

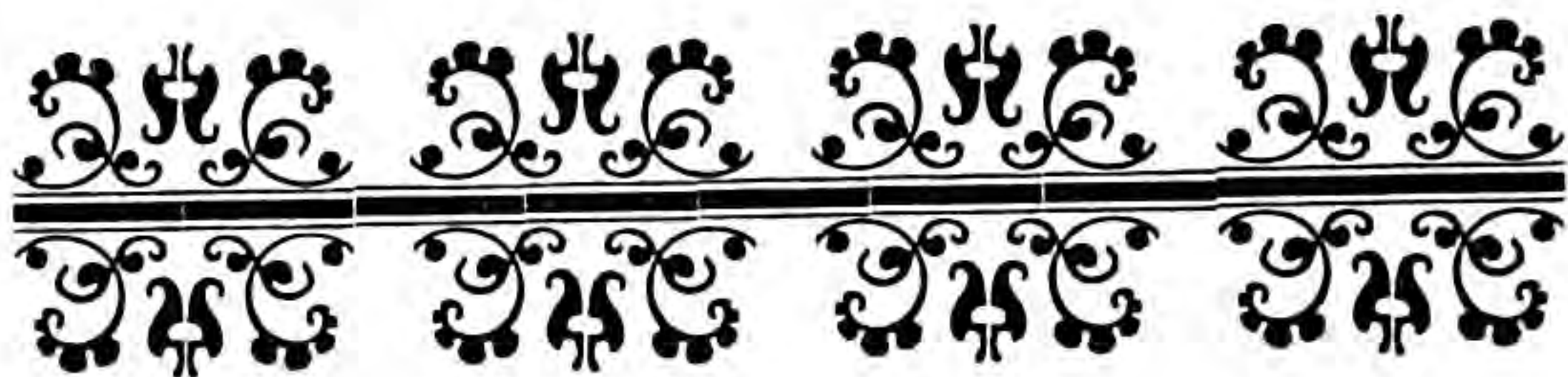
RECOLLECTIONS OF
SIR JOHN & LADY
JANE FRANKLIN IN
TASMANIA



BY JAMES CALDER



110931649



Portrait of a Lady

YOU ask me to do an impossibility; you ask me to do that which a genius alone could do, and such an animal is not found once in a century. To give a sketch of Lady Franklin, that is, a word painting of her, would require the descriptive pen of a Scott or a Dickens; and for me to attempt to analyse such a character would be simply ridiculous. Her ladyship is a woman of world-wide fame, and no encomium of mine could exalt her in public estimation, or add to the universal and just applause of millions.

It is as refreshing as dew to recall to memory those we love, and in whose characters there are no dark shades to retrench. Professor Kingsley, a man of a truly philosophic mind and one who deals largely in noble sentiments, says, 'Virtue is the likeness of Almighty God'—certainly a more rational idea than the generally received one. The application of the quotation is too obvious; and a single stroke, the mere outline, brings to the mind's eye the character of the woman you desire to have portrayed, and places her before you in her individuality.

The advent of Sir John Franklin in this island was in January, 1837. Lady Franklin's first drawing-room was held on the 11th January, and there was a crowded assembly on the occasion of the reunion, or first court. On first meeting Sir John and Lady Franklin, I was received with great kindness, and I found that Captain Maconochie (Sir John's private secretary) and his wife were home friends, hence a very early intimacy, which grew rapidly and securely into a warm friendship, too pleasing to myself to admit of being dilated, but which, I am proud to say, lasted through the period of Sir John's Government. By Sir John I was appointed a member of the Nominee Council, and had the entrée to Government House at all times, which afforded me ample opportunities of witnessing the private life of the Governor and his amiable lady.

Now, I suppose you want a little word painting. Then you must be disappointed, for I am not equal to give you the faintest idea of the comfort and happiness of Sir John's fireside. But it is with Lady Franklin's inner life that you desire to be acquainted. What was a reunion, or an 'at home', in Lady Franklin's time?

It was an intellectual treat. No burlesque of a queen's drawing room. Nothing beyond the usual forms and conventionalities of genteel life. It partook more of a *conversazione*, Lady Franklin, after taking the initiative, taking care that the subject introduced was not beyond the capacity of the company. Her study was to make every

person at home and happy, and admirably did she succeed, for an evening at Government House was considered the most enjoyable of all parties. But while her 'at homes' gave her pleasure, a large assemblage of incongruous people made her ill; yet she was strong, both physically and mentally—but of a morbidly nervous and sensitive temperament.

To look at her in a drawing room, no one would suppose she could undergo any physical exertion: but see her under the clear heavens, ascending the slopes of Mount Wellington, and brushing the dew away through dense forests of underwood, in deep and gloomy recesses, in search of natural productions and to view from the abyss the sublime and beautiful basaltic peaks and rugged rocks and waterfalls, which are only to be seen in all their grandeur from depths below! Who could believe it was the same delicate, fragile lady who was overcome by the fatigues of a ball. But Lady Franklin had been a great traveller, and had been 'tried and tutored in the world'.

It has been said a woman is naturally born and subject to fears. But Lady Franklin was innately brave, a perfect heroine; danger never deterred her when in pursuit of natural productions. Her daring excursion to Macquarie Harbour has no parallel, camping out at night, crossing rivers, climbing mountains, tearing through scrubs—for it was not walking—where many strong men perished in the attempt. Never tired of adventure, she went overland

from Victoria to Sydney, a distance of six hundred miles, camping at night and undergoing difficulties and dangers few men would have had the courage to face.

She was small in stature, but strikingly symmetrical; her head was beautifully formed, and her face was full of expression; there was a fine admixture of the intellectual and amiable; her smile was one of the sweetest imaginable, and her laugh was 'a sweet contraction of the muscles of the face, and a pleasant agitation of the vocal organs'—to use Sir Thomas Browne's definition. It was not loud, vulgar and boisterous, and all her movements had an unaffected grace that adorned the position she filled. When walking through and amongst the young, and receiving their recognition, her 'ready smile a parent's warmth expressed': her example and her manners, her love of virtue and her strict morality, did much to improve our rising generation. All her acts were incentives to virtue, which is the great root law. In her there was no cant or hypocrisy—no whining sentimentality; all was truth.

But, in truth, I can give you no idea of the woman: it would, indeed, be as ridiculous to make the attempt as to 'throw a perfume on the violet, or paint the lily'. If she does not rival, she comes very near to the standard of, the Marchioness de Sévigné; and Young's lines may not be applied inaptly to Lady Franklin:

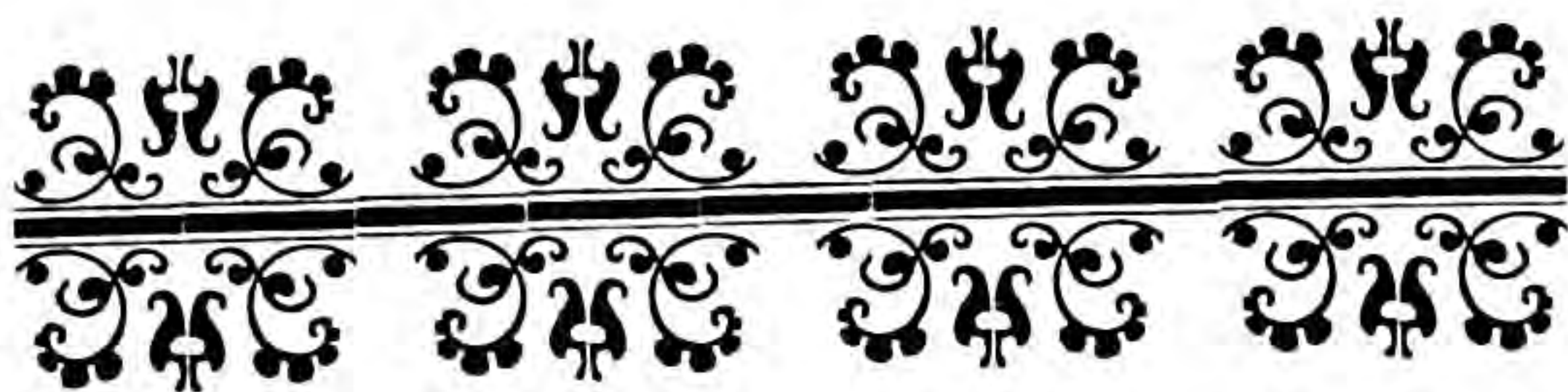
Her breeding finished, and her temper sweet;
When serious, easy; and when gay, discreet;

In glittering scenes o'er her own heart severe ;
In crowds collected, and in courts sincere.

But this excellent woman had bitter enemies. Montagu and the infamous Arthur gang embittered many of her days by their persecution of Sir John Franklin, confirming the truth of what the immortal Shakespeare has written—'Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny'.

I have already said she was small in stature, but nature had made her great in mind ; and when we contemplate the whole woman—her physical powers, when we accompany her under the sky, on the tops of mountains, by the side of rapid rivers, looking over lakes, and standing amid lightnings ; and in these perilous positions calmly admiring the works of the Creator of all—and then contemplate her character in private life, it fills the mind with admiration and wonder.

Of her liberality, take her gifts of Franklin Island and the Museum. Can you find another Governor's wife giving beyond tea and bread and butter ? No, you cannot, taking the wide range of all the colonies : her charity was unbounded, her kindness to the poor proverbial : and remember her care of the poor native girl Mathinna, that has been so well chronicled by some thoughtful writer in the *Mercury* of a few years gone by.



First Meetings

THE newspapers received by the last mail have acquainted us of the death of the accomplished, adventurous, and eccentric Lady Franklin; an event that has destroyed the last link which united Tasmania with one of the best, the justest, and kindest of Governors who has occupied the Government House of the colony. Of the thousands who once knew this estimable couple, when sojourning here, hardly a tithe of them it may be believed still remain amongst us, for the allotted years of a generation of men have passed away since the good old Governor and his family left us, on the 21st of August, 1843, and a new race, it may be said, occupies the places of those who knew the genial couple whose names stand at the head of this notice.

It was once my good fortune to be something more than slightly known both to Sir John and the excellent woman to whom he was united, and I desire on the occasion of the death of the latter, to retrace such of my recollections of both of them, that time has not yet effaced from memory, and which I beg to place at your service.

I shall not easily forget the arrival of the ship *Fairlie* in these waters, I think on the 5th January, 1837, having our fifth Governor on board; nor will anyone who was on the wharf next day forget the hearty welcome he received on landing, from the thousands who crowded the place of debarkation, from whence we all followed him up to Government House, where he held his first levee directly he reached it.

I was that day under orders for the *bush*, or *field*, as surveyors magniloquently call it, and was just ready to start, when I thought I might as well tarry awhile, if only to see what sort of a person our new Governor was, never doubting for a moment that he must be an improvement on the last one; not that his predecessor was bad-looking by any means, but the coldness of the restraint of his nature seemed to communicate itself to his very features, investing them with a repulsiveness that was displeasing; while the cruelty of his rule, and utter disregard of the rights of his fellows, were intolerable. Newspaper men should hold him in everlasting remembrance; for I hardly recollect the time when he had not two or three of them in gaol. Trial by jury was then a mockery, and fair trial of any kind none too common; and any discussion of his measures, if unfavourable to him, was as sure to be followed by impeachment, as such impeachment was by a conviction.

Not being a gregarious animal, I was never very prone

to frequenting Government House—Governor's levees, or anything of that sort; but had it been otherwise with me, I should have pondered the matter well, before committing myself to any public exhibition whatever on the 6th of January of the year above named; for never in my life was I more unprepared for ceremonious observances than just then, my rough bush dress (which in its best days was never worth thirty shillings) being the great obstruction to my attending the levee. To its original coarseness, a most villainous antiquity was now superseded, that Old Scratch himself could hardly have determined what was the original colour or material of the suit.

A vociferous but not disorderly crowd of some thousands had assembled where the new Governor landed, that is, somewhere about where the firewood boats now unload; from whence he took his way along Davey Street to Government House, followed by such a compact mass of moving men, that to extricate one's self from it, when once drawn within its vortex, was impossible; and such was the onward pressure, that it was by no act of my own I arrived at Government House along with the rest, where (despite my best efforts to make my escape) I was eventually thrust to the front, and into the very presence of the Governor by some malicious individuals behind me. There was no help for it now but to move on, and in this undignified manner it was that I made my first salaam to Sir John Franklin.

After this undesired *rencontre* with the Governor, I saw no more of him for about a couple of years, when it was announced that himself and erratic wife were about to make a tour of some of the east coast districts, where I was just then sojourning; though about a twelvemonth before this time I had a very narrow escape of falling into his hands, when he once invaded my tent, in my absence from it, remaining thereat with his party for some hours during the intense heat of a Tasmanian midsummer afternoon.

In their present visit they were accompanied not only by their own personal retinue of about half a dozen men and women (besides their horses), but by a considerable convoy of mounted settlers of the districts passed through the day before, forming altogether a caravan of about half a quarter of a mile long; so that in these *progresses* of a Governor of old, his visit to a settler must have been almost as great an infliction as those of King Lear were to his relatives, with his hundred attendant knights, in the traditional times of Old England.

The morning of the expected arrival of the travellers was one of sunshine, when, headed by the gentleman at whose house Sir John was to stay, three or four of us rode forward to Brushy Plains to meet the processionary party, which came jogging like snails along the muddy, narrow road in Indian file—for it was then next to impossible to ride two abreast. Brushy Plains, though well drained now, was nothing but a woody morass at the time I write of,

something indeed like the Great Dismal Swamp of Carolina. Not caring to trust ourselves too far into the quagmire, we awaited the arrival of the others at a small open space called the White Marsh, which lay at the base of some long and stern-looking rises that have received collectively the designation of the Burst-my-Gall Hills, a befitting name enough, although it may be a trifle too vulgar for these steep and stony solitudes. After a ride of half a dozen miles across these wearying acclivities, the traveller descends into the more agreeable regions of Prosser's Plains, where homesteads and cultivated grounds are once more met with. It was in this pleasant seclusion that the house of the Governor's entertainer stood, and towards which we all pressed rapidly forward after our dismal and most tiresome ride across the cheerless hills above spoken of.

It would be in bad taste to say too much of the kindly welcome and pleasant entertainment accorded to the party by the proprietor of the mansion at which the Governor and his many friends were domiciled for the night; but which was so crowded that one or two of them, after the rest had retired for the night, accepted a shakedown at my tent, which was pitched about a mile off and to which we betook ourselves about midnight.

It was on this occasion that I first heard our good-humoured host recount the particulars of a very unsatisfactory *rencontre* he once had with the most audacious of

Tasmanian freebooters, the bushranger Brady, who took him and about fifty others—civilians, soldiers, and police—prisoners, locking all up for the night in the Gaol of Sorell. On this unlucky night our entertainer was staying at the well-known farmhouse of Thornhill, the property of one of the Bethune family and about a mile from the gaol premises, where a strong force of military was stationed, when Brady and his followers assaulted and carried the premises by a clever surprise and held possession of them for a couple of days; the particulars of which freebooting adventure were now related to us by our host, and to all of which the Governor listened with deep attention and interest.

Sir John and his party remained but one night at Prosser's Plains, and pushed on early next morning for the beautiful little estuary of Prosser's River, where he was met by the port officer, Captain Moriarty, who conveyed him in his barge on board a government vessel that lay in the offing to receive him, and in which he sailed for Oyster Bay, his horses being sent overland to meet him there; for being a bad rider he preferred his own proper element, the sea, to the rough impracticable roads of the east coast.

In our morning journey to the coast, the whole party dismounted at what Lady Franklin called the Gates of Paradise, and led our horses through the wild ravine of that name, but certainly called so by courtesy only; for

such is its natural ruggedness that up to this time, so it was related, only one person had successfully achieved the adventure of riding from end to end of it—a feat which would not have been believed had it not been satisfactorily accounted for by his being far too drunk, at the time, to trust to anything but his horse.

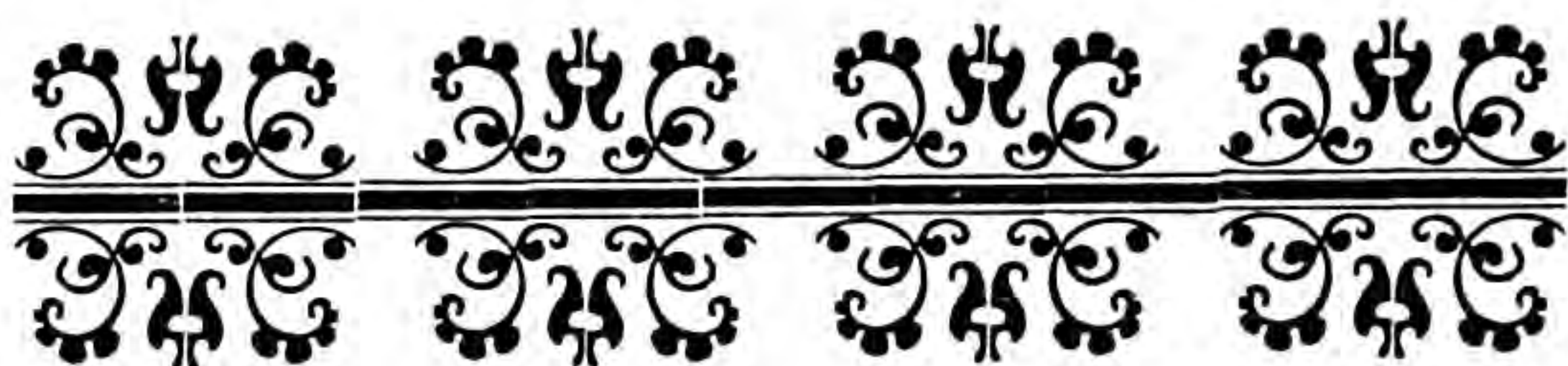
I have hinted foregoingly that Lady Franklin, notwithstanding her undoubted shrewdness, was not more free than others are from certain mental blemishes, which we are taught to call eccentricities, though the term is not always an appropriate one. But the most remarkable of her whims was the project she once set herself seriously at work to achieve, of extirpating the snakes that infest Tasmania, in the attempt to accomplish which she squandered many hundreds of pounds, and the subject is now recalled to my recollection by the excessive horror she evinced at the sight of one that crossed her path on this very morning. Had she been one of those nervous ladies who are subject to going off into fits, it may be presumed she would have had one on the spot; but never did I see loathing more strongly evinced than by her as the ghastly reptile glided in front of her.

Whether this aversion were innate, or the effect of dangerous contact with them in her many wanderings through the wilds of Tasmania, I cannot undertake to determine; but that it was ineffaceable I am well assured of, for three or four years afterwards, when I made the

overland journey to Macquarie Harbour with Sir John and Lady Franklin, the subject cropped up again. Happening one day to name to Sir John that I had just before killed a large snake, he commanded me in the gravest manner it was possible for the kind-hearted old man to assume, on no account to mention the subject in her presence, as her hatred of them was so intense that she disliked even to speak of them; but she *wrote* enough about them, and of the possibility of extinguishing them, as several of her letters of 1838 attest; and there is still extant a mass of official correspondence on the subject, under the general heading of 'Snakes', which contains many disclosures of sums repaid by her to various police magistrates for all that were killed on her account, and for which she paid one shilling a head (they were brought to any police office and burned there), her total disbursements being over six hundred pounds, paid away in the single year above named, as her friend the late Mr Gregson told me at the time. Longford was the most prolific district, and contributed one thousand and eight of the entire number that suffered from her ladyship's dislikings.

A year or two now elapsed before I saw anything more of the Franklins; when it was that I was once more brought into connexion with them, through the introduction into Tasmania of an abortive scheme for the regeneration of the convict classes, called the Probation System; which classes it was first intended to work in the unsettled districts

(the same meaning the uninhabited portions of the west), which I was accordingly sent off to examine, and cut a track through also, that the Governor might himself see the long-hidden solitudes that lay between the head-waters of the Derwent River and Macquarie Harbour, where it was intended that the army of criminals, who now began to arrive almost as fast as ships could be found to bring them to us, was to be established. I accordingly started for the duties named above at the end of November 1840.



To Lake St Clair

I WAS accompanied by seven convicts, who had been released from the torments of Port Arthur only a day or two before—a class of men whom I never felt the smallest reluctance to have with me in the bush, no matter where; for, though the brutal treatment that even the best and most tractable of them endured at these establishments in the olden times more demoralised than reclaimed them, their demeanour was orderly enough when no longer dealt with like brutes. But (as these detestable places were formerly managed) the men were so unaccustomed to considerate treatment of any sort, that at first they seemed not to understand it; but after a time no men were more appreciative of kind words and good offices than they; and better servants than the seven rough-looking fellows whom I now took with me to the westward, I never desired to have under me. Though far beyond all police control, they behaved so well that long before the track was completed the Governor gave them all such indulgences as enabled them to commence life anew; in which at least two of them were very successful.

In this dreary task of track cutting, I was employed during three or four of the summer months of the two seasons that intervened between November of 1840 and April 1842, or about two hundred days in all; the length of path actually opened being about ninety miles, which is the distance between the so-called township of Marlborough, where my labours commenced, and a point on the Gordon River where they ended, the last fifty miles being through a country difficult to penetrate and unpleasant to travel through. One free man was also temporarily attached to the party, but who remained with it only three weeks; this person having on a former occasion made his way overland from Port Davey to Macquarie Harbour it was hoped that his services might be found useful on the present occasion, as indeed they had often been before, for this prince of bush travellers was an old companion of my own who had made many a tedious journey with me, and whose good services I most readily acknowledge. They were however less valuable now than formerly, for he accompanied me no further than the Frenchman's Cap, from whence for some now-forgotten reason he turned his face homeward and left me.

This man was once well known but now nearly forgotten, 'Sandy McKay', whose many successful bush exploits had given him a large share of that sort of renown which extensive bush experiences were wont to confer on a man in those olden times of the colony when so very

much of it was utterly unknown. As his history has been a most eventful one, and would form a very entertaining volume could its soul-stirring incidents be collected together, it may not be out of place to say a few words about him. He arrived in Tasmania in those early times which are now fast fading from recollection, but when I know not. In fact, he must have nearly forgotten all about it himself, now. Having passed some years as one of the early fishermen of the waters of the Derwent, he afterwards took service with the Van Diemen's Land Company in about 1825, which was just then taking root in the *Ultima Thule* of Tasmania, Circular Head, under the auspices of Messieurs Curr and Adey, assisted by Fossey, Hellyer, Lorimer, and a host of others, of whom Mr Goldie is possibly the sole survivor. Sometimes afloat, sometimes ashore (for he belonged to the *amphibia* of the island), he remained with them for several years, now navigating their schooner, now assisting their surveyors ashore in their troublesome inland explorations of the woody districts of the northwest, a quarter which though well examined and described by several intelligent surveyors is still so little known, that the great bulk of us have no more conception of it than of Spitzbergen or *terra incognita* itself.

After an active and protracted service with the 'Company', extending almost up to the time of the dispersion of their survey staff, McKay, who was born to live and die in the woods of Tasmania, 'took up' with Mr George

Augustus Robinson who was just then starting on his mission, ostensibly to, but really against, the blacks, the real history of whose mysterious surrender to an unarmed stranger has already been told. He accompanied Robinson through all his early campaigns, and remained with him until several powerful tribes were enticed into captivity and consigned to those 'isles of the dead', from whence about four-fifths of them were destined never to return—victims it has been said (in many instances at least) to that wasting disease called Nostalgia or home-sickness brought on by an injudicious selection of abode wherefrom they could see the distant hills of Tasmania, at which the poor desponding exiles are said to have stood gazing hour after hour, doubtless tortured into despair and madness, like Tantalus in hell, by the perpetual renovations of hope, alternating with the certainty of disappointment.

Soon after the formation of the ill-starred settlements, first on Guncarriage, and subsequently on Great Island, this humble but useful attaché of the 'Black Embassy', as it was called appropriately enough in every sense—quarrelled with his principal and left him.

It was impossible however that his activity should have been unknown to Colonel Arthur; and as there were at that time many roving parties as well as Robinson's in pursuit of the seemingly inextinguishable blacks, he was entrusted with the charge of one of them; but poor McKay, who possessed none of the wonderful and magician-like

qualities of his former chief of quenching in a moment the deep-seated hatred of the justly exasperated savages (after the fashion of Demosthenes stilling the waves), or of soothing them into instant good humour with their inexorable oppressors, who through years of oppression had hunted and shot them down in all corners of the colony; poor McKay who had no such talents as these, was forced to go to work in a different manner with them. With only two companions, he followed them and attacked them in their camps, chiefly at night. But in one of the desperate hand-to-hand conflicts that followed, when spears and waddies went mercilessly to work on one side and guns on the other, it so fell out that a black was killed. This event, probably inevitable in the confusion and excitement of a night attack, was tortured into an enormity by the clever philanthropist Robinson, who virulently assailed McKay to Colonel Arthur, in a report which the other's want of education prevented him from responding to, and obtained his discharge from the service.

Poor McKay was once more keel upwards, in which condition he drifted into the Survey Department, then in charge of that unfathomable mass of inconsistency Mr George Frankland, a gentleman of the highest talents but without one atom of common sense; of extraordinary shrewdness, yet as easily imposed on by villainy as childhood itself; who had mixed more largely with the world than most men without acquiring the smallest worldly

wisdom; whose heart was overflowing with goodness, and who was yet unaccountably guilty of more than one act of injustice; such was the good, the clever, the inexplicable Mr Frankland, to whom nature had denied no quality that would not adorn a saint, excepting moral firmness, the absence of which nullifies everything, except the contempt of one's fellows.

In this department McKay remained several years, assiduously though often unprofitably employed either in exploring portions of the island which nobody desired to visit or occupy, or in cutting bush tracks for no one to travel on but himself. At other times when not thus engaged, he was helping the field surveyors to carry out duties of somewhat higher importance, namely, to find out good land for them to mark off for sale, a service in which his zeal and intelligence acquired for him a very large amount of work, a very small salary, and the honorary distinction of the 'Surveyor's Jackal'.

It was in this office and as long ago as 1831 that I first met my present *compagnon de voyage*, McKay, whom Mr Frankland at once attached to my party to assist in a wild-goose adventure, which he was then prosecuting with the wonted zeal of an enthusiast, a vision he had deeply at heart, and which through life he pursued with an unaccountable anxiety, namely, to discover in what unvisited wilds lay the hidden fountains of the Huon River.

The remaining portion of this article is derived from

notes written on the ground itself, and afterwards published partly in a periodical styled the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*, and partly in other prints, from which it is now reproduced as a *second edition* of a paper now out of print, with incidents of bush experiences added from an unpublished memorandum of the overland trip of Sir John and Lady Franklin to Macquarie Harbour, which occupied them twenty-one days.

Owing to the dreadful state of the weather that then prevailed in the west, these three weeks would have been ones of unadulterated discomfort had they not been mitigated by the presence of the cheerful and never desponding couple in whose service I was then engaged, and whose unvarying kindness and companionable qualities had the effect of creating perpetual cheerfulness around them, even in the midst of scenes and circumstances the least favourable to its development.

Throughout this sketch, however, it will be my purpose to make it topographical (that is, to describe the soils, forests, marshes, lakes, mountains, etc., that are met with between Hamilton and Macquarie Harbour) than merely descriptive of the incidents of the Governor's journey. I shall therefore devote the larger portion of it to an account of the districts we visited, without, however, quite overlooking the movements of the party with whom I was associated.

I need not I think trouble your readers with any

description of the country that lies between the southernmost city of the Pacific and the inland town of Hamilton, a track so very generally known that it would be presumptuous to describe it, at any rate in a Hobart Town paper. I shall therefore skip over the first forty-four miles of the upland journey to Marlboro', etc., with the simple statement that we reached Hamilton late on the evening of the 2nd [of December, 1840], safe indeed, but not very sound, for the men, unaccustomed of late to rapid onward locomotion, were mostly very footsore on their arrival at my usual camping ground on the Clyde, which lay just within the confines of the Lawrenny estate.

There is nothing more striking to the mind of the old hand of Tasmania, than the stationariness of the condition of nearly all our inland towns during the past thirty or forty years, very few of which have undergone much perceptible expansion in all that long period. Like certain institutions of the old empires of the world they have remained stationary in the midst of the regeneration and advancement of the world outside. They appear to have reached the utmost growth they were destined to attain to, and they seem at present even to be retrogressing, like a dwarf overtaken by premature senility. The truth is a humiliating one, and one that must oftentimes have obtruded itself on every thoughtful traveller of the fair highways of Tasmania. The causes of this unprogressiveness, or rather of this declension, are doubtless primarily traceable

to an original faultiness of site which was assigned them by the worst judges of such matters, namely, the fussy and too-paternal Governments of past times, which instead of leaving their birthplaces and future growth to circumstances, which would have fixed them according to the suggestions of local experiences and unerring common-sense, most unwisely took their culture into their own hands, and without considering what were the necessities of the country with reference to these creations, actually gave existence to no less than one hundred and seventy of these meagre excrescences, the larger portion of which have not, and will never have, fifty inhabitants within their boundaries, and which latter portion I trust the present generation may live to see treated as all such monstrous abortions should be, namely, knocked on the head.

Secondarily, such of them as have reached a higher condition than that of a mere township reserve (like Hamilton and a few others) attained it mainly in consequence of the vast abundance of cheap labour that we had in past times, which beside creating a great local trade to supply the wants of so many labourers, naturally made most districts agricultural as well as pastoral ones, instead of the latter only. Thus our export trade then embraced many articles which are now blotted from the list, thereby naturally impoverishing the colony without benefitting a single interest. Another reason of the flourishing condition of our country towns in times past, was attributable to the

large government establishments (supported by foreign capital) which were scattered throughout the land with their customary concomitants of considerable military and police forces, besides medical, commissariat, and civil officers, who naturally caused a very considerable and flourishing trade to grow up around the places of their location, into every department of which a vitality, now unknown, was infused, but whose gradual withdrawal from the interior has left our country towns in a state of moral decrepitude and decadence.

Of this condition of things the rambling and disconnected town of Hamilton forms but another example, for with the exception of a crowd of wooden wigwams seemingly erected to symbolize desolation rather than to provide for the necessities of the place, I do not believe that Hamilton has received any extension since I first visited it in 1835. The same buildings that face the sluggish Clyde (whose waters seem to have caught the prevailing stagnation of the place), the same enclosures, and everything that constitutes the town of today, were there in the remote times that I speak of. Present extension, like former vitality, is utterly unknown in the beautifully situated but inanimate town of Hamilton.

Before sunrise of the third day since our departure from the south, we resumed our walk, hoping by this early start to camp at night by the little creek at the foot of the Native Tier. The first ten miles of the journey lay through

the beautiful estate of Lawrenny, certainly one of the most magnificent ones of Tasmania. In the days that I write of, 1840, much of this noble possession was devoted to agriculture and consequently to the support of a large establishment; but dear labour, which inverts everything (even in a measure the relative positions of servant and master), has now reduced it like many another fine domain to a mere sheep-walk, and led to the dispersion of the numerous farm-hands it formerly supported also. The high road that runs through this property is generally very level and dry, and though only an unimproved bush track is a very agreeable piece of travelling. No steep hills interfere with transit and no sideling ground threatens us with the disagreeable interlude of a capsize, but everything is indeceptively smooth and silent. A good deal of the surface of Lawrenny is occupied by moderately high hills, thinly covered with timber. Between these handsome eminences there is a great quantity of level land, nearly all of which is of excellent quality and a large portion of it laid down in grass.

To the eastward of this princely domain there is also much thinly wooded land, partly hilly and partly level, all of course private property which in past times was famed for its large growth of all kinds of farm produce, a condition of things which has given place to wool-growing alone and to the dispersion of most of its former population; but looking to the westward the landscape

assumes a very different aspect, namely, a long succession of lofty hills which increase in elevation as they approach the visible horizon, stretch far away in this direction until they unite with the vast mountain chain or watershed which separates the Derwent and its tributaries from the rivers that flow towards the western coast; the prominent peaks of which, namely Mount Field, Wyld's Crag, Mount Shakespeare, etc., etc., show to great advantage from this neighbourhood, as also portions of still more remote mountains beyond, namely the fancied Frenchman's Cap of the good people of Hamilton, which however they form no portion of, being only the mountain ridge that bounds the Valley of Rasselas on the west, or the 'Gordon Plains', as that locality was afterward styled by that disturber of original names, Major Cotton.

The plains of Lawrenny and the contiguous 'High Plains' were discovered by an aboriginal man of New South Wales named Mosquito, who played a conspicuous part in the early history of Tasmania, either as a pursuer of bushrangers or leader of a sanguinary tribe of our own natives. He was sent here from Sydney for murdering some woman; and as I am informed became afterwards 'the faithful servant of the late Edward Lord, Esq.', the same who succeeded Colonel Collins in the Government of this place. A number of Lord's cattle having been driven off by some professional cattle stealers, Mosquito was put on their tracks, and in conjunction with the late Mr

Beamont came up with them as they fed the stolen herd on the plains. At this period Lord had a small farm on the clear land of Macquarie Point just beyond the railway offices, which the Government of the day wanted; and he was easily induced to exchange this petty suburban property for ten thousand acres at Lawrenny. This transaction was completed in August of 1821.

After a journey of ten miles from Hamilton, or fifty-four from Hobart Town, we reach the furious tributary of the Derwent, the Ouse, which is spanned by a massive log bridge, on crossing which we bid adieu to the fair pastures of Lawrenny, and plunge into the bush in good earnest.

A few cottages have been erected near this bridge which (with one exception) were not in being in Sir John Franklin's time; amongst them the church, the inn, the smithy, the wheelwright's and the shoemaker's shops are as usual conspicuous. These doubtless form the nucleus that is destined to expand into the future village, that is, whenever circumstances shall have dissevered the vast estates of the present landholders, and population have spread itself through the wilderness; but without indulging in any speculations as to the future condition of the spot, I shall proceed to state that the road to Marlboro' leads for the next seven miles up the valley of the river just crossed, and generally within less than a mile of it. Shortly after crossing the Ouse bridge, a branch road to the settlements on

the River Dee leads off to the left, which the traveller to Marlboro' must avoid following, taking the right-hand one and keeping nearly straight on in the direction of a brick building which is rather a conspicuous object, as it stands on the crowning point of an eminence about half a mile off; the same is either a school, or a chapel. Having avoided the Dee road the traveller need be under no apprehension of mistaking his route for the next seven miles at least as the line is well fenced in on both sides. The soil is generally very good as far as Arthur's Seat, the name bestowed on a hill which is distant some three miles from the Ouse and which is long and steep, but the only serious obstruction to travelling on the entire road from Hobart Town to Lake St Clair; and even this is not a very formidable one. After surmounting this eminence the soil, excepting a few spots is rather inferior and so continues until we reach the well-known estate of Shorefield, which is seven miles from 'the bridge' or sixty-one from Hobart Town.

The march of civilization towards the west has reached no further than Shorefield, beyond which the country, though mostly taken up for pasture, is generally uninhabited, and the traveller through these districts must reckon on meeting with few or none except the shepherd race, or solitary hawkers who supply the former with some of their indispensable requirements, and with certain questionable luxuries whereunto they are somewhat addicted.

Beyond Shorefield the road, for several weary miles, conducts us through a very uninteresting country where the soil is poor, the herbage thin, and the undulating surface everywhere covered with trees. This tract affords literally no object for description. A small open plain at the foot of the Native Tier, which is six miles from Shorefield, interrupts for an instant the disagreeable monotony of the surrounding forest, but only for an instant, for it covers but a very few acres, which indeed are scarcely appreciable in the boundless extent of forest land that surrounds it. However, intersected as this fertile little glade is by a rill of the purest water, and producing plenty of grass with abundance of wood on its margin for camping purposes, I generally contrived to make it a halting place in my numerous journeys to and from the western districts. I named it Campdown.

Quitting this verdant little oasis the ascent of the once formidable Native Tier commences, formidable from the excessive steepness of that part of its face up which the old road to Marlboro' was directed, and well it is that we now use the past tense in speaking of the detested but nearly forgotten track. This impediment to reaching Victoria Valley, and the broad expanse of useful pasture lands beyond, was obviated about thirty years ago by the construction of the present road on a line laid out by myself, and which forms about the most useful piece of work ever performed for the colony by the probationers, if we except

the highway to Brown's River and the Hobart Town dock. But ever consistent with itself the Government of the day (which never completed anything properly), left about a hundred yards of this untouched where the ascent commences, just as if it feared too much approbation. The Native Tier, formerly the great drawback to getting into the New Country, is now (with the exception above noticed) as easily ascended as Grass Tree Hill, and on reaching the summit the traveller finds himself landed on the great central table-land of Tasmania with scarcely apparent ascent.

The southern slopes of the huge Native Tier are infertile, the soil being mostly a rough sand (obviously a decomposition of the coarse sand-rock it rests on) mixed with a little vegetable mould. Both the forest and the underherbage bespeak its inferiority. Amongst the latter, that emblem of almost hopeless sterility, the native hop, is very prominent. The usual dreariness of bush travelling in Tasmania, produced by the nearly everlasting sameness of forest scenes, loses none of its force in surmounting this dismal eminence. When near the summit we catch an indistinct glance of one of the beautiful cascades of the Kenmore rivulet, said to be eighty feet high, which stands a little below another of the assumed height of one hundred and twenty, which however is hidden from us by the windings of the ravine. Shortly after this object is passed we 'heave in sight' of some ungainly hovels that once

formed the Victoria Valley probation station, which have unluckily escaped destruction amongst the general wreck of the system of which they are a remaining, though not a very abiding, monument. These disconsolate-looking wigwams appear to very little advantage by contrast with the rich and beautiful savannah on the margin of which they are planted. This place is seventy miles from Hobart Town.

Victoria Valley is a fertile and very grassy level, the open land of which covers an area of about seven hundred acres. This magnificent alluvium is almost wholly surrounded by hills of a gentle character. They are wooded, and those that lie to the westward are very much so, for their soil is rich and the vegetation it produces correspondingly vigorous, the trees attaining a very perfect development. In long-past times these forests and the adjoining valley were much frequented by wild cattle, the former serving for their cover by day, and the latter being their feeding ground by night, and often when surveying amongst these thickets have I met these awe-inspiring creatures, which however always 'took to their scrapers'. With the exception of a very few that are said to haunt the fastnesses of the remote Mount Hugel the breed has died out, hunted down under licences from the Government by anyone who could establish a claim to them. A portion of Victoria Valley was formerly cultivated by the Government with the usual success that characterized all

their farming adventures, the only permanent effect of their skill having been to depreciate the value of the place most decidedly, by attempting to drain it according to the time-honoured rules of science instead of those of common-sense.

One good effect however of the location of the probationers here, was that they made partly good the once-wretched road to Marlboro'; and had they been thus employed always, instead of in trying to grow wheat, at something very like fifty pounds a quarter, when it was selling for fifty shillings, I firmly believe the 'system' would have been popular instead of odious. But to return to the subject of the formation of this thoroughfare, it seems as if the very demon of slovenliness had acted as chief engineer; for though it was not a bad piece of work as far as it went, it was positively left undrained; hence the water from the hills above rapidly destroyed the entire bed or 'permanent way', leaving it as rough as the boulders it is strewn with can make it.

The Marlboro' road passes across the southern edge of Victoria Valley; it is then directed through a succession of heavy forests and most beautiful little marshes, the Duck, the Boggy, and Soldiers marshes, etc., all of which are coated with excellent grass, and are as fertile as possible, their soil being a fine strong black loam of great depth. The excellence of most of the pasture land, which is extensive about here, and the frequent occurrence of these

handsome little plains in the midst of the boundless primeval wood, gives a very pleasing character to the bush, which one never seems to forget. A walk of about six miles from the valley places us on the bridge of the Dee River, a sluggish stream of about twenty yards width issuing from Lake Echo, which occupies nearly the central point of Tasmania.

It is at this point of the journey that the traveller catches the first sight of the effects of the rigorous winter of 1837, a season of extraordinary severity, and which in a few weeks struck with death the forests of all the valleys that lie on the great central plateau of Tasmania. Here, however, its withering march from the westward was stayed, and at this little river (which strangely enough it never crossed) it died away; but not before its fury had accomplished a most extraordinary amount of destruction, and to which we might search the temperate latitudes in vain for a parallel. This tremendous winter destroyed the timber of almost all the lowlands of the vast plateau that extends from this quarter to the verge of the mountains overhanging Westbury and Norfolk Plains in one direction; and from St Patrick's Plains to Mount King William in another, the area of this great field of havoc being about fifteen hundred square miles.

It is quite impossible to witness the astonishing destruction of this winter without emotion, and the traveller unaccustomed to such a picture of desolation as that which

now begins to present itself, is startled at the amazing scenes of ruin that everywhere surround him. The bush is one interminable mass of dead trees; except those on the hill-tops everything (grass excepted) is dead and bleached to perfect whiteness by the heat and cold of many seasons. Whichever way he looks he sees hardly anything but dead forest—one seemingly endless expanse of dead trees. At the River Dee, where the tempest ceased its ravages, about one half of them have perished. But it is on the lands that lie around the incipient town of Marlboro' where the winter seems to have put forth its full strength, for at this point (the hilltops always excepted) the extinction of life is most perfect; indeed, for miles on miles around every tree that flourished on the lower land is dead.

A person writing of the districts I have undertaken to describe will not be accused of digressing in pausing to attempt the investigation of the cause which led to the demolition of the forest of the lowlands only, while those of the hills uniformly escaped. The subject is an interesting one, and that task can never be considered an unprofitable one which has for its object the exposition of truth and, if possible, the correction of the vague hypotheses by which some have endeavoured to account for their decay, as I believe more with the view of establishing their peculiar theories than eliciting truth. According to some of these dogmatic savants the destruction was caused by disease—to others by lightning, while a third class ascribed the

calamity to extensive bushfires, and to all manner of possible, impossible, and unlikely causes. But these 'learned Thebans' are either ignorant of facts, or else they belong to that over-wise class of sophists who never will adopt a commonsense view of anything whatever.

I was a traveller in these districts as long since as 1835, that is, when the districts were first officially examined, being one of the surveyors who accompanied Mr Frankland on that occasion; at that time the trees were everywhere fresh and vigorous. In the beginning of 1838 I was there again, conducting the subdivisionary operations that preceded the settlement of this quarter, just after the destruction of these forests had been effected. The ground was then covered with dead leaves (the effect of the simultaneous decay of the millions of trees which had just before perished), and the bark was hanging in shreds from every limb and stem, which gave the scene a still more extraordinary and unnatural appearance than it wears even now, covered as it is with the dry and bleached skeletons of the extinct vegetation of a past age. The severe winter, above alluded to, had just passed off, leaving however a lasting record of its own fury in the general extinction of vegetable life occasioned by the snow which lay on the ground for very many weeks, and doubtless by the bitter blasts that accompanied it. The kangaroos, which literally swarmed here in 1835, fared very little better than the forests, for they were almost annihilated also, and one of a party of

men who was stationed here during this terrible winter has often assured me that by taking advantage of the helpless condition to which the poor animals were reduced by hunger and long-continued cold, he and some others destroyed, in one afternoon, no less than sixty-seven, when they sickened of their brutal diversion. Judging from the quantities of their bones found everywhere (I am speaking of 1838), they must have died by thousands. The hardy wild cattle suffered also very severely, and though they survived the tempest it reduced them to skin and bone only.

If we did not know that the destruction of the forests took place with the occurrence of this severe winter, an examination of the district would lead us to infer that cold was the agent, from the simple fact that the trees that grow on the top of every hill and ridge suffered no injury whatever, and that they are as vigorous at this hour as ever they were. This is to be seen everywhere, even around Marlboro' itself, about which place the winter appears to have poured out all the vials of its wrath. It is not on one hill alone that the trees still flourish, but on every eminence throughout the district. If then fire, disease, or lightning were the agents, how came the trees to have escaped death in the above-named situations, and invariably are the effects of such agents impotent everywhere but in the valley? The answer of everyone will be, certainly not. Again, do bushfires destroy the forests, or even seriously injure sound and living trees? And do we not see the contrary in a hundred cases

every summer? If such indeed were the case we ought not to have a tree left us in Tasmania. Moreover, those of this district do not exhibit any extraordinary marks of fire, as they would do had they been destroyed by it. But I believe we might just as well ascribe the calamity to the deluge of old or modern moonshine, as to the causes adduced by the unreflecting sages, before alluded to.

Those who have not studied the subject sufficiently will be startled at the fact of the frost having spared the forests of the hills which the destroying angel of winter passed by. Such persons will naturally suppose that these are the situations where its attacks would be the most severe and destructive, but these persons I would beg to remind of the well-known fact that heat in all its manifold modifications is less intense on the hills than in the valleys, as may indeed be easily illustrated by a very simple philosophical experiment, which proves that it is reflected from, or thrown off, the former into the latter, and which experiment has been repeated here on a large scale to the destruction of everything that fell within its influence.

If any other fact be wanting to confirm the statement I have advanced, Lake St Clair (about sixteen miles westerly of Marlboro') offers itself as the witness of truth. This sheet of water is, according to Strzelecki, about three thousand three hundred feet above the sea. It is nearly enclosed by high mountains whose slopes are no less densely wooded than those of Mount Wellington, and it has been

ascertained to be of vast depth, no soundings having been obtained in parts of it, even with a line of one hundred and seventy fathoms, or more than one thousand feet. Such a depth of water could scarcely have had its temperature changed by anything less than the frosts of an Arctic winter. When therefore, in 1837, the cold of the atmosphere fell below that of this lake, the latter but naturally gave out or parted with a portion of its heat, thus lessening the bitter intensity of the frost. Theory, derived from experience, proves that this condition of things should have come to pass, and actual observation proves that it must have taken place, for in the immediate neighbourhood of this remarkable lake the forests have all the vigour of those of Mount Wellington, and indeed for two or three miles around its shores the frosts that were so formidable elsewhere appear to have lost their powers of destruction.

It is worthy of remark that, in following Sir John Franklin's track toward Macquarie Harbour, the ravages of the frost seem to have commenced at a line about six miles south-westerly from this lake or thirty-five miles from the Dee River, the last evidences that we have of its rigour showing themselves on that extensive level that separates Mount Hugel from Mount King William.

I shall offer no apology to yourself or readers for this seeming digression. For my own part I do not think it can be fairly charged against me as one; for it is the undoubted duty of the traveller (especially if he be a surveyor) to

observe the general aspect of the surface, to note the various changes it has undergone, and as far as the limited powers assigned us will allow, to investigate the causes that have produced them.

After passing the Dee the road leads nearly close along the edge of a considerable marsh, called the Dee Marsh, which is about three miles long, and which looks a great deal better than it really is. This is the only spot in Tasmania where I ever saw peat. I have indeed met with much that is called so, but real genuine peat is very seldom found here. It is sufficiently abundant on this marsh, however. After leaving this place behind us we cross a poor and most uninteresting district, which like most poor land affords no object worthy of notice. Advancing a few miles further we next reach what remains of an old probation station at a place called the Seven Mile Creek, which has been long occupied by some servants of Mr Sharland, to whom the ground and buildings are leased, he having an extensive run in this neighbourhood at a place called the London Marshes, which are very remarkable illustrations of the fact of the solid and permanent improvement that originally poor marsh land undergoes by occupation. Thirty or forty years ago I refused to mark off this land for sale, on account of its having all the characteristics of worthlessness, but from long occupation and constant stocking these extensive plains have become greatly consolidated, and the pasture wonderfully improved. It is now

a really good run; one thing which I noticed about 'the station' is the aptitude of the rocks to absorb water, a quality which adapts them admirably for filterers. We are now somewhat more than five miles from Marlboro'. A little further on lays the fine estate of Bronte, the soil and grasses of its immense levels being second to nothing that this island can show. The former is rich, deep, and black as the ink I am writing with, and the latter just what such a soil would be expected to produce. This eulogy will be the more readily received when I explain to your readers that the fair lands of Bronte constitute a portion of the vast estates of the family of the great millionaire W. J. T. Clarke, on whom good land seems to exercise a kind of magnetic force; and wherever they settle it is a certain letter of recommendation for the district around. Adjoining Bronte are the equally fine lands of what is called the township of Marlboro', which is however only a town in name, as indeed it is long likely to be, for there is not a single soul in it. A solitary house, without a tenant, seems indeed to give some uncertain intimation to the traveller that the place, like Nineveh, was once inhabited. It was formerly the police station of the district and was so at least fifteen years before there was any one living creature within it (excepting the constables themselves) to look after. A very handsome river called the Nive intersects this immense township reserve, which issues from certain remote lakes of the still higher lands of the Nineteen Lagoons and the

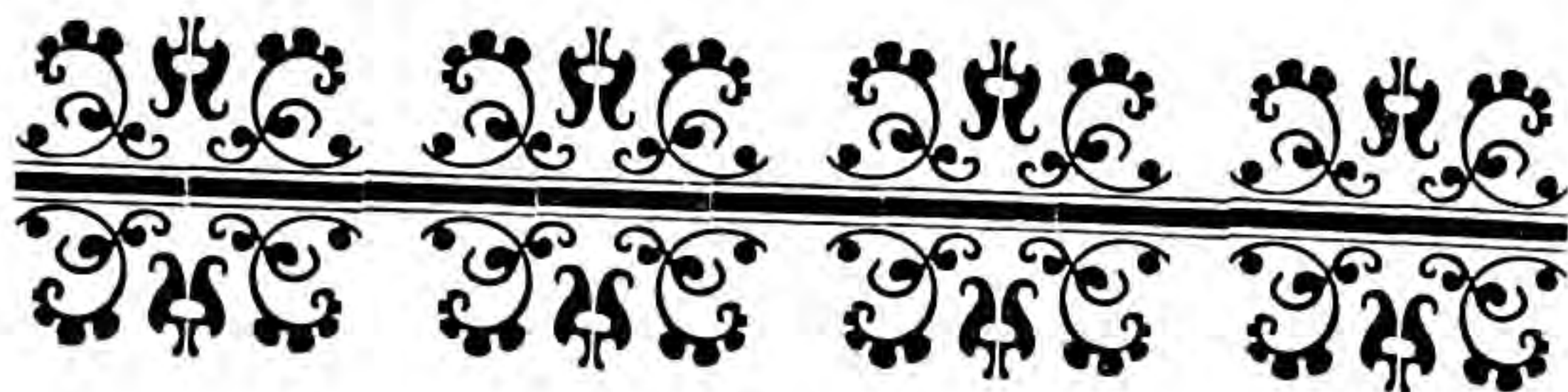
districts beyond Skull Bone Plains, and unites, after a further course of about twenty miles, with the Derwent, of which it is one of the chiefest tributaries. It was, and perhaps still is, spanned by a really good bridge, whereby access is given to the great runs to the westward at all seasons. Marlboro' is much about eighty-nine miles from Hobart Town.

When I arrived here in 1840, there was no trace of any road to the westward beyond this place, though from misinformation on the subject I directly pushed on with as many stores as ourselves (assisted by one old blind pack-horse) could carry to Lake St Clair, which is about seventeen miles further to the west. Having reached it without discovering any trace of a road I found it necessary to cut one, which made a very considerable and troublesome addition to my labours. However there was no help for it so at it we went, and soon perfected our communications with Marlboro'.

The country in no way deteriorates in quality after leaving Marlboro', at least for several miles, the road passing across large tracts of very superior soil and fine pastures similar to what we meet about Marlboro'. The trees of this place, as before stated, are uniformly dead on the lowlands, and nothing can be more remarkable than the landscape on which they form so conspicuous an object, bleached as they are to perfect whiteness by the storms of 1837. The destruction of the forests has greatly improved

the grasses, thus affording but one more example of the fact that even the most calamitous vicissitudes of nature are never productive of evil alone. Passing onward the soil and grasses gradually deteriorate, without however reaching positive inferiority anywhere. The principal eminences in view are Mount Charles and the Wentworth Hills, neither of which have anything sufficiently remarkable about them to require any particular notice. About nine miles from Marlboro' we cross a small river called the Clarence, flowing in this part of its course through some considerable marshes, which bushfires and long occupation by stock have greatly improved. Platypuses abounded in this stream of old, as I dare say they do still. The road to the lake is nearly level all the way, and were it not for the stones with which some portion is strewn, would not be bad for travelling on. As we advance from the Clarence we catch occasional glimpses of very fine mountain scenery, the prominent object of which is the massive square block of basalt that crowns the towering heights of Mount Olympus, which bounds in Lake St Clair on the west. So straight are the sides and so level the top of this mass, as seen from hereabouts, that it looks for all the world like the front of a huge mansion. The remaining portion of the road to the lake now to be traversed is generally nearly level, being led along a succession of coarse but improving marshes, alternating with much forest land. One other small stream remains to be crossed before Lake St Clair

is reached, which is now called the Traveller. Long however before this ground is gained the excursionist, knowing his proximity to the extraordinary lake, keeps looking hopefully forward for a view of it, but in vain; his curiosity is not destined to be gratified until he is very close to it; for shut in as it is by the beautiful mountains that nearly close it in, and by forest land where they do not, we do not see much of it until we halt on its shores, and it is a fact that when we first discovered it on the morning of the 10th of February 1835, near as we were to it we should have passed it by without noticing it, had it not been for Mr Frankland (who happened to have a little advantage of the rest of us, by being on horseback) fancying that he saw through the trees the basin of a large sheet of water, and which a five-minutes walk proved it to be, namely, the parent lake of the chief river of Tasmania, the Derwent. This lake was first discovered by Mr W. S. Sharland.



To Macquarie Harbour

IT WAS at the Traveller's River, and during the afternoon of the 1st of April 1842, that I met Sir John and Lady Franklin and party, who had reached thus far on their journey to the westward under various friendly escorts, which they were certain to collect at each stage of their route through the settled districts, and which respectfully conveyed them to the next. The companions of their trip across country were an aide-de-camp (Mr Bagot), Mr Burn, Dr Milligan, a female attendant of Lady Franklin, and the favourite orderly (or rather the faithful and humble friend of a long line of Governors), the intelligent and excellent Corporal O'Boyle.* These, with three picked constables and seventeen convicts—in all twenty-eight persons—constituted the Governor's party to Macquarie Harbour.

Arrived at the banks of the half-motionless Derwent,

**He was governor's orderly for about thirty years. Poor O'Boyle never recovered the effects of this journey. In after interviews he often told me that he had not enjoyed an hour's health since. It killed him even though his life was spun out for some years after.*

where they camped, they were ferried over the river, and employed the remaining daylight of a very sultry afternoon in making a visit to the shores of the hill-encompassed lake that it issues from, a lake of very extraordinary beauty whose scenery I believe never failed of pleasing every visitor, capable of appreciating the beautiful of nature, excepting Sir W. Denison (whom I once met in this neighbourhood), who was cursed with the infirmity of opposing his opinions on matters of taste to those of every other person.

Sir John Franklin was a man of another stamp; he keenly relished the attractive combinations of nature in the pleasing landscape of the lake, the darkly wooded slopes that enclosed it, and the towering masses of black basalt surmounting the rival heights of Olympus on the west and of Ida on its eastern shores; and concurred only with great reluctance in the proposals now made to him of abandoning his intentions of exploring the rarely visited recesses of its shores and of sounding its mysterious depths, in deference to the arguments that were urged against the loss of even a day just as the autumn (the treacherous autumn of the western districts) was at hand—arguments that were founded on certain unequivocal signs of approaching bad weather, which the ominous heats of the day and a lurid evening sky were the sure precursors of.

Very much of the morning of the 2nd of April was devoted to arranging the baggage of the party and to distributing it amongst the men, which on this occasion was

a task of no little difficulty; for up to this moment I was not accustomed to handling the baggage of ladies, nor had I any very correct ideas of what they considered enough to travel with, and which I now found was altogether beyond what I had expected; and worse still that all the persuasion in the world had no effect in getting Lady Franklin to reduce it to something like a reasonable bulk. Indeed, to say truth, her ladyship, though one of the best and kindest of her sex, had a very troublesome habit of taking her own way in everything, and I found that I might just as well try to persuade her that darkness was light, as that it were possible to improve on any arrangements of her making. I had often and often tried to ascertain beforehand what she was likely to bring, but one could never understand her, as it were, in advance, nor get a clear view of her intentions until the right time arrived for putting them into force, when it were about as easy to change the direction of the wind as to persuade her to alter them. There was positively no such thing as giving her the worst of the argument in any matter whatever. If she could not talk you into her way of thinking (or as she styled it, into reason), she was safe to manage you by some other ingenious means. She was full of resources, and never at a loss for a moment. Her very silence was peculiar and impressive, and often as effectual as her words in 'shutting you up'.

Possessing an inexhaustible stock of good humour, a

stranger was apt to underrate her, and to take her for one of those soft subjects who are to be done by plausible arguments or persevering opposition. This, however, was about as stupid a mistake as he could well make; for while her good-natured though slightly satirical smiles impressed him with the fond idea that she was ever ready to comply with whatever he had to propose, he had usually the mortification of finding himself thrust into the background all of a sudden, either by some witty sally or exquisite rebuke, which no one ever wanted a second dose of.

Her peculiar talents for worsting everybody who opposed her were brought into full play on the morning of her departure from the lake, and which ended in her teaching myself and half a dozen other thick-headed fellows (her special attendants) a lesson which it now looks like an impossibility that we should have learned at all, especially in so short a time as she was so good as to allow us to get it off in, namely, of making every one of them carry about double as much as I thought them able to bear. Up to this time I was weak enough to believe that no one knew better than I did how to adjust the burden of any man to the strength of his back. But I had not been five minutes under her tuition before I discovered that there was a good deal to learn yet, and that it only required a proper instructor, like Lady Franklin, to show how it was to be done both slick and quick.

Her style of going to work, though a little disagreeable,

was wonderfully business-like. Without wasting any words upon us she kept handing over to us bag after bag, and bundle after bundle, until I began to wonder whether she were really serious in believing that we were able to travel under such a load of things as she had with her, about enough indeed to have made the fortune of any small ragman in Christendom. After our knapsacks were crammed almost to bursting I made several respectful, though unsuccessful, trials at persuading her that we had got quite enough of it, and that the very best thing she could do with the rest, whatever it might be, was to put it all on to the cart and send it back to town. I might just as well have addressed myself to Mount Olympus, which would have taken quite as much notice of my remonstrances as she did. They had not even the effect of interrupting her movements for the instant, for the seemingly unfailing stream of her baggage kept pouring out of the hut just as fast as ever, being nearly as inexhaustible as the widow's cruse. Of course there was an end of it at last, when her ladyship having condescended a glance or two of satisfaction, first at ourselves and next at the bloated knapsacks, walked off and joined Sir John, leaving me to settle matters as amicably as I could with the men, who after about an hour's wrangling with one another, as to who should have this and who should get that, I contrived to start with their ungainly and wobbling swags to our next camping ground, about eight miles off, where according to orders

a moderate supply of provisions had been deposited.

It is right to observe that all the horses of the party were sent back from Lake St Clair, as they were of no further use in the country beyond, in consequence of its woody, mountainous, and swampy nature; and every individual of the party, except Lady Franklin, had to walk over to Macquarie Harbour, about sixty-six miles, whether they liked it or not, a rude palanquin having been constructed for her. She was borne on the shoulders of a party of willing volunteers for about thirty miles of the entire distance; the remaining thirty-six being either too steep or too scrubby for such a means of conveyance, she had to travel it like the rest of the party afoot.

The journey of Sir John Franklin was undertaken just in time to be as disagreeable as the rains and storms of the west could make it. It was intended that it should occupy only eight days, for which provision was accordingly made. It had also been agreed on that, come what might, there should be no halting, except of course at night. But however willingly Sir John and Lady Franklin were to acquiesce in these arrangements when talking over matters at Government House, yet when they got fairly amongst the dreary scenes of the west—the black and swampy plains, the steep and slippery hills, and the rains which rarely ceased descending—they would only face this work by fits and starts, and the eight days were thus extended to twenty-one, a circumstance which greatly multiplied

my labour by giving me the work of provisioning the halting places afresh (just wherever they pulled up) from the distant depot at the lake.

Notwithstanding all these unpleasantnesses, our journey was not wholly without its pleasurable incidents. Both Sir John and Lady Franklin were such agreeable companions, and so imbued with good humour, that it was next to impossible to feel any serious depression so long as they were there to keep up the spirits of the party. The men, too, though their patience was often put to severe trials, conducted themselves so becomingly as to add not a little to the general harmony. There was much also, on the line of country we were passing through, to furnish materials for agreeable reflection. The physical aspect of those districts where the quartz formation prevails (on so vast a scale as here) is always eminent for its grandeur, and the extraordinary variety of its outline; and though the weather was very unfavourable for observation, still we had some clearings-up, sufficient at least for the party to see the style of country they were passing through, and even to appreciate the wondrous magnificence of the landscapes of the west, compared with which the finest mountain scenery of all other parts of the island (the Schoutens perhaps excepted) is tame and inanimate beyond expression. The foliage, too, of the vast myrtle forests of this quarter of the island, though sombre enough in mass is very beautiful in detail, and the bush presented also many of what

were then botanical novelties of great interest, because of great beauty, even to the unprofessional observer of them. Another subject of deep interest to the reflecting traveller through these regions is the extraordinary paucity of birds or animals to be met with, amounting, if not to an absolute absence of animal life, at any rate to something very like it. Of the former, a few paroquets, some cockatoos, two or three crows, a single pigeon, and a mere handful of small birds were all that I saw during the two hundred days of my wanderings in the west. In the same time I may have started a dozen brush kangaroos, about as many wombats, and have been made sensible of the presence of native cats from their depredations at night. But as for the forest kangaroo, the wallaby, the kangaroo-rat, the bandicoot, or any other four-footed thing whatever, no such thing did I ever meet. Opossum, bush-mice, etc., may be there, but I never saw nor heard them. The black and the whip snake, and lizards, were common enough. The former, as I have before often noticed in all perfectly unsettled parts, where it is neither harassed by man nor disquieted by his dogs, sheep, cattle, or horses, is much less easily alarmed than elsewhere, and is, occasionally at least, positively aggressive.

I shall now return to the principal business of this paper, namely the description of the country under review, with reflections on its capabilities and probable destinies.

Immediately beyond the Derwent but some little space

to the south of Sir John Franklin's track, lay those extensive marshes called by Mr Frankland, their discoverer, King William's Plains. Here is a very considerable extent of open country amounting to many thousands of acres, intersected however by belts of woody land. Following its direction toward Mount Arrowsmith, as that dispenser of complimentary names, Count Strzelecki, re-baptized that vast mountain of quartz, which I had previously named Fatigue Hill, this great level of marsh and woodland passes between the two basaltic mountains, which are called respectively Mount Hugel and Mount King William.

The surface of all the open plains and hills of the west and south-western districts is very wet, no matter whether it be steep or level it is almost equally swampy. The southern portion of the western half of Tasmania abounds in open land, which stretches in one direction for a hundred miles,* covering I suppose a million and a half acres.

The imagination often bewilders itself in speculating on the future prospects of these vast unwooded tracts, whose general levelness seems to adapt them for occupation. The soil of most of them, it must be owned, is not very attractive, as will be naturally inferred when I state that the prevailing rocks that it is derived from are quartz and micaceous slates. During the times that preceded their

**From Lake St Clair to Port Davey, which is very nearly open all the way.*

present incipient occupation, I always thought and said they would not support farm stock, seeing that they produce no grass whatever and only a very coarse wiry herbage in place thereof. But since the late occupation of some of these plains, which lie just where the trapp and quartz formations unite, by the Clarkes, etc., I have noticed their sheep (especially in mild weather when they could emerge from the woodlands) voluntarily leaving the fine grasses on the trapp or basaltic formations, for the rough feed of the quartz hills and plains, remaining on them for days together, indeed until the first cold blasty day came, when you might see them scampering back to the shelter of the trees, like ships in distress running for a harbour of refuge.

It is at a point about eight or ten miles beyond the Derwent that the traveller from the east first finds himself crossing the boundary of the trapp or basaltic districts and passing into the regions of grey quartz and of the highly glistening micaceous slates; here also, as before stated, he passes from the grassy regions into the rough and tufty herbage which thrives on the soils that are allied to the latter formations. The track, too, at about this point, is no longer level but leads up the slopes of some pretty steep rises, called collectively the Sisters, the last of which surmounted he finds himself stationed on the crest of Fatigue Hill and at an elevation of about four thousand feet above the sea. The name of Fatigue Hill was given it by me on the occasion of my first ascent of it on Christmas Day of

1840, which the excessive steepness of its western slope suggested, where in a distance hardly exceeding a mile there is a fall of one thousand seven hundred and fifty feet, or a foot in every yard. A most extensive and diversified landscape is suddenly presented to us from this point, quite unequalled, so I believe, in all Tasmania for magnificence. Sir John Franklin when he reached the crowning point of this massive eminence assured us that during a long life, spent in wandering and in observation of what he encountered, it had never been his fortune to see so magnificent a picture as the one then before him.

The general character of our scenery is to my taste somewhat displeasing; for notwithstanding the diversity of the surface of a mountainous country, it acquires in Tasmania a disagreeable monotony from the unvarying hue of our black and interminable forests. Many a scene has its beauty half marred by the constant intervention of these gloomy-looking woods, the trees of which though individually often handsome are in mass anything but agreeable adjuncts to our wild scenery; and the extent of the woodlands is mostly so disproportioned to every other object, that it is only here and there that the forest becomes unobjectionable; as, for instance, on some parts of the southern shores of Tasmania where an ever-varying coastline and a boundless ocean interpose an agreeable counterbalance; or from certain inland eminences where we obtain a good view of the great but comparatively open pasture field which

lies between St Peter's Pass and Epping Forest in one direction, Dry's Bluff and Ben Lomond in another.

It is however well worth a walk from the Derwent to peep into the wild country that lies beyond Fatigue Hill, and the traveller who has reached the former should strain a point or two to visit this eminence, from whence on a clear day he views if not the fairest at least the sternest landscape in Tasmania. So varied is the immense panorama that lies before him that his feelings must indeed be obtuse if he can contemplate it without excitement, and it is not until his first emotions have somewhat subsided that he observes its principal defect in the entire absence of visible water. In almost every quarter of the horizon immense mountains form the background of this vivid picture, and nothing can exceed the ruggedness of the outline of these stupendous barriers. Conspicuous from its comparative proximity and its amazing abruptness is the mountain called the Frenchman's Cap, a striking object indeed and one of very peculiar contour. Its most prominent feature is the cone forming its highest point, from the supposed resemblance that it bears to a helmet, the mountain it is said has derived its name. But if so, this likeness is more fancied than real, and I have heard it compared with greater propriety to a common Glengarry cap. Between Fatigue Hill and the great eminences that skirt the horizon from south-west to north-west, the surface swells into many lesser but still very lofty hills, partly open and partly

wooded, amongst which some very considerable marshes may be found but which are only partly visible from the spot that I suppose myself standing on. The landscape indeed exhibits everywhere a wonderful irregularity of surface, and irresistibly forces the comparison of a boisterous ocean that has suddenly stood still at the very height of the storm.

An irresistible feeling of depression involuntarily succeeds to our admiration of the scene before us when we reflect on the fact that in all this vast wilderness there is not a single inhabitant; not the faintest trace of its occupation by man is apparent. No homesteads or roads, no enclosures or cultivation, attest his presence, but on the contrary the entire country could not look more void of animation, even were it like Babylon itself, 'the glory of kingdoms', the pride of Chaldea, doomed to perpetual abandonment. Such a scene of utter lifelessness and desolation is, I believe, to be found in no other country in the world, habitable in the common acceptation of the term, except Tasmania.

The quartz of Fatigue Hill is generally grey, a colour I believe it owes to the iron it contains, which indeed is sometimes so abundant in it as to make it nearly black. Along the line where it unites with the basaltic formation it is generally of a pinkish chocolate colour (superficially at least), and is streaked with numerous narrow bands of white which cross and recross it something after the fashion

of the meshes of a net. In other parts of the hill, and particularly about the point where we commence the descent of its western slopes, it presents itself in the form of a mass of thin layers that are very easily separated from each other, and are twisted into every conceivable form of contortion. The cleavage of these extraordinary rocks is vertical. I believe that every description of known quartz is present on Fatigue Hill, and I trust the right kind may be found amongst the rest, though after so many disappointments I confess my hope is stronger than my faith in its existence.

All the eastern hillocks and ridges of this mighty mound are utterly destitute of trees, except in some of the hollows where a few dwarfish gum trees are to be found, though more in a state of mere existence than of real vitality. The great slope, however, that faces the west is a little more wooded, but even here the trees attain to nothing like vigorous maturity, and appear to much disadvantage by comparison with the dark dense forests that cover the contiguous and higher mountain called Mount Gell. This latter eminence, which lies about four or five miles to the north-west of Fatigue Hill, is I suppose the westernmost offshoot of the great basaltic range which commences at the South Cape of Tasmania and terminates at the extreme Western Bluff, or about forty miles from Bass's Straits. Near to the top of Mt Gell is a considerable cascade (something on the scale of the Wellington Falls), and which is visible from Fatigue Hill. The descent of this last-named

height is very steep, but only sufficiently so to be exhilarating rather than disagreeable. The entire distance from top to bottom is about one mile, and may be pretty comfortably got over in twenty minutes. Having reached the bottom we find ourselves landed in a small swampy plain of about a hundred acres, to which Sir John Franklin gave the name of Wombat Glen. This spot is completely shut in either by the high hill just descended or by beautiful myrtle forests, and is just such a spot as a recluse might chose for his abiding place, and where perfect seclusion is a reality. The soil of this alluvium, though closely encroaching on the base of Fatigue Hill and covered with the wiry herbage of the quartz formation, seems to be derived from the basaltic rocks. It is deep and black on the surface, and, as I believe, only recently transported to its present position, for it rests on a thick substratum of quartz drift and clay, and, if I remember rightly, is mixed with volcanic cinders,* or as the quack language of science—which delights in being unintelligible—would call them, *scoriæ*. The surface of this plain is very wet, but this swampiness is only superficial, for when sinking (as stated in the footnote) we found the soil perfectly dry to the depth of ten feet, when we tapped the first spring. We next enter the first of the magnificent myrtle forests of the west, forests which I venture to predict will even yet prove of great

**I derive these facts from certain experiments made by Dr Crowther and myself many years ago, when sinking for gold.*

value to Tasmania, that is if there be any truth in the statements we hear concerning the value of the highly ornamental wood of the red myrtle tree, which can hardly be surpassed in beauty either of colour or grain.

The myrtle forests of the western half of Tasmania cover vast areas, I should think not much less than two or three thousand square miles. Those about Macquarie Harbour have a very small portion of gum trees amongst them; they are however choked with an undergrowth of scrub so close and tangled as to be scarcely penetrable. I fear we must not expect to see them settled for the purposes of agriculture for a long time, for the surfaces of the hills they cover are too steep to give encouragement to the idea.

The myrtle forest that there is to traverse after crossing Wombat Glen is about three miles through. Two fine streams called respectively the Surprise and King's river join hands in it much about a mile from Wombat Glen. The water of both is eminently pure and transparent, as indeed is always the case with the rivers that rise in the basaltic districts above the lines of settlement, and very generally so with all the larger streams of Tasmania.

The soil of this forest, formed as it seems to be mainly from the wearing down of the rocks of the great basaltic mountains from whence the sister rivers that pass through it descend, is not of an inferior sort. It is, however, much strewn with large quartz boulders, half exposed and half imbedded in the soil, which bear strong internal evidence

that it is from Fatigue Hill that they have descended ; their general texture and the strong impregnation of iron indicate their origin at least circumstantially.

Emerging from the dense thickets of King's River we enter on a narrow plain which is bounded on the right hand by high hills of impure quartz, and on the left by a continuation of the forest we have just quitted. The soil of the plain in question is not good, its surface is wet, and its vegetation the rank, tufty herbage (mixed with low tea tree) that pervades the whole of the quartz districts of the west and south-west, and which is not very dissimilar to that of the north-east coast, between the Bay of Fires and Cape Portland, where the rocks though granite have such a preponderating element of quartz in them that no wonder the soils of these opposite districts should be very much alike and that they should support a somewhat similar vegetation.

When I first crossed this plain, about Christmas of 1840, there were still a few natives uncaptured, and the scanty remnant of many tribes had halted on this ground only a very few days before I visited it,* and had left their recently abandoned encampment standing just as they had occupied it. It consisted of two small, rude but not very uncomfortable bark huts, planted amongst the few gum trees that grew beside the small rill which drained the plain.

**This was attested by the newly trampled grass, and by remnants of kangaroo that were strewn about.*

On the bark which covered them were some extraordinary charcoal drawings, one of which represented two men spearing an animal which, judging from its erect posture, I presume was intended to represent a kangaroo, though the artist, either by an unaccountable oversight or in the arbitrary exercise of that freedom of imagination which the greatest delineators have been always famed for, had omitted the animal's tail, and made the forelegs about twice as long as the hinder ones. But as this production was never intended for the inspection or amusement of anyone but its simple and unsophisticated author, criticism would be out of place. There were also sketches of a dog and an emu, which were not very unlike what they were designed to represent, and of some other objects that I had not discernment enough to make out, though I could not help fancying they were not the productions of a mind in which decency was an overpowering sentiment. I left these rude specimens of art to the mercy of the elements, which on a second visit to the spot fifteen months afterward I found had respected them less than I had done, for the tempests had long before this scattered the materials of the frail habitations of the last of the Mohicans; and as a consequence obliterated every trace of the uncouth sketches I have attempted to describe.

The place (after the contemplation of these unique designs) was henceforward styled Painter's Plain, a name

which I hope future travellers have the good sense to recognize it by.

From this plain we again plunge into the myrtle forest which in this part is about a mile through, when we find ourselves once more traversing open land, namely the valley of the Loddon River, a name that it acquired from the handsome stream that drains it, which from some fancied resemblance that I traced between it and the beautiful tributary of the Thames, I named the Loddon. This undulating plain, notwithstanding the absence of grass, is a very handsome expanse of open country, and occupies the entire bottom of a valley that is hemmed in on one side by the mountain, more often heard of than seen, namely the Frenchman's Cap, and by a series of lofty and mostly open hills on the others. The elevation of this plain is, according to Strzelecki, more than two thousand feet, so that close as we are to the mountain it does not look very high, though it is considerably more lofty than Mount Wellington. The extent of this plain has been ascertained by actual measurement to be three thousand five hundred acres. The very little game to be found along the line of route is found chiefly here, where a few brush kangaroo might be seen at evening and early day, but which the extinction of the last of the native tribes (who I have reason to know were occasional frequenters of this plain) may have increased by this time. A few burrowing wombats might also be discovered here. I called that part of the

plain which we first enter on as we come from the east, Long Grove Marsh, from the fine grove of myrtle trees on the left, through which the Loddon meanders rather than flows.

Sir John Franklin's party encamped in a small recess of this plain just beneath the woody slopes of the Frenchman's Cap, giving the name of Detention Corner to his tenting ground, for being here overtaken by a tremendous storm of hail, rain and snow, just according to the temperature of the moment; it forced him to halt for a week.

Pursuing the track to Macquarie Harbour after quitting the Loddon Plain, we have now to cross the inferior and densely wooded ridges of the Frenchman's Cap, inferior by comparison only, for they are both lofty and steep. Their width is nearly four miles, and they are planted with a jungle so close that it is a task of something more than labour to burst through the impending fields of scrub that bring the traveller to a standstill at every hundred yards. From this broad and tiresome ridge of sludge and jungle we descend into another considerable plain, about six miles long by half or three-quarters of a mile broad, the area being about two or three thousand acres. A remarkable overhanging rock stands in the entrance of this dreary solitude, pretty evidently a fragment of the rocky masses of the Frenchman above, from which, in some past age, it has been probably detached to the spot it occupies, where it looks now as firmly rooted as the mountain which it has

descended from. I called it Christmas Rock, as five others and myself slept under it on the Christmas eve of 1840.

Late on the night in question we were startled from the heavy sleep we were in by the most awful and long-continued thunder storm I was ever the witness of. For some considerable space it lightened only, there being neither rain nor thunder at the first onset of the tempest. The flashes of light succeeded each other very quickly, only a few seconds of darkness interposing between the discharges of the electric fire. They were very vivid, showing with all the distinctness of noonday the rugged features of the wild landscape around us. It was quite impossible to sleep amidst such a discharge of fireworks, which, knocked-up as we were, we all turned out to have a look at. As we were watching the storm from the top of the rock, where we were perched, we were witnesses to a scene of very unusual occurrence, namely, the kindling of fire by lightning. The recent parching weather of midsummer had scorched the long herbage of the plain to perfect dryness, when a flash more tremendous than any that had preceded, ignited it, and off it went into a blaze such only as the herbage of the west could create, which when thoroughly dry a-top is as inflammable as oakum. In our present situation the surprise this threw us into was not an agreeable one, as a quick running fire coming down on us in a night as wild and as dark as tempest could make it, and in an utterly strange place, are little matters

that don't produce pleasant sensations. We were relieved, however, before we had any serious occasion for alarm, for after raging violently for about an hour a sudden deluge of rain (that drove us all to quarters in a twinkling) extinguished it almost as quickly as it was kindled.

This remarkable circumstance gave a name to the plain we were camped on, that is Lightning Plain, which may be described as a dreary infertile solitude, whose perfect isolation (not to mention its worthlessness) seems to promise it a long period of seclusion and security from the encroachment of man. It is fortified against the advances of eastern civilization by the Frenchman's Cap on one side and by hills which will entice no intruder to enter it on all others.

Lightning Plain, like most of the open land of the western districts, is very infertile. It is about six miles long but rather narrow, and is enclosed on all sides by hills even more worthless than itself. Our route was next directed through a dark and densely wooded glen, to which we gave the inapt name of Glow-worm Forest, from the multitude of bright lights emitted after dark, either from luminous fungi or putrescent substances, which I have more than once seen in similar places, and which some of the men mistook for glow-worms. This ravine is always unpleasant, sometimes precipitous, and generally very muddy. After proceeding about a couple of miles through this forest, the high hills on the right and left suddenly close

in, leaving no level surface in the bottom; and the clear little stream that flows down this Tartarean hollow—which I called the Acheron—often monopolises the entire bottom. At one point the bed of the rivulet suddenly sinks, and the water pours over a precipice of some twenty feet, forming a handsome cascade to which Lady Franklin gave the name of Bagota. The Acheron was crossed and recrossed a dozen times on temporary bridges in this forest; and after a course of about twenty miles it eventually passes into a tributary of the Gordon called the Franklin.

Emerging from this forest at about six miles from the point where we entered it, we crossed another sterile plain of about one thousand five hundred acres, composed of the very poorest of grey sands and quartz pebbles. It produces neither a blade of grass nor other useful herbage. It is surrounded by bare white-looking hills, from which circumstance it was called the White Hill Plain.

Our route for the next two miles was across this open space, which placed us on the summit of one of the clear rises spoken of above, that overlooks a vast extent of black-looking myrtle forest in front, the monotonous tint of which is unrelieved by any other object except one small plain that lay far ahead of us. At this point the landscape is inconceivably stern and forbidding.

I called the forest that extends from hence to Macquarie Harbour the Black Forest, from the uniform sooty look of the foliage of the vast expanse of woodland before us.

A very steep and long descent, as bad as Fatigue Hill, has then to be made, at the base of which is another insignificant open area, and a further walk of four or five miles over a series of low woody undulations conducts us to the bank of a large and rapid stream, which I named the Franklin.

This dashing torrent is seventy yards wide where we crossed it. The banks are overhung by handsome myrtle and many fine pine trees, the branches of the latter, like those of the pendulous or weeping willow, drooping over the water, add largely to the beauty of the river scenery.

Though this stream is one of the chief affluents of the Gordon, being fully two hundred yards wide in several places—that is where it expands into long lake-like reaches—it is so contracted at the point where it unites with the Gordon, that when I first saw it there I did not believe it to be the same river.

The Governor's party was ferried over the Franklin in a double canoe, constructed of two large pine logs that were united after being hollowed out, and the men on a large raft. The former was devised and made by a surly old carpenter belonging to the travelling force, who had brought his own tools with him. Conscious of his temporary importance at this juncture, he was for the time complete master of the whole camp, permitting no one to come near him, working or not according to his humour, and snubbing us all round whenever he thought we

deserved it, or if we ventured a word with him. Even the Governor himself, incautiously relying too much on his privileges, had to sing small like the rest of us in a short encounter he rashly engaged in with this most impartial person. Wearied at length with his tiresome delays, he sallied forth, not without some natural misgivings, as we all thought to do battle with our naval constructor, but was put to rout directly by such a well-directed fire as he had not stood under since the great sea fights of Copenhagen and Trafalgar, at the former of which it was that he first smelt powder. 'You be off directly,' said the constructor with a menacing look, 'and don't meddle with what you know nothing about,' whereupon His Excellency, who was never known to flinch before, hooked it, as the schoolboys say, and scampered back to his tent as fast as he could, amidst the imperfectly suppressed titterings of all who were not too near him. This point of the river was called Eleanor Ferry by Sir John, after his only daughter, which a gentleman of the party, who lettered very well, inscribed on a tree close by.

Soon after passing this stream, the pathway was led up another of those prodigious eminences that have to be encountered on the route to the west coast, passing at the same time through three weary miles of heavy forest land. It then crosses the last plot of open land which we passed over, from which circumstance I called this elevated place the Western Plain. Its extent is inconsiderable and its

quality, as usual, most inferior. From this clear field the traveller first sees (far inland and somewhat behind him) the Prince of Wales Mountains, which were so named by the Governor on the occasion of his crossing this plain. The long and serried outline of these beautiful mountains are the last visible land of whatever district they lie in, and in beauty and grandeur are not surpassed by anything even in the western hemisphere of Tasmania. On this occasion also, Lady Franklin gave the name of the Cracrofts to some woody peaks close at hand and on the right.

I pause a moment to say that I had cut the narrow path thus far some time in February of 1842, when the stock of provisions that I had brought from Hobart Town began to fail me, and I returned for another supply, leaving my men at the camp. I this time went round by sea to Macquarie Harbour, to land my stores there instead of carting them to Lake St Clair, the last point then discovered that a conveyance could be got to, and now an inconvenient station for a depot, being about sixty miles from our work. A small schooner of twenty-nine tons, called the *Breeze*, was chartered for this purpose, and also for the service of Sir John and Lady Franklin for their return trip, though by a change of arrangements the clipper schooner *Eliza* was sent round for this purpose. I eventually landed the most of my stores on a point on the right bank of the Gordon, about a dozen miles above the old penal settlement on Sarah Island, touching at Recherche

Bay and Port Davey on the route. I reached the camp after three days' hard walking through the difficult thickets of the west. On this occasion I started inland from the mouth of the Franklin and walked up to Eleanor Ferry, where I had left the men.

From the Western Plain a further walk of nine or ten miles brought us to the Gordon River. The *Breeze* was eventually moored in deep water at the end of the track, to receive the Governor and his friends, on board of which he walked on the 21st of April, 1842, amidst a volley of cheers from the shore party, which he and his companions of the homeward voyage most heartily returned.

Next morning I took my leave of the kind-hearted old Governor and his party, and I think the happiest moment of my life was when I turned my back on the little *Breeze* and her living freight, for of all the harassing duties I have had to go through in a long course of hard bush service, the opening of a pathway to Macquarie Harbour was by far the most difficult and troublesome.

In closing this paper it will not be out of place to say that Sir John Franklin was the fifth Lieutenant Governor of this colony. He was a Knight of the Guelphic Order of Hanover, and of the Greek Order of the Redeemer. His Government commenced on the 6th of January, 1837, and he retired from Tasmania on the 21st of August, 1843, amidst a storm of official annoyances enough to drive an ordinary man mad, that were directed at him

from the same office that sent his successor to the grave three or four years afterwards. Sir John vindicated himself in a work styled, *Narrative of Some Passages in the History of Van Diemen's Land*, etc. His defence of himself was an unanswerable one.

