

## The History of Australia.

839

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

been a favourite land of emigration for the British population; but an extraordinary impetus has been given to emigration thither by the recent discovery of the gold beds, which most greatly influence the future character of Australian industry and the local distribution of its inhabitants. We subjoin a brief account of this interesting discovery.

On the 2nd of May, 1851, the citizens of Sydney were startled with the announcement that gold had been discovered in a native state within the Colonial Territory. Mr. Hargreaves, a resident of Brisbane Water, who had recently returned from California, struck with the similarity of the geological formation, felt persuaded that there must be gold in several districts of the colony, and on instituting a search his expectations were realised. The locality in which the first discovery of gold was made by Mr. Hargreaves, was in the neighbourhood of Summerhill Creek, thirty miles from Bathurst, (or about 140 from Sydney). A spot on the banks of Summerhill Creek soon acquired, and has retained, the attractive name of Ophir. But the Ophir diggings were shortly surpassed in amount of produce by those of Turron, a river which flows into the right bank of the Macquarie, Meroo Creek, further northward, another of the sites of auriferous wealth, belongs to the basin of the same river, the whole valley of which, from the neighbourhood of Bathurst downwards, appears to possess on either hand abundant supplies of the glittering treasure.

The discoveries to which we have been referring, as well as others that shortly ensued, were made in localities within the limits of the New South Wales territory. But it was soon ascertained that the auriferous deposits of the Australian soil were not limited to that colony. Gold fields that surpassed those of New South Wales in richness of yield, were found to exist in the neighbouring provinces of Victoria, and in places more accessible from the maritime districts. Early in the month of September, gold was found at a place called Ballarat, forty miles distant from Geelong (on Port Phillip), and within a few days after at Mount Alexander, seventy miles distant from Melbourne. The latter locality has proved by far the richest of the Australian gold fields hitherto worked, and has attracted by much the greater number of diggers. The workings at Ballarat and Mount Alexander, rapidly proved so successful, as completely to throw into shade the digging that had been already commenced at Anderson's Creek, and other places nearer to Melbourne. Within a year from the date of that announcement, gold to a value exceeding four millions sterling had been shipped to England, from the Australian colonies; and upwards of thirty thousand diggers were eagerly employed in the search after the precious metal in a single locality of the widely extended gold fields belonging to these portions of the southern hemisphere.

It is impossible to predict what consequences may result from this important discovery; but a glance at what has been done during the last twenty years may serve to indicate the future progress of the coun-

try. Within this short period the map of New Holland has gradually been filled up; the bays and headlands of the sea-board have been successively settled; river after river has received enterprising cultivators on its banks; steam navigation has united the bustling points of 2000 miles of coast, whilst an average of 200 miles along that coast has been subdued to pasturage or the plough. The marts of trade have been supplied with wool, tallow, horns, hides, ornamental and hard woods, treasuries of copper; so that England, the emporium of trade, is both clothed, adorned, and fortified with the produce of this antipodean and once desolated territory. The ebb of transportation has sunk beneath the rising tide of emigration; large cities have been founded; numerous provinces have been occupied by freemen, and civil and religious liberty have secured another home.

## NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND, a group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean, was discovered by Tasman in 1642. He traversed the eastern coast, from latitude 34 to 43 south, and entered a strait; but being attacked by the natives soon after he came to anchor, in the place to which he gave the name of Murderer's Bay, he did not go on shore. He called the country Staten Land, in honour of the states general; though it has been generally distinguished, in maps and charts, by the name of New Zealand.

In 1770, it was circumnavigated by Captain Cook, who found it to consist of two large islands, the coast of which was indented with deep bays, affording excellent shelter for shipping. From that period the coasts were occasionally visited by whalers, and some communication was held with the natives; but until 1815, when a missionary station was established there, no permanent settlement appears to have been made by any people. At the general peace the right of Great Britain to these islands was recognised; but no constituted authority was placed over New Zealand till 1833, when a sub-governor from New South Wales was sent to reside here. Meantime the shores had become infested by marauding traders and adventurers of the worst class, who attempted to obtain from the natives large tracts of land by most fraudulent means.

In order to remedy this evil as far as possible, and to put a stop to such practices in future, New Zealand was, in 1840, constituted a colony dependent on New South Wales, and a governor appointed: a commission was also appointed to inquire into the validity of all claims to land, &c.

The highest hopes were entertained respecting the issues of this adventure, and the New Zealand Company enjoyed a large share of the public favour. It undertook to transplant English society in all its ramifications to the further side of the globe; and sent out in the same expedition, judges, a bishop, clergy, persons who by purchase had become landed proprietors, artisans, peasants, medical men, and printers. But either because the precautions were not taken in the selection of colonists, or that

VERY FEW FRUITS ARE INDIGENOUS, BUT NEARLY ALL THOSE OF EUROPE AND THE WEST INDIES ARE GROWN IN AUSTRALIA.

AUSTRALIA BEYOND THE TROPICS IS HIGHLY FAVOURABLE TO HEALTH.