

VICTORIAN YEAR-BOOK, 1874.

INTRODUCTORY.

DISCOVERY AND EARLY HISTORY.

It is believed that the first Europeans who ever sighted any portion of the land now embraced within the limits of the Colony of Victoria were Captain James Cook, of the Royal Navy, and the crew of His Majesty's ship *Endeavour*. This vessel had been sent to Tahiti to observe the transit of Venus over the sun's disc, and Captain Cook, who was in command, having accomplished that object, and having also made a survey of New Zealand, continued his course westward in order to explore the eastern coast of "Terra Australis Incognita." He made the land on the 19th April 1770, and estimated a prominent point—which he named after the first discoverer, Lieutenant Hicks, one of the officers of his vessel—to be in latitude 38° south, longitude $211^{\circ} 7'$ west ($148^{\circ} 53'$ east). Captain Cook, however, did not attempt to land, or even to approach near the shore, but passed on to other discoveries. It may be observed that Point Hicks appears to be identical with the present Cape Everard, in Gippsland, situated about midway between Cape Howe and the mouth of the Snowy River.*

First discovery of Victoria.

2. On the 18th January 1788, Captain Arthur Phillip, R.N., landed in Botany Bay, whither he had been despatched from England in charge of a squadron of eleven vessels, in order to found a penal colony in Australia. Finding Botany Bay unsuitable for settlement, in consequence, as he says, of "the openness of the bay and the dampness of the soil, by which the people would probably be rendered unhealthy," he sailed northward to

First settlement in Australia.

* The latitude of Cape Everard according to the latest computation is $37^{\circ} 49'$ S., and the longitude $149^{\circ} 17'$ E. A point between Point Hicks and Cape Howe, Cook named Ram Head, from its supposed resemblance to the point at the entrance of Plymouth Sound. This name it still bears.—See "Cook's Voyages," vol. iii., p. 483; London, 1773.

Port Jackson, only a few miles distant, and took formal possession of the soil in the name of His Majesty George the Third on the 26th January 1788.

Explorations
by Bass and
Flinders.

3. For nearly ten years little was known of the coast to the south of Sydney Harbor.* The island of Tasmania, then called Van Diemen's Land, was believed to be joined to the Australian continent, and Bass's Straits, the entrance only to which had been observed, was thought to be a deep bay. At length two officers, George Bass and Matthew Flinders,† the former a surgeon, the latter a midshipman in the Royal Navy, being possessed of more enterprise and probably more leisure than most of the colonists, determined to make an effort to explore the coast. These officers went to sea together on more than one occasion in a small open boat called the *Tom Thumb*, and in the course of these excursions they made some important discoveries and encountered much risk and hardship. At length Bass started singly in a whale-boat, manned by six seamen, and, passing Cape Howe, coasted along the shore of that portion of Victoria now called Gippsland to Wilson's Promontory, the southernmost point on the Australian continent. This point—after exploring Corner Inlet, which is on the east side of the peninsula on which the promontory is situated—he rounded, and continued his course until he reached Western Port, which he entered on the 4th June 1798. It was on this voyage that Bass first conceived the idea of the existence of a strait between Tasmania and Australia,‡ to which conclusion he was led by the fact of a strong current and swell setting from the westward, which he judged must come direct from the Southern Ocean. This question was afterwards decided in the affirmative by Bass and Flinders, who, starting from Port Jackson on the 7th October 1798, sailed right through the strait

Discovery
of Western
Port.

Discovery
of Bass's
Straits.

* About the middle of February 1797 a ship called the *Sydney Cove*, while on a voyage from India to New South Wales, was wrecked at Furneaux Islands, in Bass's Straits. Mr. Clarke, the supercargo, the chief mate, and fifteen men, endeavored to reach Sydney in the launch, but were driven on shore somewhere to the south of Cape Howe, and therefore on the coast of Victoria. They started off by land for Sydney, but three only, viz., Mr. Clarke, an English sailor, and a lascar, reached it alive. Mr. Clarke and his party were probably the first Europeans who ever set foot upon the Victorian shore.—See "Australian Discovery and Colonization," by Samuel Bennett, pp. 219 and 220; Hansen and Bennett, Sydney, 1865.

† Flinders appears to have been the first to suggest that the name of Australia should be given to the southern continent. He says, at page iii. of the introduction to his work, "A Voyage to Terra Australis": "Had I permitted myself any innovation upon the original term (Terra Australis), it would have been to convert it into Australia, as being more agreeable to the ear and an assimilation to the names of the other great portions of the earth."

‡ A similar idea seems to have occurred to Captain Cook from the following expression used by him. Writing of Point Hicks, he says, "To the southward of the point no land was seen, though it is very clear the body of Van Diemen's Land ought to have borne due south. *I cannot determine whether this land joins Van Diemen's Land or not.*"—"Cook's Voyages," vol. iii., p. 483; London, 1773.

and around the island of Tasmania in a small decked sloop called the *Norfolk*. On their return to Sydney, in January 1799, the Governor, Captain Hunter, R.N., on the recommendation of Flinders, decided that the channel separating Tasmania from Australia should receive the name of Bass's Straits.

4. About two years after this, in December 1800, Lieut. James Grant, in His Majesty's small armed brig, *Lady Nelson*, bound from England to Sydney, passed through Bass's Straits from the westward. She first made the land at Cape Banks, in South Australia, and afterwards sailed along the coast of the present colony of Victoria, sighting Capes Bridgewater and Nelson; Portland Bay, the site of the first permanent settlement in Victoria; Cape Otway; Point Nepean, at the entrance of Port Phillip Bay, where an inlet was noticed; and Cape Liptrap.

Discoveries
on coast of
Victoria.

5. On the 15th January 1802, Port Phillip Bay was discovered by Acting Lieutenant John Murray, R.N.,* who had been sent from Sydney to survey the south coast in the *Lady Nelson*, and about three months afterwards, on the 26th April, it was entered by Flinders, who, having been promoted to the rank of Commander on his return to England, had been sent out again in the *Investigator*, a vessel of 334 tons, to examine and survey the coasts of Australia, commencing with the south coast. Flinders did not know of the bay having been already discovered, and spent a week in examining it.† Captain Baudin, in the French ship *Le Géographe*, had, four weeks previously, on the 30th March, passed the entrance to the bay without noticing it, but he subsequently laid claim to be its discoverer, as also to be the discoverer of all the land between Nuyts Archipelago and Western Port, which he called "Terre Napoléon." The whole of this coast, including Spencer's Gulf, called by Baudin "Golfe Bonaparte;" St. Vincent's Gulf, called by him "Golfe Josephine;" and Kangaroo Island, called by him "L'Ile

Discovery of
Port Phillip
Bay.

Flinders'
discoveries
claimed by
the French.

* He first named it Port King, after the then Governor of New South Wales. The name was afterwards changed to Port Phillip, after the first Governor. Murray also gave the hill called "Arthur's Seat," on the east side of the bay, near the Heads, the name it now bears.

† Flinders remained in Port Phillip from the 27th April to the 2nd May. He seems to have gone only as far as Station Peak on the west side, and nine miles to the north of Arthur's Seat on the east side of the bay. He ascended Station Peak to the summit, and Arthur's Seat as far as "the clearest part to be found on the north-western bluff part of the hill," whence he took "an extensive set of bearings." He says, "I find it difficult to speak in general terms of Port Phillip. On the one hand it is capable of receiving and sheltering a larger fleet of ships than ever went to sea, whilst on the other the entrance in its whole width is scarcely two miles, and nearly half of it is occupied by the rocks lying off Point Nepean, and by shoals on the opposite side. * * * No runs of fresh water were met with in my excursions. * * * The country round Port Phillip has a pleasing, and in many parts a fertile appearance, and the sides of some of the hills and several of the valleys are fit for agricultural purposes. It is in great matter a grassy country, and capable of supporting much cattle, though better calculated for sheep."—"Voyage to Terra Australis," vol. i., page 218.

Decrés," had been previously minutely examined by Flinders, who, falling in with *Le Géographe* at sea, communicated his discoveries to Baudin and allowed him to examine his charts.*

6. The first attempt to colonize the territory of Port Phillip was made by an expedition, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins, a marine officer, who had previously held the post of Judge-Advocate in Sydney. The party, which consisted of a Lieutenant-Governor and Captain-Commandant (Colonel Collins), a chaplain, a deputy commissary, a surgeon, 2 assistant-surgeons, a surveyor, a mineralogist, 2 superintendents and 4 overseers of convicts, a superintendent of artificers, 3 officers of marines, 3 sergeants, 3 corporals, 2 drummers, and 39 rank and file of the same corps, 5 women and 1 child belonging to the marines, 307 convicts, 17 convicts' wives, and 7 convicts' children, or in all 402† persons, set sail, on the 26th April 1803, in the *Calcutta* frigate of 1,200 tons, carrying 50 guns, accompanied by the *Ocean* storeship of 600 tons. The *Ocean* arrived at Port Phillip on 7th and the *Calcutta* on the 11th October. It appears that Collins first landed at "Seal Island," ‡ near the entrance to the bay, and that, after several days spent in examination of the coast, he decided on disembarking his party on a narrow neck of land forming the southern shore of the bay, some four or five miles from the Heads, § not far from the site of the present fashionable township of Sorrento.

* The following is an extract from the work of M. Peron, the naturalist to the French expedition:—"De ce grand espace [the south coast of Australia] la partie seule qui du Cap Leuwen s'étend aux îles St. Pierre et St. François, était connue lors de notre départ d'Europe. Découverte par les Hollandais en 1627, elle avait été dans ces derniers temps visitée par Vancouver et surtout par D'Entrecasteaux; mais ce dernier navigateur n'ayant pu lui-même s'avancer au delà des îles St. Pierre et St. François, qui forment la limite orientale de la terre de Nuyts, et les Anglais n'ayant pas porté vers le Sud leurs recherches plus loin que le Port Western il en résultait que toute la portion comprise entre ce dernier point et la terre de Nuyts était encore inconnue au moment où nous arrivions sur ces rivages." That is on 30th March 1802. At this time Captain Grant, of the *Lady Nelson*, had discovered the eastern part from Western Port to longitude 140° 10' E., in the year 1800, before the French ships had sailed from Europe; and on the west Captain Flinders had explored the coast and islands from Nuyts Land to Cape Jervis, in 138° 10' E., and was on the day specified at the head of the Gulf of St. Vincent. The part actually discovered by Captain Baudin lies between latitude 37° 36' and 35° 40' south and longitude 140° 10' and 138° 58' east, making, with the windings, about 150 miles of coast, in which there is neither river, inlet, nor place of shelter.—See Flinders' "Voyage to Terra Australis," vol. i., page 191; London, 1814.

† These numbers are taken from "An Account of a Voyage to establish a Colony at Port Phillip, in Bass's Strait, on the south coast of New South Wales, in His Majesty's ship *Calcutta*, in the years 1802-3-4, by J. H. Tuckey, first lieutenant of the *Calcutta*;" London, Longman and Co., 1805. Other accounts give the number of convicts as 367 instead of 307. The late Honorable J. P. Fawcner, in a lecture delivered at Collingwood on the 6th June 1862, says—"At the prisons," whatever that may mean, "there were between 350 and 360." He also mentions, besides the convicts and persons connected with them or with the Government establishment, 12 free male settlers, 6 settlers' wives, 1 widow, 1 settler's sister, and 15 settlers' children as having formed part of the expedition.

‡ This may possibly have been the present Swan Island, situated to the north of Queenscliff.

§ This distance from the Heads is that given by Fawcner. Lieutenant Tuckey says—"The people were landed in a small bay eight miles from the harbor's mouth."

First attempt to colonize Port Phillip, 1803.

Disembarkation of Collins's party.

7. Whatever the attractions this spot may now have as a watering-place, a more unsuitable locality for settlement could not have been chosen. The only fresh water to be obtained, and that of bad quality and but scanty in quantity, was got by sinking casks pierced with holes in the sand, through which the water filtered. Such timber as was required had to be brought from Arthur's Seat, some fourteen miles distant. The roar of the surf breaking upon the back beach was a constant source of annoyance. The land was sandy and sterile. In a short time the brackish water disagreed with the men, and many of the best of them became laid up in hospital. Several of the convicts deserted. Some of these were killed by the aborigines or died of starvation. One convict, William Buckley by name, managed to make friends with the natives, and lived with them until the arrival of the party who formed a permanent settlement at Port Phillip—thirty-two years after. Some returned in a starving condition. One of these, named Gibson, reported he had discovered a river flowing into the northern part of the bay. The existence of such a stream was afterwards verified by Lieutenant Tuckey of the *Calcutta**; but Collins took no notice of the discovery, and, from the first, appears to have been determined to abandon the country.

Unsuitability of the site chosen.

8. No move could, however, be made without instructions from Sydney. Colonel Collins was in such a hurry to get these that he would not wait for the departure of the *Ocean*, which, having been discharged, was about to sail for China *viâ* Sydney, but sent away a party in a six-oared cutter to report the state of affairs to the Governor, Captain P. G. King, R.N. After being nine days at sea, and encountering much bad weather, this boat-party was picked up within sixty miles of Port Jackson by the *Ocean*, which had sailed six days after them, and was by her conveyed to Sydney. The permission sought for was at once accorded. The *Ocean* was sent back to take Collins and his company to Van Diemen's Land, and the *Lady Nelson* was ordered round to assist. The vessels reached Port Phillip Bay in December 1803; and the *Calcutta*, which had awaited their arrival, sailed for Sydney a few days after.

Collins seeks permission to leave Port Phillip.

9. Colonel Collins was allowed to make his choice between Port Dalrymple in the north and the Derwent in the south of Van Diemen's

Port Phillip abandoned as unfit for settlement.

* If this river was the Yarra, Gibson and Tuckey were not its first discoverers, for, prior to the arrival of Collins, Mr. Charles Grimes, Surveyor-General of New South Wales, had been sent round by Governor King to survey Port Phillip, and had discovered the Yarra and Saltwater rivers. Tuckey says that Grimes's report of the district was unfavorable; but this I have no means of verifying, as I have not been able to discover that any copy of the report in question exists in this colony. I hope, however, to look further into the matter.

Land. Having received an unfavorable report of the former, he chose the southern port, and hastily shipping men and stores on board the vessels, he set sail on the 27th January 1804. The vessels were not able to accommodate all the party at once, so the *Ocean* had to return for the remainder. All, however, were at length embarked, and in this manner the territory now forming the fertile and prosperous colony of Victoria, the *Australia Felix* of Sir Thomas Mitchell, was abandoned as a place not fit for the abode of civilized beings.

10. For the next twenty years this district appears to have attracted but little attention. In 1824, however, the explorers, Hamilton Hume and W. H. Hovell, travelled overland from Sydney to Port Phillip. In their journey they discovered, on the 16th November, the Murray River, which now forms the northern boundary of Victoria, and this river they named the Hume.* On the 3rd December they discovered the present Goulburn River, which they called the Hovell, and on the 16th December they reached that part of Port Phillip now called Corio Bay, near the site of the present town of Geelong. Hume at once rightly declared the water they had reached to be Port Phillip, but Hovell insisted it was Western Port, and upon the representations of the latter, when he returned to Sydney in the early part of 1825,† respecting the excellence of the soil and adaptability of the country for colonization, it was determined to attempt to establish a convict settlement there. Accordingly in the following year (1826) a small party of prisoners, with soldiers to guard them, was landed at Western Port, under the command of Captain Wright.‡ This is to the present day one of the most unpromising parts of the colony. Extensive mud flats stretching far into the water, barren sandy heaths and swamps, are the characteristics of the district. The settlers pitched their tents on the eastern shore of the Port, about a mile to the north of Red Point, not far from the site of the present township of Corinella. They were not, however, allowed to remain long, as the Home Government soon gave orders for their withdrawal. On the receipt of these, nothing loath, they struck their

Hume and Hovell's explorations.

Discovery of Geelong harbor.

Attempted settlement at Western Port.

* They made this river about the present site of Albury, and ascending it in search of a crossing-place, at last they found one, on the 20th November, to the eastward of the present Mitta Mitta, which they named the Oxley. Here their cattle were able to ford the stream, and they themselves, with their supplies, crossed in "a temporary boat constructed of wicker." On the 24th November they discovered a river, which they named the "Ovens," after Major Ovens, Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane's Private Secretary. On the 2nd December they ascended Mount Disappointment, which they thus named in consequence of a check they experienced there. From this point they saw Mount Macedon, which they named Mount Wentworth.

† They crossed the Hume on leaving this territory on June 2nd 1825.

‡ Hovell was sent to guide this expedition. Of course he found the country quite different from that he had reported he had discovered whilst in company with Hume.

tents and departed. Thus on a second occasion was the territory abandoned.* Western Port abandoned.

11. In 1830 further knowledge of the course and position of the river which forms the northern boundary of Victoria was gained by the celebrated explorer, Captain Charles Sturt. He started from New South Wales, and passed down the Murrumbidgee in a boat until it joined another river, which he named the Murray. He continued his course down the latter stream for nearly 1,000 miles, until it reached the sea at Encounter Bay. He then returned. It was afterwards known that this river was one originally discovered by Hume, and named after himself. It still, however, retains the name given it by Sturt. Sturt descends the Murray.

12. The first permanent settlement founded in Victoria was at Portland Bay. The pioneers were the Messrs. Henty, merchants, of Launceston, Tasmania. They had examined the locality in 1833, and formed the idea of establishing a whaling station there. Two of the brothers accordingly, Edward and Francis, crossed Bass's Straits in the *Thistle* schooner, and landed on the 19th November 1834. They soon began to till the soil, to run and breed stock, and to carry on whaling operations. The barrenness of the ground forbade much success in the first-named pursuit, and of good pasture land there was but little in the immediate vicinity of the Port. Rich country was, however, afterwards discovered in the interior, and to this they removed their flocks and herds, and formed large pastoral establishments. Other settlers followed, and in the course of years some considerable fortunes were amassed. The sterility of the soil, however, around the original settlement, and the openness of the bay, which renders it unsafe for shipping during the prevalence of certain winds, have always acted as drawbacks to the advancement of Portland. The town now contains about 2,400 inhabitants, which is a smaller number than it contained twenty years since. Permanent settlement at Portland Bay.

13. In the year following that in which the Messrs. Henty settled at Portland, two parties from Van Diemen's Land established themselves at Port Phillip, and led the way to the permanent colonization of the district. The leader of the first party was John Batman, who acted on behalf of an association of Government officers, bankers, merchants, and one lawyer, numbering in all seventeen persons, resident in Van Batman's expedition to Port Phillip.

* I have not been able to find any official account of this attempt to colonize Western Port. In the account of Victoria given in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Captain Wetherall is stated to have been the commander of the party, and Captain Wright to have been in charge of the military. All other accounts I have met with state the party was commanded by Captain Wright.

Diemen's Land, and he brought over with him three white men and seven New South Wales aborigines. His determination was to purchase a tract of land from the Port Phillip natives, and he thought that the semi-civilized blacks from Sydney would be useful to him in conducting the necessary negotiations. The party arrived in Port Phillip in a small vessel called the *Rebecca* on the 29th May 1835, and anchored off the Indented Heads, on the west side of the bay, about twelve miles from its entrance.* Here Batman landed and found the country to be of the most splendid description, with the grass growing higher than his knees. He saw tracks of natives, but could not fall in with any ; so two days after he weighed anchor and stood up the bay, keeping the west side all the way, for a further distance of fifteen miles, to near the entrance of the small river Werribee, where he again anchored. Landing, he soon met with natives, and after some time spent in negotiating with them and examining the country, he got seven of the principal chiefs to affix their marks to two deeds, dated 6th June 1835, whereby, in consideration of a certain number of blankets, knives, tomahawks, looking-glasses, pairs of scissors, handkerchiefs, red shirts, flannel jackets, and suits of clothes, and a certain quantity of flour, they granted to him and his heirs and assigns for ever 600,000 acres of land, within certain defined limits.†

Batman's
treaty with
the natives.

Batman's
treaty dis-
allowed.

14. Having accomplished his object, Batman returned to Tasmania, leaving most of his party at the Indented Heads with instructions to build and cultivate. He came back afterwards with some members of the association, several of whom settled permanently in Port Phillip. Their bargain with the natives was, however, disallowed by Sir Richard Bourke, the Governor of New South Wales, as being in violation of the rights of the Crown. This decision was appealed against by the members of the association, but was upheld by the Home authorities.

* Speaking of this part Flinders says—"Indented Head, at the northern part of the western peninsula, had an appearance particularly agreeable" (p. 219). It is now a flourishing agricultural district.

† A copy of the map of the country purchased by Batman from the natives, taken from the report of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Disposal of Colonial Lands, 1836, is attached to Mr. G. W. Rusden's work, "The Discovery and Settlement of Port Phillip," George Robertson, Melbourne, 1871. This map shows Batman's block to have been bounded on the south and south-east by Bass's Straits and Port Phillip Bay ; on the west by a line extending from Point Roadnight to Melbourne Hill (in the map called Mount Iramoo), two or three miles south of Lancefield ; on the north by a line from Melbourne Hill running due east forty miles, and on the east by a line running from the eastern extremity of that line, in a south-easterly direction, to a point in Hobson's Bay between St. Kilda and Sandridge. It took in the sites of Queenscliff, Geelong and its suburbs, Wyndham, Williamstown, Footscray, Sandridge, Emerald Hill, Melbourne, Hotham, Fitzroy, Collingwood, Flemington, Brunswick, Coburg, Keilor, Melton, Bulla, Sunbury, Romsey, Kilmore, Whittlesea, and a number of other townships. A block extending from Batman's Swamp to the junction of the Yarra and Saltwater Rivers is marked "Extensive marsh reserved for a public common," and a block, taking in Fisherman's Bend and Sandridge, is marked "Reserved for a township and other public purposes."

15. The other expedition, and that which led to the most important and lasting results, was organized and fitted out by six residents of Van Diemen's Land, acting under the direction of John Pascoe Fawkner, an innkeeper of Launceston, the principal port on the north side of that island. Fawkner was the son of one of the convicts who were brought out to Port Phillip by Colonel Collins in 1803, and accompanied his father into banishment. He had therefore been at Port Phillip before, although at that time he was only eleven years of age; and although the expedition of which he was a member had abandoned the country as unfit for human habitation, it seems he always entertained a desire again to test its capabilities. The party of which he was the leader contemplated attempting to form a settlement in Port Phillip before Batman went there, but they were delayed from various causes. On Batman's return, however, giving a glowing description of the excellent country he had purchased, they lost no time in completing their preparations. A schooner named the *Enterprise*, of fifty-five tons measurement, was purchased and freighted with stores, farming implements, grain, seeds, plants, fruit trees, three horses, and other requisites. The vessel sailed from Launceston on the 27th July 1835, but had to put back from stress of weather. Fawkner, having been taken ill, was obliged to land, so the expedition proceeded to sea without him, Captain John Lancey being recognised as the head of the party in Fawkner's absence. Probably in order to avoid coming into collision with Batman, they first went to Western Port; but not finding that place to their liking, they left it, and entered the adjoining bay of Port Phillip. Although warned off by Batman's party, they pursued their course to the head of the bay, and entering the Yarra Yarra River, they sailed up it; and, on the 28th August, they made their vessel fast to trees opposite the spot on which Melbourne now stands. The people landed, and soon began to erect habitations and to cultivate the soil. The *Enterprise* returned to Launceston, where Fawkner and his family embarked, taking a further supply of stores, two horses, two cows, also a few passengers. On the 18th October they landed at their destination.*

Fawkner's expedition.

16. Soon after this, in March 1836, Major, afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Livingstone Mitchell, the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, started on an exploring expedition in the direction of Port Phillip. Crossing the Murray not far from its junction with

Discoveries by Major Mitchell.

* Fawkner mentions that a small vessel, the *Endeavour*, chartered by Mr. John Aitken, followed the *Enterprise* over. This vessel landed her passengers and stock at Arthur's Seat, whence the sheep were driven to Aitken's Gap, about twenty-four miles from Melbourne.

the Murrumbidgee, he travelled up its southern bank until he came to Swan Hill. Here he turned to the south, and following up the Loddon River for thirty miles, then struck off to examine Mount Hope and the surrounding country. Returning to the Loddon further south, he crossed that stream and the Avoca, Avon, Richardson, and Wimmera rivers; passed to the north of the Grampians and made the Glenelg, not far from the site of the present township of Harrow; followed down that river past the point at which it is joined by the Wannon as far as the site of the present village of Dartmoor, where he took to boats, and descended the river until stopped from entering the sea by the bar at its mouth. This point was reached on the 20th August. Following the coast to Portland Bay he came upon the settlement of the Messrs. Henty already alluded to. Here he remained a short time to recruit his party, and then started on his return journey. In this he kept more to the eastward than while on his outward route. Passing Mount Sturgeon and the plains to the north-east of it he crossed and named the Hopkins River and made Mount Alexander,* since so famous for the gold discoveries in its vicinity; then, keeping still in a north-easterly direction, and crossing the Goulburn at the present site of Mitchellstown, and the the Ovens at that of Wangaratta, he eventually crossed the Murray, on the 18th October, near the point at which "The Major's Creek" flows into it from the north.

Effects of
Mitchell's
discoveries.

17. It was after this journey that Mitchell gave the country he had explored the designation of "Australia Felix." † He had passed through some of the best parts of this colony, and the accounts he gave of the richness and capabilities of the soil, and the magnificence of the scenery, caused great excitement, not only in Sydney and Van Diemen's Land, but also in the mother country. Herds of cattle and sheep, driven overland from New South Wales, speedily occupied the best parts of the territory. Every available craft capable of floating was put into requisition to bring passengers and stock from Van Diemen's Land, and after a time ship-loads of immigrants began to arrive from the United Kingdom.

* Major Mitchell also saw and named, but did not approach, Mount Macedon, which had formerly been called Mount Wentworth by Hume.

† Lieutenant John Oxley, R.N., Surveyor-General of New South Wales, had previously reported respecting this country:—"We had demonstrated beyond a doubt that the country south of the parallel 34° S. and west of the meridian 147° 30' E. was uninhabitable and useless for all the purposes of civilized man."—"Oxley's Journals of Two Expeditions into the Interior of Australia," p. 372; London, 1820.

18. The colonists soon found themselves in want of some form of government, so they petitioned the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke, to take steps to make this provision for them.* Sir Richard sent an officer, Mr. George Stewart, to examine into the state of affairs. He reached Port Phillip on the 25th May 1836, and having returned and reported, Captain Lonsdale, formerly an officer of the 4th regiment, was despatched to act in the capacity of resident magistrate. He arrived in H.M.S. *Rattlesnake* on the 29th September, from which date the regular government of the settlement may be said to have commenced. Six days after Captain Lonsdale's arrival, the remainder of the Government staff, consisting of a customs officer, a commissariat officer, three surveyors, three constables, a few prisoners to aid in the construction of public works, and about thirty soldiers, arrived in the *Stirlingshire* brig.

Captain
Lonsdale
appointed
resident
magistrate.

19. One of the first acts of the new magistrate, after he had become settled, was to decide upon the site of the future metropolis. He examined several places, but eventually adhered to the spot first fixed upon by Fawkner's party. Six months afterwards, on the 2nd March 1837, Sir Richard Bourke visited the district from Sydney. He concurred in Captain Lonsdale's choice, and named the town Melbourne. He also approved of a plan for a town on a point to the westward of Hobson's Bay, which he called Williamstown.

Sir Richard
Bourke
arrives and
names
metropolis
Melbourne.

20. In 1839 the population of Port Phillip amounted to nearly 6,000, and was being rapidly augmented from without. The sheep in the district exceeded half a million, and of cattle and horses the numbers were in proportion equally large. The place was daily growing in importance. The Home Government therefore decided to send an officer, with the title of Superintendent, to take charge of the district, but to act under the Governor of New South Wales. Charles Joseph La Trobe, Esq., was appointed to this office, from which he was afterwards promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Governor. He arrived at Melbourne on the 30th September 1839.

C. J. LaTrobe
appointed
Superin-
tendent of
Port Phillip.

21. Soon after this all classes of the new community appear to have become affected by a mania for speculation. Not only in ordinary commercial transactions did this disposition show itself, but in the purchase and sale of allotments of land in Melbourne and elsewhere, in which a regular traffic was kept up until the nominal value of land became enormous. Sheep, cattle, and horses were sold, resold, and

Mania for
speculation.

* Prior to this, when disputes arose, Mr. James Simpson, formerly a magistrate in Van Diemen's Land, acted as arbitrator by general consent of the colonists.

sold again at increased prices on each occasion. As is always the case when speculation takes the place of steady industry, the necessaries of life became fabulously dear. Of money there was but little in consideration of the amount of business done, and large transactions were effected by means of paper and credit. From highest to lowest, all lived extravagantly. Even rough laborers and bullock-drivers indulged in champagne and other luxuries of a similarly expensive character.

Commercial
crisis.

22. Such a state of things could not last for ever. In 1842, by which time the population had increased to 24,000, the crash came. The bankers restricted the advances to their customers, so that it became necessary either to force property into the market to realise what it would fetch, or to obtain advances from money-lenders at ruinous rates of interest. In a short time the value of landed property and stock became almost nominal.* To add to the confusion, a fall in the price of the chief article of export, wool, took place in England.

Matters
improve.

23. From this depression the colony slowly recovered, and a sounder business system took the place of the speculative one which had formerly prevailed. The system of boiling down sheep for tallow was introduced, and this proved a real boon to the pastoral settlers. †

Separation
from New
South
Wales.

24. All this time, however, the colony was a dependency of New South Wales, and a strong feeling had gained ground that it suffered in consequence. Complaints were made that the expenditure of Government moneys in the district was not equal to the amount of revenue yielded by the taxes levied and lands sold within its borders. The distance from the capital was also found to operate injuriously to the interests of the colonists, and a cry was raised for separation. The demand was, as a matter of course, resisted by New South Wales, but as the agitation was carried on with increased activity, it was at last yielded to by the Home authorities. The vessel bearing the intelligence arrived on the 11th November 1850. The news soon spread, and great was the satisfaction of the colonists. Rejoicings were kept up in Melbourne for five consecutive days, on three of which not even a newspaper was published, and on the night of one the city was illuminated. Before,

* "Real property became so reduced in value that only about one-tenth of its former price could be realised for it. Sheep had depreciated so much that flocks, worth from £1 10s. to £2 in the first phase of Port Phillip settlement, had been sold from 1s. 2d. to 4s. per head."—"History of Victoria," by the Hon. Thomas McCombie, page 104; London, Chapman and Hall, 1858.

† McCombie says that Mr. O'Brien, of Yass, New South Wales, was the first to come forward and show his fellow-colonists how a standard value of nine shillings per head could be given to sheep by this practice. The same process had been carried on for many years in Russia, but, until then, it had never been thought of in Australia.—McCombie's "History of Victoria," page 105.

however, the separation could be legally accomplished, it was necessary that an Act should be passed in New South Wales to settle details in connection with the establishment of a Legislature in the new colony, and that sundry other observances should be gone through. The requisite forms were at length given effect to, and, on the 1st July 1851, a day which has ever since been scrupulously observed as a public holiday, it was proclaimed that the Port Phillip district of New South Wales had been erected into a separate colony to be called Victoria, after the name of Her Most Gracious Majesty. At the same time the Superintendent, Mr. C. J. La Trobe, was raised to the rank of Lieutenant-Governor.

25. At the commencement of the year of separation the population of Port Phillip numbered 76,000, the sheep 6,000,000, the cattle 380,000, the horses 21,000, and the land in cultivation 52,000 acres. In the preceding year, the public revenue had amounted to £260,000, the public expenditure to £196,000, the imports to £745,000, the exports to £1,000,000. The ships which arrived numbered 555, of an aggregate tonnage of 108,030, and the ships which departed numbered 508, of an aggregate tonnage of 87,087. The wheat grown amounted to 550,000 bushels, the oats to 100,000 bushels, the hay to 21,000 tons. The wool exported amounted to 18,000,000 lbs., and the tallow to 10,000,000 lbs.

Statistics at period of separation.

26. On separation it was of course necessary that an adjustment of accounts should be made between the two colonies, and this was done in a manner which appears to have been by no means fair or equitable to Victoria, inasmuch as the principle acted upon was to divide the balance remaining in the New South Wales Treasury at the time of separation between that colony and Victoria, in the proportion of their respective revenues during the year prior to that of separation, leaving out of sight altogether the amount by which in former years the revenues of Port Phillip—all of which had gone to New South Wales—had exceeded the amount expended by the latter in or on account of the Port Phillip district. Looking at a statement laid upon the table of the Legislative Council of Victoria, on the 13th July 1852, of the revenue raised in and amount expended on the Port Phillip district, during the 15½ years from the beginning of 1836 to the 30th June 1851, it appears that the former exceeded the latter by £489,492. The amount handed over on separation was, however, £95,063 only. Victoria, by this arrangement, was therefore a loser of £394,429; or, if an estimate, which seems to be purely imaginary, of the proportion chargeable to Victoria by New South Wales on account of the expenses

Unfair treatment of Victoria on adjustment of accounts.

of General Government, amounting to £102,842, or about £6,635 a year, be admitted, the amount of loss will be reduced to £291,587.*

27. By the New South Wales Act above referred to, the number of members of the Legislative Council of Victoria was fixed at thirty, of whom twenty were to be elected, and ten nominated by the Governor. The first meeting of this Legislature took place on the 11th November of the year of separation.

28. In little more than a month after the establishment of Victoria as an independent colony, it became generally known that rich deposits of gold existed within its borders. Two years and a half previously a lump of gold had been exhibited in the shop of a jeweller at Melbourne, named Brentani, which it was said had been found in the locality of the Pyrenees Ranges by a shepherd named Chapman. This created some little excitement at the time, but as the man could never point out the place at which he had found the specimen, and indeed soon deserted a small searching party he had undertaken to guide to the spot, it was readily supposed he was an impostor, and had obtained the gold by melting some articles of jewellery he had stolen, and so the belief in the existence of a goldfield gradually grew weaker. The discovery of gold, however, in New South Wales, by Hargreaves, in February 1851,†

* I have taken some pains to examine into this matter, and believe the following to be a correct statement of account between the two colonies:—

<i>Dr.</i>	VICTORIA IN ACCOUNT WITH NEW SOUTH WALES.				<i>Cr.</i>
To Amount of Port Phillip Revenue, 1836 to 30/6/51 ..	£1,909,415	4	2	By Expenditure on Port Phillip, 1836 to 30/6/51	£1,419,923 10 6½
To Amount repaid New South Wales in adjustment of advance on account of General Revenue	236	2	1	By Advance at separation on account of General Revenue	33,688 3 3
To Amount repaid New South Wales in adjustment of advance on account of Territorial Revenue	11,124	14	8	By Advance at separation on account of Territorial Revenue	72,669 11 8
				By Payment on account of Denominational Schools ..	66 2 10
				By Balance, being amount of Port Phillip Revenues not accounted for by New South Wales	394,428 12 7½
	£1,920,776	0	11		£1,920,776 0 11

This statement does not include an amount of £102,842 said to be chargeable to Victoria on account of expenses of General Government. If this be admitted, the balance of unaccounted for revenues would be reduced to £291,586 12s. 7½d.—See "Parliamentary Papers of Victoria," Session 1852-3, vol. ii., p. 89; also Session 1853-4, vol. ii., pp. 453 to 469.

† The first discoverer of gold in Australia is believed to have been the Rev. W. B. Clarke, of Sydney, who, in 1841, found gold in the mountainous regions to the west of the Vale of Clwyd, in New South Wales; and in 1844 exhibited a specimen of gold in quartz to the then Governor, Sir George Gipps, and others. But the subject was not followed up, "as much from considerations of the penal character of the colony, as from general ignorance of the value of such an indication." Mr. E. H. Hargreaves returned to Sydney from California in 1850, for the express purpose, as he states, of searching for gold; and on the 12th February 1851 he succeeded in finding gold at Summer Hill Creek, in New South Wales. This discovery afterwards led to gold being found in other places in that colony, and to the discovery of the goldfields of Victoria.—See Report of Select Committee of Legislative Council on claims for discovery of gold in Victoria, Session 1853-4.

First meeting of Legislature of Victoria.

Reports of the existence of gold.

caused numbers to emigrate to that colony. This being considered detrimental to the interests of Victoria, a public meeting was held in Melbourne on the 9th June, at which a "gold-discovery committee" was appointed, which was authorized to offer rewards to any that should discover gold in remunerative quantities within the colony.

29. The colonists were already on the alert. At the time this meeting was held, several parties were out searching for, and some had already found gold. The precious metal was first discovered at Clunes, then in the Yarra Ranges at Anderson's Creek, soon after at Buninyong and Ballarat, shortly afterwards at Mount Alexander, and eventually at Bendigo.* The deposits were found to be richer and to extend over a wider area than any which had been discovered in New South Wales. Their fame soon spread to the adjacent colonies, and thousands hastened to the spot, desirous of participating in the newly found treasures. When the news reached home, crowds of emigrants from the United Kingdom hurried to our shores. Inhabitants of other European countries quickly joined in the rush. Americans from the Atlantic States were not long in following. Stalwart Californians left their own gold-yielding rocks and placers to try their fortunes at the southern Eldorado. Last of all, swarms of Chinese arrived eager to unite in the general scramble for wealth.

Discovery of gold in Victoria.

30. The payment for a license to dig for gold was first fixed at £1 10s. per month, and this was afterwards reduced to £1 10s. per quarter.† The license fee was not seriously objected to in the early days of the goldfields when gold was found in large quantities by almost

Grievances of the gold-diggers.

* The following is a short statement of the order in which the Select Committee appointed by the Legislative Council to consider claims for rewards for gold discoveries in Victoria, placed the various claimants in their report dated 10th March 1854:—The Hon. W. Campbell discovered gold in March 1850, at Clunes; concealed the fact at the time from the apprehension that its announcement might prove injurious to the squatter on whose run the discovery was made; but mentioned it in a letter to a friend on the 10th June, and afterwards on the 5th July 1851, which friend, at Mr. Campbell's request, reported the matter to the gold-discovery committee on the 8th July. Mr. L. J. Michel, and six others, discovered gold in the Yarra Ranges, at Anderson's Creek, which they communicated to the gold-discovery committee on the 5th July. Mr. James Esmond, a California digger, and three others, obtained gold in the quartz rocks of the Pyrenees, and made the discovery public on the 5th July. Dr. George Bruhn, a German physician, found indications of gold in quartz "two miles from Parker's station," in April 1851, and forwarded specimens to the gold committee on the 30th June. Mr. Thomas Hiscock found gold at Buninyong on the 8th August, and communicated the fact to the editor of the *Geelong Advertiser* on the 10th of the same month. This discovery led to that of the Ballarat goldfields. Mr. C. T. Peters, a hutkeeper at Barker's Creek, and three others, found gold at Specimen Gully on the 20th July; worked secretly to the 1st September, then published the account. This led to the discovery of the numerous goldfields about Mount Alexander.

† Towards the end of the first year of the gold discovery the Government determined to raise the license fee to £3 per month, and actually issued a proclamation, dated 1st December 1851, stating that on and after the 1st January 1852 such amount would be charged. This was met by strong protests on the part of the diggers, which resulted in the proclamation being rescinded on the 13th December 1851. No licenses therefore were ever issued at the increased rate.

all who sought it, but in the course of a year or two the number of gold diggers had increased so enormously that a considerable proportion were necessarily unsuccessful, and to these the payment of even the reduced license fee became a grievous burden. The mode of collecting this tax by means of armed troopers, who surrounded parties of diggers whilst at their work and apprehended all who were found without licenses, was also particularly obnoxious. The miners had besides other grievances, the chief being that they were denied the franchise, and were not allowed to cultivate ever so small a portion of land to help towards the maintenance of themselves and their families.

Riots on
Ballarat.

31. Public meetings were held on some of the goldfields to protest against this state of things, but as little notice was taken by the Government, a wide-spread feeling of discontent ensued. This culminated in an outbreak which took place at Ballarat towards the end of 1854, when the diggers erected a stockade at that portion of the gold-workings called the Eureka, and set the authorities at defiance. All the troops that could be mustered were immediately despatched to Ballarat, and the riot was quelled, with some bloodshed on both sides.* A number of prisoners were taken by the troops, and some of these were brought to trial. The charge set down in the indictment was high treason. There were several trials, but the juries would not convict the prisoners of this offence, and they were consequently all acquitted.

32. As a result of the Ballarat outbreak, a Royal Commission was appointed, on the 7th December, by the Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, to enquire into the grievances of the gold miners. This led to the oppressive license fee being removed, and other concessions being made. The miners have since been no less loyal than any other of Her Majesty's subjects.

Colonists
invited to
frame Con-
stitutions.

33. The important position which the Australian colonies had obtained in consequence of the discovery of gold, and the influx of population consequent thereon, was the occasion of the Imperial Government determining in the latter end of 1852 that each colony should be invited to frame such a Constitution for its government as its representatives might deem best suited to its own peculiar circumstances.

Provisions of
Victorian
Constitu-
tion.

34. The Constitution framed in Victoria, and afterwards approved by the British Parliament, was avowedly based upon that of the United Kingdom. It provided for the establishment of two Houses of Legislature, with power to make laws, subject to the assent of the Crown

* The Eureka Stockade was taken by storm on the morning of Sunday the 2nd December. It occupied about an acre, and was situated in Ballarat East, between the present Eureka, Stawell, Rodier and George streets.

as represented generally by the Governor of the colony ; the Legislative Council, or Upper House, to consist of thirty, and the Legislative Assembly, or Lower House, to consist of sixty members. Members of both Houses to be elective and to possess property qualifications. Electors of both Houses to possess either property or professional qualifications, the property qualification of both members and electors being lower in the case of the Lower than in that of the Upper Chamber. The Upper House not to be dissolved, but five members to retire every two years and to be eligible for re-election. The Lower House to be dissolved every five years, or oftener, at the discretion of the Governor. Certain officers of the Government, four at least of whom should have seats in Parliament, to be deemed "Responsible Ministers." Any member of either House accepting a place of profit under the Crown to vacate his seat, but to be capable of being re-elected.

35. This Constitution was proclaimed in Victoria on the 23rd November 1855, and with certain modifications* is still in force. Sixteen Ministries have successively held office since its inauguration, and an investigation of the causes which brought about the fall of each Ministry and the elevation of the succeeding one would afford material for an instructive and not uninteresting chapter in the history of the colony. In order to compile such a narrative, however, it would be necessary for me to treat upon the subject of politics, with which the official writer must not meddle. The historical portion of this volume must therefore end here.

Rise and fall
of Minis-
tries.

36. When the Constitution was proclaimed the population of the colony numbered 364,000, it now numbers 814,000 ; the land in cultivation amounted to 115,000 acres, it now amounts to over 1,000,000 acres ; the bushels of wheat grown in a year numbered 1,150,000, they now number 4,850,000 ; the sheep numbered 4,600,000, they now number 11,250,000 ; the cattle numbered 530,000, they now number 1,000,000 ; the horses numbered 33,000, they now number not less than 200,000 ; the public revenue amounted to £2,728,000, it now amounts to over £4,000,000 ; the value of imports was £12,000,000, it now amounts to £17,000,000 ; the value of exports was £13,500,000, it now amounts to £15,500,000, and this although the export of gold has fallen off from £11,000,000 in the former to little over £4,000,000 in the past year. For further evidences of progress the reader is referred to the statistics given in a later portion of this work.

Progress of
colony since
inaugura-
tion of Con-
stitution.

* The chief of these modifications is the reduction by one-half of the property qualification of members and electors of the Upper House ; the total abolition of the property qualification of members and electors of the Lower House ; the increase of members of the Lower House from sixty to seventy-eight, and the shortening of the duration of the term of their election from five years to three.