

CAPTAIN STURT'S EXPEDITIONS INTO THE INTERIOR OF SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA.

The geography or chorography of New Holland presents as many novelties as its natural history: the platypus and kangaroo do not distinguish it more from other continents than the superficial features of the country, as far as it has been explored. As soon as the formidable range of the Blue Mountains was crossed by the colonists on the south-east coast, and the rivers, Lachlan and Macquarie were successively discovered, flowing into the interior, the grand desideratum of an inland navigation was supposed to be obtained. The Lachlan, surveyed by Mr. Oxley in 1817, was traced for about four degrees of longitude, till it was lost in extensive marshes covered with reeds, the water being stagnant and unfit for use.—Next year Mr. Oxley followed the Macquarie (which was in the same parallel with the Lachlan, and only about a degree east of it, but flows to the north-west, the Lachlan flowing almost due west), in like manner, to a vast expanse of shoal water, in which all semblance of a river was lost in reedy morasses. The result of these expeditions, and the conclusions to be drawn from the general dip of the country, led Mr. Oxley to frame a theory, which soon became current, that the interior was a vast shoal sea or lake, into which the rivers fell which flowed westerly, and he fancied, in his last expedition, that he had reached the borders of the "long-sought Australian sea." He remarks in his journal, that "it is most singular that the high lands on this continent seem to be confined to the sea-coast, and not to extend to any distance from it."

In 1828 the local Government determined to avail itself of the existing drought, and to fit out an expedition in order to ascertain the nature and extent of the marsh or basin into which the rivers were supposed to fall, by descending along the Macquarie and tracing that river beyond the point reached by Mr. Oxley. The command of this expedition was given to Captain Sturt.

The first volume of the work before us contains the account of this expedition.—Captain Sturt, accompanied by Mr. Hume (an Australian by birth, and himself celebrated in the annals of discovery) traced the Macquarie from Wellington Valley, through a low, dreary, unwooded country, diversified with some rich flats, to an expanse of marsh, level and unbroken except by a wilderness of reeds. The journey had been painful and difficult; the soil was parched by the heat (the thermometer 149 deg. in the sun); the eye was fatigued by the monotony of the landscape and the general stunted character of its vegetation. Prosecuting his survey to the N. W., however, beyond the edge of the marshes, which was traversed on every side, he reached a noble river, which he named the Darling, coming from the north-east, and flowing to the south-west, with a capacity of channel in that dry season which proved that he was as far from its source as from its termination. The trees that overhung it were of beautiful and gigantic growth. Its water, however, was salt, owing, as it afterwards appeared (though it gave rise immediately to a speculation that they were near the sea), to brine-springs gushing from its bed.

This river, which was struck upon in about lat. 37½ S. and long. 145½ E., and which was afterwards met with two degrees more to the eastward, was traced about 66 miles to the south-west. Captain Sturt's party were not in a condition to prosecute their survey of its course, or of the country beyond the river, further. The result of this expedition, therefore, whilst it has disproved the theory of an inland sea, disclosed no inviting country for settlement, and "withdrew the veil from the marshes of the Macquarie, to spread it over the channel of the Darling." Subsequent discoveries seem to connect this river with the Dumaresq and the Gwydir.

Captain Sturt remarks that "it is the characteristic of the streams falling westerly from the eastern ranges to maintain a breadth of channel, and a rapidity of current near their sources, that ill accords with their diminished size, and the sluggish flow of their waters in the more depressed interior." He states his impression, when travelling to the north-west of the Macquarie marshes, to have been that he was traversing a country of comparatively recent formation, which impression was produced by the sandy nature of its soil, the great want of vegetable decay, the salsolaceous character of its plants, the appearance of its isolated hills and flooded tracts, and its trifling elevation above the sea.

In the ensuing year (1829) a new expedition was resolved upon. As it was evident that the Darling was the chief drain for carrying off the waters falling westerly from the eastern coast, and as its course indicated a decline of country directly opposite to that calculated upon, it was important to ascertain whether it held on a due south course (that being its direction when Captain Sturt left it), or whether it turned westerly and ran into the interior. With this view it was determined to trace the Morumbidgee, a river of considerable size, which runs westerly, between the parallels of 34 deg. and 35 deg.

and if stopped, it was expected that the expedition might gain the banks of the Darling on a N. W. course. Captain Sturt was likewise intrusted with the command of this expedition, the history of which is given in his second volume.

The early part of the course of the Morumbidgee lies through a country of superior character to the steppes of the Lachlan and the Macquarie; the scenery is grand and diversified, and Captain Sturt speaks of rich flats, backed by ranges of hills clothed with verdure to their very summits. This pleasing aspect of the scenery, however, soon gave place to the prevailing characteristic of this singular region. "It is impossible for me to describe the kind of country we were now traversing," says Captain Sturt, "or the dreariness of the view it presented. The plains were still open to the horizon, but here and there a stunted gum-tree, or a gloomy cypress, seemed placed by nature as mourners over the surrounding desolation." At length he came to an expanse of reedy swamp, in which it was supposed they should lose the Morumbidgee; but it was at length discovered that here it joined the marshes of the Lachlan, not far south of the ultimate point reached by Mr. Oxley. The diminished channel of the Morumbidgee was recovered, and followed till its junction with a broad and noble river, the Murray, flowing from the south-west. Its medium width was 350 feet, its depth from 12 to 20, and the views upon it were splendid. No positive change, however, took place in the general features of the interior. The junction of another river took place which flowed from the north, and consequently in the very direction of the Darling: whether it be that river is one of the interesting problems to be solved. The Murray (no longer the Morumbidgee) was traced till, in the parallel of 34 degrees, it received another river, the Lindesay, from the south-east, and, after flowing through a sandy and barren interior, except the partial alluvial flats on its immediate borders, it was turned off by the high country to the east of the Gulf of St. Vincent, almost at right angles, to the south, when the country began greatly to improve, and the river terminated in a lake, named Lake Alexandrina, 50 miles long and 40 broad, but extremely shallow, communicating with the ocean at Encounter Bay, by a passage impracticable even for the smallest boats!

Such are the results of the two expeditions, of which Captain Sturt's narrative gives some interesting details. They appear to have been conducted with ability, and they fill some important chasms in the map of southern Australia. They have revealed little, however, to show that that portion of the interior is a land of great promise.—Much, indeed, remains to be explored before we can venture to pronounce a judgment upon the possibility of realizing the two grand desiderata—a large extent of cultivable country, and an inland navigation.

As an author, Captain Sturt appears in a highly respectable character. His qualifications, literary and scientific, seem to be ample.

CROCKFORD, GULLY, AND CO.—Of the public racing men at Newmarket, Messrs. Crockford, Gully, Ridsdale, Sadler, the Chifneys, &c., we need not say much, their deeds being almost daily before us. But, looking at the extraordinary results of these men's deeds, who will not admit racing to be the best trade going? Talk of studs, talk of winnings, talk of racing establishments, our Graftons, Richmonds, Portlands, and Cleverlands, with all their "means and pliances to boot," are but the beings of a summer's day, when compared with those illustrious personages, and their various transactions and doings on the turf. Here is a small retail tradesman, dealing in a very perishable commodity, become our modern Cressus in a few years, and proprietor of several of the finest houses in England! Behold the champion of the boxing-ring, the champion of the turf, the proprietor of a noble domain, an honourable member of a reformed Parliament, all in the person of a Bristol butcher! Turn to a great proprietor of coal-mines, the owner of the best stud in England, one who gives 3000 guineas for a horse, in the comely form of a Yorkshire footman! We have a quondam Oxford livery-stable-keeper, with a dozen or more race-horses in his stalls, and those of the very best description, and such as few country gentlemen, or, indeed, any others, have a chance to contend with.—By their father's account of them (see "Genius Genuine," by the late Sam. Chifney) the two Messrs. Chifney were stable-boys to Lord Grosvenor at eight guineas a year, and a stable suit. They are now owners of nearly the best horses, and—save Mr. Crockford's—quite the best, houses, in their native town. There is the son of the ostler of the Black Swan, at York, betting his thousands on the heath, his neckerchief secured by a diamond pin. Then, to crown all, there is Squire Beardsworth of Birmingham, with his seventeen race-horses, and his crimson liveries, in the same loyal, but dirty town, in which he once drove a hackney-coach. Taking for granted that all this is done honestly, why should we despair of having the gratification to see the worthy devil who trots with this sheet to Stamford-street, appear some

fine morning on Newmarket Heath, with his seventeen race-horses, his crimson liveries, and his diamond pin.—*Quarterly Review.*

HOUSEBREAKERS.—London is the headquarters of the regular and practised delinquent—it is the centre to which they all gravitate, and whence they again diverge into the country to commit crime; many of them taking journeys as regularly as any mercantile house of business in the city of London. There is a gang of pickpockets who start regularly every spring, to make the circuit of all the race-courses, cattle-fairs, and other places of public resort, returning as the season closes to winter business in town. The housebreaker travels at all seasons, but his journeys are direct, for the accomplishment of some one specific object of robbery.—Sometimes it is a *put-up affair*—that is, notice has been given them by some one on the premises intended to be robbed, or by an agent residing near the spot, of an opportunity to commit a robbery. When an intimation of this kind is given, hands are forthwith sent down with a vehicle to accomplish the speedy removal of the property to town. Some of the parties are always in the country on the adventure and look-out for business. As they pass through the different towns they find no difficulty in meeting with loose characters, who are ever ready to receive their instructions, and to listen to the temptations held out to them of gain, if they will but in due time send up an account to the rendezvous of the housebreakers, of the maturity of any scheme for committing a robbery in the neighbourhood where they (the informants) reside. These characters are always to be met with at what are called the flash public-houses, one of which is in every town, usually kept by pugilists. Those who travel for this purpose are generally dressed respectably, and are so well supplied with money as to support themselves in very good style, without running the least risk, being paid after a certain rate for each *put-up* (intimation): they are most usually accompanied by a well-attired female, assuming on the road a journey of both pleasure and business. I was very recently informed of one man, who himself carried in his chaise a case of housebreaking instruments, in order to be in readiness in the event of meeting with any chance of committing a robbery before hands could be sent for from town; and I was favoured with a sight of this case. I had not time to count the number, or to view the various kinds and purposes to which the instruments were applicable, but I guess there were from sixty to seventy in the whole: most of them appeared designed for lock-picking, with some few for forcible entry. When I saw the case it was in the hands of a carpenter, who had it for a short time to make some alteration in the interior fittings-up. He informed me that the whole was made at a cost of £150 and that if a door was not bolted or barred, there was no lock made which could resist these instruments in skilful hands.—*History of Crimes committed by Offenders in the present day.*

AN INDIAN NIGHT. I have said it was a night in the south-west monsoon. Over head a star and a half appeared wading despondingly through an ocean of black humid-looking clouds, which every now and then hurled down a cataract of lukewarm water (called rain in India) on the already flooded earth. Forty millions of gigantic frogs drank their fill, ate frogs less than themselves, and croaked like thunder round the fortress of Budge Budge; and they were answered by other thunders from the pitchy firmament, which kept grumbling and spluttering as if universal nature had the colic. About every five minutes, a man or a cow was killed by lightning; while a thick, dank, damp, steamy, fume, clammy, hot moistness clung to every thing and every body, like a close-fitting garment of cholera morbus turned up with fever, liver lapelles and skirts. Neither had the frogs and the thunder all the noise to themselves;—every now and then the jackals set up a screaming like the yell of twenty thousand furies; occasionally a wild burst of howling and wailing announced some village becoming extinct under the fangs of the blue cholera: or a crash, a plunge, and a roar, indicated the precipitation of another, with all its inhabitants and two or three miles of some worthy gentleman's estate, into the muddy billows of the Ganges. Then did the alligators smack their chops, with a noise as of a volley of small arms, and feasted like aldermen; in short, it was a Bengal night in the rains, so there is no necessity to say any more about it.—*The Bengal Annual.*

THE COMING STORM.—If further suffering is now dreaded, (and dreaded it need be, for it is to come,) the middling orders are the parties to be alarmed; they it is who will exhibit all that will be new in the way of suffering. They do suffer now: but how much more adversity have some of these to undergo? We question if, let the factions do their best to coerce us, there can ever be more general distress throughout the country than now exists. It is only in the form which distress is by and by to assume, when we shall see placemen, and pensioners, and hangers-on of one kind and another weeping and wailing aloud, that it will appear to be

greater than it now is. The poor wretches who are now ground down to the last point of endurance are comparatively silent with their thoughts of misery, and hidden from the sight of those who are better off. The labourer has, by degrees, been so intured to starvation, that when he is seen to suffer it seems as if he were even made by nature (and educated he in fact is) to bear the odious degradation with patience. Misery of this kind can hardly increase, as is well known by those who visit the hovels of country places and the streets in which poor towns' people are huddled together. But that "great mass of private distress," the thought of which so choked the nerves of Mr. Horace Twiss, is still to come. Come it must, unless a miracle be worked to prevent it; and if none were to be the sufferers but such as can now shut their eyes to the sufferings of others, we should hail such suffering—the humiliation of the plundering and the unfeeling—as one of the best of blessings. There is this one thought for consolation with the "lower orders;" that they cannot be shifted into a worse condition than they are now, and that, whatever may occur to embarrass their enemies, it must come attended by relief to themselves.—*Colbert's Magazine.*

duc de BORDEAUX.—The playful innocence, the graceful deportment, the precocious talents of a child, threw even a charm over the sadness of the meetings at Holyrood. Happiness in the choice of words carelessly scattered here and there during the progress of his amusements, sallies of wit announcing not only a lively imagination, but a judgment already formed, an elevated mind, called up the expression of real pleasure in countenances to whose features an expression of grief had become familiar. The good-nature of the Duc de Bordeaux is apparent in those frequent acts of munificence and charity which the sight of misfortune never fails to elicit. His memory is not only retentive, but well stored. He speaks with equal fluency the French, German, Italian, and English languages. Gymnastic exercises, to which he had been early accustomed, tended to develop in him a dexterity and elegance of manners which distinguish his deportment and all his movements, and could not fail to attract notice, were he not already, by his birth and premature importance, an object of general and undisguised interest. The following anecdote will give an idea of his elevated mind, and the readiness and tact of his sallies. When the exiled family was about to quit Lulworth Castle, where they had taken up their temporary abode on their first arrival, in order to repair to Edinburgh, his sister, who, it had been arranged, should proceed by way of London, entertained her brother with the pleasure she should have in visiting the chapel. "What will you see," said the young princess, "that can possibly interest you in a sea voyage?" "The coast of France," was his reply. And the ill-concealed tears started into his eye, and drew corresponding tears from all who heard a reply, inspired by so affecting a sentiment, expressed with such dignified simplicity.—*Baron Haussez Sketches.*

ARISTOCRACY IN GRADATIONS.—Exclusiveness is not peculiar to any one class; we are, all exclusives, from the peer, which black-balls the merchant at a club-house, to the farmer's cook, who drives the pigs out of the kitchen with a birch-broom. Exclusiveness is part of man's nature, and the dignity with which he resists usurpation in the way of rank is but a spice of ambition to rule.—Curious is the voluntary blindness of men to their own passions, when they, who seek for the destruction or abatement of rank, seek for it from their own love of rank. The eloquent author of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire flies out, I remember, into a violent and splendid rage with the complimentary and adulatory titles, which prevailed in the decadence of the empire, which he is pleased to call ridiculous and unmeaning;—yet that same Edward Gibbon was a hearty Tory, and as good a stickler for rank as any man living—nor did he see any great folly or absurdity in the title of Lord Sheffield, which was conferred on his friend Holroyd.—*Athenaeum.*

A lawyer, said Lord Brougham, (in a facetious mood) is a learned gentleman, who rescues your estate from your enemy, and keeps it himself.

A FRAGMENT.

FROM FRASER'S MAGAZINE.

She comes in vision as she came
When heavenly beauty filled her frame—
When, in a mould of mortal birth,
Heaven flung its charms o'er those of earth.
But oh! it is in midnight dreams
That I behold those radiant gleams
Of vanished brightness come and go,
Like sunshine on the mountain snow.
Her quivering lips may not unroll
The hidden transports of her soul;
But straight before my tranced eye
She stands, a vision of the sky—
A child of heaven, that may not brook
The ardour of a waking look.

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