

educated at Liverpool. Much difficulty was experienced in making the king understand that England is governed by a *queen*, and he laughed heartily when he at last understood what was meant, as did likewise his Majesty's attendants, the interpreter having assured them that "the King of England is a woman."

Cotton is indigenous in Benin, and is spun there and woven into cloth by women. Indigo is also indigenous, and the sugar-cane, from what was observed there, appears to be so likewise. Around the city the land is laid out in square plots, producing yams, plantains, cassada,* and Indian corn, and the soil is of a dark rich colour.

Mr. Smith's watch was much admired, and a pocket-compass which he carried was looked upon with astonishment and fear, as always pointing to the white man's country! A rocket fired at night in presence of the Captain of War caused surprise and delight, and called forth from the people loud cheers for the "Eboes," as they call Europeans.

The melancholy fact remains to be stated, that, soon after returning to the schooner "Warree," Mr. Smith, a very promising young man, died from an attack of dysentery, caught by his having been drenched with rain on the road between Gatto and the city of Benin.

XV.—MR. ORR's *Report to Governor Latrobe of an Expedition to Gipps's Land in S.E. Australia.*

Melbourne, 27th April, 1841.

SIR,—I beg leave to furnish you with a report of the expedition made to Corner Inlet, and from thence overland to Melbourne, as correct as could be drawn up from the hasty notes taken by myself and the gentleman who came hither overland.

We sailed from this port in the barque "Singapore" on the 6th of February, and on the 13th of the same month made the entrance of Corner Inlet, the weather being clear, with a favourable breeze from the S. We were enabled minutely to observe the appearance, and form a true estimate of the character of the harbour. The vessel was kept close in-shore after passing Sealers' Cove, and passed between a large island (called Rabbit Island, as it abounded with those animals) and the main land, a passage of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile wide, where we carried from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 fathoms of water. We found the passage by sounding ahead, pretty close in-shore, and had not less than 2 fathoms water till the middle of the entrance bore about N.W.: we then came into the deep channel, and had from 10 to 25 fathoms, till we came to a safe anchorage in 7 fathoms, under the lee of the S.W. head

* *Jatropha Manihot* or rather *Manioca* or *Mandioca*, its Brazilian name.—ED.

of the entrance. Our efforts were first directed to find an entrance to Gipps's Land, and we surveyed the harbour all round, which occupied us 4 days; but our exertions were unavailing, and we were compelled, after very great delay and fatigue, to direct our attention to another quarter. By travelling along the beach we arrived at the wreck of the "Clommel," from which we descried what Capt. Lewis has described as an inland sea, which is, however, only a channel communicating with Corner Inlet.

After surveying this channel for 10 days, we discovered a fresh-water creek or river about 10 yards wide at its entrance, which we called the "Terra," in compliment to our native guide, and afterwards a river, about 20 yards wide at its entrance, which we called the "Albert," in honour of her most gracious Majesty's Consort: near this river we found a good landing-place, where we landed all the stores, horses and cattle belonging to the party. A storehouse and other buildings were erected, and a sufficient number of men left to protect them. The situation of this river bears about N.N.E. from the high mountains of Wilson's Promontory, being distant about 10 miles from the Terra River, the country to the N. being also very good.

Should there be a township formed at the present encampment, it is proposed to call it "Albert." This is a beautiful spot: at low water the receding tide leaves uncovered a fine yellow sand, with a narrow channel meandering through it. At high water the scene is more striking, and presents an extensive sheet of water with the lofty mountains near it, forming a splendid panoramic view. It is my opinion that, as soon as the channel is properly surveyed, vessels of considerable burthen will, at high water, get within a short distance of the encampment.

The greater number of our party having resolved to return overland to Melbourne, with the intention of exploring the intermediate country, and discovering, if possible, a good road through it, the "Singapore" set sail again for Melbourne, after lying in Corner Inlet for nearly five weeks.

On the 23rd of March the party started from the encampment, with eight horses and provisions for three weeks, and travelled up the right bank of the Terra for 9 miles, after crossing which, they proceeded about 7 miles N.E., where they discovered a marked tree-line running due North; by following this line they conjectured that they would come upon a good place for crossing the River La Trobe, and they therefore followed the same course till they arrived at a height, where they encamped for the night. The land in the neighbourhood was extremely barren.

On the 24th the tree-line, which continued due N., was still followed for 12 miles, which brought them to the top of a high hill, whence they could perceive Wilson's Promontory S.E.,* about

* S.W., as appears from what follows.—ED.

17 miles. They descended this hill, and continued in the same course till they came to a small stream surrounded by rich pasturage, where they encamped for the night. On the 25th, by continuing along the marked line for about a mile N.W., they arrived at an eminence, from which they obtained a Pisgah-view of the vast and fertile plain forming the interior of Gipps's Land. After a journey from this hill of about 9 miles N.E., they arrived at the banks of the La Trobe, a river laid down by Count Streletski as running S.W., but its true course is due E.

On the 26th, the La Trobe was followed almost due W.,* bordered by rich plains and reedy swamps. After travelling about 11 miles, they arrived at a crossing-place where the river is about 30 yards wide and only 3 feet deep. A N.W. direction was then followed till they arrived at the plains, whence they observed the Snowy Mountains, the sublimity of which, contrasted with the beauties of the surrounding scene, presented a view the most enchanting. The plain is about 20 miles by 8. After crossing it, they came upon the River Maconochie which is much smaller than the La Trobe.

On the 28th, the Maconochie was crossed, and an easterly course followed for 4 miles across a beautiful plain; and they some time afterwards arrived at Count Streletski's encampment near the Barney. This river is there about 20 yards wide, and 2 feet deep; and its junction with the Maconochie is about 3 miles farther down. After crossing the Barney, a due eastern course was still kept, and the party arrived at the Dunlop River, there 80 yards wide and 4 fathoms deep.

On the 29th, they travelled five miles down the Dunlop, where they perceived at a distance a large inland lake 6 miles broad, and stretching for about 20 miles from E. to W. It receives the waters of the La Trobe, Maconochie, Barney, Dunlop and Perry Rivers; this lake was called "Wellington." Wilson's Promontory was also perceived from this place; its southern extremity bearing S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S., and its northern end S.W. by W., distant from the western extremity of the lake about 50 miles, and from the encampment about 20 miles.

On the 30th, the party began their journey to Melbourne, and re-crossed the Barney.

On the 31st, they continued a due western course over the plain between the Barney and Maconochie, and proceeded along the banks of the latter for 12 miles.

On the 1st of April, they travelled from the Maconochie S.W. about 22 miles.

On the 2nd, after continuing their route for about 5 miles, they discovered a fine river, supposed to be the La Trobe, run-

* In the original "quare E." has been added, but if they followed the river towards its source their course is rightly given.—ED.

ning eastwards, near which place it is joined by a small stream, which they called the Kinghorn.

On the 3rd, they crossed the La Trobe, and proceeded N.W. by W. for about 6 miles, when they crossed another river called Kirsopp.

The remainder of the journey was pursued with much difficulty; the party was obliged to cut a road for more than 30 miles through dense brushwood, and reached Mr. Turnbull's Station on the 11th, very much fatigued, about 35 miles from Melbourne, near Western Port.

The country thus explored is generally well watered. The banks of its rivers are lined with every kind of the finest timber usually found in this colony; and the intervening land is either gently undulating or quite level, having a rich alluvial soil, supposed to be formed by the deposits of the numerous rivers which descend from the Snowy Mountains. Throughout the whole of Gipps's Land scarcely a rock was to be seen.

I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.,

JOHN ORR.

XVI.—*An Account of the Chatham Islands.* Communicated by Dr. ERNEST DIEFFENBACH, M.D., Naturalist to the New Zealand Company, and printed with its concurrence.

THE group, in the Southern Pacific Ocean, called the Chatham Islands, was discovered by Lieutenant William Robert Broughton, of His Majesty's brig "Chatham," who hoisted the union-flag on the largest of the islands, and took possession of it, in the name of His Britannic Majesty, on the 29th of November, 1791. He anchored in Waitangi, or, as he calls it, Skirmish Bay, and had some intercourse with the natives; but a misunderstanding having arisen between the latter and the Europeans, one of the natives was killed, and thus terminated abruptly the discoverer's short visit. The natives did not appear ever to have seen a ship. Lieutenant Broughton ascertained Cape Young to be in latitude 43° 48' S., and longitude 176° 58' W.; two small rocky isles, called the "Two Sisters," to the N.W., being in latitude 43° 41' S., and longitude 177° 11' W.*

I visited the largest island of this group in the year 1840, in the barque "Cuba." The purchases of land in New Zealand by the New Zealand Company having suddenly terminated in consequence of a proclamation of His Excellency the Governor, the "Cuba" was despatched to this group of islands, in order to purchase them, as they were not included within the limits specified in the proclamation; and I was attached to that expedition as naturalist. Twelve days after we sailed from Port Nicholson

* Vancouver's Voyage to the North Pacific Ocean, vol. i.