown loam, intermixed with blocks of limestone, and susceptible, Mr. Fraser thinks, of producing any description of crop. Fresh water may be had in all these valleys, by digging to the depth of two feet. On this island Captain Stirling caused a garden to be planted and railed out; on which account, he named it "Garden Island."

On this island, Buache, or garden (as the party named it), Captain Stirling left a cow, two ewes in lamb, and three goats, where, he observes, abundance of grass and a large pool of water awaited them. They would be, at all events, perfectly free from any disturbance from the natives.

Rottenest Island is the largest in this quarter, being about eight miles in length; it contains several saline lagoons, separated from the sea, on the north-east side, by a beach, composed of a single species of bivalve shell. Like Buache, it is covered with an abundant and vigorous vegetation, and a small species of kangaroo is said, by Freycinet, to be numerous upon it. Vlaming, who first discovered it, speaks in raptures of the beauties of this island, to which, from the multitude of rats, as he thought them to be, he gave the name of the "Rats' Nest."

It is not to be supposed that a hasty visit could enable the party to explore the mineralogical resources of the country. It appears, however, by a list of the soils and rock formations, in Captain Stirling's report, that he brought home specimens of copper ore, of lead ore with silver, and also with arsenic, two species of magnetic iron, several varieties of granite and chalcedony, and of limestone, with stalagmite incrustations, &c. The high cliffs of Cape Naturalist abound with large masses of what Mr. Fraser calls "an extraordinary aggregate," containing petrifactions of bivalve, and other marine shells, every particle of which was incrusted with minute crystals. Here, too, he says, veins of iron, of considerable thickness, were seen to traverse the rock in various directions; and he speaks of the caverns formed in the micareous schistus between the granite and the limestone, as something very extraordinary. They contained rock-salt in large

quantities, forming thick incrustations on every part of the surface, beautifully crystallized, and penetrating into the most compact parts of the rock. In many of these caverns were very brilliant stalactites and stalagmites, of extraordinary size, adhering to the nodules of granite which form their bases or floors, and which are from forty to fifty feet above the level of the sea.

In several parts of the limestone formation, mineral springs were found; one in particular was noticed within half a mile of the entrance into Swan River. It bubbled out at the base of the solid rock in a stream, whose transverse area was measured by Captain Stirling, and found to be from six to seven feet, running at the rate of three feet in a second of time. It was thermal, saline, pleasant to the taste, and some who partook of it attributed to it an aperient quality.

The following interesting report of the "Botanical Productions, &c., of the Banks of Swan River, Isle of Buache, &c.," was lately read by Mr. Fraser before the Linnæan Society:—

"The North and South Heads of the entrance into Swan River are formed below rocks of fossil limestone, in an advanced state of decomposition, presenting, in many instances, apertures of the most fantastic form, in which are exposed to view the appearance of masses of roots, and trunks of trees of great size.

"The soil on the south head, though barren, produces a considerable variety of interesting plants; amongst which I observed a beautiful species, producing large quantities of rich blue flowers, and a species of reclining white flowers give a snowy appearance to many parts of the cliffs.

"In tracing the river a quarter of a mile from its entrance on the south bank, I observed quantities of a beautiful species of *Brownonia*, growing in great luxuriance on the margin of a salt-marsh; its flowers were of a brilliant sky-blue. Here I likewise observed a magnificent species of *Melaleuca* with scarlet flowers, and two species of *Metrosideros*.

"Half a mile from the entrance, I found the soil, although apparently sterile, to consist of a fine light brown loam, containing a small proportion of sand, and capable of producing any description of light garden crops. This description applies not only to the immediate bank as far as the reach below Pelican Point, but likewise to the hills, as far as my observations went. These hills present the appearance of a petrified forest, from the immense quantity of trunks which protrude for several feet above the surface; but their decomposed state renders them of benefit rather than otherwise to the soil.

"I was much astonished at the beautiful dark green appearance of the trees, considering that the season had been evidently unusually dry; but the cause must arise from the great number of springs with which this country abounds. On penetrating two feet into the earth, I found the soil perfectly moist; and I feel confident that, had I proceeded a foot deeper, I should have found water. On the beach I observed several small pools of water, and numerous moist spots, which, in seasons of usual humidity, must be converted into springs, issuing from the calcareous rocks beneath.

"The luxuriance of the herbage on the beach itself is truly astonishing. Here I observed a beautiful pendulous species of *Leptospermum*, resembling, in its appearance, and the situation it prefers, the weeping willow. An arborescent species of *Acacia* was likewise seen associating with it.

"While examining the productions of a mass of cavernous limestone rocks on the beach, I was astonished by observing an extensive spring issue from beneath them; its width was about seven feet, running at the rate of three feet in a second: the water is brackish, but evidently fresh at some periods of the tide. Its elevation is about three feet above low-water mark, yet at the lowest ebb its current was at the above rate.

"The soil on the north head is sandy; its productions are much the same as that on the south. Two hundred yards from the beach the soil changes to a light red loam, improving, as the hills are ascended, to that of a fine virgin earth. The valleys separating these hills are of the richest description, and capable of producing any crop; the country continues of the same description along the coast, as far as my observations went, and inland to Pelican Point, beyond which its character was not examined.

"The limestonew ith which these hills are studded renders them admirably adapted for the culture of the vine, and, being divested of timber or brushwood, to immediate culture.

"The few trees and shrubs seen on these hills are stunted, but a species of *Calytrix*, or cypress, is of the most beautiful green.

"On perambulating the beach I was astonished at the great degree of fragrance imparted by two species of *Metrosideros*, then in flower, exceeding anything I ever smelt. On the beach I observed a magnificent arborescent species of *Rhagodia*, twenty feet in height, and immense quantities of *Gnaphalium*; but no marine productions were discovered.

"From Pelican Point to the entrance of the Moreau, the country is diversified with hills of gentle elevation, and narrow valleys, magnificently clothed with trees of the richest green. Here the genus *Banksia* appears in all its grandeur, consisting of three species, of which *grandis* is the most conspicuous. The principal timber is *Eucalyptus*. The shrubs consist of a species of *Dryandra*, two species of *Hakea*, one of *Grevillea*, and a species of pendulous *Viminaria* of considerable height, richly clothed with yellow and crimson flowers, associating itself in the most graceful manner with the pendulous *Leptospermum* already alluded to.

"The shores are covered with rushes of great height and thickness, concealing many beautiful syngenesious plants; they are occasionally flooded.

"The soil between the above points resembles, in its surface, the sandy soil of the shores of Port Jackson, more than any hitherto seen; but, on digging a few inches, it is found to contain a considerable proportion of loam. The valleys and headlands are of excellent soil, more particularly that of Garden Point. Here we planted several *Bananas*, and seeds of all sorts of culinary vegetables. This point produces an immense number of herbaceous plants, among which is a species of *Goodenia*.

"The botanical productions of Point Heathcote are splendid, consisting of magnificent *Banksias* and *Dryandras*, a remarkable species of *Hakea*, two of *Grevillea*, one of *Leptospermum*, and a beautiful dwarf species of *Calytrix*. Here we found great abundance of fresh water on the beach, by scratching the sand with our fingers, within two inches of low-water mark. The beach at Garden Point is of the same character; and I doubt not but every beach within the heads will be found of a similar description.

"The view from Pelican Point is exceedingly grand; the contrast between the dark blue of the distant

mountains and the livid green of the surrounding forests is peculiarly pleasing, and, to the eye of a person accustomed to the *everbrown* of the forests of Port Jackson, it must be particularly interesting, so materially distinct is it from anything in New South Wales. From Point Heathcote to the Inlands the country seemed to improve, as far as I could judge, from the immense quantity of herbage it produced.

"The only spot of the opposite shore examined was found to produce *Banksias* and *Eucalyptus*. The shrubs consisted of beautiful species of *Isopogan* and *Jacksonia*, with crimson flowers, and a species of *Acacia*, with the general productions of the other shore. The soil is sandy, and the cliffs (of very considerable elevation) are formed of fossil lime and sandstone.

"The islands on the flats are composed of a rich deposit, carried down by the floods; their margins are covered with *Metrosideros* and *Casuarinas*, and their interior with submarine succulent plants. On one of these islands I observed an arborescent *Palm*, which, on examination, proved to be a species of *Zamia*, with spiral fruit, differing only from *spiralis* in habit. Here the *Aquatic Goodenia*, formerly alluded to, disappears. The difficulties which the party met with here (from originally mistaking the channel), in dragging the boats over the mud, were great, but by perseverance were overcome. From the extensive beds of oyster-shells, covered by soft mud about a foot in depth, our feet became dreadfully lacerated. These flats are extensive, but by having flat-bottomed boats they can easily be crossed.

"At Point Fraser the bank may be said to terminate, and the channel appears to be that of a beautiful inland river. The flats or levels at this point are very fertile, composed of a rich alluvial deposit, but evidently flooded, drift timber having been seen five feet above the surface. Here are extensive salt-marshes, admirably adapted for the growth of cotton. The hills on the banks of the river are barren, resembling those of Port Jackson, producing, however, a magnificent species of *Angophora*, which seems to abound as much in this part as the genus *Eucalyptus* does in that of Port Jackson. *Banksia Grandis* was here seen to attain the height of fifty feet, and frequently exceeding two feet and a half in diameter.

"Amongst the botanical discoveries of this tract may be enumerated—a species of *Metrosideros*, of great beauty, forming thickets on the flats, and intermingling with two other species of the same genus, of minor beauty, its flowers of the most brilliant scarlet, general height six feet; and a pink-flowered species of *Centaurea*, of considerable beauty.

"Here I observed a species of *Psittacus* (cockatoo), in large flocks. The back and upper part of the wings were white, whilst the quill feathers of the tail were a pale yellow, and the others white. The breast of the male was of a dirty gray and light vermilion, and the female of a dirty black. The upper part of the feathers of the crest were white, whilst the inner part and under surface were of a bright vermilion. The eyes were dark brown, surrounded by a lead-coloured membraneous substance, half an inch in depth; and the upper mandible projects considerably over the under. It flies low, has a more plaintive voice than that of the white cockatoo, and feeds on the roots of orchideous plants, for which they scratch to a considerable depth."

"Whilst attending to a boat on the river, during the time the party were dragging the cutter over the mud, I distinctly heard the bellowing of some huge animal, similar to

that of an ox, from an extensive marsh further up the river. Immediately afterwards, I was visited by three natives, armed; they made signs for me to depart, but offered no violence. On hearing the voices of the party, they retired into the woods.

"One mile up the river from the last point, is a small creek of fresh water, issuing from an extensive lagoon, covered with arborescent *Metrosideros*, and of great beauty; the banks are ornamented with the most beautiful plants, amongst which I observed two species of *Calytrix*, a species of *Acacia* with scolopenderous stem, and several papilionaceous plants: the *Angophora* on the flats are gigantic. These flats are formed of tolerable loam, of great depth, and are capable of producing average crops.

"Proceeding up the river from Claude's Creek, the country assumes an entirely different appearance from what it does below; on the left is a salt-marsh, of considerable extent, bordered by thickets of *Casuarina*. This marsh is surrounded by an extensive flat of the richest description, rivalling in soil that of Hawksbury. Here I first observed the *Brome*, or kangaroo grass of New South Wales, in great luxuriance (with the exception of some seen on the banks of Point Fraser). *Bastaro* and real blue gum are seen here in considerable quantities and of great size.

"From the above point, the country resembles, in its features, that which borders all the rivers in New South Wales, varying alternately on each bank into hilly points and extensive flats. The hills are covered with magnificent *Angophora*, *Zamia*, and *Xanthorrhœa*. The soil is a rich red loam, of very great depth, throwing up a luxuriant herbage.

"It is worthy of remark, that in New South Wales the presence of *Banksia*, *Zamia*, and *Xanthorrhœa*, are considered sure criterions of bad soil. Such being the impression on my mind, I pronounced all the land on which they were seen to grow to be sterile, until I examined where they grew in the greatest luxuriance, when, to my astonishment, I found the soil to be a red earth, of great depth, producing the richest *Brome* grass.

"As the river is ascended, the flats increase in breadth and luxuriance, each being backed by a terrace of forest land of the finest description, extending some miles from the river, and resembling, in their character, those seen on the banks of the Macquarrie River, west of Wellington Valley.

"On further observation, towards the source of the river, these flats were seen to extend to the base of the mountains, interspersed with stripes of good forest land, on which I observed a considerable quantity of stringy bark. The variety of plants seen in this tract is great.

"The base of the mountains is covered with fragments of quartz and chalcedony; the soil is a red sandy loam. Here I saw a species of *Hakea*, with holly-shaped leaves, and a splendid species of *Melaleuca*; and further up, *Schist*, in considerable beds. The soil is here improved to a light brown loam, but, from its rocky nature, is incapable of cultivation. The summit of the mountain is studded with magnificent *Angophoras*.

"The ridges on the banks of the river are perforated with immense numbers of deep pits, the original cause of which we could not at first ascertain; they proved, however, to have been made by the natives for the purpose of catching land-tortoises, with which these ridges abound.

"The Island of Buache is formed

principally of low ridges of light sandy loam, the highest parts of which are thickly studded with cypress, the surface towards the beach being interrupted by limestone rocks.

"The soil, although light, appears to me, from the immense thickets of *Solanum* (*laciniatum var*) which it produces, and which, on the ridges, is seen to attain the height of ten feet, to be capable of producing any description of light garden crops.

"The interior of these ranges is singularly divided by transverse banks or dykes, forming deep pits or hollows, which receive all the water collected or falling from the ranges, the banks preventing its escape otherwise than by absorption. The surface of these hollows is covered with gigantic *Solanums* and a beautiful species of *Brownonia*.—Fresh water may be had in each of them by digging two feet deep.

"The coast towards Port Success is thickly covered with *Cypress*, the beautiful green of which imparts to the scene an agreeable and elegant appearance. The soil here is very sandy, and in my opinion incapable of producing (without artificial means) any description of crops. Here, by digging a few feet, we found abundance of fresh water, not only on the beach, but in the cypress thickets beyond the influence of the sea.

"My observations did not extend beyond Port Success, but, from the appearance of the country, I doubt not its being of the same character as that already described.

"On proceeding along the coast of Geographer Bay, the appearance of the country is particularly interesting; the shores are richly clothed with timber, the foliage is of the finest green, consisting principally of *Eucalyptus*. No walls of *Banksia* were seen.

"From the shore the country is seen to rise gradually into gentle undulating hills, separated apparently by extensive valleys, the whole terminated by a bold range of mountains of considerable elevation, thickly clothed with large timber, and extending inland as far as the eye can reach.

"There appears no visible change in the soil or character of the valleys as far as Cape Naturaliste; but in the construction and composition of the rocks a great difference appears. There they are seen to present immense cliffs, overhanging the beach in awful grandeur.

"The northern extreme of the cape is formed of majestic cliffs of limestone two hundred feet in height, presenting two magnificent ranges of caverns. Two of the lower range are superb, the roofs and sides being covered with beautiful stalactites of great magnitude, and exceedingly brilliant. In one of them were found stalagmites, of extraordinary size, adhering to modules of granite, with which the base is covered. The outer or great cavern is about fifty feet wide, and forty-five to fifty feet in height; its extreme length about one hundred feet.

"The sides, roofs, and stalactites, present an extraordinary assemblage of colours, from the immense variety of liverwort and minute fungi with which they are covered. Some of the stalactites were found to measure fifteen feet.

"The sea makes a breach into each of the lower ranges over blocks of granite; the scene is then truly grand. The upper ranges we could not inspect, from the perpendicular nature of the cliffs; but, from their exterior appearance, no doubt remains of their grandeur.

"It is worthy of remark, that the whole coast of this bay is a perfect source of active springs, discharging

themselves on the beach in rapid rills of considerable extent every six or seven yards."

Such is the outline of a country on which the government have determined to establish a colony, and over which they have justly, and, we think, judiciously, appointed Captain Stirling to act as lieutenant-governor. The plan on which it is to be founded is, in our opinion, unobjectionable. It promises the most advantageous terms to qualified settlers, and deserves only to be known to insure as many of the most respectable agriculturists as may in the first instance be desirable.

In point of climate, this colony and New South Wales may perhaps be equally salubrious, though we are disposed to think that the western aspect and the sea-breezes may preponderate in favour of the new one; this being, probably, milder, as the western sides of all continents and large islands are, than the eastern sides, in the winter, while the refreshing breezes cool the air in the summer. "In my opinion," says Captain Stirling, "the climate, considered with reference to health, is highly salubrious. This opinion is corroborated by that of the surgeon of the Success, who states, in his report to me on the subject, that, notwithstanding the great exposure of the people to fatigue, to night air in the neighbourhood of marshy grounds, and to other causes usually productive of sickness, he had not a case upon his sick list, except for slight complaints unconnected with climate."

It likewise appears, from Captain Stirling's report, that the thermometer, in the hot months of January, February, and March, averaged, in the morning, about 60 deg.; at noon, about 78 deg.; and in the evening, 65 deg. The barometer averaged about 30 deg. The weather generally fine;—some rain and showery weather, and occasionally thunder and lightning.

In geographical position it has an incalculable advantage over New South Wales. In the first place, it is not only much more conveniently situated than that colony, but is much nearer to, and has much more easy means of communication with, every part of the civilized world, the east coast of America perhaps excepted. The passages to it from England, and from the Cape of Good Hope, are shortened by nearly a month, and the return voyages still more. The voyage from it to Madras and Ceylon is little more than three weeks, at all times of the year, and only a month from those places to it; while, for six months in the year, from November to April inclusive, when the western monsoons prevail on the northern coast of Australia, the passage from New South Wales through Torres Strait, always dangerous, is then utterly impracticable; and that through Bass's Strait nearly so to merchant vessels, on account of the westerly winds which blow through it at all times of the year, and which generally oblige them to go round the southern extremity of Van Dieman's Land. The Success frigate left Port Jackson on the 17th of January, and did not reach Cape Lewin till the 2nd of February, being six weeks and two days; and Captain Stirling observes, that the only chance by which the passage could be accomplished at all, was by carrying a constant press of sail.

One point of consideration in the proposed measure (although in reality of no essential importance to pecuniary success) is of considerable magnitude, as regards moral feeling and the pride of many—that is, there being no admission of convicts into the proposed colony. Without

any illiberal sentiment, this is a disadvantage under which Port Jackson and Van Dieman's Land certainly suffer. Nevertheless, these thriving colonies, in the course of thirty or forty years, have made surprising progress in agriculture, population, commerce, and wealth. The situation of Port Jackson was the most distant from the mother country; its position was not peculiarly adapted to production or traffic with any part of the globe; therefore, the improvement can only be attributed to a favourable soil, free from the taxations of old European governments, a low fee cost, or a nominal pepper-corn rent; which circumstances have not only been capable of maintaining those who adventured, but of yielding a profit for capital, sufficient to induce others to pursue the same course.

In the infancy of a colony, the certain maintenance of the settlers should be well established; and it is also right to know with what facility, and at what cost, an adequate supply of necessaries, comforts, and even luxuries, may be obtained. Adjacent, and favourably situated to Cockburn Sound, are the Mauritius, Cape of Good Hope, Timor, Java, Sumatra, and the East-Indian Presidencies.

Rice, from Java, can be obtained in five weeks, at or under 1*d.* per pound.

The bantam fowls and China pigs at equally moderate prices.

Sugar, from the Mauritius, Java, or Calcutta, at 3*d.* per pound.

Coffee, from Java, 4*d.* per pound.

Spices, the production of the Moluccas, Celebees, &c. &c., at the lowest possible rate—viz. pepper, nutmegs, cloves, &c.

Algoa Bay, the Cape of Good Hope, furnishes cattle and sheep. The coast of Cockburn Sound, and Swan and Canning Rivers, promise plenty of fish for the table—also, oil for use. Tea will not cost more than 2*s.* 6*d.* per pound through Java; from whence stocks of cattle, poultry, and pigs, can be added, of the best quality.

There is no intention in these remarks to show the extent of production of which the soil and climate are capable: time and prosperity will be requisite to bring forward all their capabilities. Nothing, therefore, has been said of the articles grown in similar latitudes in Asia, and carried to Smyrna, and other Turkish ports, at immense distances, for export to England, France, and Holland. There is, however, no reason for supposing that silk (equal to that of Brussa), opium, madder-roots, goats' wool, senna, gums, currants, raisins, and the highly esteemed Turkish tobacco, and various other productions, may not be cultivated to advantage, half a century hence. But in the commencement, it is sufficient to look to *early*, *certain*, and *profitable returns*; without calculating upon chances of wealth, which may not be realized in the lifetime of the present adventurers.

It remains only for us to offer a word of advice (says a writer in the *Quarterly Review*) to the multitudes who, we understand, are preparing to take their flight to this new land of Goshen,—which is this: that no one should, *at present*, think of venturing on such a step, unless he can carry out with him, either in his own person or in his family or followers, the knowledge of agriculture, and the capability of agricultural labour. It is quite certain that, for the first few years, every settler must be mainly indebted for the means of subsistence of himself and family to the produce of the soil; beyond this, the country itself, for the first year, will afford him nothing, with the exception, perhaps, of a little fish—the rest must be raised by the labour of the ploughman and the horticulturist. The only settlers, therefore,

who can reasonably hope to thrive in the infant state of the colony, must consist of this description of persons —any others, with very few exceptions, must inevitably be disappointed, if not irretrievably ruined. A clergyman, a schoolmaster, a land-surveyor, an apothecary, a few small tradesmen and fishermen, may reasonably expect employment, and make themselves useful to the new community; as will also a limited number of house-carpenters, joiners, bricklayers, blacksmiths, tailors, shoemakers, and common labourers, the latter being required to assist in building habitations; but the unproductive class, or idlers, had better wait a few years before they embark for a country where, as yet, there is neither hut nor hovel, and where the "*fruges consumere nati*" have unquestionably no place in society. We cannot forget what happened, when, a few years ago, the government resolved to send out, at a very considerable expense, a number of new settlers to improve and extend the agriculture of the Cape of Good Hope; giving allowances to the heads of parties, proportioned to their respective numbers.

The persons best calculated for effecting the improvement of the colony, and, at the same time, their own condition, must be looked for among the English and Scotch farmers; these cannot fail. To such we would recommend not to encumber themselves, and incur a great and unnecessary expense, by carrying out live-stock from home, but to take them from the Cape of Good Hope. At Algoa Bay, which is perfectly safe for six months in the year, they may be supplied with every kind of domestic animal, in good condition, and at reasonable prices, which may be carried to their destination in the short space of twenty-eight days. Seed corn and the seeds of culinary vegetables may be taken from home; but of young plants of peaches, pomegranates, oranges, figs, and vines, it may be advisable to take a supply from the Cape of Good Hope. For these, and many other species of fruit, the climate is admirably adapted; and the vine, in particular, is just calculated for the limestone ridge which extends along the coast facing the western sun.

It appears that apprehensions of interruption were once entertained from a prior settlement from France; these fears are, however, removed by that nation having fixed on a point to colonize, in latitude 25 deg. south, (which is distant north of the Swan River 400 miles) called Shark's Bay, within which there is an inlet called Freycinet's Harbour. The country in this neighbourhood much resembles the western coast.

THE SWAN-RIVER COLONY.

As the public take a deep interest in the settlement on Swan River, in Western Australia,—an interest the more natural, as this expedition, which may be said to be under the auspices of government, connects itself with some very important considerations of national polity, and involves the great questions of colonization and emigration as a relief for popular distress,—we have great satisfaction in being able to lay the following additional accounts, derived from authentic sources, before our readers.

The first advices received are from the camp on the left bank of the river, immediately after H.M.S. Sulphur arrived, viz. early in July, 1829. They mention the disembarkation on the 8th, four months after their sailing from Plymouth, of the force under Captain Irwin, consisting of the light company of the 63d regiment. The Challenger, and Parmelia transport, had come to anchor a few days before, and had

taken possession of Western Australia, by planting the British flag at a post on the main. Governor Stirling determined to land the rest of the expedition on Garden Island, and to remain there during the winter; the operation was effected without accident, though the mouth of the river is so difficult, being blocked up by rocks and sand-banks, that a small boat cannot cross the bar except the weather be very moderate.

The men having got ashore, soon threw up some mud-works to shelter them, and set about making cantonments and gardens. They found good water, and plenty of fire-wood; but as the governor intended to call them to head-quarters in the interior, where the first settlement would be made, this occupation of Garden Island was likely to be only temporary.

For a while after arriving in the new country, the weather was not propitious to the emigrants, and violent winds, with heavy rains, afforded them no very pleasant anticipations for the future. It soon mended, however, and only occasional days of rain interrupted its serenity. At the coldest, the thermometer in the open air ranged from 42° to 55° within the twenty-four hours; and when the season improved, from 52° to 70°.

The natives who visited the posts behaved with great gentleness, and showed every dispostion to be on friendly terms with the new comers, by leading them to fresh water, and other civilities. None had been seen by our exploring parties; but, from indications, it was supposed they had watched, and avoided their presence. They do not appear to be numerous, and wander about in small tribes, without concert or connexion one party with another.

The banks of the Canning have been ascended for some miles; and the statement respecting the ground is very favourable. There are well-wooded islands, the water is fresh, and a rich soil supersedes the sterile sands of the coast. The scenery was picturesque and beautiful; the river meandering with a current running six miles an hour, many smaller streams, fine pastural marshes formed by overflows, and the timber, of noble dimensions, abounding with parrots and paroquets of the gayest colours.

Such were the earliest accounts of the settlement; but, after our countrymen had been six weeks on shore, their communications became more important. We learn from another letter, about the middle of August, the right bank of the Swan had been explored for nearly twenty miles; the upper portion of which was fertile, and quite different from the sandy district below. A multitude of shrubs and flowers in blossom added to the beauty of this park-like scenery. The natives still continued shy when encountered, which seemed to be as seldom as they could help it; but they betrayed no fear, and were apparently desirous of keeping up a good understanding with their visitors, when obliged to meet them. The Calista, with its freight of settlers, arrived out after a stormy passage of five months, which destroyed much of their live stock; and the St. Leonard from the Cape, with a supply, was consequently a very welcome successor.

By accounts dated as late as Nov. 22, 1829, we learn that the traders of New South Wales, Van Dieman's Land, and the Cape of Good Hope, have already begun to export their commodities to the new colony.

Live stock has not realized prices equal to what might have been expected had our settlers been longer in the colony, and overcome the inconveniencies and difficulties inseparable from landing their property, and conveying

it to their locations in a new country. Hitherto, few have been sufficiently forward to allow of the additional incumbrance of stock.

A lot of sheep, say 340, of mixed breeds, were sold at 47s. per head. Bullocks may be valued at £25, fit for the butcher.

Since the equinox, they have not experienced any gales; and the masters of ships have only to complain of the inconvenience of discharging their cargoes on an open beach, where no erections have yet been made for the protection of boats, &c.

Some stir has been made for the establishment of a whale fishery, very many whales having been seen along the coast; also, the establishment of a company to cure fish. These arrangements have received additional vigour from the discovery, on the banks of the Swan, of veins of salt of good quality.

The highly-wrought expectations which the people in England have formed of Western Australia, have caused disappointment in some quarters, as to the quality of the soil here. Still the settlement has advanced at a most rapid rate. Of the interior of the country, our knowledge is most imperfect, and the mountains still remain to be explored and crossed. The banks of the rivers up to these mountains afford the richest soil and most luxuriant vegetation, and about 500,000 acres are already apportioned. Another river, of considerable size, has been discovered 25 miles to the southward of Cockburn Sound.

On the 9th of August, Governor Stirling ascended the right bank, with a military escort, to fix on the site for a town; and selected, as the seat of his government, an elevated ground, half way between a hill called Mount Eliza, on the shore of Melville water, and commanding a fine view all around, and the group of islands which stud the river about two miles off, and about ten or twelve miles from the mouth. The water-edge is not more than 150 yards from this position, which is well shaded, and watered by rivulets and springs. The 12th, the King's birth-day, was appropriately chosen for the commencement of this work; and the *rising* town was named Perth, in honour of that ancient Scottish town, which is the birth-place of Sir George Murray, the Secretary for the Colonies, to whose fostering care the settlement is so much indebted.

The entire male population, from fifteen to fifty years of age, had been called on to enrol themselves in the militia. The colony is stated to be contented, and much pleased with the conduct of the governor.

There is a rumour of settlements being formed on a river lately discovered to the south of Cockburn's Sound; and also beyond the mountains thirty miles inland; as also ninety miles to the south, at Cape Naturaliste; so that a great range of country will soon be planted with inhabitants.

Upon the whole, these accounts are far more satisfactory than we expected after the reports which preceded them. Indeed, we can entertain no doubt of the prosperous results of the undertaking.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL REGULATIONS.

1. His majesty's government do not intend to incur any *expense* in conveying settlers to the New Colony on the Swan River; and will not feel bound to defray the expense of supplying them with provisions or other necessaries, after their arrival there, nor to assist their removal to England, or elsewhere, should they be desirous of quitting the Colony.

2. Such persons who may arrive in that settlement before the end of the year 1830, will receive, in the order of their arrival, grants of land, free of quit rent, proportioned to the capital which they may be prepared to invest in the improvement of the land, and of which capital they may be able to produce satisfactory proofs to the Lieu-

tenant-Governor (or other officer administering the Colonial Government,) or to any two officers of the Local Government appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor for that purpose, at the rate of forty acres for every sum of three pounds which they may be so prepared to invest.

3. Under the head of the investment of capital will be considered stock of every description, all implements of husbandry, and other articles which may be applicable to the purposes of productive industry, or which may be necessary for the establishment of the settler on the land where he is to be located. The amount of any half-pay or pension which the applicant may receive from Government, will also be considered as so much capital.

4. Those who may incur the expense of taking out labouring persons, will be entitled to an allowance of land at the rate of fifteen pounds, that is, of two hundred acres of land, for the passage of every such labouring person, over and above any other investment of capital. In the class of "labouring persons," are included women, and children above ten years old. Provision will be made by law, at the earliest opportunity, for rendering those capitalists who may be engaged in taking out labouring persons, to this settlement, liable for the future maintenance of those persons, should they, from infirmity, or any other cause, become unable to maintain themselves there.

5. The license of occupation of land will be granted to the settler, on satisfactory proof being exhibited to the Lieutenant-Governor (or other officer administering the Local Government,) of the amount of property brought into the colony. The proofs required of such property will be such satisfactory vouchers of expenses as would be received in auditing public accounts. But the full title to the land will not be granted in fee simple, until the settler has proved, to the satisfaction of the Lieutenant-Governor (or other officer administering the Local Government,) that the sum required by Article 2 of these regulations (viz. one shilling and sixpence per acre) has been expended in the cultivation of the land, or in solid improvements, such as buildings, roads, or other works of the kind.

6. Any grant of land thus allotted, of which a fair proportion, of at least one fourth, shall not have been brought into cultivation, or otherwise improved or reclaimed from its wild state, to the extent of one shilling and sixpence per acre, to the satisfaction of the Local Government, within three years from the date of the license of occupation, shall, at the end of three years, be liable to a payment of sixpence per acre, into the public chest of the settlement; and, at the expiration of seven years more, should the land still remain in an uncultivated or unimproved state, it will revert absolutely to the crown.

7. After the year 1830, land will be disposed of to those settlers who may resort to the colony, on such conditions as his Majesty's Government shall see occasion to adopt.

8. It is not intended that any convicts, or other description of prisoners, be transported to this new settlement.

9. The government will be administered by Captain Stirling, of the Royal Navy, as Lieutenant-Governor of the settlement; and it is proposed that a bill should be submitted to Parliament, in the course of the next session, to make provision for the civil government of the New Settlement.

Downing Street,
13th January, 1829.

*** *For the greater portion of the valuable and scientific information contained in this Pamphlet, we are indebted to the Westminster Review, No.* 23.

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