

Murray, were cold and frosty ; but the noonday temperature delightful. The native constable—a fine intelligent man—told them that when a boy he remembered a flood on the Murray, the waters of which reached up to and covered the levels over which they were then journeying. No rain fell—the weather had been unusually fine—and the blacks said the waters came from a great distance ; but they knew not whence. Captain Sturt infers from this, that the flood was independent of the ordinary and yearly flood that takes place in the Murray, and that it arose from heavy and distant rains. The periodical rise and fall of the Murray he judges to be regulated by the melting of the snow on the Australian Alps. The river commences to rise in July, and attains its maximum height, about sixteen feet above its ordinary level, in January. As it gradually rises it fills the back lagoons and creeks, replenishing them with fish of every kind, and resuscitating myriads of cray-fish, that have lain dormant under the flats. The natives of the Murray look to this periodical overflow with as much anxiety as did ever the Egyptians to the overflow of the Nile—to the first as to the last, it is the bountiful provision of a bountiful Providence.

On the 31st August, the whole party reached Lake Bonney, and on the 7th September encamped at the junction of the Rufus, having that little channel on the left, and Lake Victoria in the rear. They remained here till the 15th, during which time they had two days' heavy rain. On the 18th, they turned from the Murray northwards ; the junction of the Ana-branch, or ancient channel of the Darling, with that river, being in latitude $34^{\circ} 4' 30''$ south, and in longitude $141^{\circ} 53'$ east. On the flats of the Murray plenty of grass was found. They crossed the Ana-branch fifteen miles above its junction with the Murray, and then, passing an east course, traversed barren sandy plains separated by long lines of low scrub, chiefly composed of cyprus, eucalyptus, dumore, and fusani.

When they reached the Darling, scarcely any water was in its channel, but the grass existed to its edge, down banks as regular in their slope as a fortification, and graceful but not large trees waved over them like willows. In consequence of rumours of the hostile disposition of the natives in this quarter, the party were anxious to hurry on, but the nature of the ground over which they had to travel impeded their progress much. The flats in the immediate precincts of the river still looked beautifully verdant ; but the outer flats were perfectly bare, and thinly scattered with box-trees. The soil was rotten, blistered, and full of holes—so close together that it was impossible to avoid them. These flats were more extensive than those of the Murray, and were uniformly bounded by sandy deserts, portions of which were covered with short stunted bush. Some few days after their arrival at the Darling, the waters of the Darling were so low that at one point they could nearly jump across. They observed, however, that the waters seemed to be propelled by back impulse—grass and bark were floating on it, and other indications of an approaching fresh. That evening the Darling scarcely deserved the name of a stream—on the following morning it was an impetuous and headstrong river, foaming along, and carrying everything away before it. In four days it had reached sixteen feet