

impeding their course, prevented them from reaching Botany Bay before the 18th day of the same month.

Governor Philip had no sooner landed than he set about an examination of the country surrounding Botany Bay, which had been so strongly recommended by captain Cook as the most eligible place for a settlement. He found that neither the bay, nor the land about it, appeared favourable for a colony; being in some places entirely swampy; in others, quite destitute of water. The governor, finding the difficulties that he had to surmount, determined to examine the lands further on, and accordingly went, with several officers, in three boats, to Port Jackson, about three leagues distant from Botany Bay. Here they had the satisfaction to find one of the finest harbours in the world, where a thousand sail of the line might ride in perfect safety. A cove, which he called Sydney Cove, in honour of lord Sydney, and the country around it, he destined for the settlement; orders were therefore immediately given for the removal of the fleet to Port Jackson.

The convicts, and others, destined to remain in New South Wales, reached Port Jackson on the 25th of January. No time was lost in beginning to clear the ground for an encampment, storehouses, &c. The work, however, went on but slowly; partly owing to the natural difficulties they had to encounter, and partly owing to the habitual indolence of the convicts, as well as to a want of carpenters; only twelve convicts being of that trade, several of whom were sick, and no more than sixteen could be hired from all the ships. But on the 7th of February a regular form of government was established in the colony.

The scurvy soon began to rage with violence; so that, by the beginning of May, two hundred people were rendered incapable of work; and no more than eight or ten acres of barley, or wheat, had been sown, besides what individuals had sown for themselves. The natives now began to show an hostile disposition, which they had not hitherto done, and several convicts, who had strolled into the woods, were murdered. All possible enquiry was made after the natives who had been guilty of the murder, but without effect.

Cook's survey of the east coast did more for Australian discovery than the united labours of all who preceded him; nor should it be forgotten that captain Bligh, after the unting of the *Bounty*, in 1789, though in an open boat, and devoid of almost every necessary, carried a series of observations that added much to the information before obtained. By this time, however, many English colonists had arrived, and home and colonial expeditions were actively set on foot. But the greatest discoverers, towards the end of last century, were Bass and Flinders. In 1798 they sailed through the strait between Van Dieman's Land (now often called Tasmania) and New Holland; these two being marked in Cook's chart as continuous, and the fact of their being

otherwise not having before been proved. Further discoveries have since been made; but it is to Cook and Flinders that we are indebted for the most valuable information.

The eastern coast, or New South Wales, commences at Cape York, in 10° 30' S. lat., and terminates at Wilson's Promontory in Bass's strait, in 39° S., including an extent of 700 leagues. A chain of mountains appears to run parallel to this coast, through its whole length, whose bases are from 10 to 30 leagues from the sea. Until of late years all attempts to pass this natural barrier have been unsuccessful. It has, however, at last been overcome; and, instead of the sandy deserts or the inland sea with which conjecture had occupied the interior, the discovery of beautiful meadows, watered by considerable rivers and by chains of ponds, has given to the colonists new prospects of extension and riches. The coasts towards the south are in general elevated and covered with lofty trees. Towards the north they are lower, bordered with mangrove swamps, and lined with a labyrinth of islets and coral reefs. The Blue Mountains, which rise behind the seat of the colony, are a mixture of primitive and secondary rocks.

Only the south-east part, with comparatively small sections in the west and south, and an inconsiderable tract in the north, near Port Eslington, have been thoroughly explored. Some useful expeditions have been conducted by Mr. Eyre, Governor Grey, Dr. Leichard, and Sir T. Mitchell; but much of the interior is still unknown, and some features of its best known regions can only be sketched. The following are the present settlements, with the date of their establishment:—The British settlement of New South Wales, of which Sydney is the capital, was made in 1788. Western Australia, or Swan River, in 1829; South Australia, of which Adelaide is the capital, in 1834. Australia Felix, or Port Phillip, chief town Melbourne, established in 1837, is a dependency of New South Wales. North Australia was colonised in 1838. Australia on the western coast, about eighty miles south of Swan River, was established in 1841.

The government, after passing through the usual phases, is now by a recent act of parliament expanded in all the settlements into a constitution.

The wealth of Australia consists mainly in its flocks, which produce the finest wool in the world; and pasture is so abundant, that sheep may be reared by all who take the trouble to attend to them. The fisheries too, though heretofore neglected, seem to hold out strong inducements to industry, and coal and other minerals necessary to the prosperity of man are found in abundance. The animal and vegetable productions of the island, are the very opposites of those to be found in Europe. Yet the soil is so good, and the climate so salubrious, that whatever plants or living creatures the settlers import, thrive and multiply. The wretched natives are fast disappearing. It appears that they are little capable of improvement, and that intermarriages between them and the whites seldom prove productive. For many years Australia had

WHEN THE MOUNTAINS ARE SATURATED WITH WATER, THE RIVERS OVERFLOW THE COUNTRY TILL IT BECOMES ONE VAST MARSH.

IN DRY SEASONS THE RIVERS DWINDLE TO TRICKLING BROOKS, AND THEIR WIDE BEDS BECOME COVERED INTO DUSTY CHASMS.

IN DRY SEASONS THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM IS ALMOST ANNIHILATED.

FLOWERS OF VERY GREAT BEAUTY ARE FOUND IN AUSTRALIA, AND ODORIFEROUS PLANTS SCENT THE AIR WITH THEIR FRAGRANCE.