

BONWICK — Early days of Melbourne

EARLY DAYS
OF
MELBOURNE.

BY
JAMES BONWICK.

1.269
49







Calcutt. FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE NATIVES OF PORT PHILIP. See page 12.

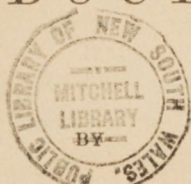


J. Michy.

EARLY DAYS

OF

MELBOURNE.



JAMES BONWICK,

*Author of "Geography of Australia and New Zealand,"
"Discovery and Settlement of Port Phillip," &c. &c.*

MELBOURNE:

JAS. J. BLUNDELL & CO., COLLINS STREET.

1857.



INTRODUCTION.

It is surely as useful and as pleasing for the children of Victoria to know the rise and early times of their colonial home, as for the English youth to know the history of Britain.

To meet this necessity of schools and private families, an introductory sketch of Port Phillip history is here presented to the attention of parents and teachers.

The "Early Days" of Sydney, Hobart Town, Adelaide, and Auckland, will successively appear as opportunity may permit.

The Author again gratefully acknowledges the kind sympathy and support which his colonial school books have received from the friends of Colonial Instruction.

MELBOURNE, *January 9, 1857.*

EARLY DAYS OF MELBOURNE.

THE colony of Port Phillip, now Victoria, has had a strange history. It was discovered by accident, and settled by convicts. It was forsaken and despised as a desert land. It was visited by roving sailors. It was again settled by a few straggling squatters with their sheep and cattle. In fifteen years more, gold was found in its mountain gullies, and the once abandoned shore became the wonder and envy of the world.

The oldest colony in Australia is that of Sydney, which was established by prisoners from England in 1788. Its first Governor was Capt. Phillip. Mr. Bass, a surgeon of one of the early vessels, rounded Cape Howe in a boat, and, landing on the beach of Gipps' Land in 1797, became its first white visitor. He rowed onwards, and entered a western harbour, which he named *Western Port*. He thought, from the swelling of waters, that a sea ran between New

Holland and Van Diemen's Land, but want provisions obliged him to return to Sydney.

His friend, Matthew Flinders, a fine young sailor, joined him in another trip in 1798. They sailed through the passage now called *Bas Strait*, and round Van Diemen's Land, which they found to be an island. The news went to London, and a Capt. Grant, coming out to Sydney, tried the new route, and saw Portland Bay, Cape Otway, and a little opening between two headlands. He arrived at the settlement, and told his tale.

Governor King sent off Lieut. John Murray in the little craft, "Lady Nelson," to examine this opening. On February 15, 1802, Murray passed the limestone Heads, and beheld a noble bay stretching 40 miles each way. He brought the brave news to Sydney, and called the place *Port King*. At the Governor's request, however, he changed the name to *Port Phillip* after the founder of New South Wales colony.

That same year, Flinders, in command of a discovery ship, was cruising about the southern side of the continent. He discovered the whole shore line of South Australia, and then went on his way through the Straits to Sydney. He observed the same opening between the white cliffs, and anchored in the Bay ten weeks after Murray. The sailors took a run on shore, and climbed up *Station Peak*, on the Geelong side. Our bold captain was much pleased with the

country, and thought it would make a fine place for a settlement.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT.

THE English Government wanted another establishment for their criminals. They heard of Port Phillip, and resolved to send a party there. Capt. David Collins was directed to take 367 prisoners, under charge of 50 soldiers. He left in the "Calcutta" and "Ocean," and approached our Heads on October 10th, 1803.

Capt. Woodruff and he went ashore. They brought a dismal tale on board: the land was barren, and no water could be found. Without going higher up the Bay to look for a better place, the people were removed from the ships to a sandy beach just eight miles inside of the Heads, on the east side, near what is now the Quarantine ground. The hills were in sight, and yet they complained of bad soil and no water.

Lieut. Tuckey set off with some marines and sailors in a boat to explore the country. The natives saw them, and came down to meet them. A blackfellow stole an axe from the boat, and a quarrel ensued. Two hundred waddies were seen approaching down the hill. The chief came forward alone, and Tuckey went to pacify him.

The wild man became friendly, but he could not stop the others, who came onward shrieking and yelling in anger. An Englishman fired at the foremost, and the whole tribe disappeared.

Governor Collins and his officers were not satisfied with Port Phillip. Boats were sent across to Van Diemen's Land, to report upon the country. One entered the Tamar, and the future site of Launceston was seen. But Bass and Flinders had written so favourably about their visit to the banks of the Derwent, and others had spoken so highly of the locality, that it was resolved to ship the prisoners thither. A mixture of sailors, soldiers, and transported thieves, did not make the best material for new colonists. They were not the men to explore the bush, and cultivate a wilderness. They left the Bay January 25th, 1804, and went to the river Derwent, and formed Hobart Town. Two runaways remained in the country, one of whom was Buckley.

FURTHER DISCOVERIES.

TWENTY years rolled on, and only the wandering sailor entered the Bay of Port Phillip. In 1824, a native-born Australian, Mr. Hume, who was a squatter at an out-station of New South Wales, determined to go in search of new pastures to the southward.

Accompanied by Capt. Hovell, he crossed the river Murrumbidgee, and came to a stream among the hills, which he called after his father, but which is now known as the Murray. The party next passed the Ovens, and walked over a gold field. Knowing nothing of the country, they got entangled among the rough spurs and dense scrub of the Australian Alps. They sighted Mount Macedon, climbed over the Plenty ranges, admired the noble plains westward of Melbourne, and camped by the Bay at a place the natives called *Geelong*. Hume and Hovell had quarrelled all the way there, and they differed all the way home.

The sea was believed to be Port Phillip by Hume, and Western Port by Hovell. The latter gentleman induced the Governor at Sydney to send a party to settle upon the rich Geelong plains of *Western Port*. In 1826, the establishment was formed, but Geelong was not found. The country was wild, waterless, and barren. An order came for the return to Sydney,—and a second time was this country abandoned.

Two more discoverers visited Port Phillip. Capt. Sturt went from Sydney in 1830, rowed down the Murrumbidgee until it reached a fine river, and followed the course of that stream for a thousand miles. He traced it through a broad but shallow lake, and beheld its waters battling with the waves of the Atlantic ocean, over a

sandy bar. The river was named *The Murray*, and the lake was called after our beloved Queen, *Victoria Alexandrina*.

Major Mitchell left Sydney for the south, 4th March, 1836. He passed the Murray, rode over the Loddon plains, crossed the modern diggings of Dunolly, Maryborough, and Avoca; wondered at the salt lakes of the Wimmera district, ascended the lofty Grampians, and rowed down the romantic Glenelg river of our western border. He called at Portland Bay, stood on the top of Mount Alexander, noticed the queer-looking auriferous rocks, without detecting the nuggets, and beheld the Bay from the summit of Mount Macedon. We wonder not that, after seeing such beautiful scenery and such luxuriant herbage, he called the country AUSTRALIA FELIX —“Australia the Happy.”

ANOTHER SETTLEMENT.

THE Van Diemen's Land settlers never lost sight of their old Port Phillip home. They often wished that grass and water could be found there. Tales of seamen told of both being there. Some resolved to make a trial with sheep and cattle. Mr. Gellibrand, Attorney-General of Hobart Town, joined Mr. John Batman, a bold

explorer, in asking permission of Governor Darling, in 1826, to settle upon our shores. They received no favourable reply.

In 1833 the Messrs. Henty Brothers, of Launceston, enterprising merchants and whalers, undertook a visit to Portland Bay, and established a station there the following year.

In 1835 the real settlement of Port Phillip took place. The two heroes of the enterprise were John Batman and John Pascoe Fawkner. The former was born at Parramatta, near Sydney, in 1800, and afterwards removed to Van Diemen's Land. He was successful in capturing some of the poor hunted blacks, in the contest between themselves and the whites. He then located himself with his family upon a station near Ben Lomond. He died at Melbourne in 1839.

Mr. Fawkner was a boy accompanying his father in Governor Collins's expedition. He landed in Port Phillip in 1803. He removed with the others to Hobart Town, and he laboured for years in the bush as a working man. Afterwards he entered into business in Launceston, and established the first newspaper in that city. He is now an active Member of Parliament for the colony of Victoria.

Mr. Batman formed an association with Messrs. Gellibrand, C. Swanston, J. H. Wedge, James Simpson, and others, to colonize the country near the Bay of Port Phillip. Mr. Gellibrand was killed by our blacks in 1837. Mr. Swanston

died a few years ago. Mr. Wedge is a wealthy and honourable Tasmanian settler. Mr. Simpson occupies a high position in Melbourne. Mr. Batman was requested to inspect the country, and endeavour to treat with the natives for the purchase of some land.

The "Rebecca," of 30 tons, anchored beside Indented Head, on Friday, May 29, 1835. John Batman, and his seven civilized Sydney blacks, explored the neighbourhood of Geelong, Melbourne, Moonee Ponds, etc. They fell in with a lot of native women and children. The Sydney men joked with the ladies, and Batman gave them and the young folks some sugar and apples to eat, and pretty things to look at.

The party went some thirty miles up the Salt-water river, and across to the Merri Creek. There they fell in with the Jagga Jagga tribe, who received them kindly. By the help of signs, and a few words understood by the tame black-fellows, Mr. Batman told them that he wanted to bring his children across and settle in their country, and that he sought to buy some land from them. They knew what he meant when he took up some soil in his hand, pointed round the country at certain hills, and then showed a pile of blankets, tomahawks, flour, etc.

A treaty was entered into. A sort of law deed had been drawn up, in which it was said that they, the natives, agreed to sell so much land for so many tons of flour, and so much beads,

blankets, etc. We do not think, with all the explanations of the Sydney blacks, that our Port-Phillipians understood much about the matter. But they were quite pleased with the fine things they got as presents, and were quite willing for their white friends to live among them.

It was certainly better and more honest for our countrymen to give the aborigines something for liberty to settle on their hunting grounds, and to make any sort of rough treaty with them, rather than take no notice of their claims, and establish themselves by killing the real owners of the soil. We know, too, that the tribes here, like the New Zealanders, had distinct boundaries to their districts, and full control over them.

By this sort of argument, Batman thought to secure for the Association 600,000 acres of land, for which, besides the presents, he was to pay tribute or yearly rent of 50 pairs of blankets, 50 knives, 50 tomahawks, 50 pairs of scissors, 50 looking-glasses, 20 suits of clothing, and 2 tons of flour. We must remember, that however valuable that land may be now, it was of no value then. The deed was signed on June 6th, 1835, by Mr. Batman on the one side, and by the three brothers Jagga Jagga, and four others, on the other side, and duly witnessed by three white men.

As this country was considered beyond the territory of New South Wales, leave to settle was not asked of the Governor, Sir Richard

Bourke. But, jealous of his power, he issued a proclamation from Sydney, dated August 28th, warning off all trespassers, and denouncing any treaty with the natives. Governor Arthur, of Van Diemen's Land, wished the new settlement to be placed under his authority, though he professed to regard John Batman's conduct as unlawful.

The letters of the two Governors went home to England. Governor Arthur was told by Lord Glenelg that private settlements must be discouraged, and that Port Phillip had better not be placed under his rule. He praised, however, the wise and benevolent behaviour of Mr. Batman. The answer to the Sydney Governor approved of his step, and condemned the Association.

The opinion of British lawyers was sought as to the right of the King to oust the Association. The opinion was unfavourable to the colonists. All admitted the good motives of the gentlemen, and praised them for their kind feelings towards the natives. Compensation for their outlay and trouble was requested as the least that could be done. This was allowed some years after. At a land sale they bought 7416 acres on the Geelong side for £7919, and £7000 of the amount were remitted for their loss.*

* Particulars of the Treaty, Batman's visit, and the early history of the colony, may be obtained from the Author's larger work of "*The History and Settlement of Port Phillip.*"

Mr. Batman left Hobson's Bay on the 8th of June, after having walked along the banks of the Yarra, on the present site of the wharfs and gas-works, till he reached the junction of that stream and the Saltwater river. The following extract from his journal refers to the Yarra Falls at Melbourne:—

“ June 8, Monday. The boat went up the large river I have spoken of, which comes from the east, and I am glad to state about six miles up found the river all good water, and very deep. This will be the place for a village.”

The formation of this village—afterwards Melbourne—was left to the enterprise of Mr. Fawkner, and his colonizing partners.

When Batman crossed the Bay, he left a man with the Sydney blacks at Indented Head, with directions to prepare a garden, and gave him written directions to warn off any white trespassers. The first hut was erected near Swan Point, about 15 miles from the Heads.

Not many days after, the tenants of this hut received an extraordinary visitor. A very tall man, six feet six inches high, with a dark, bushy beard, dressed in a kangaroo skin, with a spear and boomerang beside him, sat down with the natives before the door. James Gumm thought

there was something of the whitefellow about him. He offered him some bread. The man took it, tasted it, pondered a good while, muttered, and at last exclaimed "Bread."

Received into the tent, he showed his arm, upon which the letters W B were printed. The other guessed *William Burgess*. The stranger shook his head, but could not recollect his own name. After being a day or two there, and hearing English spoken, his tongue was recovered, and he told the following story.

His name was William Buckley. Originally a mason, and then a soldier, he had committed a crime, and was transported. He came to Port Phillip in 1803 with Governor Collins, and afterwards bolted from the camp. Received kindly by some natives, who thought he was one of their friends, jumped up into a whitefellow, he had adopted the dress and manners of the aborigines, and lived with them for about thirty-two years.

Had such a person been possessed of some sense, he might have done much to civilize the blacks, and have had a fine tale to tell. But he was dull, reserved, and inactive. He had done nothing for his dark friends, and his English acquaintances could never get any information out of him. For a time, upon the settlement of the country, he acted as a sort of constable. But being found of no use, and suspected of being a better friend to the natives than to his country-

men, he retired to Hobart Town, where he lived a very quiet life, and died in January, 1856.

NOTE.—Full particulars of this wonderful character, and the condition of the blacks in his time, may be learned from the Author's work, entitled, "*William Buckley, the Wild White Man, and his Port Phillip Black Friends.*"

MR. FAWKNER'S SETTLEMENT OF MELBOURNE.

THIS gentleman appears to have had his eye upon Port Phillip for some years before Batman's visit. The news of the Aristocratic Association, as it was called, roused the energies of this Tribune of the People. Entering into combination with two carpenters, one architect, one plasterer, and the captain of a merchant vessel, he resolved to have a share in the profit more than glory of a Settlement in Port Phillip.

The schooner "Enterprise" was hired, and laden with such good things as suited whites and blacks. Tools, seeds, and fruit trees, were sent for the new farm. The illness of Mr. Fawkner prevented his going the first trip. Upon Sunday, the 30th of August, 1835, some seven weeks after the departure of Batman, the new colonists, Messrs. Evans, Moor, and Lancey, anchored in the river Yarra, below the Falls.

Few places in the world could have been thought more beautiful than the site of future Melbourne town at that season of the year. Its wattle blossoms perfumed the country; gay flowers adorned the grassy banks; majestic trees towered above odoriferous shrubs; kangaroos sported through the glade; swarms of parrots chattered through the foliage; and the murmuring music of the *Falls* mingled with the sweet notes of the bell-bird, and the soul-stirring echoes of the laughing jackass.

Our friends of the "Enterprise" fixed themselves upon Batman's Hill, where they remained until the arrival of the leader of the expedition, Mr. Fawkner. It is rather remarkable that he came on his first visit to the Yarra on October 10th, 1835, the anniversary of the day on which he first arrived at Port Phillip in 1803. But before he set foot on the site of Melbourne, a portion of land, now occupied by the wharf, had been ploughed and sown. Subsequently, a large tract on the other side of the river, at the foot of Emerald Hill, was brought into cultivation.

Mr. Wedge, the active partner of Mr. Batman, arrived in Port Phillip about five weeks before the "Enterprise." He inspected the operations of the Association on Indented Head, and afterwards surveyed a great part of the neighbouring country, tracing the Barwon, etc. In the course of his travels he came to Batman's old track up on the Yarra, and was greatly surprised to see a

vessel quietly moored in the basin near the present Prince's Bridge. He introduced himself to the new comers, and afterwards established the head quarters of his Association upon Batman's Hill—an acknowledgment of the superiority of the Yarra bank.

THE SETTLEMENT OF PORT PHILLIP ESTABLISHED.

THE dispute between the Port Phillip Company and the Colonial Governments began before any other persons appeared in the field of settlement. When the tidings of luxuriant pasture and insecure possession reached Van Diemen's Land, numbers rushed across the Straits with cargoes of sheep and cattle. The excitement was great in the little island. There were two places for the landing of stock:—Point Henry, on the Geelong side; and Point Gellibrand, now Williamstown, by Hobson's Bay. Carcasses of rotting sheep originated no spicy gale from those parts.

There was plenty of elbow-room for some time. The favourite spots for squatting were between Geelong and Melbourne, and the country westward. The stations were often 20 or 30 miles across. As the country thickened, the new

comers went further back toward the ranges, and on the Sydney overland track.

The life of a shepherd then was not all sunshine. What with blacks by day, and wild dogs by night, he was kept pretty well on the watch. There were no wild dogs to worry the sheep in Van Diemen's Land, but there was not the fine pasture there for the flocks, and there were not such high wages for the shepherds. When, however, weeks passed without the sight of a white man—when supplies were delayed on the road, and the mutton was without the damper and tea—when the natives grew troublesome, and harassed the sheep, while they speared the shepherd,—the shepherd's life in the bush of Port Phillip lost many of its charms.

Droves now set in from the Sydney side. The first overlanders were Mr. John Gardiner and Mr. Hawdon, who brought across the first mob of cattle. They found good feed, plenty of water, safety from natives, and fine prices. Their success induced numbers to follow. The overlanders to Adelaide found more difficulty. The first who carried stock through our district to South Australia, were Messrs. Hawdon and Bonney, in April, 1838. Mr. Bonney afterwards drove across to Adelaide from Portland Bay in twenty days, discovering the noble country of Mount Gambier.

Mr. Eyre would have been the first western overlander, but for being lost. Keeping along

the Murray, he thought to cut across, and so got entangled in our mallée scrub. In the midst of this, however, he came upon a large lake, which he called after Governor Hindmarsh, of Adelaide. With great difficulty and loss he extricated himself, got back to the Murray, and was content with its banks afterwards. Captain Sturt, the same year, took 400 head of cattle across.

GOVERNMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT.

IN spite of Governor Bourke's proclamation, it was still the cry, "They come! they come!" The wattle-and-dab huts increased beside the Yarra, for stores were needed to supply the interior. The immigration was more of quadrupeds than bipeds, for when there were but two hundred people, there were fifteen thousand sheep. It became necessary to look after the lawless people of Port Phillip,—so Mr. Stewart, New South Wales magistrate, was sent down to report.

Our first official visitor arrived on June 1st, 1836. Mr. Batman was then living with his family on the hill called after him. Mr. and Mrs. Fawkner were at their rude house of accommodation in Market-square; and the other townsfolks were thinly scattered in that neigh-

bourhood. A meeting was held by Mr. Stewart. His advice was, to have some form of government to keep order, until proper officers could be sent from Sydney. It was, therefore, agreed that Mr. James Simpson, who had been a magistrate in Van Diemen's Land, should act as general umpire. He was not much troubled with cases.

Four months after, the "Rattlesnake" brought Capt. Lonsdale from Sydney to act as Commandant;—a force of 30 soldiers, and three or four constables, accompanying him. The colony grew and strengthened: its name was noised abroad by the discoveries of Major Mitchell, and numbers hastened to the beautiful paradise of the south,—*Australia Felix*. A higher officer was demanded, and greater liberties were required.

The looked-for man came at last,—Joseph Latrobe, Esq. arriving as the SUPERINTENDENT OF PORT PHILLIP, October 1, 1839. This gentleman passed through the subsequent changes of the colony. He witnessed the bad times of 1842-3; the independence of 1850; the gold discovery of 1851; and the blaze of Victorian prosperity.

RISE OF MELBOURNE AND GEELONG.

THE most distinguished visitor of the early times was Sir Richard Bourke, who sailed into our

harbour in March, 1837. He saw the need of a fixed Government, and of fixed homes. He resolved upon a township beside the Yarra, and another at Point Gellibrand, the port of the settlement. The one was to be called MELBOURNE, after the lord at the head of the English Government; and the other was to be Williamstown, after the King.

The first land sale was held by Mr. Surveyor Hoddle on the ground, June 1st, 1837, when there were sold 100 half-acre lots in Melbourne, and seven in Williamstown—the former averaging £35 each, and the latter £45. Mr. Fawkner bought the corner of Collins-street and Market-square, the block of the Shakespeare Hotel, etc., for £10 only; the corner half-acre opposite the Post Office fetching £28.

Our first suburban land was sold at Sydney in February 1838. It included Collingwood and East Collingwood, and was in blocks of 25 acres each—realising £7 an acre. The site of Richmond and Richmond Flat fetched from £13 to £28 an acre in 25-acre blocks, on August 11, 1839. The first sale of Geelong land was held, also, in Sydney, then the capital of the colony of New South Wales, of which this district was a part. It took place on February 14, 1839, and averaged £65 an allotment.

Immediately after the sale in Melbourne, the thirty mud huts rapidly disappeared, and more substantial buildings were constructed. The first

brick houses arose in 1838, and consisted of a store or two; Mr. Fawkner's hotel at the corner of the square; Mr. Batman's house on the opposite corner; Mr. John Hodgson's dwelling, now the Port Phillip Club Hotel. Mr. Batman's house upon the hill was prepared in Launceston,—the chimneys were made by Buckley. It was afterwards used as the Colonial Treasury, and is now a sort of hospital for immigrants.

Other signs of progress followed. The old Police Office of mud was replaced by one of wood. Petty Sessions were established in July, 1838, and Quarter Sessions in May, 1839. The Post Office was removed from the Police Office to Mr. Bagster's care, in a little place in Flinders street. Mr. Kelsh, the first real postmaster, lived in Chancery Lane. The Custom House was a rude, dirty-looking shed; it received £2000 duties in 1837. The export of wool for the year 1838 was £53,000; in twelve years it became nearly a million pounds.

Tradesmen were few in the early times. The labour was required for the flocks of the country. When Mr. Latrobe came in 1839, there were in Melbourne but four tailors, four blacksmiths, three bakers, and four butchers. There was no watchmaker. The price of provisions was high, especially when sheep were two or three guineas a head; and all flour had to be imported. Banks soon arose. Mr. Macarthur, from Sydney, established a branch of the Bank of Australasia, at the

close of 1837. It was at a little two-roomed brick house in Little Collins street.

Geelong was much slower in its progress. Dr. Thomson, the present Mayor of that town, and the first colonial surgeon of Port Phillip, was the earliest settler of that quarter. The first store erected in Corio Bay was before the formation of a township. Foster Fyans, Esq. was appointed magistrate on that western side in September, 1837. Williamstown promised to be a very flourishing place, but its success was prevented by its want of water.

PROGRESS OF RELIGION, EDUCATION, AND THE PRESS.

THE first religious service was held in April, 1835. The Rev. Mr. Orton, Wesleyan minister, of Van Diemen's Land, visited the young settlement. Upon the Sunday morning seats were placed under the sheoaks of Batman's Hill. Mr. Batman's Sydney blacks were full dressed, in red shirts and white trowsers, and many of the aborigines assembled with the colonists. Mr. Orton read the Church of England prayers, and then preached. Subsequently a wooden room was erected for a church, when Mr. James Smith conducted service for the Episcopalians, and the

Rev. James Clow for the Presbyterians. The first clergyman of the Church of England, the Rev. J. C. Grylls, arrived in October, 1838; the Rev. Mr. Waterfield, of the Independents, came in May, 1838; the Rev. Mr. Forbes, of the Scots' Church, in January, 1839; and the Rev. Dr. Geoghan, of the Roman Catholic Church, from Sydney, in May, 1839.

A Mission for the Aborigines was established near the site of the Botanical Gardens, Melbourne, in 1836, under the care of Mr. Langhorne. A Wesleyan Mission was formed at Buntingdale, on the Barwon, in 1839, under the superintendence of the Rev. Messrs. Hurst and Tuckfield. Both were abandoned for want of success, though liberally supported by the Government.

The first school was opened in the little wooden Church, under Mr. James Clarke, in January, 1838. A Sunday School had been in existence before in the same place. Mr. Campbell opened the first Scots' School, in Collins-street, in November, 1838.

Mr. John Pascoe Fawkner had the honour of starting the first newspaper in the colony. The first number of the *Port Phillip Advertiser* appeared in January, 1838. It was simply a written sheet of foolscap. The ninth number was rudely printed, and consisted of four small pages of two columns each. As the law of the times demanded sureties in Sydney, &c., the paper was stopped.

The *Port Phillip Gazette* was commenced by Messrs. Strode and Arden, in October, 1838. The type had been lying as a heap of rubbish in Sydney for many years. Mr. Strode had to put all in order himself, as no printer could be obtained; and he used she-oak ashes as a ley to cleanse the letters. Mr. Fawkner brought out his *Port Phillip Patriot* in the following February.

MELBOURNE HISTORY CONTINUED.

AFTER the coming of Mr. Latrobe, the colony made rapid progress. A severe trial happened, however, on Christmas Day, 1839. A heavy flood caused an overflow of the Yarra, which destroyed many farms, greatly injured Melbourne warehouses, and carried away whole kilns from the brick-field at the southern side of Prince's Bridge. About the same time, an explosion took place in a house by Market-square, which killed four persons. Toward the close of 1839, the first emigrant ship, the "David Clarke," brought 200 passengers.

The year 1840 was the sunshine of the early days. The influx of people bringing capital with them, and the bold speculations of most colonists, caused a great advance in the value of stock and property, and brought a certain fortune before

the eyes of every one. Sheep rose to £4, and even £5 a head. Town allotments had a surprising leap in price. A half acre bought at a previous sale was sold for the benefit of a chapel, and realized a profit of £980. So good an example was followed by other communions. Land jobbing became a furious mania, and lawyers had plenty of conveyancing.

The Government land sale of the 1st of June, 1840, put about £100,000 into the Treasury, and was the grand cause of the subsequent depression, by locking up the moderate capital of the country. Amusing and exciting colonial advertisements, with most extravagant and luxurious luncheons, attracted crowds of purchasers to auction land marts.

Wages were high, and money easily got easily went. The greatest dissipation prevailed. Shepherds and bullock-drivers were seen drinking champagne out of buckets with pannikins, and their masters indulged in similar habits. The independence of private character begot a political feeling of dislike of restraint. With some sense of injustice received, the people clamored for immediate separation from the mother colony of New South Wales. This provoked one of the island papers to say, "Our Melbourne neighbours put us in mind of a forward miss, who estimates her capability for a husband before her mamma thinks it fit for her to discard her doll."

In that same year we find no post delivery of letters in town, and no fence around the Burying ground. Melbourne then was not very extensive, for we hear of parties losing themselves in the bush, going from town across the present Carlton Gardens. It was not until 1841 that a Market was established, and placed under commissioners, elected by the four wards of the city. The Post Office was removed to its present site in August of 1841.

It was in these high times that ministers' stipends were raised from £100 to £200. Bread then cost half-a-crown a four-pound loaf. At the census of 1841, the colony numbered 12,000 inhabitants, 4,500 of whom were in Melbourne, 50 in Geelong, and 600 in Portland. So much was expected from Portland, that, at its first land sale that year, twenty lots realized £11,000. The first Dam at Geelong was constructed by Foster Fyans, Esq., in 1841. The town was then commonly known by the name of Corio.

The bubble burst at last. The export of the colony was insufficient to maintain so many in luxury; the heavy payments to other countries for flour and other produce drained off the limited capital, and the feeding upon each other came to an end. A quaking began. It was not confined to Port Phillip, but extended to Sydney on the one side and Adelaide on the other. All had thought too much of the future. To make matters worse, English merchants poured goods into

the market so fast, that sales could not be made ; stores were filled, prices fell, and bills became due too soon for their acceptors.

Everybody wanted money, and wanted it when others were looking earnestly for it. Goods were sacrificed, and houses and lands were sold to make up payments. Property thus as rapidly fell in value as it had arisen. There was nothing to fall back upon, and ruin was the consequence. The country settlers had been just as imprudent. Calculating upon still higher prices, they had bought and bought, and, according to the system of the day, had given bills instead of cash. The crash came upon them ; numbers had to sell their stock to raise means, and sheep and cattle gradually fell in price, till a flock could be bought at two shillings a head, and many stations changed hands at eighteenpence only.

The misery of the bad years of 1842 and 1843 is only known to those who witnessed those colonial times. Crowds entered the Insolvent Court, only to pay, perhaps, a few pence in the pound. Families of opulence were reduced to want. The town was deserted. There was no employment for artizans, and they must go upon land and grow their food.

The ultimate consequences were useful, though the present endurance was sad enough. The ground had not been tilled before. The general impression was, that Port Phillip soil was useless for wheat, and would never grow potatoes.

When necessity drove men to the fields, crops of both were found suitable to the climate, and the era of farming began in earnest. The remuneration, it is true, was for some time very low; for potatoes brought, in 1843, only 50s. a ton; hay, 2 a ton; and wheat itself about 4s. a bushel: but other things were in proportion, as rent and labour were low also.

At the extremity of the colony's troubles, relief unexpectedly appeared. It was suggested that the sheep should, in the season of low prices for wool and meat, be boiled down for tallow for the London market. Trial proved successful. Felting-down establishments were erected, many thousands of carcasses were thrown into the huge cauldrons, and the value of sheep immediately rose to some 7s. or 8s. each.

Melbourne moved again. Depending upon the squatters, the city rejoiced in their good fortune. The wildness of excitement did not return. Men worked on steadily and soberly, and the country was happier and better for the passing cloud. The uncertain and rapid changes of the early days were over, and the colony continued, for years before the gold discovery, to progress safely and satisfactorily.

The district of Port Phillip became the Colony of Victoria, in its separation from New South Wales, in July, 1850. The gold appeared in 1851.

DISCOVERY OF GIPPS LAND.

ALTHOUGH Flinders must have seen parts of the Australian Alps in 1798, and the early settlers penetrated to the western part of the range, yet it was not until 1840 that any good land was known to exist southwards of the mountains. Two parties claim the honour of this discovery.

In May, 1839, Mr. Angus M'Millan left Maneroo Plains, and, from the top of Mount McLeod, first caught a view of the fine country lying between the Alps and the sea. Repeated but unsuccessful attempts were afterwards made to gain the fertile plains. The roughness of the country and the fierceness of the natives opposed his efforts. In February, 1841, however, Mr. McMillan went from the Avon across the Simpson and other rivers, and reached the sea at Port Albert. He had before this given the district the name of CALEDONIA AUSTRALIS.

Mr. McMillan was the first to cross the Alps and discover some of the rich meadows of the flat country; but his complete exploration did not take place until after another party had crossed the new region and gained the lakes by the sea. The first public announcement of this paradise of Victoria came from the same persons. These were—Count Strzlecki, Mr. James McArthur, and Mr. John Riley. The Count is a scientific Polish traveller.

Accompanied by Charley Tarra (black fellow) the party ascended Mount Kosciusko, 6,500 feet high, in February, 1840, and, crossing the Port Phillip border of the Alps, descended into the plains. They followed Mr. McMillan's tracks to the River Riley, and then struck across the beautiful Barney Plains to Lake King, &c. Leaving the coast, they went to the north-west, discovered the noble La Trobe River, and sought to reach the settlement by the densely wooded and mountainous country.

Persisting in following the gullies, they became entangled in the scrub, and were compelled to leave behind them their horses, baggage, and provisions. For some time they had but a biscuit and a slice of bacon a day, and for eighteen days they lived upon the flesh of native bears, which were caught by Charley. They succeeded at last in reaching an out-station of Western Port on May 12th, 1840. Count Strzlecki gave the name of GIPPS LAND to the country, after the Governor of New South Wales.

THE PORT PHILLIP BLACKS AS THEY WERE.*

AN account of the early times of Melbourne would not be complete without a notice of the dark men and women whose home had been destroyed by the visit of the whites. The time was when the settlers found it necessary to make friends of the sons of the forest, as the poet writes—

“When he was weak and we were strong,
The white man’s soul was warmth and light;
With friendly smiles and friendly tongue
He talked of reason and of right.

He asked of us, in language meek,
Where flocks and herds might well abide;
We led to river and to creek,
Fair streams and pastures, green and wide.”

After a while, as stations got formed, disagreements arose between the two. The Whites complained of their sheep being stolen, and their shepherds being sometimes killed by the blacks; the Natives complained of the sheep eating up their roots, and the settlers killing their kangaroos and injuring their women. Many murders were thus committed on both sides.

* For fuller particulars of this subject, we refer the reader to the “Life of Buckley and his Black Friends.”

The first murder was too remarkable to be passed over. Two men had been sent by Mr. Batman to fetch some stores to town from his first station. On their way, they ill-treated a Native woman. Returning with their pack-bullock, the Natives beset them. One Englishman had his gun in hand, the other had his on the beast's back. Decoying the first aside, they surrounded and killed him, and afterwards speared the second. The frightened bullock kicked off his load, and the blacks seized upon the sugar and flour.

Some settlers behaved well to the tribes, and were protected by them. Others lost their flocks and shepherds. Cruel returns were made. One man boasted of killing a score of men, women, and children, in a day. Cases were known of black little ones being thrown into a fire. The Government sought to protect the natives, and promised rewards to discover the white murderers. But the evidence of the aborigines was not admitted, and white men refused to tell of each other's cruelties.

After a while *Protectors* were appointed by the British Government to watch over the rights of the natives. Mr. Robinson, who had shown such courage and kindness in catching the wild Tasmanians, was appointed the Chief Protector. But little was done to induce the aborigines to settle down. While they could easily get enough

food by hunting in freedom, they liked not to be fixed to one spot, and to do hard work. Little success, also, followed any attempt to teach them the Christian religion. Missionaries gathered them together, and talked about God and heaven; but they seemed not to understand the one, and cared nothing for the other.

It is sad to see the first inhabitants of this land passing rapidly away, and leaving no children behind them. But it is sadder still to see them dying without any knowledge of the gentle Saviour, and without a thought of the world to come.

Attempts have been made to get them to live with their white neighbours. Some will stay for a while when kindly treated; but they soon long for the happy bush. There they have natural food, and natural friends. Like Englishmen, they wish to marry, and have a home of laughing little ones. We cannot make them so comfortable as they are with one another.

But our countrymen have shown more cruelty to the dark tribes than shooting down a few of them. They have taught them to drink intoxicating liquors, and introduced sad diseases among them. These are the two great causes of their misery. their quarrels, and their frequent deaths. Other nations, from the same cause, are dying off in the same manner. The South Sea Islanders, the New Zealanders, the Sandwich Islanders,

and others, are fast disappearing. In less than a hundred years more, there will be hardly any aboriginal tribes left upon the earth.

APPEARANCE, CHARACTER, AND HABITS OF THE NATIVES.

THEY were, at the time when uninjured by living among the white men, a fine race of people, tall, well-proportioned, active, and strong. Their hair was greased and ochred, their bodies were scarred and painted, and feather necklaces of reeds and other finery adorned their persons.

For clothing they had rugs of opossum or kangaroo skin, though some wore garments of seaweed. The fineness of the climate, and their roving habits, prevented their having fixed and comfortable dwellings like other people. A break-wind of branches and rags was generally thought sufficient.

In olden times there was no want of food. The women gathered roots, and picked out grubs, while the men waddied down birds, netted fish, speared kangaroos, and pulled opossums from their holes. The cooking was performed by roasting and baking. Singed and half raw, the beast was caught up from the embers, dragged to pieces, and greedily devoured. The ba

king was managed in a hole by means of heated stones, and water was thrown down to cause a steam. Fire was obtained sometimes by the friction of two sticks.

They had many ingenious modes of hunting. Water fowl were snoozed, or caught by diving under them. Turkeys were trapped by a moving bush, behind which the hunter was hidden. The bark of trees was notched with a stone tomahawk, so that the natives could climb up the gum tree stem after opossums. Fish were decoyed at night by fires in the boats of bark.

Their wars were more frequent than mischievous. They threw the spear, and their enemies parried it off with the shield. The close fighting was with the waddy or knobbed stick; but their skulls were generally too hard to be broken. Boomerangs, or curved wooden swords, would return through the air to the thrower, after striking their object. The wommera, or throwing stick, jerked forward the spear. In a fight, the women and boys picked up the spears to return to the warriors. A contest was often unattended with loss of life, and flesh wounds were rapidly healed.

No prisoners were taken. The bodies of the slain were sometimes cooked and eaten, after the manner of the forefathers of the English and most other nations. But our natives did not indulge in cannibalism so much as most other people. The New Zealanders were known to

have as many as two thousand cooking in their ovens after one battle.

Though the Port Phillip blacks were fierce in war, they were not an ill-tempered race. As savages, they were good-humoured and kind. Though the men sometimes beat their wives when their suppers were neglected, they were ever indulgent to their children. The evening family party was often a merry one. In intellect our blacks were not so inferior in their wild state as many suppose. If without a fancy for geometry or letter writing, they had abundant common sense for everyday life, and showed an intelligence in the bush equal to that of the white man in the field or shop.

Their songs and corrobory were alike proofs of their love of fun and enjoyment. Though the music of their voices may seem strange to our ears, it is pleasant enough to them. We understand not the words which make them merry, nor the sentiments which excite them. They keep capital time while singing by knocking two sticks together, while women beat folded rags for drums.

In their dances they show great taste and grace in movement, and wonderful agility. They love then to have their bodies painted with pipe-clay, and have bundles of leaves in their hands. Some dances were in imitation of animals, as the kangaroo, frog, etc. Others seem to have had a connexion with religious ideas. They had fa-

vourite places where tribes met together for feast and corrobory.

The early settlers and travellers agree in thinking the native women less fine-looking than the men. The *lubras* might be favoured when young, but they soon got old and ugly. Marriages were usually made up between persons of different tribes when visiting each other, and after the usual forms of courtship. Sometimes the young man ran away with a girl, but not against her will. Then the tribe would demand justice from the young man's tribe. A few spears would be thrown at him, which he would contrive to catch with his shield, and the quarrel would then be made up.

The old men were allowed two or more wives, whose business was to get them food. Others seldom had more than one partner. Jealousies among them often occasioned quarrels. Since the coming of the white man, the peace and happiness of the native family have gone. The women, as well as men, are rapidly dying off, and no children are born to take their places.

The diseases to which they were subjected were few in the early times, and for these they had corrective means. They shampooed for rheumatism, bled for inflammation, and applied cold water for fevers. The habit of drinking has exposed them to diseases of the lungs and acute inflammations. There are now not one-fourth the number that were when Batman came.

They appear to have thought death to be occasioned by an enemy, particularly by one of an opposing tribe. It was the sad custom, therefore, when a person died, for his friends to lay in wait for, and murder, another and a stranger. Sometimes they believed evil spirits came down trees at night, and stole away the kidney fat of their sick friends.

Great mourning followed such loss. Some would cut themselves; and the women shaved off their hair, and covered their heads with lumps of moistened pipeclay. The body was buried in a doubled-up posture. Occasionally it was burnt, or suspended in trees. Different tribes had different modes of disposing of their dead. It was a belief in very early days among them, that after death their friends would jump up whitefellows.

They were a people without religion. They knew no God, said no prayers, offered no sacrifices, and had no notion of a world to come. While able to be taught many things with ease, they never appeared clearly to comprehend instruction in spiritual things. All other nations in the world but themselves have a faith, and have been able to understand and follow the teachings of Christian missionaries. They should succeed better with their children, but these are few, and surely disappearing.

Though not religious, they are superstitious. Their ceremonies of man making, when lads are

about 14 years old, are similar to those of the American Indians. They use charms to drive away diseases and troubles. Kidney fat, put in a bag, and worn round the neck, is supposed to keep the person from harm. The doctors, or wise men, are dreaded by the others. Some thought fire came first, when a woman broke a magic stick with which she was hunting. Sick people were blown upon, and certain words were repeated over them. The moon was considered the husband of the sun. The Loddon blacks thought the first kangaroo was cut into little pieces, and each part turned into a live kangaroo.

DEATH OF BATMAN'S FRIEND, GEL- LIBRAND;—LOST IN THE BUSH.

THE most exciting incident of our early times, in connexion with the blacks, was the remarkable disappearance of Messrs. Gellibrand and Hesse, in the bush of the western district, in February, 1837. These gentlemen left Dr. Thomson's by Geelong, on their way to meet Governor Bourke at Melbourne. Doubtless on the look-out for good pastures, they travelled out of their road, and were lost among the Cape Otway ranges.

A man named Acres, their guide, returned to

Capt. Pollock's station on the Barwon, with the following story. He said that Mr. Gellibrand wanted to go one way, and Mr. Hesse the other, and that after a quarrel he had left the two. The last words he heard were those of Mr. Hesse to his friend, "Don't have us lost." He left them near the Wesleyan Mission on the Upper Barwon: doubtless, fear of the natives caused his retreat.

When no report came about their arrival in Melbourne, the settlers were alarmed, and parties were organized in search. Mr. Batman offered Buckley £50 to bring him news of his friends. In the native costume, Buckley went into the bush, and returned with news that a number of wild blacks had tomahawked them. A description was given of one man with a bald head sitting by the fire, when a man came behind him, and drove his stone axe into his skull.

The other expedition consisted of the Rev. Mr. Naylor, from Van Diemen's Land, Dr. Cotter, Mr. Sutherland, four other settlers, and two of Mr. Batman's Sydney blacks. The Barrabool tribe sent men to accompany the party, with instructions to have revenge for the murder of their friend Gellibrand. The friendly blacks chose to believe that the Lake Colac tribe had committed the murder. Capturing an old man and his daughter, they killed both, cooking and devouring the tender flesh of the latter. After an absence of six weeks, no information was obtained of the lost ones.

But effort did not slacken; for the widow of Mr. Gellibrand had a claim of several thousand pounds upon the Life Assurance Office, the payment of which was withheld for three years. In 1838, Mr. Hawdon found a white man's fractured skull on the ranges toward the head of the Loddon, which it was thought identified with that of the missing solicitor. In the *Hobart Town Colonial Times* of June 18, 1838, is a notice of the offer of one Alexander M'Geary, the celebrated Tasmanian native catcher, to go in search of the two gentlemen, with six free men, on condition of receiving two thousand pounds, if he brought satisfactory and conclusive information about their fate.

In 1844, Mr. Allan of Warrnambool received intelligence from some natives of the murder of two white men, without horses. They were beset by seven blackfellows, and killed. Being asked when the event occurred, an answer was given by pointing to a boy some six or seven years old, and stating that it was just before he was born. A shepherd of Mt. Rouse found a skeleton of a horse, with the rusty iron work of the bridle. These vague rumours were all that were ever heard respecting the lost men.



B

2



AN 4353071

