

VARIOUS

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Various

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SWAN RIVER.

SWAN RIVER

(See the Engraving.)

"A view in Western Australia, taken from a hill, the intended site of a Fort, on the left bank of the Swan River, a mile and a quarter from its mouth. The objects are, on the left, in the distance, Garden Island, that on the right of it Pulo Carnac; between the two is the only known entrance for shipping into Cockburn Sound, which lies between Garden Island and the main land; the anchorage being off the island. On the right is the mouth of the Swan River. On the left, a temporary mud work, overlooking a small bay where the troops disembarked. In the foreground tis a road leading to the intended fort and cantonment on the river."

Few subjects in our recent volumes have excited more attention than the facts we have there assembled relative to the New Colony on Swan River. The most substantial and agreeable proofs of this popularity have been the frequent reprints of the Numbers containing these Notices, and the continued inquiries for them to the present moment. For the information of such persons as are casual purchasers of our work, we subjoin the numbers:

No. 368 and 369 contain the papers (abridged) from the *Quarterly Review*, with the Regulations issued from the Colonial Office; and an Engraved Chart which is more correct than that in the *Q. Rev.*

Nos. 410 and 411 contain an Engraved View on the Banks of the River, from an original drawing by one of the expedition; and a copy of Mr. Fraser's Report of the Botanical and other productions of the Colony.

No. 430 contains an important Letter from the Colony.

No. 464 contains an account (with extracts,) of the first Newspaper *written*, not printed, in the settlement.

The annexed Engraving is from a well-drawn lithograph distributed with No. 12 of the *Foreign Literary Gazette* date March, 1830; the support of which work by the public was by no means commensurate with its claims.

The letter-press with which the Engraving was circulated contains little beyond the earliest settlement. The most recently received account is that conveyed through the *Literary Gazette*, a fortnight since; and as no paper is more to be relied on for information connected with expeditions of discovery, colonial matters, &c. we extract nearly the whole of the communication:—

Perth Town, Swan River, Western Australia, Oct. 4, 1830.

My dear —, a ship being about to sail in the course of a week for England, I must not lose the opportunity of giving you a few lines respecting our movements and the state of the colony. I am somewhat late in my communications to my friends; but as this is the second ship only that has sailed direct for England since our arrival, you must not attribute the delay to any neglect on my part. The information which I can give you may be implicitly depended on. By the late accounts from England, it appears that the most exaggerated and false reports prevail regarding the present state and probable prospects of the colony, like all other reports that are a mixture of truth and falsehood; and as it is usual to paint the latter in the brightest colours, so it usually stands foremost in the picture: they have been industriously disseminated by a set of idle, worthless vagabonds, and have been eagerly taken up by the inhabitants of Cape Town and Van Dieman's Land.—These two places are so excessively jealous of the colony of Swan River, lest the tide of emigration should turn towards us, that the former use every means in their power to induce the settlers in their way here to remain with them; and they have been, I am sorry to say, too successful, having detained nearly two hundred labourers. The grounds of complaint are, that the colony is not equal to the representations given of it, and that it has

not answered their expectations. The account in the *Quarterly Review*, as far as it goes, is correct, with one exception; but the impression it is calculated to make, when in unison with the hopes of needy adventurers, is too favourable to be realized. The *Review* observes, that the land seen on the banks of the Swan is of a very superior description; and this is undoubtedly true; but the imagination and enthusiastic feelings of many have induced them to suppose that *all* the land on the banks of the Swan, and the whole country besides, is included in that description. Now, the good land is chiefly confined to the banks of the rivers, as you will see by a map which I have sent to –; the rest is sandy, but it is covered throughout the year with luxuriant vegetation. The cause of this arises in some measure from the composition of the soil beneath, which, at an average depth of five or six feet, is principally clay, which holds the water in lagoons, that are to be met with in every hollow in every part of the country on this side the mountains. It unfortunately happens that none of the good land is to be seen even as far up the river as Perth, the whole soil of which is sandy; hence all new-comers are at first disappointed; and, without taking any further trouble to examine the country, leave the colony in disgust altogether. But it has now been found that the land at Perth, notwithstanding its unpromising appearance, possesses capabilities which intelligent and experienced persons foresaw, and that it only requires time and patience to develop its surprising qualities: at this moment there are vegetables growing to an enormous size, scarcely credible, and which for the sake of truth I actually measured. What say you to radishes twenty inches round, and grown in nothing but sand, without any manure or preparation of the ground? Turnips, cabbages, peas, lettuces, all flourish in the worst soils here; but I fear the climate is too warm for potatoes, though well adapted for most of the tropical fruits, as yams, bananas, &c.

The soil and aspect of the country seems well suited for the vine, which, from the little experience we have had, does exceedingly well. There are no esculent productions worth mentioning indigenous, but there is some fine timber, which will no doubt become a valuable article of exportation: it is between the mahogany and the elder, and may be applied to all the purposes of the former. Its greatest recommendation is, that the white ant will not touch it, and it will consequently be a great desideratum where that insect abounds. We have likewise the red and blue gum, but in no great quantity, in the immediate vicinity of Perth. The animal productions are the same as on the other side of the island, as also the birds. The rivers swarm with fish, every one of which is good eating; but it is only lately that we have been well supplied with them. There is abundance of limestone ready at hand in most parts of the river, as well as the finest and strongest clay, plenty of which runs along the shore that bounds Perth, for a mile and a half, as you will see by the map. Of the mineral resources of the country nothing is as yet known; for every one has been too much occupied in locating himself to give that subject any attention. By the reports from England, it appears that from the misfortunes which happened to the first ships that came out, a very unfavourable opinion is formed of the safety of the port. Gage's roads afford a very good anchorage during the summer months; but, being exposed to the north-west winds, it is a very insecure station during the winter, the ground being rocky and a loose sand; but this evil, I am happy to say, is in a great measure obviated by the discovery of a good anchorage about four miles to the southward of the mouth of the river, and marked in the map as the Britannia Roads. The bottom is firm holding ground, and has been proved to be a very secure anchorage during the late gales, when all the ships in Gage's Roads went on shore, while those on the Britannia Roads rode it out, with the exception of one ship, which broke her anchor. Besides, a passage has lately been found out from Gage's Roads to Cockburn, into which ships may run, if they are too much leeward of the Britannia Roads; so that you see we may always have a refuge from the storm. I hope you will take care to give publicity to *this* circumstance, because it is one upon which the success of the colony mainly depends. The bar at the mouth of the river, and the flats in various parts of its course, are a great drawback to our communications; but these evil will no doubt be remedied in the course of time, and that without much expense. There is a clear channel all the way up the river for vessels of 500 tons, commencing about a mile and a half above Freemantle to

Perth; then there are a succession of flats until you pass the islands, where the navigation continues clear for many miles up the river.

The prospects of the colony are every day improving, to the satisfaction of all classes; and the great number of respectable settlers, and their patience and perseverance in establishing themselves, are the surest grounds for the ultimate prosperity of the settlement. The only objections, as I can see, that can be urged with any degree of plausibility against the success of the colony, are, that the land at Perth and in the neighbourhood is not of that description to induce the settlers to cultivate, and that all the good land being now granted, there is no more on this side the mountains to satisfy the demands of new settlers; but these objections are, I am happy to say, about to be removed, as an ensign of the 63rd regiment (a Mr. Dale) has lately returned from a tour of discovery into the interior, and has brought intelligence, that to the eastward of the Swan River there is a large and fertile tract of beautiful country, with a river passing through it, which, from a subsequent visit by Mr. Erskine, a lieutenant of the 63rd, is likely to prove of the greatest importance to the colony. Those of the settlers who have not taken up their grants of land mean to secure them here, and myself among the number, a grant having been allowed me, at the rate of 3,200 acres. The governor is quite delighted, and now considers the ultimate success of the colony to be certain. He intends visiting the country, and tracing the course of the river, in a few days; and it is my wish to accompany him, if possible, that I may select my own grant.

The spirit of detraction to which the writer alludes in the early part of his letter is thus noticed in the *Cabinet Cyclopaedia*, vol. iii. of Maritime and Inland Discovery: "The difficulties and embarrassments which the settlers at the Swan River have been obliged to endure, have been industriously exaggerated by the colonial press; the strong desire which exists in New South Wales to attract emigrants to that country being naturally allied with a disposition to disparage every other settlement."

ON VIEWING CANTERBURY

From the rural Heights of Harbledown, in the Summer of 1827

(For the Mirror.)

I

I am no pilgrim unto Becket's shrine,
To kneel with fervour on his knee-worn grave,
And with my tears his sainted ashes lave,
Yet feel devotion rise no less divine—
As rapt I gaze from Harbledown's decline
And view the rev'rend temple where was shed
That pamper'd prelate's blood—his marble bed
Midst pillar'd pomp, where rainbow windows shine;
Where bent the 'anointed of a nation's throne
And brooked the lashes of the church's ire;
And where, as yesterday, with soul of fire,
Transcendent Byron view'd the hallow'd stone.
Sure Chaucer's pilgrims, on this crowning height,
Repress'd their mirth, and kindled at the sight.

II

Couch'd in the bosom of a bounteous vale,
The ancient city, to the enamour'd sight,
Gleams like a vision of the fairy night,
Or Be-ulah, in Banyan's holy tale.
The silvery clouds that o'er the valley sail
Dim not the sinking sun, whose lustre fires
The old cathedral and its gorgeous spires,
The ruin'd abbey, garlanded and pale
The vesper choristers in each lone wood
Chant to the peeping moon their serenade;
Now creeps the far-off forest into shade,
And twilight comes o'er heath, and field, and flood.
Oh! had I genius now the task to try,
My picture should Italian Claude's outvie!

¹ Henry the Second.

*** * H**

MOUNT ST. MICHAEL

(To the Editor.)

In no. 477 of the *Mirror* you have given a spirited engraving of Mount St. Michael, with a succinct account annexed, to which the following particulars may serve as addenda:—

Its most ancient name was Belinus, when it was inhabited by Druidesses. After the abolition of the Druids, it took the name of Mons Jovis; to which was substituted that of Tumba, when a monastery was erected upon it. In 708, Bishop Auber raised upon it a church, which he dedicated to St. Michael.—Ethelred, the second, of England, had a particular veneration for Mount St. Michael. Abbot Roger had been almoner to William the Conqueror. Henry II. of England made a pilgrimage to Mount St. Michael, when he met Louis VII. King of France, with a splendid suite.

In 1203 the fortifications consisted only of wooden palisades. Being attacked by the Bretons, they set fire to them: the fire reached the church and abbey, which was completely destroyed. The monastery was restored in 1226, by Abbot Adulph de Villedieu. His successor, Richard Justin, obtained from the Pope the most distinguished privileges.

In 1418 the English made a fruitless attack upon it.

In 1423 it was attempted again, with a very considerable force and powerful artillery, two pieces of which now stand at the main gate: one has a stone ball in it of about fifteen inches diameter. Among the distinguished English officers who perished at the siege, was a Chevalier M. Burdet.

In 1577 a Protestant chief (Dutouchet) succeeded by stratagem in getting possession of it. After two day's possession, he was obliged to evacuate it.

In 1591 a similar attempt proved most destructive to the assailants.

In 1594, the spire, the bells, and the church, were considerably injured by lightning.

Mount St. Michael was visited in 1518 by Francis I. of France; in 1561, by Charles IX.; in 1576, by the Duchess de Bourbon; in 1624, by the Duke de Nevers, who made a rich present to the abbey; in 1689, by Madame de Levigné, who designated it *Le Mont fier et orgueilleux*. In 1689, Philip Duke of Orleans, brother to Louis XIV., was one of its visitors.

The most remarkable circumstance is the visit paid to it on the 10th of May, 1777, by the Ex-King of France, the Count d'Artois (twenty years old). On inspecting the state-prison, a wooden cage was shown to him. The prince, struck with horror at the sight of it, ordered it to be destroyed. Shortly after, the young princes of Orleans, among whom the present King Philip, accompanied by Madame de Lillery, stopped at Mount St. Michael. After having inspected the subterraneous passages and magazines, the wooden cage was shown to them. They asked for workmen and axes, and giving the first blow themselves, this infernal machine was completely destroyed.

The prior of the abbey was formerly governor of the town and castle, and the keys were brought to him every evening. It gives name to the late military order of St. Michael, founded by Louis XI, in 1479. The view from the summit is fine, embracing the coasts of Normandy and Brittany, with the town and ruins of the cathedral of Avranches, elevated on a mountain, and the intervening valley, with the open sea of the British Channel.

W.G.C

SONNET TO M * * *

(For the Mirror.)

Though rough, not lengthened, is our worldly way;
Then wipe thy pearly eyes, no more to weep—
Thy feet from falling let this memory keep—
Our love hath lasted through the stormy day.
These clouds like early mist shall melt away,
And show the vale beyond the pointed steep;
For they who sow in tears, in smiles shall reap—
Then be thy spirits as the morning gay.
For thou alone art gifted with the power
To still the tempest in my stubborn soul;
Thy smile creates around the billows roll
The blissful quiet of a halcyon hour.
Then shed no tear—then heave no sorrowing sigh
Since love like thine may time and toil defy.

* * H

LONG RIDES

(To the Editor.)

In 478 of your entertaining little miscellany, I observe a short account of an unparalleled feat of riding, performed by John Lepton, of Reprich, in 1603. As I know you wish to be "quite correct," the following may be acceptable: it is copied verbatim from a scarce book (in my possession) entitled, "The Abridgement of the English Chronicle," by Edmund Howes, imprinted at London, 1668 (15th James I.):—

"In this month, John *Lenton*, of *Kepwick*, in the county of Yorke, Esq., a gentleman of an ancient family there, and of good reputation, his majesty's servant, and one of the grooms of his most honourable privy chamber, performed so memorable a journey as I may not omit to record the same to future ages; the rather for that I did hear sundry gentlemen, who were good horsemen, and likewise many good physicians, affirm it was impossible to be done without danger of his life.

"He undertook to ride five several times betwixt London and Yorke, in sixe dayes, to be taken in one weeke, between Monday morning and Saturday following. He began his journey upon Monday, being the 29th of May, betwixt two and three of the clock in the morning, forthe of St. Martin's, neere to Aldersgate, within the city of London, and came into Yorke the same day, between the hours of 5 and 6 in the afternoon, where he rested that night. The next morning, being Tuesday, about 3 of the clock he tooke his journey forthe of Yorke, and came to lodgings in St. Martins aforesaid, betwixt the hours of 6 and 7 in the afternoon, where he rested that night. The next morning, being Wednesday, betwixt 2 and 3 of the clock, he tooke his journey for the of the city of London, and came into Yorke about 7 of the clock the same day, where he rested that night. The next morning, being Thursday, betwixt 2 and 3 of the clock he tooke his journey forthe of Yorke, and came to London the same day betwixt 7 and 8 of the clock. The next day, being Friday, betwixt 2 and 3 of the clock he tooke his journey towards Yorke, and came thither the same day, betwixt the hours of 7 and 8 in the afternoon. So as he finished his appointed journey (*to the admiration of all men, in five days, according to his promise*

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