7

EVIDENCES

OF

AN INLAND SEA,

COLLECTED FROM THE

NATIVES OF THE SWAN RIVER SETTLEMENT,

BY

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

DUBLIN

WILLIAM CURRY, JUN. AND COMPANY,

9, UPPER SACKVILLE-STREET.

JANUARY, 1837.

Dublin : Printed by JOHN S. FOLDS, 5, Bachelor's Walk.

AUSTRALIA.

It has been a matter of conjecture that there exists in the interior some great sea or lake forming a receptacle for many of the rivers of Australia.

That these collected waters discharge themselves into the ocean, somewhere on the North West coast of the Continent, has been though probable, as well from the high tides and discoloration of the sea, as from currents running rapidly seaward and carrying driftwood, which Dampier, King, and others, have observed off that part of the coast.

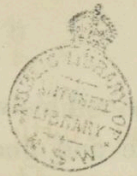
The British Government (at the instance of the Royal Geographical Society) having lately taken up the subject, had determined to avail themselves of the services of Lieutenants Gray and Lushington, (who had volunteered to make explorations in the interior of New Holland,) by sending them

to explore to the North of Swan River. The question was under consideration when Mr. Moore's account of his excursion of May last was received.

The expedition has been since arranged. Messrs. Gray and Lushington are to sail in the Beagle early in March, for the Swan River, from whence they are to proceed and explore the interior in a North East direction, whilst the Beagle is employed in making an accurate survey of Dampier's inlet, and the coast to the North West and North.

Within these few days we have had further accounts from Mr. Moore, (who, in a second excursion,) has received such information from the natives, as leads us to anticipate for the expedition a successful result.

His Letters speak for themselves.



LETTERS.

Swan River, May 1836.

As no river of any magnitude flows from the north into the Swan throughout all its course, it appeared fair to presume that some drain for the waters of that district would be found at no great distance. Under this impression, I determined to make an excursion in a northerly direction, and to use the limited time of ten days, which was at my command, in seeking for amusement and interest from whatever should fall in the way, whether it was of human, of animal, of vegetable, or of mineral nature. Disappointed in the companionship of two other gentlemen, I was obliged to commence my excursion with no other companion than one mounted policeman, with a led horse. I had not even an opportunity of securing the services of a native; but we were scarcely mounted, when "Weenat" made his appearance. Little persuasion, and still less preparation, did he require to accompany us. A word of explanation of the object of the expedition, a piece of bread in one hand, a fire-stick in the other,

and he was ready. This was fortunate, for he is a lad of intelligence and good humour, as well as of an inquiring and communicative disposition. Crossing the river at Coulston, and leaving Yagan's grave on our left, we proceeded northward along the plain at the base of the Darling Range. Our native guide soon perceived, by the smoking embers of a fire, that we were following in the wake of some other party; and we had not gone many miles before we overtook "Coondebung" and his pretty wife "Toodyeep," celebrated as the "fairest of the fair," and another native, "Waytung," on their way to the valley of "Gabbia Yandirt." As this was the very course I proposed to take, we joined their party, and, striking into the range a little beyond the conspicuous hill of "Mambup," stopped about the middle of the day at a place called "Kyetmunga," where there was delicious water in two small wells, in a valley, and excellent grass for the horses. After a short halt we proceeded, and about sunset arrived at Mavolanup, a distance of twenty-one miles, and rested for the night on the banks of a small stream running to the south-east into the valley of Gabbia Yandirt, to which I now found we were going parallel, but which they did not appear to have any desire to approach. It must be borne in mind, that the grassy lowlands and the fertile valleys are not so favorable for their hunting as the scrubby hills and the clear high

grounds; so, our further destination being the same, I thought it better to continue in their company for the next day, and see their mode of life, which was novel, than to strike into the valley, which I had seen on a former occasion. Before disposing of ourselves to rest, my conduct exposed me to the raillery of my fair friend. Where shall we make a house, said I to my assistant? "What for house make?" said she, pointing, laughingly, to the clear blue sky and the bright moon. I felt ashamed of my effeminacy, so followed their example in laying myself down upon the ground, with my feet to the fire, but with the great advantage of being wrapped in an ample blanket, whilst they doubled themselves up under the insufficient covering of a scanty cloak. On a former visit to this neighbourhood I had observed a remarkable standing stone called "Boyay Gogomat," to which the natives had attributed marvellous powers. All inquiries now produced no more satisfactory answer, than that it had been a man who had died, and others would die who, in passing it, neglected to make a bed for it. With a view of drawing out more information, I attacked this superstition with the ingenious argument that a stone is a stone, a man is a man; but a stone is not a man,—a syllogism, which, however conclusive in logic, seemed to afford matter of great amusement to the natives, as I afterwards heard Toodyeep upon several occasions making herself merry at my expense, by

repeating and parodying to her young companions my words, "Boyay's boyay, mamerip, mamerip," &c. On our course next day I had many opportunities of witnessing the unerring aim of Coondebung, as he struck with his spear the kangaroo-cat, sitting in its nest—his agility in ascending trees—his fearlessness in climbing decayed limbs which appeared dangerously overhanging, and from one of which he flung a black opossum to the ground, whilst his companion stood ready to knock it on the head before it had recovered from the fall. We were now passing through his own country, over his native soil, and as he bounded along with buoyant look and an elastic step, he appeared as if glorying in his vigour, and exulting in his independence. Our course hitherto lay over a part of the Darling Range, which requires no particular description. In some of the valleys, the soil consisted of a good red loam, and in one water-course a white marl was discernible. A short day's march of thirteen miles, brought us to the broad part of the valley of Gabbia Yandirt—a district which appears to be distinguished also by the name of "Jaider," as comprehending the entire extent of the valley north and south. Here we were joined by many other natives, some of them old acquaintances; among others was "Woollatneen," who, in the space of a year since I had last seen her, appeared to have leaped from childhood to maturity: she was the wife of Waytung. We

had scarcely arrived before the sky became overcast, and I had a corner of a hut constructed and covered in just in time to afford a comfortable retreat from heavy rain. Each family had its separate hut soon completed from the ready materials of blackboy spears and paper-tree bark. In the middle of a heavy shower Toodyeep exclaimed, "What for you bush too much walk, Midyer Moore?" as if to say, what do you think of the pleasures of the bush now? But it soon cleared up, and we had a lovely evening. I have elsewhere described the place in which we were as a valley of about a mile wide, and of an unascertained length, having a large, irregular shaped, muddy lake, or swamp, occupying its centre, and with a belt of rich land of varying breadth between the lake and the base of the enclosing hills. Close to the outer margin of the lake ran a border of luxuriant green grass, of so moist a description as to bid defiance to the fire, and in which grass our horses were revelling to their manifest content. Numbers of ducks, swans, and other birds were heard in the centre, but undiscernible through the trees and bulrushes on its edge, and unapproachable on account of the softness of the mud. A stream, which is discharged from this lake, had been followed down its course for twenty-five miles, through a fine valley, on a former occasion; and it may be as well to say here, that, from what I saw afterwards, the extent of the valley to

the north of this swamp equals, if not exceeds, its extent to the south. Here Coondebung requested my gun, that he might try to get a shot at the ducks. In a short time two shots were heard, and he soon returned, bringing in his hand two young swans and a musk duck. The latter he had shot—the two former he had caught in his hand, after firing ineffectually at the old swan, which we saw coursing through the air, looking for its young, and heard during the night uttering its plaintive cries. He apologised for missing the old one, by saying that in the act of firing he slipped from the branch on which he stood, and sunk to his middle in the mud. But now active preparations were made for his dinner; and if I had cause to admire in the morning his expertness in hunting, there was as much reason for surprise in the voracity with which he disposed of his game in the evening—a bandicoot, an opossum, two kangaroo-rats, a young swan, and a musk duck, quickly disappeared before him, and considering that scarcely any part from head to foot, inside to outside, is rejected, the allowance appeared a pretty good one. Poor Toodyeep's share was not a Benjamin's portion. After all this, he baked and demolished a good sized damper of flour, which he had brought with him, and then came to our fire to pick up scraps or beg for morsels. Thinking this a favorable opportunity, I now endeavoured to draw from them some information upon the principal

object of my search—"a river to the north;" but found great difficulty, from this singular fact, that they have no name for a river—I do not mean that they have not in their language a term signifying a river, but that they do not give a name to a river, but speak only of the ground on its banks, and the water of such a ground. Hence, to all my inquiries about water, or a river to the north, I could only obtain the information, at this particular period, that water came from the north a long way, and ran to Gabbia Yandirt, and so on to Perth and Fremantle, by the Beeloo Coombar, or large River, (Swan River.) This was the first intimation I had of the extension of this valley northwards. "But what river is there running to the north-east? There is the water of Dyerring, which runs into the Beeloo Coombar at Wonganup." This, I am sure, is the river running through a fine valley formerly passed by Mr. Dale and myself, in which we saw a number of cattle tracks. "But where does the other water far away in that direction go to?" The answer is very remarkable, and deserving of serious consideration. "The other waters far away go *to* the north-east, and out at *Moleyean*, or Molieen;" the literal meaning of which word I believe to be, "the other side." This is the second occasion upon which I have heard this word used in this sense; the inference from which would be, either that they have, from communications with tribes in the inte-

rior, an idea of the eastern side of Australia, *or that there exists in the interior a water so broad that they cannot see across it*, and so speak of its western margin as "the other side." I would not be understood as desiring to build any theory upon this, or indulging any visionary speculations, but merely mentioning what the natives have said, leaving it to time to ascertain the truth. In answer to my inquiries about cattle, Coondebung said he recollected a long time ago that a number of cattle came through his country, and went to the north far away; when I hinted delicately, the possibility of his having killed some of them—he said at once with the greatest naivéte, "I did not know *then* that white man eat cow, but *now* I know,"—with a very significant emphasis upon the *now*. Whilst engaged in this conversation, one of the men in the outermost hut suddenly shouted an exclamation in a tone of surprise and alarm—Waow Yoongar (the term by which they designate themselves.) This started us all on our feet, when we saw the man, with his spear poised, holding at bay two figures which stood at a little distance. The strangers had a downcast, submissive, melancholy look; the alarm gradually subsided, the spears were dropped from the hands, and the men silently approached. Thinking it was merely some chance arrival, I seated myself again; but Coondebung's attention was rivetted, and he shortly whispered me to go and ask who was dead.

Dead? now? where? said I, in surprise. Do you see one with his arms about the other? I went near, and saw one sitting on the ground, and one of the strangers seated upon the thighs of that one, his legs pushed out on either side, the stranger's arms embracing the body of the other, who held his hands under the stranger's thighs—breast to breast, and cheek to cheek. Who is dead? No answer but a shake of the head. After a time, the stranger arose, and the other said, "Now, I'll speak." It appears that a man called "Wango," a relative of this family, had been killed that day by the Dyerring tribe—this messenger had come to announce the event; whether to warn them of danger, or to arouse them to revenge, I could not learn. This gave occasion to Weenat to explain to me their laws, that when one dies or is killed, the relative of a certain degree is bound to avenge the death, by killing one of the same age and sex, belonging to another or to the offending tribe; that the man who was killed was a nephew of Goongal, who was bound to avenge the death—uncle of nephew—brother of brother—son of father or mother,—that he himself had an old account to settle for the death of a brother, which he would revenge on a child of the Dyerring tribe, if he could see one; and he finished by saying, that white men did not kill one another so—that black men had no understanding. Being desirous of having some further communication with

the stranger, I found that he had already disappeared; thus proceeding on his melancholy mission with the same stealthy silence with which he had arrived. His former companion, "Needyal," who remained behind, had been a mere chance conductor from a neighbouring tribe. Finding that the whole party intended to proceed northwards on the morrow, on a hunting expedition over the hills, and to sleep beside some pools at a distance up the valley, where they said there were plenty of that eel-like fish called "cobblers," to be had, I promised myself much satisfaction in thoroughly exploring the valley in the same course, and joining their station in the evening; but next morning such a dense fog hung over all the low grounds, that the eye could not discern any object distinctly at one hundred yards distance, so we kept a straight course on the high ground, and only touched on the valley at different turnings, as it wound its course in a very serpentine direction from the north. By noon the mist had cleared away, and we could see several windings of the valley, both north and south, its breadth varying from a quarter to half a mile; the low ground consisting of good soil, covered with wattle and blackboy, and a hedge of spearwood and sedge marking the course of the winter stream. At ten miles distance, in nearly a straight course N. by E., we dined beside some pools of good water, with abundant grass around them. The place is called

"Jaydalup." It must be noted, that fire had recently passed over all this country, and that where the grass was, it was so green it would not burn. About three miles further in a straight line brought us to "Jainabengup," the appointed station for the night.

We were unwilling to rest so soon, but a guide, who had accompanied us, said there was no water further on; in which (as we afterwards found) he was not speaking the truth; but this appeared a favorite place with the natives, as there was plenty of "Yandyait"—that broad flag or sedge, the roasted root of which they eat with avidity. To prevent the necessity of mentioning the particular description of the character of this valley, which I marked in my journal, I may say at once that it greatly resembles the place called Ebenezer Flats, on the York road—the soil on the hills a stiff red loam, softening in quality, and darkening in color, as it descends. The trees are (in order as you descend from the high grounds) Wando (white gum with a rusty tinge), Kardan (red gum), Mangart (raspberry jam), Toart (the York gum), casuarina, wattle, and swamp oak. The stone consists of fragments of quartz and felspar. At the place where we stopped there was a long succession of deep pools in the course of the water bed, as if the river was beginning to scoop out a decided channel for itself, but had dug deep only

where the ground was soft, leaving the rest to be hollowed out on future occasions; the pools were perhaps twenty feet deep, from the level of the ground, with sides so shelving, that it was scarcely possible to stand upon them. Bringing my fishing tackle into requisition, the bait was scarcely in the water, when it was seized, and up came a fine cobbler of nearly two pounds—the first perhaps that ever was drawn out of that pool since its creation. The natives call this fish, in the fresh water, "Moyoart," and its relative, in the salt water, "Garalyer." Sailors call them "cobblers," in my hurry to recover the hook from the fish, I fancied I learned the reason of the name, by getting a deep "probe" in the finger from an awl-shaped sort of spike, which he seemed to wield at each of his fins. Warned by the native that the sting was poisonous and would cause inflammation up the arm, I sucked my finger and drew blood copiously from it, and, perhaps, to this precaution owe the comparative impunity of a mere temporary pain. Between five and six dozen fish were pulled out of these pools during that evening, and the next morning, an abundance, which enabled me to gratify the natives, without much inconvenience to myself. They had never got any here before, for though they have a very ingenious mode of clearing the shallow pools of fish, these holes were too deep for their operations.

At one end of the shallow pools they introduce a quantity of brushwood and bushes, which they push before them, and so sweep out all the fish at the other end. At night I renewed my inquiries about a river among some natives of this quarter, who had arrived in the evening, and now, for the first time, heard the mention of water at a place called "Jaydeep," a day's journey to the north, without any intervening halting place of grass or water. It seemed to be rather out of their usual *beat*, and a discussion sprung up among themselves as to its locality. At length Needyal silenced them, with an air of one who would say, "I'll tell you all about it;" and, in a rapid and hurried manner, he seemed to give an itinerary of names of men and hills and waters and grounds so complete, that they all assented with a kiah! kiah! and then turned to me with an air of the greatest complacency, as if I must now be informed to my complete satisfaction. Must I acknowledge that I was not much the wiser, but I had stationed Weenat beside me, with a caution to attend and understand it. Needyal's utterance was so rapid, his pronunciation so thick, and his gesture so energetic, that I was rather amused at his manner, than interested in the matter of his story. One part of his description seemed to have particular reference to the immediate subject of my inquiry, but at the same time appeared so questionable and so ludicrous,

from his animated manner of "suiting the action to the word," that I was constrained to indulge in a laugh, which seemed to offend him. I hastened to make amends. His words were these, as well as I could catch them:—"Needya Beloo colo colo, boorda bokal derbacolo, boorda yerapp, Garbanup, Gabby wotan wato; as if he had said, "there the river runs, runs till it runs headforemost under a hill; by and by it rises again and goes past Garbanup out to the sea." Now it would be too much to say that I saw the river afterwards perform this marvellous feat, but I will tell in due time what I did see, and leave it to the reader to say, whether poor Needyal's animated description was not true in fact, though figurative in expression. It was a great point gained, to find that the river I was going to, fell into the sea near Garbanup, and with this information we retired to rest. As we were about composing ourselves to sleep, Weenat started up with an exclamation—Waow! Allenâit? Ho! What is there? No answer. After trying again, with as little success, suddenly changing his tone he called out, "Well, Sir, you come here, me gun choot him—kill him dead." But this English producing no more effect than his mother tongue, he declared it to be either a Bolia or a Cheirgah—a wizard or a ghost. The former opinion seemed to prevail in the encampment, for two men immediately proceeded with torches to

walk a circle in opposite directions round the huts, making a noise as if snuffing up the air and exhaling it forcibly from their lungs. Some one of the party affirmed that he saw a Bolia ascend in the shape of a white cockatoo, and having thus satisfactorily warded off the witchcraft, all betook themselves to repose. In the morning I asked Needyal how far it was to the river. He said I must make haste and walk all day, and that the sun would be setting when we saw it; that there was no other water or grass to stop at. Placing the compass under his hand as he pointed how we should go, the line was N.N.E., and this was our only guide. After distributing some more cobblers among them, and presenting Toodyeep with a hook and line, we proceeded on our way. Adhering strictly to the N.N.E. course, over hill and dale, in the space of nine miles we crossed a valley, which we supposed to be the same that we started from, no fewer than five times. Thence, for fourteen miles further on, our course lay over hills of the ordinary description of the Darling Range. The last hill that we descended consisted of fragments of whinstone and quartz, and at its base we came into a valley of good soil, with a water-course trending to the north. It was now about the time we hoped to see the river, but there was no sign of it; so turning down the valley, we began to search for water and pasture for the horses—the sun set, the

twilight failed, and no river. We had come about twenty-seven miles since morning, but were obliged to stop where there was good grass, and the valley appeared to have expanded on all sides. We had brought some cobblers with us, Weenat baked them in the embers, wrapped in paper-tree bark, and, from the richness and moisture of that delicious dish, suffered but little uneasiness from want of water. Next morning we started at daybreak, and had not proceeded two hundred yards before we saw the flooded gum-tree, which indicates the vicinity of water—the horses instinctively quickened their pace—we struck upon the river at a fine long reach, and rushed down the first opening to the water. Numbers of ducks fluttered off in great alarm as the horses plunged in to quench their thirst. Handing the flask to Hefferon to qualify his draught, he said, "Sir, as you are the first to see this river here, I think you have a right to name it; I'll christen it, if you please, Sir, the 'River Moore;'" and so he made his libation, but not on the ground. Whether his christening will be considered good, is not for me to say. We had now leisure to look around us. The river here was not running, but in pools and reaches, at different distances. Judging from the length and depth of the reach, the breadth of the water-course, and height of the banks, the river appeared to be intermediate in size between the Swan and the

Helena. The appearance of the country at this particular place very much resembled the York district, the trees and shrubs being similar ; but we supposed that we were only just approaching the eastern side of the Darling Range, and not yet quite out of their influence. As we ascended the river, which came from the N. and N. E. the country improved at every step—the hills became more gentle—the river flats or plains more extensive—the grass fine, wherever it had not been burned. Some hills appeared still to the eastward, but near the river the soil was of the best brown loam of the York district. At a place called Candoby we halted on a fine pool, and caught some cobblers, but having by this time plenty of ducks, we were careless of other fare. It was not many miles from this that we first met with a native in this district. His name is Bingal, and, in mentioning him, it is gratifying to record an instance not only of kindness and good fellowship on his part, but of his reliance on the good faith and friendship of white men, whom he now saw for the first time. He was evidently a good deal embarrassed at first, but in mentioning the names of his friends whom we had last seen, by way of introduction, he regained his confidence, appeared pleased to have met with us, and asked us to go and eat some of a kangaroo, which he had killed in the morning. This is almost the only instance that I have met

with of a voluntary proffer of hospitality among them. He preceded us to his fire—his two wives had run away in alarm. Three fine native dogs (which I think they call "Moarjne") were very *honestly* couching beside the fire, looking at the kangaroo, but had not taken advantage of the absence of their master to help themselves. They rose on our approach, and seemed greatly puzzled —first wagged their tails—next shewed their teeth, then turned tail and slunk off. Here Bingal handed us the entire "saddle," which had previously been cooked. I took a substantial cut of it, and handed him in return two cockatoos and some cobblers, and also a piece of biscuit, which Weenat called his attention to as being the "very good," of which he seemed to have heard. I then began to question him. Where did this river come from? Far away. Did he know of any other river? None. Did he know Wonganip—a district on the Swan River in the hills to the S. E.? No. Was there any water in that direction? No; all hills. What was there to the N.W.? Stony hills, with Wando and Barro (the sort of tough-topped blackboy, the true *Zanthorrhea*, from which the yellow resin is obtained with which they cement their hammers.) What was to the N.E.? All good ground and grass—the same as what was around us. Did he know Wangan Gatta? (some high hills which I had often heard the natives

speak of as being very far away and remarkable, on some account which I could not understand.) Yes, he said, Wangan Gatta caccal pardoke—was to the east a short distance. This identifies that hill with some high land which I saw to the N.E. when out with Mr. Dale in 1831. Had he ever seen any cows in the district? Cows! what is it? Larger than that great horse, says Weenat, with curved spears sticking out of their head. Never saw such a thing. Where was the next water or pool? At Marramerrip. Where is another water? There is no other water. I have put this down as he said it, as well as I can recollect. Whether he meant that there was no water now beyond that, or whether none that we could reach that night, I must leave to time to tell. I could not express my meaning so as to obtain any other answer. As it was too early to rest for the day, we proceeded up the river from this place, which was called Moarup, and passed several small pools, but none of them answering the description which Bingal had given of a large deep pool which we should know by the number of cockatoos about it. The sun had set and we had not arrived at it, and began to suppose we had come up a wrong branch of the river. At last a white cockatoo (a certain indication of the vicinity of water) screamed his alarm, and we were soon upon the pool. We could see nothing now, save that there was a plain, on which our

horses busied themselves in eating, so we fastened their "tether" to a bush, and deferred our observations till the morning. Alluding to the dogs, which appeared under such command, Weenat said that they hunt by sight and scent; that the man follows their tracks as fast as he can; that they frequently have the kangaroo killed before the master comes up, and seldom attempt to devour it, which he accounts for by saying, they are too much tired and out of breath. Next morning by sunrise, took a view of the country. We had slept upon the left bank of the river bed, which here lies nearly north and south. As far as the eye could discern, particularly towards the north, the ground was of an even, level appearance—the soil a dark hazel-coloured loam, of the richest quality—grass of the former spring, of course now much withered, covered the soil with a very good coating. The trees and shrubs—wattle, mangart, and toart. A low hill or rising ground was seen indistinctly through the trees to the N. E., apparently about two miles off, but no decided hills in view. On the right bank the ground appeared to rise from the river with so gentle an ascent, that it was only by prolonging the view to a considerable distance, that you could perceive the acclivity. Where the water was confined to one channel, its course or bed was about twelve yards from bank to bank, the sides from ten to twelve feet

deep, and steep; the pool, which appeared to be the residuum of a large water, evaporated by the summer sun, was about twenty yards long, and four yards wide—the detritus in its bed was of granite, but no rocks nor stones to be seen. A hundred acres of ground in our view might be ploughed without clearing anything but a wattle here and there. Several miles which we had passed on the evening before appeared to be of the same nature, and when we consider what was said by Bingal, I think it fair to presume that a good grazing country continues on the east side of the Darling Range all the way from York to this district, which is very little short of one hundred miles north of it. As it was now the morning of the sixth day of my excursion, as I was ninety miles from home in a straight line, and I knew not how many by the river, should I follow its course through the river towards the sea, I felt myself obliged with great regret and reluctance, to turn away from the further examination of a country which, for the extent and quality of soil taken together, I have no hesitation in saying, is the best I have seen in the Colony. We retraced our steps down the river, and soon came to the fire of our friend Bingal. His wives were with him. It was interesting to see the looks of mute surprise with which they regarded the horses. Weenat, to shew his accomplishments, knocked down two cockatoos at one shot.—

Goodyall dabbat (two down) said one to the other, in amazement. Bingal told us that before he saw us he heard the sound of the gun, and could not understand what it was, but supposed it must be a tree falling. We gave each some more bread, and I directed Weenat to tell him to tell all other black men that hereafter if they should see white men, they should not fear, but speak to them, for all white men were friends; and so we departed. Twenty miles lower down than our starting place we slept beside a pool, where the valley had narrowed and the river had evidently entered the range. The hills on either side were high, but retiring in some places to a considerable distance from the river, leaving an elevated table land on one or other side, and sometimes on both sides, of considerable extent, and generally resembling the high grounds on the banks of the Swan—soil stiff red loam—trees white and red gum—shrubs mangart, wattle and broom. We were on the left bank, and we saw, not far from this, the opening of a narrow stream or river coming from the north, and having very deep water at its mouth. Next morning, after proceeding about eight miles in a course going considerably to the westward, and passing a vein of slaty stone with nearly vertical strata running E. and W., and also some white marl shewing itself in the banks, we obtained from the high ground above the river, a view of what we supposed to be

the plain outside of the range towards the north-west. One remarkable hill of considerable elevation bore N. about twelve miles distant. Further on a range of Banksia sand-hills appeared on the right bank of the river, sandy soil, intermixed with ironstone fragments, on a scrubby plain on the left, then remarkable conical-shaped cliffs of very white clay standing up to a height of near one hundred feet above a long deep reach of the river. At twelve miles we dined, where a valley of considerable depth, with a well-marked watercourse, fell in from the north. A few miles further on, in a S.W. direction, we thought we perceived the decided mountains of the Darling Range running, at a distance behind us, N. and S. and, in their stead, appeared to be traversing a district of ironstone ridges of small comparative elevation, and of a treacherously smooth and rounded appearance at a distance, but of a horribly rough, grinding composition when arrived at, like the scoriæ of an iron foundry closely paved together. At one place, where high steep walls of this ironstone seemed roughly built along on either a reach of the river, looking like a deep, broad, navigable canal, another river fell in from the north. This place Weenat said he recognized as Motyamelup, from a description given by Bingal. A little further on the banks softened down, there was sandy loam, red gum, and some indifferent pasture ; so we stopped, after a

rough march of nineteen miles. The reaches of the river now appeared to approach one another so closely as almost to be united; a narrow barrier of moist gravel seemed alone to separate them, and regulate their discharge like locks of a canal. Here I have marked some round-topped hills, bearing W. ½ N. about ten miles off. Next morning, passed a place where the river seemed to empty its waters into a very small, deep, circular basin, and to discharge them at a right angle to the place of their entrance. Some miles further on, in a westerly direction, we came upon a broad belt of rich red loam, about half a mile wide, perfectly level, and at an elevation of upwards of one hundred feet above the level of the river, which we saw below making its way through a narrow valley, and apparently having commenced to run, but we were at too great a distance to be certain.

It was here that Weenat was hailed from a distance by a native woman with a question which appeared at the time very singular, and which we had occasion to remember afterwards. As we had not seen a native in all this district, and were anxious to get information as to whereabouts we were, we wished her to approach and answer our questions. But "Guinny Ganmaliaty mocone ahi? (literally, "Are you the likeness of Ganmaliaty, or his son?") was her oft repeated question; and when Weenat answered in the negative, she kept

up this sort of distant parley, for a time, till she secured the retreat of a child, which we saw stealing away, and then she disappeared herself, and no longer answered to our call, though we shouted lustily, in hope of inducing somebody to come to us. It was the more provoking, as a short time after we came upon a piece of ground all trodden over with cows' tracks, not very recent, but perhaps after the last winter, whilst the ground was still moist. From this we had, for some miles a change of scenery—the river running through a very picturesque valley—the water almost in one uninterrupted bed, of a singularly beautiful sky-blue color, and deep—the banks almost precipitous, 150 feet high in some places—the river varying in breadth from 20 to 40 yards in the reaches—the trees principally red gum, stone, iron-stone, and red sand-stone. About mid-day, having come 12 miles, we went down upon a rich grass flat of alluvial soil—the first which we had seen upon the river. It was of no great extent, perhaps three acres, but the grass so luxuriant and so green, as to make walking through it in some places not an easy task. The horses rejoiced in it, and indulged in a salad of sowthistle. Near the termination of a long deep reach, the river turned at a right angle through a channel about four feet deep and nine feet wide, partly concealed by sedges and bulrushes. From this, after some windings, the river took a

westerly course for some distance, and we appeared to have left the ironstone ridges behind us, as we could see their rounded, naked tops ranging N. and S. A high abrupt hill bore N. ½ E. about 15 miles. The character of the river here appeared to be very variable, sometimes like a trout-stream playing among sedges and willows, and murmuring over obstructions in its course, sometimes like a long deep canal, and again like a broad winding river. Having come 22 miles, we halted for the night where there were alluvial flats, with good grass, among wattle and other trees. Hefferon and I being absent for some time, occupied in watering and tethering the horses, on our return, Weenat had evidently been working hard to prepare a surprise for us, having a house nearly constructed as a shelter from impending rain. An expression which he made use of struck me as shewing, in a singular manner, the very general use of a phrase, perhaps more familiar than true. "Côrt Taccaneen," My heart is broken, said he, with making the house; and by the way the sound of Côrt strongly resembles the Italian pronunciation of the Latin *cor*. He had not forgotten the address of the woman in the morning, as he recounted to himself the events of the day by way of storing them in his memory, and "Gninny Ganmaliaty mocone ahi" became an often bandied expression between us: we supposed Ganmaliaty to be some

great man in these parts. Needyal formerly, in describing the river, said we must not turn away from it till we came to the Gabby Coombar, or large river. What this large water was none could tell: I supposed it the inlet near the sea, and we had been anxiously looking out for the Gabby Coombar for the last 20 miles, and thinking of turning at once homeward, without further delay. At last it was agreed to proceed to noon next day in search of it, and if unsuccessful, then to fill our jar with water, and push for home; but the character of the back ground looked very uninviting, while curiosity and interest lured us to remain by the river. Next morning alluvial flats became more frequent and extensive, and of a rich nature. The scene of the river was ever varying, and kept the interest alive. About noon we passed a place greatly resembling Point Walter, in soil, limestone, and vegetation; and at a short distance further, having now come 15 miles, we halted on an alluvial flat, with good grass. The valley now appeared to expand, so that we could not perceive the other side of it through the trees—the reaches were long and deep, with steep sides, and nearly as broad as the Swan River at Guildford, the water running strongly through the connecting channels. Proceeding further onward, we found it impracticable to keep our course upon the margin of the river, as waters seemed to spring up in several

places in secondary channels, and to continue imperceptibly increasing in size and breadth till they formed into the appearance of a tributary stream falling into the main river ; thus completely entrapping us in its fork, and compelling us to retrace our steps, in order to extricate ourselves. We therefore rode upon the higher land on the margin of its outer bed, and could perceive, from the denseness of the trees and shrubs, that the valley was of considerable extent. Thus we continued in a S. W. course for eight or ten miles, having an occasional glimpse of the river through the close foliage on its banks. At length a hill of considerable elevation appeared to stand directly across its course, and it seemed evident that the river must suddenly turn either north or south. Accordingly, the higher ground on which we rode led us directly to the south ; but after proceeding a little way, the appearance of the valley was altogether changed. I supposed that we had turned up the valley of a tributary stream, that the river had turned up to the north, and that we must now bid farewell to it. In the hope of getting a parting view, and possibly of seeing the " Gabby Coombar," I *crossed the valley*, and ascended the hill on the opposite side. From this I saw an extent of densely-wooded low ground below, and in the course which we had come ; but, to my surprise, there was no appearance of the river turning round the shoulder of the hill, nor

any view of large water. I came down into the valley again, and observed in it only a small, faintly-marked, dry water-course. Feeling convinced that we had left the river behind us and were now *going up* a tributary stream, but which led us directly south in our way home, we pushed on to look for grass and water for the horses, but could not see anything very satisfactory in either way. Shortly afterwards we saw some horse tracks, which were of Mr. Norcott's party, going northwards. But the sun was now declining, and we hastened onwards in search of water, being reluctant to turn back from our course. The ground on which we were had the appearance of being covered with shallow water at some time of the year, for there were the traces of low curving banks of mud raised across some parts of it by the natives, for the purpose of catching fish ; but though we peeped narrowly into hollows where water had been, there was none now ; and at length having come to a place with a growth of young grass, sprung up after a fire had passed over it, we were at a late hour obliged to take up our quarters for the night without any water. So just about the place where we expected to find the Gabby Coombar, we found, as Weenat expressed it, " Gabby kyan " (not a drop.) In the course of the night we heard shouting of natives, and screaming of white cockatoos, " right ahead "—both sure signs

of water; so in the morning we determined to push on at daybreak, and continued our course due south over a level ground, with blackboys and wattle in abundance on its surface. Two miles further on we came to an encampment of natives in a very close thicket; our arrival seemed to occasion some stir. Numbers were seen hurrying to and fro among the bushes—some armed, some not. I hailed them in great glee, thinking that our perplexities were now at an end; that we could not only get a supply of water, but also get all the desired information as to the localities of the place. Some entered into conversation, while some stood aloof as in doubt. The attitude of one man amused me not a little. His body was leaned a little to one side; his right arm extended, with his fingers crooked, as if clutching something; his mouth pursed into a circle; his eyes staring, and his whole countenance having a "what-can-it-be" sort of expression. In a laughing way, I called out to him, "Guinny Ganmaliaty mocone ahi." Gua (yes) was the answer, and "Gnanyay Ganmaliaty." I am Ganmaliaty himself, said a portly, elderly fellow, with a jollity of face and obesity of form, which reminded me of Jolly Falstaff. Where is there water? There, said he, pointing to a deep dark pool, with steep, muddy sides. Taking a look round before I should venture to descend, I saw the women and children sneaking off, and at

a little distance one man handling his spears in a very suspicious way, while another seemed to persuade him to be quiet. Thinking it might be something among themselves, I paid not much attention till I heard him exclaim, "Whinjal Yoongar," and saw his eyes directed with anything but affectionate regards towards poor Weenat, who, with his back to him, was seated on horseback, looking wistfully at the water, and wholly unconscious of his danger. I grasped my gun in my right hand, and, holding it up, shook it at the man; but his eyes were too intent upon his game. Hefferon was also upon the alert, with his gun ready. I gave another wistful look at the water, "No time to think of water now, Sir; we cannot be too soon out of this close place;" and I began to think so too. The man continued raising and quivering his spears, and all their hands seemed now armed as if by magic. Weenat, come away quickly; he could not discern the reason of the hurry, and was moving rather slowly. Gid gid (make haste) and we kept our guns ready to cover his retreat. With a few knocks and bruises against blackboys and trees, we extricated ourselves from the thicket, and got on a gentle rising ground. Looking round, we saw them peeping after us, but not following. I will now do them the justice to say, that I did not consider any of them hostile, with the exception of one man, and his hostility seemed directed against

Weenat alone. Perhaps he was of some unfriendly tribe—perhaps this man had some feudal quarrel, or some death to avenge ; but we were bound to defend our companion Weenat, and any attack upon him might have led to a general collision. It was mortifying and tantalizing to have the cup thus literally and metaphorically dashed from our lips, when we had such a long looked-for opportunity of quenching our thirst, and satisfying our curiosity ; but our party was too weak to risk our safety by further attempt or longer delay, so we broke into a trot and rode off. Some distance further on we came to another pool. Keeping watch by turns, we gave our horses a drink, filled our jar, and pursued our course southward ; again fell in with horses' tracks, which we traced, in hope of finding their last bivouac. At ten miles' distance from our morning's starting point, to our great surprise, we came upon a river of considerable size, running strongly and directly to the west. We had never heard of any river but one in this quarter, and that we supposed we had left behind us. Suddenly poor Needyal's description occurred to my mind—"Had we really seen *the river run headforemost into the ground under the hill, and after a time get up again, and run past Garbanup and out to the sea.*" I cannot solve the mystery—I have stated what I saw. With some difficulty we crossed the river at one of its narrow runs. From hence

our progress presented but little of interest. We took, by compass, a S. E. course, as likely to lead directly home. Five miles further brought us to a large lake, of which we did not see the extent, as we rounded its western side ; then another, which we passed on the east. Five miles again brought us to a bare plain, of considerable extent, bounded on the west by a remarkable double-topped hill, which is marked in the charts of the coast. This plain is called Wallingup, as we learned from an old couple of natives, the man being of a hideously distorted countenance, apparently from scrofula. Seven miles further brought us to a lake called Bindiar, where we slept, after a march of 27 miles. Next morning our course, for some time, lay among swamps and lagoons ; then a mere banksia, sandy country for 20 miles, when we hit upon Ellen's Brook, at a place called Garbungar. Weenat procured us water by scraping in its sandy bed. Being anxious to reach home this night, we made but short stay here, and by steering by the stars for several hours, we arrived about nine o'clock on the night of the eleventh day from our first starting, having come no less than 37 miles on this last day, and 225 in all.

Yours, &c.

George F. Moore.

Swan River, June 18, 1836.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Leake having projected an expedition, for the purpose of examining the district of country which lies adjacent to the Swan River, on its course through the Darling Range, I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of joining their party, with a twofold object in view. One was to combine with their intentions, the examination of the valley falling into the Swan at a place called Toodyay, ten or twelve miles below Northam, a branch of which I had crossed with Mr. Dale in the year 1831, where we saw marks of cattle at that time, and in the neighbourhood of which valley the natives had lately seen some cows. The other object was, to push as far as practicable to the eastward, in order to acquire some additional information as to the existence and locality of that great inland lake or sea, which upon a former occasion I have ventured to conjecture as lying at no very great distance from this, in the interior—a conjecture not founded upon mere theory, but upon information carefully collected from the natives at different periods and places, and also upon the interpretation I give to the word "Moleyean," which they invariably use with reference to this water. My impression still remains unshaken, that they use the word to express their idea of the "other side of this island."

As the result of our expedition has been highly satisfactory with respect to both of the above-mentioned objects, a detail of some of the particulars may not be uninteresting. On Monday the 30th of May, we proceeded from my place to what has been called Shaw's barn, at the foot of the hills. Here our expedition was nearly clouded, at the outset, by an unpleasant accident. Mr. Smythe, who accompanied us, was standing beside his horse; a gun was attached to the saddle by the usual manner of bucket and strap; some part of the dress of the native Tomgin caught upon the hammer and caused it to rebound and ignite the cap. Fortunately the strong leather of the bucket weakened the force of the charge; two grains went through his boot, one of them lodged itself in the flesh of his great toe, and there remains still, without occasioning much uneasiness. Intending to keep the course mentioned by Mr. Drummond, we searched minutely for his marked trees, but were not fortunate enough to find them; so, on arriving at the top of the first ascent, we took a course E. by N. ½N.; and, passing over several valleys and steep hills, arrived in the evening at Padjebup, a place famous as being the scene of the slaughter of a cow, in earlier days, by our old acquaintance Coondebung, who, notwithstanding his voracity, was only able to dispatch one leg and a side, before the meat was spoiled. Next day the same course took us over a

still more rugged and forbidding country; our progress was very slow. At sunset we had not reached the river, and could find no water. A few miles next morning brought us into the York district. We came upon the river two or three miles lower than Mr. Heal's settlement, which we visited shortly after. It is gratifying to see the progress which a few weeks' industry has enabled him to make. Several acres of wheat already in the ground; a considerable garden; two huts for present residence; the side walls of a large substantial stone house; a stock-yard and sheep pen; all attest his laborious assiduity. Having struck the river much higher up than we expected, and having overshot the valley at Toodyay, it was thought advisable to proceed at once to the eastward, and defer the examination of that district till our return. Next morning we proceeded to Mr. Morrell's, who has also, in a short space of time, made himself a well-sized house, wi h windows framed and glazed, a snug fire-place and chimney, and has several acres ready for the plough. The native name of this place is Gnardiac. We now commenced our eastward course, under the guidance of Hannapwirt, a native, who volunteered his services, as, he said, that country, was his "calleep," or own immediate district. At a short distance, we crossed the bed of a brook, the waters of which (when it contains any) are said to be salt. Several springs of good

water were mentioned by the native as lying to the north of our course. Yavaning and Goromoling lie not far from a remarkable hill called Moloin. As these springs are a most important and valuable feature in the country, I am desirous of mentioning every one that he indicated. The native name for a spring is "Gnôrah." Eleven miles east from Morrell's, we halted for the night, at a copious spring called "Coleyaging," close to the bed of the same brook which we had crossed in the morning. It was on this day's progress that we first saw a species of the *Eucalyptus*, which the natives call "Wooruc," having a smooth, glossy, bright yellow bark. We had now supposed ourselves to have gone beyond the reach of former explorations; but, to our mortification, we found here undeniable evidence of a former visit of both man and horse. It was at this spring also, that we first saw a screen of brushwood, within which the natives ensconce themselves, and knock down pigeons, parrots, and other birds, with a long stick, as they come to drink in the hot weather. Next morning, there was water at Padarung, a little to the south of east. Hitherto we had passed a good grazing country, but now we came upon a large open sandy down. Upon this we first saw a singular shrub, with white leaves, and having a hard woody fruit, (if it may be so called,) something resembling an artichoke, in shape and size, the young fruit looking like an

acorn. I know not in what class to place it. If there be "virtue in a name," it may be an *Eucalyptus*, but it differs greatly in its outward appearance. The natives call it "Balwunga." From a rising ground here we first got a view of Mount Stirling, which the natives call "Candenup." To the north of this place water was to be had at Welgwilly; to the S.S.E. at Guelling, Mekaring, and Colyungaling. After passing five or six miles of this bad vein, we suddenly came to a fine valley running to the eastward, and so for ten miles farther, through a good grassy country, with but little interruption; but in our course we had not found water. We had already got beyond the knowledge of Hannapwirt, and he informed us that we must now "paper give it him," meaning that we must now look to the compass for our guide, for he knew no more, and he evidently was very anxious that we should return. He said that there was no more water, or only salt water; that the Daran (eastern) men were not good. We had now reached the summit of a hill, which Mr. Brown proposed to call "Mount Anne," in honor of the fair daughter of our excellent fellow tourist (Mr. Leake). From this spot our view was rather perplexing. Below us, a narrow belt of wooded and grassy land; beyond that, and directly in our course, lay an extensive plain, of an irregular shape, but apparently not less than twenty miles in diameter, and of a

scrubby, repulsive appearance, perfectly hopeless for either water or pasture. With a spy-glass we examined the plain in all directions, in search of something more promising. Hannapwirt said that there was plenty of water there after the rainy season, but it was all salt. To the N.E. we could not discern the extent of the plain ; to the E. it was considered twenty miles across ; to the S.E. there were grassy hills near us, but the plain appeared to stretch behind them, in the direction of Mount Stirling. It was at last decided, that, under the circumstances, it would not be prudent to persist in going farther eastward at this time of the year. I confess it was a great trial to me ; I felt sadly chagrined, that, with all our preparations, we had only made twenty-five miles of easting from the Avon, and had got no further light on that subject, which I had so much at heart. As we proposed to halt for half an hour, to take refreshment, Mr. Smythe said he would take a run down to the plain and see what it was like, and, with many cautions not to delay, he took his departure. The time elapsed, and there was no sign of him. As we looked out and shouted, a flock of white cockatoos was visible over the trees. Shortly after Mr. Smythe came, bearing in his hand two of those splendid pink-feathered cockatoos which the natives call "Jacaly-acail," and the existence of which in this Colony has been often doubted. He said he had crossed

the wooded belt, which was broader than we supposed, and had arrived at the bank of a river course, forty yards broad in some places, but having salt water in it. All thoughts of turning back now, were at once abandoned. We hurried down to the plain, unsaddled our horses, and started at once to walk to the river. It had a broad, sweeping channel, having the appearance of containing a large body of water in the winter, flowing gently and steadily, as if coming from a distant and level source. Its bed was cut into a whitish sandy loam, stiffening into a white clay; the neighbouring plain covered with coarse scrub, as if it were so much impregnated with salt, as to be incapable of bearing any more kindly pasture. White clayey soil and salt seem, from my experience in this Colony, to have some intimate connection; which may be the cause, and which the effect, (if one is derived from the other,) I am not prepared to say. We found a pool of water; it was salt as brine from a pork cask. Whilst we were tasting it, and considering whether to fill our kettles for the purpose of boiling some meat, we heard shouts of natives, and returning immediately to our bivouac, when we found that several had arrived, in the meantime. One of them came and volunteered to show us water in a pool or in a rock, which they call "Amar," (the â broad and full, as in father.) I began to question him immediately. His name

was Dyat. Have you ever seen *Moleyean?* Yes. Where is it? There to the east. How many sleeps to it? Here I observed some hesitation, as he looked round to Hannapwirt, and, to my surprise, he said, "Dtonga uada" (I do not know.) It was evident that Hannapwirt was prompting him, and he did not wish to go further eastward. On returning to the fire, I accosted a good looking young lad—"Tacatgwirt," have you seen Moleyean? Yes. How many sleeps to it? Here Dyat's jealousy was roused, and he said, "Friend, I'll tell you." Being aware that many serious doubts are entertained on this subject, and that I have exposed myself to some little goodhumoured ridicule, as being a credulous dupe of the natives, I called the particular attention of Mr. Brown and Mr. Leake to the man, that they might see I was not leading him, or suggesting answers. He then told, *that there was a great water ten days' journey to the east; that it was salt: you could not drink it; that the country was good between this and the water; that there was plenty of gum (menny boola.)* He mentioned the names of the places where he slept each night; the nature of the trees, grass, and water; and it is remarkable, that out of the nine "sleeps," all were beside springs (gnorâh,) with one exception, on the second day, where there was only water in a rock (âmar.) That he had gone to it from behind Mr. Clarkson's; that there were no

high hills. I asked him particularly about a river. He once said that there was a river on the third day's journey, and I understood him to say that it came towards Mr. Clarkson's, but he did not speak positively, so it is likely that it is but a small tributary falling into the salt river. There was much other conversation, which need not be detailed. It ended in our engagement, to this effect: Dyat, I am going to Moleyean; will you go with me? Yes, now? No; in the season "Cambarung" (about the latter end of September and October.) In Cambarung; where is Dyat? Behind Mr. Clarkson's. Then I shall make fires, and call and you will understand, and come? Yes. I hope I shall be able to keep this engagement with him. He informed us that this salt river came from the direction of Mount Stirling, and ran out to Mr. Morrell's; that the ground we were upon was "Medongabing," and the hill (Mount Anne) was "Bebaring." Next morning we turned W.N.W.—a course which we supposed would lead us to the valley alluded to before, as meeting the Swan below Northam, where the cattle had been seen. In the course of the day our progress of seventeen miles led us across a varying country, sometimes having good valleys, and undulating grassy hills—sometimes bare, sandy, scrubby downs. On this day we saw a tree which is, perhaps, the same with that called "stringy bark," on the Sydney side.

The trees beautifully tapering, tall, and straight—colour, a glossy yellow; the stems of some looking like several trees laid alongside of one another, like the cluster of a Gothic pillar; others appeared to be composed of several stems, intertwined like gigantic basket work. Its native name is "Gnardarue." We slept beside some deep pools, in rocks, in the bed of a water-course—the place called "Coandeny." On this day we saw a native and his "cardo" (wife,) a young woman of a very pleasing countenance, and something of European features, and long, wavy, almost flaxen-coloured hair. At night, at our fire, we were joined by several natives, one of whom announced himself, to our no small surprise, as Jack Mullowney. He had exchanged names with a soldier, near York. The same course next day brought us through a good district—past two remarkable hills, called "Boringaring"—a pool in a rock, and a spring at "Maneeng," both in a fine country; and towards the evening we came to a beautiful valley, having a perennial spring gushing out water, which flowed for half a mile before it was absorbed. This place is called "Bejoording." There were many traces of cattle having recently slept here, and remained for a considerable time; but they appeared to have gone off to the north, by a well-worn path. This valley was supposed to be a tributary to the main valley of Toodyay, which lay further to the west. Next day our course was

nearly north, in a straight line for the springs of "Boolgart," where we expected to find the cattle. In this course we touched upon what was supposed to be the main valley, at a singular conical shaped volcanic-looking hill, called "Benbengaddading." There was one tree on its summit. The view from this was most gratifying. In every direction hills and vales appeared to be grassy, even at the greatest distance, when viewed through a spy-glass. We passed another variety of *Eucalyptus*—a tall, straight stem and scaly bark, called "Morrail." A valley from the east from "Wattan" (which will be mentioned hereafter) fell in about this place. Our further course left the main valley to the west. We passed through a sort of defile between hills; those on the right hand being two of that conical shape before alluded to. These seemed to have stories belonging to them. One (the larger one) was considered by our guide to be the peculiar residence of a "Chingah," (a spirit) which he described as having large head and horns; the other had upon one occasion been used as a refuge by a man who had killed another;—the top is so sharp as completely to command the steep ascent on all sides. Posted on this vantage ground, with his spear in hand, he bid defiance to all approaches of his pursuers, and forced them to come to an amicable parley. This hill is called "Bedowan." Hills of this nature had on a former occasion engaged the

attention of Mr. Leake, whilst adverting to the geology of the country, in an essay sent to the Geological Society in London. Here we saw another variety of the *Eucalyptus*, called "Mallat," closely allied to the Morrail, mentioned above. About midday we came to "Boolgart," a tract of several acres of rich ground, covered with active springs—the grass rich and green. The cattle had been here, but not very recently. Hearing of another spring called "Yoelgening," some miles further to the north, we determined to leave our horses to enjoy themselves here, and walk to see it. Seven miles N. by W. brought us to it—the spring was copious, but the water rather brackish—the land of an inferior quality as we ascended the valley. A little incident occurred, which I may mention as a singular instance of strong affection among the feathered tribe. A parrot of splendid plumage (the male bird) was shot, while his less shewy mate sat near; as we proceeded, it was remarked, from time to time, that the poor survivor continued to follow us for several miles. As we sat at the spring, she hopped from branch to branch about us, in silent but restless examination. It was thought a mercy to save her from "lingering sorrows," and she fell dead without a murmur. It was during this walk, and on poor gravelly ground, that I first saw a bulbous root, called by the natives "Conne," which, there is great reason

to expect, may turn out to be a very valuable vegetable. It is almost the size of a large potato —not so firm and heavy, but of a very good palatable flavor when roasted—something resembling the meat of a cocoa nut, but not so oily. The stalk is slender and fibrous, with a few very small leaves of a hastate shape at the end. I have planted all the good specimens which I could procure. Next morning five miles E. by S. brought us to a valley, with a spring called "Wattaning," at which we saw traces of cows having drank during the morning. Some of the party had cows "in the bush"—all were excited by the novelty. We left our horses at the spring and started off upon the track, as eagerly as hounds upon the scent. The track, after some time, led out upon bare, open, sandy down, over which the view extended for a considerable distance; but no cattle to be seen. Our spy-glass was put in requisition; every grove and clump of bushes at a distance examined—but no cattle. We were almost turning back, when from a slight eminence to the right, we saw them emerging slowly, one after another, till we counted five. A large black cow—the mother of the herd—led the way; a two year old bull followed close after; then two fine young black cows and a liver-coloured bull, with the buffalo hump on his shoulder, brought up the rear. They did not allow us to approach much nearer, but

quickened their pace as we quickened ours, so we turned, and, proceeding S.S.E. five miles, passed "Jandaging," a spring, and seven miles in nearly the same line brought us over a fine country to "Boiagaring," a deep spring, with pitfalls for kangaroos (biniar) dug all round, with one narrow passage to the water. Next morning, leaving the baggage horses, we struck off, at a right angle, in the direction of the main valley, which lay to the west. We crossed seven miles of a very rich grassy character—crossed several water-courses and valleys with rich low grounds of red loamy soil; but could not yet be certain whether we had reached the main valley. We then returned to the baggage horses, and in seven miles of a course S. by W. came to the Swan River some miles to the east of Toodyay valley. The river hereabouts winds so as to form a peninsula, across the neck of which we passed over a high hill, to reach a large pool, which Tomgin recollected, at "Gonoling." Hitherto we had been in a country of which he knew nothing. We came to the pool about sunset; it was nearly a mile long. A high hill called "Waukonogalung" approaches the southern extremity of the pool, on the right bank of the river. This was below the valley of Toodyay about four miles. Next morning we went up the river, for the purpose of examining the valley of Toodyay upwards; but the day became wet and misty, so

that our principal object was defeated. Four miles upwards the soil in the valley was of a black alluvial character—the flats extensive, and covered with black wattle, but we could discern nothing distinctly through the mist, on either side. Next morning, three or four miles down the river brought us to the opening of the valley of Jampertbing. The hills of "Wonganip," "Yenarup," and Mordungup, stood upon the southern side of the valley, as it opened to the Swan into a pool or reach of nearly two miles. Here we saw some of Mr. Drummond's marks upon the trees, but soon lost them again, and though the track by which we returned was better than that by which we went out, it is not one much to be recommended to future travellers. About twenty-eight miles from Jampertbing, in nearly a W.S.W. direction, brought us to Shaw's barn, and concluded our journey.

Yours, &c.

G. F. MOORE.

Swan River, June 1836.

Much scepticism appears still to prevail as to the existence of a large body of water at no great distance in the interior, as I have before ventured to assert. As this is a subject of much importance to the Colony, I am desirous of mentioning all the

progressive steps of information by which I have advanced to such a conclusion, in order that others may not only have the means of judging of the reasonableness of the conjecture, that such a thing does exist, but also may be able to form some idea of its situation, distance, extent, and direction. It is known to all who converse with the natives here, that their knowledge of the localities of the country beyond the bounds of their own immediate district is extremely limited and imperfect. A visit to some friend in a neighbouring tribe comprises, in general, the extent of their travels; the occasions are rare and urgent when they transgress these limits. Tomgin is a native of much shrewdness of observation, and some reflection. Having upon one occasion gone into a sort of voluntary exile for the slaying of a man, he had proceeded to a considerable distance, principally northward. On his return, nearly a year ago, I had been inquiring what strange things he had seen or heard of during his absence; and it was then that he first told me amongst other things, that he had seen a man called "Mannar," who said he had gone a long way to the *north east*, till he had gone to *Moleyean*; that it was very far away—"moons would be dead," (meaning more than a month,) before you would arrive at it; that you walked over a great space where there were no trees; that the ground scorched your feet, and the sun burned your head; that you came to very high

hills; that, standing upon them, you *would look down upon the sun rising out of the water beyond them;*—that the inhabitants were of large stature; and that the women had fair hair, and long as white women's hair; that all the people's eyes were "sick;" that they contracted the eyelids and shook their heads as they looked at you. Deeming much of this to be the mere exaggeration of a traveller's story at the time, I laughed at it; when he said, "Well, friend, do you ask Mannar; I do not tell you that I saw these things: I tell you what Mannar told me." From my imperfect acquaintance with the language at that time, I was not sure whether he meant that Mannar himself had seen all these wonders or only heard of them; but he frequently mentioned the word *Moleyean*, and pointed to the *north-east*, in explanation of it. This word puzzled me greatly. I took an opportunity of getting Mr. Armstrong to question Tomgin as to what he meant by the word, and told him how he had used it. After some conversation with him, Mr. Armstrong said, "*the natives seem all to be aware that they are living on an island*, and Tomgin appears *to be speaking of the other side of the island.*" It was evident that he thought it some idle tale—but it made a great impression on my mind, and I often examined the chart, to see if any nook or bay in that direction might possibly be within their knowledge. The gulph of Carpentaria appeared to be

quite beyond the reach of probability. The Governor supposed that I must have mistaken the direction, and that one of the deep indentations of Shark's Bay might have been alluded to. In this state the subject rested, until I made an excursion about two months ago, when, on the bank of a river-course at a spot distant about *one hundred miles from Perth in a N.N.E. line*, it may be remembered that, in answer to my inquiry "where the waters to the east of that river went to," a native of that district gave this striking answer:—"The waters there *go to the east*, and out at *Moleyean*." Here was the word again which had puzzled me so much before, and the waters going to the east and to that place which Tomgin had so often mentioned when supposed to be speaking of *the other side of the island*. It appeared utterly improbable, either that the waters should run from this to the eastern side of Australia, or that the natives could have any idea of a place so distant. I came at once to the conclusion, that there must exist, at no very great distance, a body of water *so broad, that they could not see across it*, and *so they spoke of its western margin as the other side of the island*. In the hope that when attention was drawn to this subject, some lucky moment might throw a light upon it, I mentioned the conjecture, and in a short time Mr. Drummond's sons were informed of an *immense salt water lake* lying to the eastward. About this

time a native of large stature appeared at York, as a visitor, from a country which he described as being *seven* days' journey to the east. He said there was water plenty in his country; that York was but *a little good* in comparison with it. This man's name was "Bellung," and the name of his country "Cabba," which will be spoken of presently. On our recent excursion we fell in with five natives at a place, perhaps 25 or 30 miles to the east of Northam. They all spoke familiarly of *Moleyean;* all had seen it; yet one of them was but a youth. They pointed eastward to it. Dyat said it was ten days' journey from Mr. Clarkson's, (we were then about 25 miles east of the meridian of Mr. Clarkson's.) He mentioned the different stages or sleeps where water was to be had at this time (the very driest, it should be borne in mind.) It may be useful to mention the resting places:—Biargading, a spring; Gwenaging, a pool in a rock; Candaning, a spring; Gnaling, ditto; Yoondaing, ditto; Yeneling, ditto; Borralingy, ditto; Mordoling, ditto; *Cabba*, ditto; with menny boola (plenty of gum;) then *Moleyean*. Here we have *Cabba*, the country of Bellung, on the ninth day's journey. There were also intermediate springs, which he mentioned, as Cairgarung, Damalagerry, and others; but fearing confusion, I did not note them. I think sufficient has been shewn to prove the existence of some large water, and the shortest way to it. As to the

distance to the nearest point. The best average I can make of their day's journey is about fifteen miles; this would make 150 miles from Mr. Clarkson's. It is not likely that the distance is greater: it may probably be less. The next question is not only of immediate interest to this Colony, but of public interest in a geographical point of view—what is the character of this large water? Whether *a lake, an inlet of the sea, or a strait?* It must be broad, for it is a commonly received opinion among the natives here, that the Dáran, or Eastern men see the spot where the sun rises from; that it is at a place *where the sky and the water are near one another;* that they see him *start at once from his bed into the sky—whereas he has got up some distance before the Swan River men see him.* The Daran men appear to make the most of these wonders, for they connect them with several other fables relative to the sun and moon, which I do not clearly comprehend, even if they were fit to put on paper; but fables, however absurd, are always interesting. A community of fable may form a clue in tracing a community of origin, and, in many instances, fable is but truth shrouded in a pervious mantle of allegory. It appears fair to conclude, that they cannot see land across this water, between them and the whole range of sunrise. The information which Mr. Drummond's sons derived was of an "immense

lake." I tried the natives to the eastward with the word which is generally used here to designate a lake ; they would not apply this phrase, though they seemed perfectly to understand it, but constantly used the word *Moleyean*, which they seemed to think was sufficient to explain itself. As far as our present information extends, the whole question now hinges upon the precise meaning of that word. Let us consider it a little. Mr. Armstrong says he has lately learnt that it is the word by which the Mountain men designate the *ocean*, and he appears inclined to acquiesce in the inference that they are speaking of the sea on the south coast. A little reflection will shew us that this inference cannot be correct. The "immense lake" was mentioned as lying east of York, which is in lat. about 31, 50. Twenty miles to the north of York the Dâran men spoke of Moleyean as lying due east, ten days' journey; and ninety miles north of York. Bingal also spoke of Moleyean as lying due east from that point, say, for round numbers, about lat. 31. Now the surveys of Captain Flinders are held to be of acknowledged and established accuracy, and the most northern limit of any part of the southern coast on his charts, is a point of the great Australian Bight, in lat. 31, 30., long. 131., or about 14 degs. to the east, which, allowing 58 miles to a longitudinal degree in this latitude, equal to about 67 British miles, gives between 900 and

1,000 miles distance, which is manifestly beyond ten days' journey. But it may be said, it is some part of the Southern Ocean nearer to this; but as you come to the west, the coast extends further to the south, and on the meridian of 150 miles east of Mr. Clarkson's, the nearest part of the coast is 160 miles to the south. Then how can the ocean lie ten days' journey to the east of lat. 31. 40., or at all to the east of lat. 31.; or how can the sun be seen to rise from a water which is due south 160 miles, or due east 900 miles distant? No; *if it be the ocean*, it is not that part of it which is marked in the charts as being to the south of this coast. One point strikes me as important with reference to this word. The native Hannapwirt, whom we met on this side of Northam, on being asked, "Where is Moleyean?" said, "To the east far away." Now if this word meant simply *the ocean*, would it not have been more natural for him to have pointed to the ocean which was but sixty miles to the west, than to the ocean which was, by their own reckoning, twelve days' journey, or perhaps 180 miles, to the east? This, however, is by no means conclusive on the point. That to the east may have been more familiar to him; but I have a very strong impression that this word has some peculiar meaning which we have not yet arrived at. With respect to the probability of this water being connected with the sea

to the south, it may be remembered, that two boys, who said they were driven by ill usage to desert from a sailing ship at Middle Island, made their way along the coast from that to King George's Sound. This negatives the idea of the existence of any broad or deep channel of communication between this and Cape Arid, in longitude about 123. 12. But whatever may be the boundary of this water to the south, or wherever may be its connexion with the sea (if it has any) to the south, I feel myself bound to say, that the whole tenor of the many conversations I have had with different natives on this subject, their looks, gesture, and manner, as well as that portion of their language which was intelligible, all lead me to the belief, that this water extends to the north, and is in all probability *connected with the sea at Shark's Bay, or, more probably still, at North West Cape.* One expression of Bingal appears to bear strongly upon this point. In endeavouring to explain the meaning of this word, he said, in his dialect, that at Moleyean there was "bojore waam uad" (no more land.) Surely if he was speaking of the Southern Ocean, which lies to the south of that parallel, he could not express himself in this way, when pointing eastward; nor, again, if he knew *any northern termination* to this water, is it likely that he would have used such an expression. And again, another circumstance is very important, but it must not be

estimated beyond its real value. In speaking to the eastern natives, I had Tomgin beside me as a sort of interpreter, when I felt at a loss. Having asked—Does this large water go to the north? Yes.—Far to the north? Yes, far away.—Does it go to the south far away? Yes.—Going to the north by Moleyean, do you go to the sea? The answer was, yes, it is the sea or the same as the sea (Gaibby wotan mocoin.) I was not satisfied with this, for it seemed to prove too much; so I said to Tomgin, "You know what a ship is—ask him if a ship could go to the north by Moleyean and round that way by the gaibby wotan (the sea) to Freemantle." He seemed surprised at my simplicity, but asked several questions of Dyat, which I did not thoroughly comprehend, except that he spoke of a boat or ship (woandabery) going north. He then turned and said something tantamount to this—and I will give the whole answer as he gave it:—"*Yes, it is a truth* (boondobuc) a ship may go to the north, then round to the south to Freemantle, (still turning and pointing,) and east to King George's Sound, where Migo has been, and then north to *Sydney*—all, all, all, said he, completing a circle with his hand. He had been told that white men lived at Sydney, to the east. Now, it will be seen, that, in saying this, he has said more than Dyat could have told him, for Dyat knew nothing of King George's Sound or Sydney; but

still the answer strikes me as being very material, to show what was his impression, as gleaned from the natives, and that he considers Moleyean *to bound the eastern side of the island*, which, if it be true, would amount to this—*that it is a strait running from north to south, and insulating a large portion of Western Australia.* Now I should be sorry to be misunderstood, as if resting upon this as a position which I should defend, or even advancing it as a plausible theory, upon these slight foundations. I have merely been desirous to state, fully and candidly, all the information which I have acquired on this subject, and to leave it to others to draw whatever inference they may consider best warranted by such information.

GEORGE FLETCHER MOORE.

The following is an extract from the Perth Gazette of the 25th of June, 1836 :—

" An opinion has long prevailed at home, founded on the reports of Dampier, Flinders, and King, that a river of considerable magnitude would be found to the northward of this settlement.

" To the inquiries instituted here by Mr. Moore we are decidedly indebted for the information we have hitherto obtained upon this subject, derived from an intercourse with the natives of distant tribes;

we look, therefore, with no little degree of interest to his next excursion, (in September or October, when the weather will be more favorable for such an enterprise,) for the solution of this grand question."

On the state and prosperity of the colony we shall merely add a few words :—

THE NATIVES are few in number, and of friendly dispositions towards the Colonists. They have been found faithful as guides and messengers, and it is to be hoped will yield to the influence of Doctor Guistiniani, (a pious and zealous missionary,) who has lately arrived among them.

THE CLIMATE is salubrious, it has been compared with the south of France, but is not so cold in winter. In summer there are no droughts, there being occasional refreshing showers in every month but one (or sometimes two) during harvest.

THE SOIL—There is every variety of soil—much that is fertile and capable of producing all kinds of grain and garden vegetables abundantly. "The fig, vine, and the olive grow luxuriantly, as do also such tropical fruits as have had a fair trial." The sheep pastures are excellent and of extent unknown.

THE HARVEST of last year (1835) was found sufficient for the supply of the colony for 18 months.

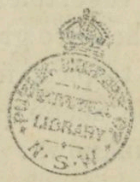
Sheep of purest Merino and Saxon breed are rapidly increasing.

Horses and Black Cattle thrive well. Lately proposals have been made from India to form a company for the breeding of horses for the Indian market.

Whales and Seals are abundant on the coast.

Schools are in preparation for the education of the children of Anglo East Indians—the distance from Madras being only three weeks sail.

Information relative to the colony may be obtained (on application by letter post paid) from Charles Mangles, Esq. Secretary to the Western Australian Association, 27 Austin Friars, London; or from the perusal of "Moore's Letters and "Journals from the Swan River," and "Major "Irwin's pamphlet on the State and Position "of Western Australia," to be had at Messrs. William Curry, jun. and Co. Sackville-street, Dublin, or at J. Cross's, 18 Holborn, London.



THE END.

Dublin: Printed by John S. Folds, 5, Bachelor's-Walk.