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## EARLY DAYS IN NORTH QUEENSLAND

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**Edward Palmer**  
*From photo, by "Tosca," Brisbane.*

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# EARLY DAYS IN NORTH QUEENSLAND

BY  
**THE LATE  
EDWARD PALMER**

SYDNEY  
ANGUS & ROBERTSON  
MELBOURNE: ANGUS, ROBERTSON & SHENSTONE  
1903

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## TO THE NORTH-WEST.

*I know the land of the far, far away,  
Where the salt bush glistens in silver-grey;  
Where the emu stalks with her striped brood,  
Searching the plains for her daily food.*

*I know the land of the far, far west,  
Where the bower-bird builds her playhouse nest;  
Where the dusky savage from day to day,  
Hunts with his tribe in their old wild way.*

*'Tis a land of vastness and solitude deep,  
Where the dry hot winds their revels keep;  
The land of mirage that cheats the eye,  
The land of cloudless and burning sky.*

*'Tis a land of drought and pastures grey,  
Where flock-pigeons rise in vast array;  
Where the "nardoo" spreads its silvery sheen  
Over the plains where the floods have been.*

*'Tis a land of gidya and dark boree,  
Extended o'er plains like an inland sea,  
Boundless and vast, where the wild winds pass,  
O'er the long rollers and billows of grass.*

*I made my home in that thirsty land,  
Where rivers for water are filled with sand;  
Where glare and heat and storms sweep by,  
Where the prairie rolls to the western sky.*

—"Loranthus."

*Cloncurry, 1897.*

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*W. C. Penfold & Co., Printers, Sydney.*

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## PREFACE.

The writer came to Queensland two years before separation, and shortly afterwards took part in the work of outside settlement, or pioneering, looking for new country to settle on with stock. Going from Bowen out west towards the head of the Flinders River in 1864, he continued his connection with this outside life until his death in 1899. Many of the original explorers and pioneers were known to him personally; of these but few remain. This little work is merely a statement of facts and incidents connected with the work of frontier life, and the progress of pastoral occupation in the early days. It lays no claim to any literary style. Whatever faults are found in it, the indulgence usually accorded to a novice is requested. It has been a pleasant task collecting the information from many of the early settlers in order to place on record a few of the names and incidents connected with the foundation of the pastoral industry in the far north, an industry which was the forerunner of all other settlement there, and still is the main source of the State's export trade.

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## NOTE BY MR. G. PHILLIPS, C.E.

The author of this book, the late Edward Palmer, was himself one of that brave band of pioneer squatters who in the early sixties swept across North Queensland with their flocks and herds, settling, as if by magic, great tracts of hitherto unoccupied country, and thereby opening several new ports on the east coast and on the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, to the commerce of the world. In writing of these stirring times in the history of Queensland, Mr. Palmer has dealt with a subject for which he was peculiarly qualified as an active participant therein.

Very few of those energetic and indomitable men are now left—veritable giants they were—great because they attempted great things, and though few of them achieved financial success for themselves individually, they added by their self-denying labours a rich province to Queensland, which has become the home of thousands, and will yet furnish homes for ten of thousands under conditions of settlement and occupation adapted to the physical and climatic characteristics of North Queensland.

Mr. Palmer was a native of Wollongong, in New South Wales, and came to Queensland in 1857. He took up and formed his well-known station, Conobie, on the western bank of the Cloncurry River, situated about midway between Normanton and Cloncurry, in 1864, first with sheep, but subsequently, like most of the Gulf squatters, he substituted cattle therefor, which by the year 1893 had grown into a magnificent herd.

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Mr. Palmer also took part in the political life of Queensland, representing his district, then known as the Burke, but afterwards as Carpentaria, until the general election of 1893, when he retired in favour of Mr. G. Phillips, C.E., who held the seat for three years.

In the financial crisis of 1893 and subsequent years when the value of cattle stations in North Queensland owing to the ravages of ticks and the want of extraneous markets, gradually dwindled almost to the vanishing point, Mr. Palmer was a great sufferer, and he was compelled to leave his old home at Conobie, which was bound to him by every tie dear to the human breast, and most dear to the man who had carved that home out of the wilderness by sheer courage and indomitable endurance.

Mr. Palmer's constitution, originally a very good one, was undermined partly by a long life of exposure and hardship under a tropical sun, but chiefly owing to the misfortunes which latterly overtook him, and after a few years of service under the State in connection with the tick plague, he died in harness at Rockhampton on the 4th day of May, 1899.

Edward Palmer was essentially a lovable man, kind-hearted and genial, a great lover of Nature, as his poems prove, a true comrade, and a right loyal citizen of Queensland, which he loved so well, and which, in the truest sense of the word, he helped to found.

GEO. PHILLIPS.

Brisbane, February 12, 1903.

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## CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTORY.

The pioneers of Australian civilisation in the territory known as North Queensland have mostly passed away; they were too busy with other activities and interests and more absorbing local topics to make notes of the days that are gone. A record of the work they did, and their march of progress through the unknown land, was a matter that no one recognised as of any importance to themselves or others. "The daily round and common task" took up most of their time, and sufficient for the day was the work thereof. If one (however unqualified) should record a few of those early steps of settlement, and thus help to preserve the remembrance of events connected with the occupation of a prosperous country, the facts would remain, and be available for those more competent to utilise them in other ways and for other purposes. It is well that some one should do it, and one who has experienced the vicissitudes of Northern pioneer life, with its calls on active endurance and its ceaseless worries would not be altogether unfit to note the progress of a great movement, or to place on record some of those events that helped to make up the early life of Queensland, however unqualified the writer might be, in a literary sense. A pioneer is one who prepares the path for others to follow, one who first leads the way. The life of the pioneer in the early days of Northern settlement, from want of ready communication with seaports, and the lack of means of obtaining supplies, was one that called out all the energy, resource, and bushmanship of those who had been trained to this life, and who had pushed far in the van of civilisation to make a living for themselves, and open the way for others who might follow. Though the whole country is fitted for settlement and occupation by European races, such fitness had to be demonstrated by the residence and work of the pioneers, some of whom did good service in the way of exploration and discovery. By living their lives in the far outside districts and making their homes therein, they proved the adaptability of the soil and climate to the wants and civilisation of the European.

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That there were more shadows than lights in those early days was not so much the fault of the settlers as of their surroundings, but the best was made of all circumstances, and the result is satisfactory. Very few of the pioneers made wealth for themselves, though they helped to convert the wilderness into prospective homes for millions of their own race.

The story of North Queensland's childhood is simply one of gradual discovery and advancing settlement from the Southern districts, where the same severe course of wresting the land from uselessness and sterility had been gone through. The source of this movement may be traced chiefly to a desire for pastoral extension by squatters, always on the move for new pastures, and to the ever roving prospector in search of fresh mineral discoveries.

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First the navigator outlines the coast with its bays and islands and openings for ports; such were Cook, Flinders, Stokes, and others. Then the explorer appears on the scene, and discovers its rivers and facilities for establishing the occupation of the country, and maps out its capabilities. Such were Leichhardt, Mitchell, Gregory, Landsborough, and many others. Thus the way is opened up for the pioneer squatter with his flocks and herds and the attendant business of forming roads and opening ports for his requirements, holding his own against many odds, droughts, floods, outrages by blacks, fevers that follow the opening up of all new countries, and losses peculiar to life in the wilderness.

Following the pioneer (or Crown lessee, as he is called) in course of time comes a closer settlement, when the large runs become divided, and the selector or farmer holds the country under a more permanent tenure. Cultivation follows, whilst families reside where the pioneer squatter strove with nature in a long struggle many years before.

The development of North Queensland has taken place since separation from New South Wales; the period of a single generation covers the time that it has taken to settle this large extent of country. The continuous discovery of natural wealth, the progress of settlement, the healthy growth of the great industries, the establishment of a system of oversea, coastal, and inland communications, the creation of great cities, the founding of social and educational institutions, in fact all that makes the colony of to-day, with its potentialities of industrial wealth and expansive settlement, have been covered by the span of a single life.

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In 1824, Lieutenant Oxley discovered and explored the Brisbane River. Redcliffe, so named a quarter of a century before by Flinders, but now generally known as "Humpy Bong," was the original site selected for the first settlement on the shores of Moreton Bay. Some convicts had been forwarded there from Sydney to form the settlement, but owing to attacks by blacks and the unsuitability of site, it was removed to the present one of Brisbane. Up to 1839, the dismal cloud of convictism was over this fair land before it was thrown open to free settlers.

Over 12 degrees of latitude, and as many of longitude, through a country previously unknown and

untested as to climate and soil, the course of advancing occupation went on unchecked, until the land was filled with the outposts of civilisation, and the potentialities of the colony were ascertained. Great indeed are the conquests of peace; much greater than those of war; more beneficial and more permanent.

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The first sale of Brisbane lands took place in Sydney in 1841, and next year a sale was held in Brisbane; the third took place in 1843, and there was not enough land surveyed to meet the demand, so small was Brisbane in those early days. The upset price was £100 per acre, although much more was realised for some lots. Even at those prices, many buyers suffered a loss, for a commercial crisis occurred shortly afterwards, and much of the property was forfeited, or resold at much lower prices.

For the year 1843, the exports consisted of 150 tierces of beef, 450 hides, 1,998 bales of wool, 3,458 sheepskins, and 3,418 feet of pine timber.

The foundations of trade, so modest at the start, have developed in one lifetime to a nation's wealth. In 1844, in the territory then forming the colony, there were 650 horses, 13,000 cattle, 184,000 sheep, and scarcely more than 1,500 of a population, one half of whom were domiciled in North and South Brisbane. At the present day, the products of the live stock of the State furnishes employment for thousands, and forms a volume of trade that employs the finest lines of steamers sailing in the Southern Seas.

It is needless to dwell on the history of the dark days of bondage and weakly infancy, which has little to do with the early days of settlement in North Queensland, except to show the starting point. The North is free from the stain and drag of convictism. The real life of the colony began with the first days of free settlers, then immigrants poured in rapidly, and the occupation of the interior advanced. With this strong growth of material progress, came also the desire for self-government, and separation from New South Wales. This, however, was not obtained without much exertion, self-sacrifice, and display of patriotic energy. The history of the separation movement is long, extending over many years, but it was finally consummated on 10th December, 1859, when Sir George Ferguson Bowen was sworn in as the first Governor of Queensland. The boundary line of the new colony commenced at Point Danger, near the 28th parallel of south latitude and ran westward, leaving the rich districts watered by the Clarence and Richmond rivers, although much nearer to Brisbane than to Sydney, still belonging to New South Wales. After separation and self-government, came the commencement, in 1865, of the railway from Ipswich towards the interior. The discovery of gold at Gympie, near Maryborough, in 1867, and the rapid extension of the ever-spreading pastoral industry, laid the foundation of national life in Queensland. From this solid basis, the settlement of North Queensland commenced in earnest, with a more rapid extension than had been seen in any other part of Australia.

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Telegraphic communication was established between Brisbane and Sydney on November 9th, 1861, and its inauguration had a marked effect on local affairs. The immigration induced by Mr. Henry Jordan was an important factor in the settling of people on the land in the early days of Queensland.

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In 1869, Townsville was connected by wire with Brisbane, and in 1872 the line was extended to the mouth of the Norman River at Kimberly, now known as "Karumba," the intention being that the first cable to connect Australia with Europe should be landed at the mouth of the Norman River, but, for reasons which have never been made public, South Australia was allowed to step in and reap the advantages which should have belonged to Queensland, although we carried out our share of the work by constructing, at great expense, a special land line across the base of the Cape York Peninsula, from Cardwell, across the Sea View Range, to Normanton and Kimberly at the mouth of the river.

The last service rendered by Walker, the explorer, was in connection with the selection of the route of the telegraph line from Cardwell to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Mr. Walker's second in command was a fine young man of the name of Herbert Edward Young, who was subsequently telegraph master in Townsville in the year 1871. Mr. Young received an injury in the service which eventually resulted in his untimely death very shortly after his marriage.

Australia was connected with Europe by cable in 1872. Queensland thus starting on its career so hopefully was nevertheless subject to periods of depression, booms, and crises, prosperity and hard times alternated. And then came the "salvation by gold." The discovery of gold came as a hope and help to all, as it came to the North a few years later. It helped to find markets for stock of all kinds and employment for thousands, and also to extend the settlement of the land and open up commerce with other countries, introducing immigrants or diggers, many of whom remained and settled in the country. But the young country had to be opened up and some degree of settlement established before mining for gold could be carried on.

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In all parts of Queensland, pastoral settlement has preceded all others, including mining. Though the squatter is now, in the more settled districts, becoming a thing of the past, his work being finished and his day gone by, at the first enterprise, bush knowledge and a practical life were the most potent factors in making known the possibilities of the land of Queensland.

The name "squatter" was given in the early days to the pastoral tenants of the Crown, who rented pasture lands in their natural state. The first pastoral occupation took place about 1840, and this may be said to have commenced the life history of the movement that made Queensland known to the world. Large areas were occupied on the banks of rivers and creeks where the splendid and

nutritive indigenous grasses required no further cultivation. All that the squatters did was to turn their stock loose on them and exercise some care to prevent them from straying, or being killed and scattered by the blacks. No country was ever endowed by Nature with a more permanent, healthy, and beneficial pasturage than Australia, though heavy stocking and hot dry seasons have somewhat diminished the value of this natural wealth in some of the earlier settled districts. The chief source of employment in the Colony of Queensland, and the leading export, is still derived from the stock depastured on the native grasses that were found when the State was first explored.

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A company or syndicate was formed in February, 1859, for the purpose of establishing a new pastoral settlement in North Australia. The project was conceived in consequence of the reports of explorers who had passed through much of the country to be operated on. These reports were from the journals of Sir Thomas Mitchell, Dr. Leichhardt, A. C. Gregory, the Rev. W. B. Clarke, and others. The prospectus was of a most ambitious and comprehensive nature, and it showed an intention to overcome, or make light of, all obstacles, and to march straight on to glory and wealth, as well as to start a young nation on its prosperous career. The area of the proposed new settlement was comprised within the 22nd parallel of S. latitude, the 137th degree of east longitude on the west, and on the north and east by the ocean, practically including what is now known as North Queensland.

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The report of the Rev. W. B. Clarke, which was favourable to the probability of auriferous country being discovered, and of rich deposits of gold being met with on the northern rivers, was a great factor in promoting the project of founding a settlement which was to establish a thriving and industrious European and Oriental mercantile and planting community. The immediate design was to commence a detailed exploration of the country reported on by Dr. Leichhardt. The prospectus dwelt on the advantages of thoroughly exploring the rivers and country and making known the capabilities of the soil and climate to the capitalists of Australia as a field for investment. The programme mapped out was:—To proceed from Rockhampton direct to Leichhardt's camp in the bed of the Burdekin River at Mount McConnel. To trace the Burdekin down to the sea in canoes, taking soundings to establish its navigable capabilities; to fix its mouth and its qualifications as a seaport. To fix the probable head of navigation, and a favourable site for a goods depôt there. To return to Mount McConnel; thence to explore the lower Suttor, lower Cape, and Burdekin Valley as far as the Valley of Lagoons, ascending the river by its western, and returning by its eastern bank; to fix the most favourable position as near as possible to water carriage for the first establishment of pastoral stations, and to trace the most accessible route from the latter to the former. To return to the settled districts by a different route, viz.: to trace up the Cape or Belyando River to its head in latitude 24 degrees, to cross the great watershed, and to drop down upon the Maranoa, which was to be followed to about latitude 26 degrees, where the course was to be left and a route made down the River Culgoa, arriving in the settled districts by the lower Condamine.

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By adopting this route, the whole frontier, from the Valley of Lagoons to Gregory's last track down the Victoria (or Barcoo) would be explored; thus, without additional outlay, deciding whether Leichhardt pushed westward by the Victoria according to Gregory, or what is more probable, from some point upon the Belyando or Burdekin, according to the Rev. W. B. Clarke. The person in charge of the party was to prepare a full report upon the country traversed, while the surveyor of the party was to draw out a chart of the region explored, copies of the report and chart to be furnished to each of the subscribers, who would then be in a position individually or collectively to take measures for tendering for and occupying the country, by sending their stock overland, and their stores, etc., by water to the depôt at the head of navigation.

The cost of the exploration was estimated at about £1,000, to meet which it was proposed to raise that sum by subscription; unless that amount were subscribed, the expedition to be abandoned. The leader proposed was George Elphinstone Dalrymple. The names of the subscribers of £50 each were:—Captain J. C. Wickham, R.N., Messrs. J. C. White, John Douglas, Gilbert Davidson, P. N. Selheim, A. D. Broughton, George Perry, W. A. Simpson, Ernest Henry, A. H. Palmer, Garland and Bingham, J. B. Rundle, Joseph Sharp, D. McDougal, Raymond and Co., R. Towns and Co., Griffith, Fanning and Co., How, Walker and Co., Dennison and Rolleston, F. Bundock, Edwd. Ogilvie, R. G. Watt, and J. R. Radfort.

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It was intended that a committee of these subscribers should be at once formed in Sydney. The reasons given for the projection of a party with such a comprehensive and magnificent scheme before it were: 1st—Because the supply of butchers' meat was even then unequal to the demand, and the latter increased more rapidly than the former. 2nd—Because the demand for sheep stations as an investment for capital was far beyond the capabilities of the settled districts; and the capital available for speculation in Melbourne in particular, was seeking new fields for employment. 3rd—Because the number of small or moderate capitalists who annually immigrate with a view to pastoral pursuits could find no field of operations within the settled districts, had to push northwards, and in a short time would occupy all available country within practicable distance of the most remote existing, or contemplated ports of shipment—Port Curtis and Broad Sound.

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It was anticipated that other ports equal to Moreton Bay, with its highly-favoured back-ground, Darling Downs, would be opened up by exploration. The character of the country reported on by Dr. Leichhardt, intersected as it was by some very interesting rivers, such as the Suttor, Burdekin, Mitchell, and Lynd, warranted such a favourable conclusion.

The tablelands were high, and possessed of a cool and healthy climate; the soil on the banks of the rivers was of a rich nature, suitable for agriculture; the pasturage was unequalled for stock of all kinds; and the mineral prospects were favourable towards the settlement of a mining community. All this undeveloped natural wealth lay at the disposal of any who might enter and bring it under the magic influence of capital and enterprise.

In their wildest moments of enthusiasm, none of those enterprising colonists could have foreseen what a few years would bring forth. None could have expected to see in the short space of less than thirty years that, where the mangrove then fringed the shore, jetties and harbours would be built, and that great ocean-going steamers and vessels from all parts of the world would be found discharging valuable cargoes collected from many lands; that great cities would arise adjacent to these harbours, that land would be sold by the foot at high prices; that these thriving towns would be the termini of many railways reaching far away into that unknown interior which they were so anxious to explore, bringing in the natural products of the soil valued at many millions of pounds annually for shipment to the markets of the world, or that the mining prospects so modestly alluded to in their prospectus would be developed to such an extent as to produce hundreds of tons weight of gold. These men were the pioneers of a new colony; they looked out over the wilderness extending northwards to the Indian Ocean, and laid their plans to conquer and subdue it to the wants of civilised man. The promoters of this pioneering enterprise anticipated the probability of the deep indentation of the Gulf of Carpentaria enabling direct oceanic communication with the Western world, as well as with India and China, to be established, and that the projected telegraphic connection with Europe by way of Timor and Java might be extended by way of the level bed of the Gulf, and along the valley of the Lynd and Burdekin Rivers into the territory of Moreton Bay, thus bringing North Queensland and Brisbane nearer to the marts of the world than any of the sister colonies. The progress of civilisation has brought all this to pass within the memory of those now living.

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Our Queensland land policy is a legacy of the old days of New South Wales, where the first attempt to confer a right to property in land was by way of grant. It dates from the time of Governor Phillip, the first Governor of New South Wales; these grants were made to any free immigrants on certain conditions.

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The system of tenure by occupation began about 1825, and was the origin of the squatting system; the production of fine merino wool gave a great impetus to the occupation of the waste lands. The licenses were annual, the rate of charge rested with the Governor, and they were renewable and transferable. But much dissatisfaction arose with the administration by the Crown Lands Commissioners who had the disposal of all disputes connected with the new system. Hence an agitation was set up for a redress of grievances, and this led to the passing of the 9th and 10th Victoria c. 104—28th August, 1846. In this act power was granted to the Crown to lease for any term of years not exceeding fourteen, to any person, any waste lands, etc., or license to occupy; such lease or license to be subject to the regulations thereafter mentioned. On the 9th of March, 1847, the celebrated orders in Council, framed under the authority of this act, were issued. The lands in the Colony of New South Wales were divided into three classes, "settled," "intermediate," and "unsettled." As respects Queensland, the settled districts were confined to very limited areas within ten miles of the town of Ipswich, and within three miles of any part of the sea coast. All the rest of the territory now comprised in the boundaries of the State was left in the unsettled districts; but power was given to the Governor to proclaim any portion as within the intermediate districts when necessary. The lease gave the right to purchase part of the land within the lease to the lessee and to him only; other acts dealing with the sale of land had been passed, and land had been alienated under them; but the leases and regulations under the orders in Council forbade the sale of any waste land to anyone except the lessee. When a run was forfeited, tenders might be given, stating the term of years for which the tenderer was willing to take it, the rent he would give in addition to the minimum fixed by the act, and the amount of premium he would pay. In the event of competition, the run was to be knocked down to the highest bidder.

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Where new runs were tendered for, the tenderer was to set forth in his tender a clear description of the run and its boundaries, and also whether he was willing to give any premium beyond the rent. The rent was to be proportioned to the number of sheep or equivalent number of cattle which the run was estimated to be capable of carrying according to a scale to be established by the Governor; but no run was to be capable of carrying less than 4,000 sheep, or to be let for less than £10 per annum, to which £2 10s. was added for every additional 1,000 sheep. The estimated number of sheep or cattle was decided by a valuator named by the intended lessee and approved by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, who, with an umpire chosen by the two, acted as a small court of arbitration. The scheme was fitted in its simplicity to encourage exploration on the largest possible scale.

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Proclamations issued by the Government of New South Wales to give further effect to the "orders," authorised an assessment on stock pastured beyond the settled districts, which was levied at the rate of a halfpenny for each sheep, three halfpence for every head of cattle, and threepence for every horse; and returns were directed to be made by every pastoral lessee under severe penalties. Under these several acts and orders, the Executive and the squatters came into collision, and disputes arose as to the meaning of many clauses in the various Land Acts; but no material alteration had been made at the time when Queensland was separated from New South Wales, although the Constitution Act of New South Wales, July, 1855, vested in the local legislature the entire management and control of the waste lands of the colony. In 1859, when



the Colony of Queensland was separated from New South Wales, the pastoral interest was in the ascendant, and this is considered to have been made evident by the first land legislation of the new colony. The first consideration of the new Government was legislation for leasing and selling the land. A very large number of tenders for Crown Lands had been accepted by the New South Wales Government, or had been applied for and were in abeyance, and until a decision was given on these applications, the land was lying idle and waste. One-fourth of the entire unoccupied territory had been applied for, the result of the energy of pioneering pastoralists, and the prospects opening up for new pastoral settlements. The first bill presented to the new Parliament on 11th July, 1860, was introduced by the Colonial Treasurer, an old squatter, Mr.—afterwards Sir R. R.—Mackenzie. Some of the provisions of the old orders in Council were followed; they accepted the unsettled districts as declared in them. The intermediate were abolished. Applications for licenses for a year were to be accompanied by a clear description of runs, to be not less than 25 nor more than 100 square miles, with a fee of 10s. per square mile. These entitled the lessee to a lease of 14 years. The land to be stocked at the time of application to be one-fourth of its grazing capabilities.

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This was fixed by the act at 100 sheep or 20 head of cattle to the square mile; the rent to be appraised after four years for the second and third remaining periods of five years each, at the commencement of each period. As to the runs tendered for and still unstocked, the provisions were extended, but lessees were compelled to stock their land to one-fourth of the extent fixed by the act. The tide of speculation in unoccupied land was stayed, there arose a great demand for stock of all kinds, and those pastoralists in the south, who had flocks and herds to dispose of, realised great prices. Afterwards the colony passed through some troublesome years, and a Relief Act was required; and as a vast area of the young colony had still to be occupied, encouragement was held out to settlers to take up runs. The Pastoral Leases Act of 1869, gave another impetus to the settlement of outside districts, and acted as a relief to many who had taken up runs under the previous acts. The new leases were to be for a term of 21 years, and the new Act also dealt with leases under existing acts. Where new country was applied for, a license had to be taken out, and a declaration made that the country was stocked to one-fourth of its grazing capabilities, the rent being 5s. per square mile for the first 7 years; 10s. for the second term, and 15s. for the third term. Every succeeding Government tried a new Land Bill, some dealing with selection, land orders to new arrivals being part of the system; but the tendency of all succeeding land legislation down to the present day has been to allow more liberal terms to the prospective selector. The conditions were made so restrictive in the first days as to lead one to conclude that land selection was almost a crime; whereas the genuine selector in remote districts has enough to contend with in opening his land for some kind of cultivation and facing the seasons, etc., without being forced to make improvements he will not require. The grazing selector is a coming power in the land; a grade between the old squatter and the small selector. The discovery of artesian water will be a factor of the utmost importance to him as tending to assure his position from loss by drought. The grazing selector is spreading over the interior rapidly; and before the expiration of the leases now in existence, more land legislation is sure to be introduced to liberalise the terms and initiate a system for obtaining the freehold of parts of these large grazing farms. The history of our land laws shows them to have been simply experimental at every stage, hence the need for repeated alterations.

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It would have been a good thing for Queensland, I might say for Australia, if a similar policy to that of the United States of America had been followed, namely the throwing open of the public estate on the most liberal terms and the encouragement of private enterprise in railways.

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## CHAPTER II. THE NAVIGATORS.

According to historical record, the first part of Australia discovered by Europeans, was the northern part of Queensland, and it also bears the mournful distinction of being the first scene of their death at the hands of the natives. Nearly three hundred years ago, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, a boat's crew belonging to the "Duyfken," one of the early Dutch vessels exploring there, was cut off and killed. The knowledge of the country obtained in those days produced no results as regards settlement, and very little addition was made to geographical knowledge until Captain Cook discovered and made known the eastern seaboard of North Queensland. The occupation and settlement of this large territory was initiated by the enterprise of pastoralists from the southern districts in search of new runs for their stock. Thus the first record of Queensland is of the North; her growth and settlement comes from the South.

The Dutch yacht "Duyfken," despatched from Bantam in November, 1605, to explore the island of New Guinea, sailed along what was thought to be the west side of that country, as far as 14 deg. South latitude. The furthest point reached was marked on their maps Cape Keer Weer, or Turnagain, and the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria were supposed to be a part of New Guinea. Torres was the first to sail between New Guinea and the mainland of Australia; he commanded the second vessel of an expedition fitted out by the Spaniards for the purpose of discovery in 1606. He sailed through from the eastern side, and he describes the numerous islands lying between New Guinea and Cape York. It is probable he passed in view of the mainland, and his name is perpetuated in that of the Straits. The Gulf of Carpentaria is supposed to have been

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named by Tasman after the Governor of the East India Company; and so little by little the coast was explored, and the outline of Australia mapped out, until Captain Cook's memorable discoveries of the east coast completed the chart of Australia and its history commenced. The west coast had been visited frequently by many Dutch ships, as it lay in their line of route in sailing to Batavia. Dampier, in 1688, was the first Englishman to land there, and his description of the country and the natives was far from encouraging. He spoke of them as the worst people he had ever met, and the country as the meanest. It was not until 1770, when Captain Cook ran the east coast up from Cape Everard to Cape York, and took possession of the whole territory in the name of King George the Third, that the veil began to lift from this land of silence and profound mystery. His voyage furnished the most reliable and scientific information about the coast line of Australia hitherto published. Captain Cook had been commissioned by the English Government to make a scientific expedition to the island of Otaheite, as it was then called, to witness the transit of Venus, on June 3rd, 1769. He was accompanied by Dr. Solander as a botanist, and Mr. Banks (afterwards Sir Joseph Banks), as a naturalist. After carrying out his commission, he sailed in search of the southern continent. He circumnavigated New Zealand, and thence steered westward till he sighted the shores of Australia on April 19th, 1770. After landing at Botany Bay on the 28th of the same month, he sailed north along the east coast to Torres Straits. He passed and named Moreton Bay and Wide Bay, and rounded Breaksea Spit on the north of Great Sandy Island, named Cape Capricorn, and Keppel Bay, Whitsunday Passage, Cleveland Bay, and Endeavour River, where he stayed some time to repair his vessel, the "Endeavour." The spot where he beached his ship is now Cooktown, and a monument stands where his vessel was careened under Grassy Hill. Many of the principal headlands, bays, and islands, along the coast were named by him. Finally, he passed through Torres Straits, naming Prince of Wales Island, and Booby Island, and then sailed homeward by Timor and Sumatra.

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Captain Matthew Flinders, navigator and discoverer, gave up his whole life to the cause of discovery, having as a young man in company with Bass, made trips along the southern coast of Australia in an open boat, soon after the settlement of Sydney. In 1799, he sailed from Sydney to explore Moreton and Hervey Bays in the "Norfolk," and went as far as Port Curtis, landing at several places and examining the country. He was appointed to the command of the "Investigator" in 1801, and arrived in Sydney in May, 1802; thence he proceeded up what is now the Queensland coast, which he examined from Sandy Cape northwards. He named Mount Larcombe, near Gladstone; surveyed Keppel Bay and other places, correcting and adding to Cook's charts; he sailed into the open ocean through the Great Barrier Reef in latitude 19 degs. 9 mins., longitude 148 degs., after many narrow escapes among the shoals and reefs. His destination was the Gulf of Carpentaria, and on his way he sighted Murray Island, where he saw large numbers of natives using well-constructed canoes with sails; from thence he steered west, anchoring close to one of the Prince of Wales Islands, where he and his crew mistook the large anthills for native habitations; then steering southwards, he found himself in the Gulf of Carpentaria, of which very little was then known. Flinders was the first English navigator to sail along its coasts, where such shallow waters prevail that they were at times afraid to go within three miles of the low shores, and had to be content with merely viewing the tops of the distant mangroves showing above the water.

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There is only one tide in the twenty-four hours; it takes twelve hours for the tide to flow in, and twelve hours for it to flow out again; and very uninteresting is the aspect of the coast line sailing down the Gulf. Flinders anchored near Sweer's Island, which he named, and examined Bentinck, Mornington, and Bountiful Islands adjacent thereto, the whole group being called Wellesley's Islands. An inspection made here of the "Investigator" showed that there was scarcely a sound timber left in her, and the wonder was that she had kept afloat so long; however, Flinders determined to go on with his explorations. One island was called Bountiful Island from the immense number of turtles and turtles' eggs which were there procured, and when leaving on the continuation of their course, they took forty-six turtles with them averaging 300 lbs. each.

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There is at the present day on Sweer's Island, a well containing pure fresh water called Flinders' well, supposed to have been sunk by him, and near to it was a tree marked by him. This tree was standing in 1866-8, but as it showed signs of decay, it was removed in 1888 by Pilot Jones, and sent to the Brisbane Museum, where it now is. This tree (which is generally known as the "Investigator" tree) has a number of dates and names carved thereon, as follows:—

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- 1.—1781, "Lowy," name of early Dutch exploring vessel, commanded by Captain Tasman, after whom the Island of Tasmania is named.
- 2.—1798, and some Chinese characters.
- 3.—1802, "Investigator." "Robert Devine." (Devine was the first lieutenant of Flinders' ship "Investigator.")
- 4.—1841, "Stokes." (Captain Stokes commanded the "Beagle," surveying ship, which visited the Gulf in 1841.)
- 5.—1856, "Chimmo." (Lieutenant Chimmo commanded the "Sandfly," surveying vessel.)

In skirting the western shores of the Gulf, Flinders identified many leading features which were marked in Tasman’s chart, and which were found quite correct. On the last day of 1802, the “Investigator” was in sight of Cape Maria, which was found to be on an island. To the west was a large bay or bight, called by the Dutch Limmen’s Bight; and the whole coastal line seemed to be thickly inhabited by natives. Flinders mentions seeing many traces of Malay occupation along the shores of the islands of the Gulf—temporary occupation for the purpose of collecting *beche de mer*. Blue Mud Bay was so named by him on account of the nature of the bottom. This bay was surveyed. The country beyond was found to be higher and more interesting than the almost uniformly low shores of the Gulf they had been skirting for so many hundreds of miles. Melville Bay completed the examination of the Gulf of Carpentaria, which had taken one hundred and five days; the circuit being twelve hundred miles. Shortly afterwards they fell in with six Malay proas, held intercourse with the crews, and learned that the object of their expedition was to find trepang, or *beche de mer*; and as they had been trading for many years on the northern coasts of Australia, it is evident that they must have been well acquainted with the seas and shores of the Gulf. Flinders sailed for Timor, and thence to Sydney, as his vessel was now utterly unseaworthy, and reached the harbour in June, 1803.

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His vessel after arrival was condemned, and Flinders determined to go to England to procure another ship to continue his surveys of the coast. On his way home, he was wrecked on a reef, and, returning to Sydney, obtained a small craft, in which he made another start, but, touching at Mauritius, was detained a prisoner for six years by the French, notwithstanding his passport as an explorer. After his release, he set about editing his journals and preparing an account of his researches. He completed this work, but died on the very day his book was published. No navigator or explorer has done more than Flinders in the matter of accurate surveys, or in the boldness of his undertakings, and his great work for Australia was entirely unrewarded. He spent his life in voyaging and discovery, and suffered many hardships, besides imprisonment.

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One of the largest and most important rivers flowing into the Gulf of Carpentaria has been named after him “The Flinders.”

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In 1823, an expedition was sent out from Sydney under the command of Lieutenant Oxley to survey Port Curtis, Moreton Bay, and Port Bowen, and to report upon a site for a penal establishment. The party went up the Tweed River some miles, and then went northward to Port Curtis harbour. After landing in several places, a river was discovered which was named the Boyne. The vessel employed on this service was the “Mermaid,” and finding nothing about Port Curtis suitable for a settlement, Oxley returned south, and anchored at the mouth of the Bribie Island passage, which had not been visited by Europeans since Flinders landed there in 1799, and called it Pumicestone River. Here they were joined by two white men, Pamphlet and Finnegan by name, who had, with one other, been cast away on Moreton Island a short time previously, and had since been living with the blacks. These men piloted Oxley into the Brisbane River, which was named by him after Sir Thomas Brisbane, Governor of New South Wales. They pulled up the river a long way above the present site of the city, and admired the beautiful scenery along its banks. This discovery led to the occupation of Moreton Bay as a penal settlement, and the foundation of the town of Brisbane.

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Captain Wickham and Lieutenant Stokes of the “Beagle” were surveying the coast in that vessel, from 1838 to 1843, and Lieutenant Stokes afterwards wrote an account of their journeying. They named the Adelaide and Victoria Rivers on the north-west coast, both of which they located and explored. In 1841, the “Beagle” was on the east coast. She passed Magnetic Island, and sailed through Torres Straits into the Gulf of Carpentaria on an exploring cruise. In latitude 17 deg. 36 min., they entered a large river, which was followed up a long way in the boats, and was called the Flinders; it is one of the principal rivers entering the Gulf. Further west, in 1840, they had discovered and pulled the boats up the Albert River. Stokes was astonished at the open country found on the Albert. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen but open extensive plains, which he named “The Plains of Promise.” The fine stream of the Albert was followed until the boats were checked by dead timber about fifty miles from the entrance. The geography of northern tropical Australia owes a great deal to Stokes, who wrote most interesting accounts of his journeys.

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Stokes surveyed and charted the estuaries of the Albert and Flinders Rivers, and he named Disaster Inlet, Morning Inlet, Bynoe Inlet, Accident Inlet, and the Van Diemen River, the latter he also examined and charted for some miles up from its mouth.

Mr. G. Phillips, in 1866-8, made the first examinations and surveys of Morning Inlet, Bynoe Inlet, (which he found to be a delta of the Flinders), Norman River, Accident Inlet, and the Gilbert River. Mr. Phillips was accompanied by the late Mr. W. Landsborough, the work being done in an open boat belonging to the Customs Department.

H.M.S. "Rattlesnake" left Portsmouth in 1846, under Captain Stanley, on a surveying and scientific cruise. She reached Queensland waters in 1847, and visited the Molle Passage, inside of Whitsunday Passage, where some of the most striking and charming scenery on the north coast of Queensland is to be found. They went as far as Cape Upstart, and failing to find water ashore, returned to Sydney. In 1848, they returned to the northern coasts, bringing the "Tam o' Shanter," barque, on board of which were all the members and outfit of Kennedy's exploring party. Captain Stanley assisted Kennedy to land at Rockingham Bay and make a start on his ill-fated trip to Cape York.

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They found cocoanut trees growing on the Frankland Islands, the only instance known of their indigenous growth on the coast of Australia.

They rescued from Prince of Wales Island a white woman who had been four and a half years among the blacks. She was the sole survivor of the crew of a whaling cutter, the "American," wrecked on Brampton Shoal; she had been adopted by the tribe, and spoke the language fluently; she returned to her parents in Sydney when the "Rattlesnake" reached port. Professor Huxley, the scientist, was one of the party of the "Rattlesnake."

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## **CHAPTER III. INLAND EXPLORATION.**

The cause of exploration and discovery in Australia has never lacked enthusiastic volunteers, whether on sea or land. Like the North Pole, the hidden secrets of the continent have always attracted men of enterprise and energy anxious to penetrate the veil of mystery and silence that has hung over this vast territory since Creation's dawn. Little by little has the land been explored and opened up for occupation; and those geographical secrets so long sought after have been unfolded as an open page for all to study and make use of. The records of some of the early pioneers, the motives which promoted their search, their hardships, and their journeyings, their failures and their endurance, will always remain an interesting portion of colonial history.

The explorers were types of the men of a generation now gone by; they were men who endured a thousand perils and hardships to solve the mystery of Australian geography. By their enterprise and discoveries, they became the forerunners of the early pastoral pioneers who opened up the vast plains of the interior to occupation, and settled the towns and ports of the coast. The navigators were the first to make known the outlines of the country, then the explorers followed, starting from various points to trace its geographical features, follow the courses of its rivers, and investigate the suitability of the soil and herbage for the sustenance of stock. In this manner was the path opened for the pioneer squatter or pastoralist with his flocks and herds to settle on and portion out the land, and turn the wilderness to profit and occupation. The skeleton map of the country being traced out, the details were worked in gradually by the spirit of enterprise and adventure that has always been ready in these lands for such work.

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The first land explorer of the territory now called Queensland, was, in point of time, Allan Cunningham, botanist, explorer, and collector for the Royal Gardens at Kew, who arrived in New South Wales in 1816. After many journeyings on sea along the coasts of Australia, and inland to the Liverpool Plains through the Blue Mountains, he left the Hunter River in 1827 with a party of six men and eleven horses, discovering the Darling Downs, and thus opening the way to settlement in Queensland. He named Canning Downs on this trip, and returned the same year. In the following year, 1828, he went by sea to Brisbane, and connected that port with the Darling Downs by discovering a gap in the coast range, still known as Cunningham's Gap. He spent most of his life collecting and exploring, and died at the early age of 48 in Sydney. His brother, Richard Cunningham, also botanist and collector, accompanied Sir Thomas Mitchell in one of his early trips; while camped on the Bogan, he wandered away, lost himself, and was killed by the blacks.

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Of all the explorers who have taken a prominent part in discovering the inland territory of Australia in general, and Queensland in particular, Dr. Leichhardt occupies the most conspicuous position, and his discoveries have been followed by the most extensive and advantageous results. He explored all the country on the east coast inland as far as the Mitchell River, and on the northern coast as far as Port Essington. He was a man of considerable scientific attainments, and his travels had a marked effect in inducing settlement along his line of march. His memorable trip from Brisbane to Port Essington reflects great honour on his memory, and his name will last as long as colonial history.

Leichhardt left Sydney in 1844 in the steamer "Sovereign" for Brisbane; he had with him Calvert, Roper, Murphy, Phillips, and Harry Broome, an aboriginal. The party later on was joined by Gilbert, a naturalist, and one coloured man, a native. They left Jimbour on the Darling Downs, on October 1st, 1844, crossed the Dawson on November 6th, and on the 27th Leichhardt named the Expedition Range. Two days after that they came to the Comet River, so named because a comet was seen there. On December 31st, the party came across the remains of a camp evidently made by a white man, consisting of a ridge pole and forks cut with a sharp iron instrument, probably

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the halting place of some adventurous pioneers who travelled on the outside fringe of all settlement, and who frequently made long journeys into the unknown land.

On January 10th, they reached the Mackenzie River, and on February 13th were on the Isaacs River, coming from the north-west, which they named after F. Isaacs of Darling Downs. Leichhardt's account of his journey is very interesting. It gives a description of the geological formations, of the mountains and peaks, and also a botanical description of the flora of the country through which he passed. He describes the game, some of which they turned to account to supplement their already scanty fare. The expedition passed on March 7th from the heads of the Isaacs to another creek, which they called Suttor Creek, after Mr. Suttor of New South Wales, who had contributed four bullocks to the expedition. The stream enlarging with the additions of other creeks, eventually merged into the Suttor River, which they continued to follow down, passing a great number of native encampments on the way, and observing large numbers of water fowl and other game. The junction of the Cape River was passed, and they camped close to a mount which they called Mount McConnel, after Fred McConnel, who had contributed to the expedition. Near here they discovered the junction of the Suttor with a large river coming from the north, called the Burdekin, after Mr. Burdekin of Sydney, who had also liberally contributed to the expedition. The river is described by Leichhardt as being here about a mile wide, with traces of very high floods coming down its channel; the junction of the two rivers is in latitude 20 deg. 37 min. 13 sec. On April 22nd, after following up the Burdekin through fine open country well grassed, they discovered the Clarke River coming in from the south-west, called after the Rev. W. B. Clarke, of Sydney.

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The course of the Burdekin River, which was closely traced, served the little party through more than two degrees of latitude and the same of longitude, with a never failing supply of pure water and good grass, and then passing over some large fields of basalt towards the north-west, they arrived on another watershed, the first river of which they called the Lynd, after Mr. R. Lynd, a gentleman to whom the explorer was much indebted. The first camp on the Lynd was in latitude 17 deg. 58 min.; the country throughout its course was very rough, consisting mostly of large granite boulders; its course was generally north-west, and the adventurous party were now on waters flowing into the Gulf of Carpentaria. The Lynd was followed to its junction with the Mitchell in latitude 16 deg. 30 sec., and a marked tree of Leichhardt's is still visible at the junction of the two streams. Although they were so far from the termination of their journey, their flour had already been exhausted for several weeks, their sugar bags were empty as well, they were also without salt, and had scarcely any clothes. However, the explorer speaks in great praise of the congenial climate they were experiencing, the weather being almost perfect (this in June). Having followed the course of the Mitchell River till it took them past the latitude of the head of the Gulf, it was decided to leave it, and their first camp thereafter was in latitude 15 deg. 52 min. 38 sec. Three days after leaving the Mitchell, the party was attacked by the natives early in the night; Gilbert was killed at once, Calvert and Roper were badly wounded, and the whole party had a narrow escape from total destruction. After burying their companion, they continued their journey towards the Gulf, where the finding of salt water in the rivers gave them great encouragement.

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One river they named the Gilbert after their late companion, and after crossing all the rivers flowing into the Gulf within tidal influence, the party steered north-west, naming Beame's Brook and the Nicholson River after two of Leichhardt's benefactors. They had now crossed Captain Stokes' Plains of Promise, and were making their way along the coast to Port Essington. They travelled through poor, scrubby, rough country, crossing many rivers and creeks, and enduring a thousand hardships, till on September 21st they reached the largest salt water river they had seen, with islands in it; this they called the Macarthur, after the Macarthurs of Camden, who had given liberal support to Leichhardt. Continuing north-west through poor, scrubby country, on October 9th they encamped on what was named the Limmen Bight River on account of its debouching into Limmen Bight, and about the 19th, the Roper was discovered and named after a member of the expedition. Here they had the misfortune to have three of their horses drowned, and Leichhardt was compelled to leave behind much of his valuable collection of plants and stones; a matter that grieved him sorely. A great quantity of game was obtained here, ducks, geese, and emus were killed every day, and made a welcome addition to their fare of dried or jerked bullock meat. They thickened their soup with green hide, which was considered a treat; they made coffee from a bean found growing along the river banks, which Leichhardt called the "River Bean" of the Mackenzie; and they were constantly making experiments, sometimes rather dangerous, as to the value as food of the seeds and fruits they found on their line of march.

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The South Alligator River was reached, and the same north-west course, continued through rocky country, which lamed their two remaining bullocks, and when they reached what Leichhardt considered the East Alligator River over some extensive plain country in which large numbers of geese and ducks were seen, they were full of hope on meeting some friendly natives, who could speak a few words of English, evidently visitors to the settlement towards which our way-worn explorers were trying to find their road. Many tracks of buffaloes were seen, and one was shot, and made a welcome change from their usual fare. Eventually they reached Port Essington, where Captain Macarthur gave them a kindly welcome, and after a month's rest they left in the "Heroine," arriving in Sydney March 29th, 1846. Their arrival created great astonishment and delight, as they had been mourned as dead for a long time. The Legislative Council granted £1,000, and the public subscribed £1,578 to the party, which was presented to them by the Speaker of the Legislative Council at a large public gathering in the School of Arts in Sydney.

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Leichhardt's journey from Moreton Bay to Port Essington furnished the first knowledge we had of the capabilities of North Queensland. It was the turning of its first leaf of history, for his journey was for the greater part through the territory now comprised within its boundaries. The record of his trials, hardships, and endurance, will stand unequalled among all histories of explorations in any part of Australia.

Mr. John Roper, who was badly speared in the night attack by blacks and lost the use of one eye afterwards, died a few years ago at Merriwa, New South Wales, and was the last survivor of Leichhardt's first trip to Port Essington.

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On a subsequent exploring trip, in which he intended to cross Australia from east to west, Leichhardt and his party disappeared, and no definite information has ever been forthcoming as to the fate that overtook them. On this occasion he started from the Darling Downs, and his companions were Hentig, Classan, Donald Stuart, Kelly, and two natives, Womai and Billy. His last letter is dated April 4th, 1848, from Macpherson's station—Coogoon, beyond Mount Abundance, situated about six miles west of the present town of Roma.

Traces have been discovered of their journey through a part of the Flinders River country. Two horses found by Duncan Macintyre on the Dugald, a branch of the Cloncurry, about 1860, were identified as having belonged to Leichhardt's expedition, and some traces were discovered by A. C. Gregory in latitude 24 deg. south, consisting of a marked tree at one of his old camps. These form the only records we possess of the ill-fated travellers. Drought may have split his party up in the desert interior, and, disorganised and scattered, they would fall an easy prey to thirst and delirium, for so soon does extreme thirst in a hot and dry climate demoralise the strongest men, that hope is lost even in a few hours, and delirium sets in. People thus distracted, lie down under the nearest bush to die, after having wandered to every point of the compass in search of water until their strength fails. On the other hand, the party may have been destroyed by flood, by hunger, or by the attacks of hostile natives, a mutiny may have broken out and the party, split up into fragments, may have wandered by devious paths and perished in detail.

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Many expeditions were sent out in search of the lost explorers, and although not able to find any definite traces of his route, or to account for his disappearance, they were instrumental in opening up vast tracts of hitherto unknown territory, and adding largely to the knowledge of the geography of the interior.

The following beautiful verses were written by Lynd, a friend of Leichhardt's, and have been set to music:—

“Ye who prepare with pilgrim feet  
Your long and doubtful path to wend.  
If whitening on the waste ye meet  
The relics of my martyred friend.

“His bones with reverence ye shall bear.  
To where some crystal streamlet flows:  
There by its mossy banks prepare  
The pillow of his long repose.

“It shall be by a stream whose tides  
Are drank by birds of every wing,  
Where Nature resting but abides  
The earliest awakening touch of spring.

“But raise no stone to mark the place.  
For faithful to the hopes of man.  
The Being he so loved to trace,  
Shall breathe upon his bones again.

“Oh meet that he who so carest,  
All bounteous Nature's varied charms,  
That he her martyred son should rest  
Within his mother's fondest arms.

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“And there upon the path he trod,  
And bravely led his desert band,  
Shall science like the smile of God  
Come brightening o'er the promised land.

“How will her pilgrims hail the power,  
Beneath the drooping Myall's gloom.  
To sit at eve and muse an hour,  
And pluck a leaf from Leichhardt's tomb.”

—Lynd.

The following descriptions are taken from a journal of an expedition into the interior of tropical Australia in search of a route from Sydney to the Gulf of Carpentaria by Lieut.-Colonel Sir T. L. Mitchell, Surveyor-General of New South Wales, in 1845.

The money for this attempt was found by the Legislative Council of New South Wales. The Secretary for the Colonies sanctioned the expedition, which had been suggested by the leader himself, during a slack time in his department. This trip, though it never approached the Gulf, or even its watershed—which was its main object at starting—nevertheless discovered such an extent of available country as to make it one of the most valuable and interesting expeditions that were ever carried out in North Queensland. This was Mitchell's third exploring trip, and it is referred to now, as it relates to the discovery and opening up of a large part of western, as well as a part of North Queensland. There is no doubt that Mitchell would have reached the Gulf waters if his equipment had not been so cumbersome and altogether dependent on good seasons. An account of his outfit will be interesting reading in these times when people think little of moving from the South to the North of Australia with any kind of a party, and his departure must have looked like the start of a small army on the move to conquer a new country. Sir Thomas Mitchell took with him eight drays drawn by eighty bullocks, two iron boats, seventeen horses (four being private property), and three light carts; these were the modes of conveyance. There were 250 sheep to travel with the party as a meat supply. Other stores consisted of gelatine and a small quantity of pork. The party consisted of thirty persons, most of whom were prisoners of the Crown in different stages of probation, whose only incentive to obedience and fidelity was the prospect of liberty at the end of the journey. According to the testimony of their leader, they performed their work throughout creditably; they were volunteers from among the convicts of Cockatoo Island, and were eager to be employed on the expedition. Some of those engaged on a previous trip were included in this expedition.

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The whole party left Parramatta on November 17th, 1845, and crossed the Bogan on December 23rd, that country being then settled with stations, the result of discoveries made in previous years by the same intrepid explorer. Their journey led them by St. George's Bridge, the present site of the town of St. George, on to the Maranoa River, then entirely unsettled, and this river was followed up towards its source. Touching on the Warrego, discovering Lake Salvator, and passing the present site of Mantuan Downs, they reached the head of Belyando. This was thought at first to be a river likely to lead to the Gulf country, but after following it down nearly to the latitude where a river was described by Leichhardt as joining the Suttor from the westward, Mitchell decided it was a coast river, and so the party returned on their tracks to a depôt camp which had been established on the Maranoa, coming to the conclusion that the rivers of Carpentaria must be sought for much further to the westward. Therefore, continuing their travels in this direction, the Nive River was discovered, and this was thought for a time to be a water leading to the Gulf, but after following it towards the south-east, the party turned northwards, and thus discovered the far-famed Barcoo River, which they thought was the Victoria of Wickham and Stokes. Again high hopes were entertained that at last a river was found that would lead them to the desired end, and that this was a Gulf River. They followed the course through all the splendid downs country, below where the Alice joins it, and found it was going much too far to the south to be a Gulf river, being thus again disappointed in their expectations. Mitchell speaks in glowing terms of the country through which they passed, and named Mount Northampton and Mount Enniskillen, two prominent landmarks. Returning to his party, he took the route home by the Barwon and Namoi, and so back to Sydney, which all reached in safety after an absence of over twelve months. Mitchell's discovery of the Barcoo River was due to a division of his party, and a light equipment, by which he could advance as much as twenty or twenty-five miles a day, and still keep a record of his latitude and progress.

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This trip of Mitchell's led to the appointment of his second in command, Mr. E. Kennedy, to return and discover where the Victoria or Barcoo really went to, and to obtain further information of the mysterious interior of the great Australian continent, and its peculiar river system. Mitchell was famous for his exploring trips in the southern part of Australia, and his two volumes of explorations remain a classic in literature. His account of Australia Felix and the Werribee are most interesting. Mitchell invariably traversed his route with compass and chain, so that his positions can always be verified.

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Edward Kennedy, who was second in command under Sir T. L. Mitchell when the Barcoo was discovered, was appointed to lead a party to the same districts in 1847. He followed down the Barcoo to where a large river came in from the north, which he named the Thomson, after Sir E. Deas Thomson, of Sydney. The Barcoo he identified with Mitchell's Victoria, which at a lower stage is called Cooper's Creek. Kennedy intended to go to the Gulf of Carpentaria, but the blacks removed his stock of rations left at the Barcoo, and so he decided to return to Sydney by way of the Warrego, Maranoa, Culgoa, and Barwon Rivers.

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The Gregory brothers had successfully conducted several exploring expeditions in West Australia before entering on those journeys in North Queensland that have helped to make known its north-eastern parts. A letter from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Duke of Newcastle, to the Governors in Australia, was received, in which it was recommended that an expedition should be organised for the exploration of the unknown interior of Australia, stating that a sum of £5,000 had been voted by the Imperial Government for the purpose, and suggesting that Mr. A. C. Gregory should be appointed to the command, and Brisbane be the point of departure. The

expedition was to be conveyed by sea to the mouth of the Victoria River, on the northern coast of Australia. It was to be an Imperial expedition, paid for by the Imperial Government, for the purpose of developing the vast and unknown resources of the continent. It was called the North Australian Exploring Expedition. The preliminary arrangements having been completed, the stores, equipment, and a portion of the party were embarked at Sydney on the barque "Monarch," and the schooner "Tom Tough," and sailed for Moreton Bay on July 18th, 1855, arriving at the bar of the Brisbane River on the 22nd. The horses and sheep were collected at Eagle Farm by Mr. H. C. Gregory, and shipped on board the "Monarch" on July 31st. After some difficulties in getting over the bar and obtaining the necessary supply of water at Moreton Island, the expedition may be said to have started on its responsible task on August 12th, 1855.

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The party consisted of eighteen persons, the principal members being:—Commander, A. C. Gregory; Assistant Commander, H. C. Gregory; Geologist, J. S. Wilson; Artist and Storekeeper, J. Baines; Surveyor and Naturalist, J. R. Elsey; Botanist, F. von Muller; Collector and Preserver, J. Flood. The stock consisted of fifty horses and two hundred sheep; and eighteen months' supply of rations were taken.

They sighted Port Essington on September 1st, but the next day the "Monarch" grounded at high water on a reef, and was not worked off for eight days, during which time the vessel lay on her side, and the horses suffered very much in consequence, indeed, the subsequent loss of numbers of them is attributed to the hardships endured during the period. The horses were landed at Treachery Bay under great difficulties, having to swim two miles before reaching the shore. Three were drowned, one lost in mud, and one went mad and rushed away into the bush and was lost. The "Monarch" sailed for Singapore, while the "Tom Tough" proceeded up the Victoria River, where Mr. Gregory and some of the party took the horses by easy stages to meet them, as they were so weak from the knocking about on the voyage that they had frequently to be lifted up. This little trip occupied three weeks before they joined the party on the schooner. When they met, it was to learn that mishaps had again occurred, the vessel had grounded on the rocks, and much of the provisions had been damaged by salt water; the vessel had also suffered injury; some of the sheep had died from want of water, and the rest were too poor to kill. The record is one continuous struggle with misfortune, but owing to good general-ship and patience, progress was made, and the main objects of the expedition being constantly kept in view, each step taken was one in advance.

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After the horses had recovered a little from their journey, Mr. Gregory and a small party made an exploring trip towards the interior, and to the south to latitude 20 deg. 16 min. 22 sec., passing through some inferior country, and touching the Great Sandy Desert seen by Sturt, red ridges of sand running east and west, covered with the inhospitable *Triodia* or *Spinifex* grass. As his object was to visit the Gulf country, he retraced his steps to the camp on the Victoria River; and after adjusting matters there, dividing his party and sending the vessel to Coepang for supplies, with directions to come to the Albert River, he started on his journey to the Gulf of Carpentaria on June 21st, 1856. His party comprised the two Gregorys, Dr. Mueller, Elsey, Bowman, Dean, and Melville, seven saddle and twenty-seven pack-horses, with five months' provisions.

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They followed down the Elsey River to the Roper, so called by Leichhardt, and passed a camp of some explorers some six or seven years old, where trees had been cut with sharp axes. They reached the Macarthur River on August 4th, after passing through much poor country covered with inferior grasses. Their track skirted the tableland, and as the journal states, the country was barren and inhospitable in the extreme. The Albert River was reached on August 30th, 1856, and not finding any traces of the "Tom Tough" having been there, the explorer started from that point to Moreton Bay. Coming to a large river, which Leichhardt thought to be the Albert, Mr. Gregory named it after the great explorer, and it is now known as the Leichhardt. This river they crossed, and travelled east-south-east. After crossing the Flinders River, where the country consisted of open plains, the party travelled east-north-east through a flat ti-tree country, north of what is now the Croydon goldfield, a barren, flat, and dismal prospect. Gregory says in his journal, that had the season been earlier, he would have preferred travelling up the Flinders, and turning to the Clarke from its upper branches. However, they moved on to the Gilbert River, and followed it up through rocky defiles and rough granite country till they reached the Burdekin River on October 16th; the next day they passed one of Leichhardt's stopping places, where he camped on April 26th, 1845, in latitude 19 deg. 37 min. S. They were living on horseflesh at this time, and mention is made of a horse that had not carried a pack since leaving the Gilbert, being killed for food, and its flesh dried in the sun, forming what is called jerked meat, an article well known to early pioneers when salt was absent. They frequently saw the blacks, who mostly ran away at the sight of the horses, probably the first they had ever seen; but no casualty happened during the whole trip, owing to the good management of the leader, and the caution always shown where danger was likely. On October 30th they camped near the Suttor River, with Mount McConnell in view. After the junction of the Suttor and Burdekin Rivers had been passed, the Suttor was followed up past the latitude of Sir Thomas Mitchell's camp on the Belyando, and thus his route connected up with Dr. Leichhardt's. They left the Belyando, and on November 8th, killed the eleven months' old filly, born on the Victoria River after landing, the flesh was cured by drying, and the hair scraped off the hide, which was made into soup. They passed the Mackenzie River, went on to the Comet, below the junction, and found a camp of Leichhardt's party on their second journey. They reached the Dawson River, and following a dray track, they came again in contact with civilisation at Connor and Fitz's station, where they were hospitably received. They then travelled past Rannes (Hay's station), Rawbelle, Boondooma, Taminga, Nanango, Kilcoy, Durundur, reaching Brisbane on December 16th, 1856.

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Mr. A. C. Gregory's expedition in search of Leichhardt was equipped by the New South Wales Government. The objects of this expedition were primarily to search for traces of Leichhardt and his party, and secondly the examination of the country in the intervening spaces between the tracks of previous explorers. The expedition was organised in Sydney, and made a start from Juandah, on the Dawson River, on March 24th, 1857. They crossed the dense scrubs and basaltic ridge dividing the Dawson waters from those trending to the west, flowing into the basin of the Maranoa River. The Maranoa was reached in latitude 25 deg. 45 min., and they followed it up to Mount Owen, advanced to the Warrego River, westward from there to the Nive, and pursued a north-north-west course to the Barcoo River, then called the Victoria. As the captain of the "Beagle" had discovered and named the Victoria River on the north-west coast first, the name of Sir T. Mitchell's river was changed to the Barcoo, a native name. When Mr. Gregory traversed this fine country, one of those devastating periodical droughts that visit this inland territory now and again, must have been prevailing for many months, and had left the land a wilderness. That land Mitchell had described in 1846 in glowing language as the fairest that the sun shone on, with pastures and herbage equal to all the wants of man, and water in abundance covered with wild fowl. When Gregory passed through it in 1857, it was bare of all vegetation, there was scarcely any water in the bed of the river, and that only at long intervals, nothing but the bare brown earth visible.

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In latitude 24 deg. 35 min. S., longitude 136 deg. 6 min., a Moreton Bay ash tree was discovered with the letter cut in, and the stumps of some small trees cut with an axe, evidently one of Leichhardt's camps, but no further traces could be discovered, though both sides of the river were followed down. The Thomson River was reached and followed up to latitude 23 deg. 47 sec., and here they were compelled to retrace their steps owing to the terrible state of the country through drought; it being impossible to travel either north or west, although at that time the country was not stocked. The far-reaching plains were devoid of all vegetation except for drought-resisting herbage. The principal object of their journey had to be abandoned and a southerly course taken, as it was considered madness to travel into the sandy desert bordering on the river during such a season. So, with horses weakened by hard living, they followed down the Thomson, over dry mud plains that wearied both man and beast, and across stony desert ridges to Cooper's Creek and to Lake Torrens. Before reaching the branch of Cooper's Creek called Strezlecki Creek by Captain Sturt, they saw the tracks of two horses lost by that explorer in this locality years before. Their course was continued south-south-west towards Mount Hopeless at the northern extremity of the high ranges of South Australia, which had been visible across the level country at a distance of sixty miles. Eight miles beyond Mount Hopeless, they came to a cattle station, recently established by Mr. Baker. After that they proceeded by easy stages to Adelaide.

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It is, perhaps, with reference to the physical geography of Australia that the results of the expedition are most important, as by connecting the explorations of Sir T. Mitchell, Kennedy, Captain Sturt, and Eyre, the waters of the tropical interior of the eastern portion of the continent were proved to flow towards Spencer's Gulf, if not actually into it, the barometrical observations showing that Lake Torrens, the lowest part of the interior, is decidedly below sea level.<sup>[A]</sup>

[A] There is reason to believe from later and more detailed surveys that Lake Torrens is not below the level of the sea.

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As the people of Victoria were desirous of taking part in the explorations of Northern Australia, a most elaborate and expensive expedition was organised to travel across Australia from Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Great credit is due to the enterprise of the people and the Government of Victoria for this display of public spirit, for, apparently, Victoria had less to gain than any of the other colonies by geographical discoveries in the interior. Robert O'Hara Burke was appointed leader, G. J. Landells second, and W. J. Wills third in command. Burke and Wills and two others reached the Gulf, and named the Cloncurry River; but the notes of the trip do not give much information as to the journey or the country travelled through. The expedition left Melbourne on August 20th, 1860, fifteen men in all, provided with twelve months' provisions, making twenty-one tons of goods. The party was too large and cumbersome, and the time of year was badly chosen for a start; there were no bushmen with them, and the leader was a man unfamiliar with bush life, though full of devotion to the cause he had taken in hand. The record of the trip is one full of disaster, arising from mistakes that could have been avoided had men competent for the task been chosen. They started from Cooper's Creek, where Brahe was left with a depôt store, while Burke, Wills, King, and Grey with three months' provisions set out for the Gulf on December 16th, 1860. The party that had been so well equipped in every way on leaving Melbourne, was reduced to too small a compass when the critical time for action arrived. They followed the edge of the stony desert to the point reached by Sturt on October 21st, 1845, and then steered for the Gulf of Carpentaria, at the mouth of the Flinders. After passing through the Cloncurry Ranges, the little party followed one of the tributaries of that river, one that had numerous palm trees on its banks, which must have been either the Corella or Dugald, to the west of the Cloncurry River, and on February 11th, 1861, in the middle of the wet season, Burke and Wills reached tidal water in the Gulf, on the right bank of the Bynoe River, which is a delta of the Flinders River. Thus the object of the expedition was attained. On the return journey, Grey

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died through exhaustion and weakness. The ground was very heavy for walking owing to the rains, and the only horse had to be abandoned, while the camel was almost too weak to travel, even without any load. Burke, Wills, and King arrived at Cooper's Creek on April 21st, having been absent four and a half months on their trip. They found the depôt had been deserted that morning by Brahe; he, however, had remained several weeks beyond the time he was instructed to stay. Instead of following on his tracks, Burke decided on starting via Mount Hopeless to Adelaide, but not finding water, they returned to Cooper's Creek, growing weaker every day. Their last camel died, and they were forced to live on the seeds of the Nardoo (*Marsilea quadrifida*), which, however, gave them no strength. The blacks treated them kindly, but they left the creek, and then came the mournful end. Burke and Wills died, and Howitt's search party found King, the only survivor of the little band, wasted to a shadow in a camp of the blacks. As no proper record of the journey, or description of the country was made, and in the diary many gaps occur of several days together, the expedition was barren of scientific results. There is merely the fact of visiting the shores of the Gulf, and returning to Cooper's Creek, under the most distressing circumstances and hardships. Although successful in the main, it is a record of sorrow, despondency, and a sacrifice of life. On this expedition camels were used for the first time in Australia. Until the fate of Burke became known, many efforts were made to discover what had become of him, and to this end, there were five exploring parties sent out in search of him. They were Howitt's, Walker's, Landsborough's, Norman's, and McKinlay's, and their discoveries led to an important increase in the knowledge of Australia.

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Mr. A. W. Howitt's party proceeded to the spot where Brahe had kept the depôt, and seeing no traces there of the missing party (although they had dug up the stores left), he searched down the river, and they came on King sitting in a hut which the blacks had made for him. He presented a melancholy appearance, wasted to a shadow, and hardly to be recognised as a civilised being except by the remnants of clothes on him; this was on September 15th, 1861. As soon as King was a little restored, they looked for Wills' remains, and having found them, gave them burial, marking a tree close by; a few days afterwards Burke's bones were found and interred. They called all the blacks around, and presented them with articles such as tomahawks, knives, necklaces, looking glasses, combs, etc., and made them very happy indeed. When the sad story was revealed there was much sorrow and grief throughout Victoria; and it was agreed that Mr. Howitt should go back and bring down the bodies for a public funeral in Melbourne. A large sum of money was voted to the nearest relatives of Burke and Wills, and a grant made to King sufficient to keep him in comfort for life. A searching inquiry was made into the circumstances relative to the conduct of some of the officers of the expedition, and a few of them were severely censured for neglect of duty in not properly supporting the leader.

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One of the expeditions in search of Burke and Wills was led by John McKinlay, who travelled through a great part of North Queensland, and reported favourably on its capacity for settlement. He started from Adelaide in August, 1861, and arrived at the Albert River in May, 1862, thus crossing the continent a second time. He was a bushman well fitted for such an enterprise by experience, endurance, and decision. The second in command was W. O. Hodgkinson, subsequently Minister for Mines in Queensland. McKinlay found a grave near Cooper's Creek which he examined, and found a European buried there, which he understood from the natives to be a white man killed by them, but afterwards it was known to have been Gray's burial place. The party made an excursion into the melancholy desert country described by Sturt many years before, consisting of dry lakes, red sand hills, and stones. They travelled through to the Cloncurry district, and onwards to the Gulf, passing through country now under occupation, Fort Constantine, Clonagh, and Conobie being the principal stations there, and thence over the Leichhardt River to the Albert, which was reached on May 13th. McKinlay expected to receive supplies from the "Victoria," but she had sailed three months before, and thus short of provisions and generally hard up, he had to tackle a long overland journey to the settlements on the eastern side of North Queensland, a most trying and harassing undertaking, which, however, he accomplished successfully. He had first to eat the cattle, then the horses, then the camels. They killed their last camel for food—it was called "Siva"—and it proved a saviour, as they arrived at Harvey and Somer's station, on the Bowen, with their last piece of camel meat, and one horse each left. They had a hard rough trip from the Gulf, travelling in by the Burdekin, and McKinlay proved himself a daring and most persevering and experienced explorer. The McKinlay River—a branch of the Cloncurry—and the township of McKinlay are named after him.

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Though not pertaining to any exploration or discovery connected with North Queensland, it will be interesting to refer shortly to the Horn Exploring Expedition which was carried out on a scientific basis to make known the country in the more central part of the Australian continent. The scientific exploration of central Australia, or that part known as the Macdonnell Ranges, had long been desired by the leading scientific men of Australia. The party consisted of sixteen in all, with twenty-six camels, and two horses, and made a final start from Oodnadatta (which is the northern terminal point of the railway from Adelaide), on May 6th, 1894.

In the very centre of the continent there exists an elevated tract of country known as the Macdonnell Ranges. These mountains, barren and rugged in the extreme, rise to an altitude of nearly 5,000 feet above sea level, while the country surrounding them has an elevation of about 2,000 feet above the sea level, and slopes away towards the coast on every side, which at no point is nearer than 1,000 miles. The mountains are at the head of the Finke River; the region is called Larapintine from the native name of the river. The existence of these ranges saves that portion of the continent from being an absolute desert, as they catch the tropical showers, which flow down the sides of the mountains, and cause inundations in the low country, and a spring of grass, which, however, is not permanent, the rainfall being from five to twelve inches annually. These ranges measure, from east to west, about 400 miles, with a width of from twenty to fifty miles, the entire area covering more than 10,000 square miles of country. Apart from these ranges, there are several remarkable isolated masses, about 32 miles S.S.W. from Lake Amadeus. Rising like an enormous water-worn boulder, half buried in the surrounding sea of sand hills, is that remarkable monolith known as "Ayers' Rock." Its summit can be seen more than forty miles away, as it rises about 1,100 feet above the surrounding plain. The circumference at its base is nearly five miles, and its sides are so steep as to be practically inaccessible, although Mr. W. C. Gosse, the explorer, succeeded with great difficulty in ascending it. It is quite bare of vegetation, except a few fig trees growing in the crevices. Fifteen miles west of Ayers' Rock is another remarkable mountain mass called Mount Olga, rising to 1,500 feet from the plain. The Finke River flows south from these Macdonnell Ranges towards Lake Eyre, and water is only found after floods. Both alluvial gold and quartz reefs are found in the ranges. Professor Ralph Tate, of the University of Adelaide, and Mr. J. A. Watt, of the Sydney University, assisted in drawing up the report.

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## CHAPTER IV. EXPLORERS IN NORTH QUEENSLAND.

The second journey of Edmund Kennedy, in 1848, was confined to the east coast of North Queensland, and is one of the most mournful narratives of disaster and death; only three of the party returning out of the thirteen that started.

The party was hampered with an unsuitable outfit of drays, as well as some undesirable men, unused to the bush and out of accord with the objects of an exploring expedition.

The members of a party going into an unknown country have to depend on the fidelity of each to all, and according to the devotion displayed by each, so will success or failure attend the expedition. Kennedy had men in his party he had better have left behind.

His troubles and trials commenced after landing at Rockingham Bay, near the site of the present town of Cardwell, in trying to pass over swamps, and then cutting his way through tangled, dark, vine-scrubs to the summit of the steepest ranges in North Queensland. They were obliged to leave their carts and harness behind, and wasted much time in looking for a place to ascend the ranges. They quarrelled with the blacks soon after starting, and some of the men took fever. They reached the Herbert, and went into the heads of the Mitchell and Palmer Rivers, passing over the site of the Palmer goldfield. Here the strength of the party began to fail, and horse flesh was their main dependence for food. At Weymouth Bay, Carron and seven men were left, all sick with disappointment and hardship, and in a low state of health. Kennedy and Jacky, with three men, pushed on along the coast northwards to Cape York. One man was wounded by a gun accident, and he and the other two were left at Pudding Pan Hill, and were never heard of again. The leader and Jacky went on, intending to return to the scattered party. They were followed by hostile blacks, who speared the horses, and afterwards mortally wounded Kennedy himself, who died in Jacky's arms. Jacky himself was also speared, but he buried his leader in a grave dug with a tomahawk, and after many hairbreadth escapes and much privation, he reached the northern shore, where the "Ariel" was waiting for the arrival of the party. Only one man, and he an aboriginal, endured to the end, and but for his keen bush knowledge, courage, and splendid devotion, neither of the two other survivors would have been rescued, nor any tidings of the mournful fate of the party have been made known to the world. The "Ariel" sailed to Weymouth Bay, and found the two men, Carron and Goddard, barely alive, the only survivors of the eight left there by Kennedy.

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Kennedy's papers planted in a tree by Jacky, were afterwards recovered by him. When the nature of the country through which Kennedy travelled is understood and its difficulties known, it is no wonder that mishaps occurred to him. Stony mountainous country, thick dark scrubs, long dense grass, with tribes of fierce blacks ready to throw a spear on every occasion, were enough to tax the capacity of any leader, without the accompaniment of sickness, want of rations and disorganisation.

### E. KENNEDY.

His task is ended, his journeying o'er.  
He rests in the scrub, by that far northern shore;  
By the long wash of the Coral Sea,  
Brave Kennedy sleeps now quietly.

Not lonely he lies in his last bed,  
For loving memories o'erbrood his head;  
Kindly to him, the tall ferns lean,  
In love, their fellowship of green.

Sweetly for him, the bird's deep song,  
Is sung when summer days are long;  
Soft drips the dew in the morning sun,  
Rest harassed one, thy task is done.

His native friend, faithful to death,  
Stayed by him to his latest breath;  
Nor thought he had himself to save,  
Till he had made his leader's grave.

Mr. W. Landsborough left Brisbane in the brig "Firefly" on August 24th, 1861, in company with the colonial warship "Victoria," taking the outer passage. Rough weather on the voyage caused distress and a loss of seven horses out of thirty, and they were compelled to seek refuge inside the Barrier Reef at Hardy's Island. The brig grounded broadside on the reef; the masts had to be cut away to save the vessel; and the horses were landed through a large hole cut in the side of the ship. After some delay, the "Victoria" appeared in sight, towed the crippled craft off, and proceeded with her in tow in order to carry out the objects of the expedition. Passing through Torres Straits, they called at Bountiful Island and obtained a good supply of turtles, anchoring in Investigator Roads, situated between Bentinck and Sweer's Islands. Landing on Sweer's Island, they found the wells left by Flinders in 1802, also the "Investigator" tree. After clearing the sand out of the wells, the water was found fresh and good. Mr. Landsborough made a preliminary survey of the Albert River to find a site for landing his horses and for starting on his overland journey.

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The Albert had not been surveyed since Captain Stokes had ascended it as far as Beame's Brook in 1842, but being known, it was appointed a rendezvous for exploring parties. They found no traces of Burke having visited this spot. The hulk of the "Firefly" was towed up the Albert, and used as a depôt for the expedition, and this was her last voyage. The writer saw her early in 1865; she was then in an upright position, close to the left bank of the river, with the tide flowing in and out where the side had been cut open for the horses to land on the reef. The horses soon recruited after landing, the grass round the depôt being excellent. They now got ready for a start to Central Mount Stuart, leaving the "Victoria" to wait ninety days for their return. The party consisted of Mr. Landsborough, Messrs. Campbell and Allison, and two blackboys, Jimmy and Fisherman. Their horses had improved so much that they gave a lot of trouble at first, throwing their packs and scattering the gear over the plains, but they soon quietened down to work. The little expedition followed mainly the Gregory River towards its source, and were much surprised to find a beautiful river with a strongly flowing stream and long reaches of deep water, overhung by pandanus, cabbage-palm, and much tropical foliage. They soon discovered the use of the heart of the palm as a vegetable, though it can only be obtained by the destruction of the tree. Blacks were frequently seen, observing their movements, looking on at a distance, as they usually do at the first sight of a white man; but they did not attempt to interfere with them. The Gregory River is distinct from most of the Gulf rivers. The luxuriant foliage along its banks, cabbage-palms, Leichhardt trees, cedar and pandanus, denote the permanency of the running water, while level plains, covered with fine pasture grasses, extend on either side for scores of miles. They named the Macdam, an anabanch of the Gregory, and observing a river joining on the right side of the Gregory, called it the O'Shannassey; the source of the flowing stream that made the river so useful and picturesque was shortly afterwards found, where a large body of clear water fell over some basaltic rocks, showing that springs caused the flow, and not summer rains in the interior as was thought at first. This is not the only instance in North Queensland where running streams flow from springs bursting forth from the basaltic table lands. Above the source of the water, the Gregory partook of the character of other Gulf rivers, dry sandy channels, dependent for their supply of water on tropical rains. They followed up the now dry river, and reached a fine tableland over 1,000 feet above sea level, which was called Barkly's Tableland, after Sir Henry Barkly, late Governor of Victoria. Open basaltic plains, covered with the very finest pastures now met them everywhere, though water was scarce. After journeying across the open country southwards, a river was found, which was called the Herbert; it flowed in the opposite direction to the tributaries of the Gregory. Following down the Herbert, they spent Christmas Day on a sheet of water called Many's Lake, and lower down Francis Lake was seen; still lower down grass and water both became so scarce as to induce the leader, much against his will, to abandon the project of reaching Central Mount Stuart. In latitude 20 deg. 17 min., and longitude 138 deg. 20 min., he was compelled to retrace his steps. It was a season of drought, no water having come down the Herbert, and being limited to time to meet Captain Norman at the Gulf in ninety days, forty-three of which had already passed, no resource was left but to return by the route they had come. They followed the right bank of the Gregory River, and met a large number of natives, who threatened them on several occasions, but the little party of five passed through without any mishap, owing in a great measure to the care taken by the leader, who was well aware of the good old bush maxim of always being prepared and never giving a chance away. In following the Gregory, they ran Beame's Brook, which forms the head of the Albert, down on the right bank. This is an affluent from the Gregory, and is one of the most remarkable streams in Queensland. It is very little below the level of the adjoining plains, and is a clear stream of pure water,

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overshadowed by cabbage-palms, pandanus, and ti-trees; it traverses the plains some fifty or sixty miles before it flows into the Albert. It is said the blacks can turn the water out of this channel by blocking up the exit from the main stream with stiff mud, and thus catch fish that may be left in the holes. The little channel is boggy in its course, and the country is subject to great floods in the wet season. The party came to the depôt, and found all well, and there learnt that Mr. F. Walker, another explorer, had been there and reported finding Burke's tracks on the Flinders, about seventy miles distant; and having restocked himself with some provisions, had left to follow up the traces. After three weeks' detention, and arranging matters with Captain Norman, Landsborough took his departure with his party, intending to go right through to Melbourne. Their supply of rations was of the most miserable kind, not even as good as prison fare. The stores provided for the expedition were ample for all requirements, but they were refused tea, sugar, and rum. Starting on a long hazardous overland journey of unknown duration, the inadequate outfit accorded to these enterprising men from a steam vessel within a fortnight's sail of a commercial port, was unjustifiable, and must be condemned.

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The expedition left the Albert on February 8th, 1862, a party of six, Mr. Landsborough, Mr. Bourne, and Mr. Gleeson, with three blackboys, Jimmy, Fisherman, and Jacky, and twenty-one horses, whilst there was a continent to cross before they could reach their destination. The tracks of Walker's party were just discernible, as they followed a course that took them to the Leichhardt River, over level plains covered with flooded box and excaecaria, commonly called "gutta percha," one of the Euphorbia family; these plains are subject to floods, and are very much water-logged during the rainy seasons on account of their being so level. The grass grows in great tussocks, showing only the tops above the water for many miles, and these were the "Plains of Promise" of which so much was expected from the reports of the early explorers! They crossed at the bar of rocks at what is now Floraville, and directed their course to the Flinders River, eastward through Newmayer Valley, and on past Donor's Hills, so named in honor of an anonymous contributor, a Melbourne gentleman, who gave £1,000 to the exploration fund. In following the right bank of the Flinders, they passed Fort Bowen, a small mount rising abruptly from the plains near the right bank of the river, which was called after the first Governor of Queensland. Many springs were met with surrounding the base of the little mountain forming mounds on the top of which water may be found. The nature of the ground in places is very treacherous; the water has a strong taste of soda, and is quite undrinkable in some of the springs. About twenty miles south-east from Fort Bowen are two similar small mountains, Mount Browne, and Mount Little (now forming part of Taldora run), at which springs similar to those at Fort Bowen are also to be met with. These small mountains, the highest of which is only seventy-five feet above the surrounding plain, were named by Mr. Landsborough after a firm of solicitors in Brisbane, the Hon. E. I. C. Browne, and Robert Little. The latter subsequently became the first Crown Solicitor of Queensland, but both gentlemen are now dead. The ground in places is dangerous, for under the light crust, that shakes and bends beneath the weight of a horse, are depths of soft mud, sometimes of a bluish colour, that would engulf both horse and rider. One spring is hot, the water at the surface being 120 deg., evidently a natural artesian well. Heavy tall ti-trees surround all these mud springs, and also innumerable small mounds that are the result of the pressure of water from the great depths below. The whole extent of country travelled through consists of open treeless plains, covered with good pasture grass, and occasionally some small white wood trees (atalaya hemiglauca). As the river ran in the direction they were travelling, they followed it up, and about where Richmond now stands, they saw the fresh tracks of a steer or cow making south, supposed to have wandered from some of the newly-formed stations towards the Burdekin. After this, the river trending too much to the east, they crossed the divide, thus leaving the Gulf waters behind them. The change occurs in an open downs country without any ranges to cross. A watercourse called Cornish Creek took them to the Landsborough, and following it down to the Thomson River, they passed Tower Hill, where Mr. Landsborough had been exploring before, and had left his marked trees. Travelling southwards, they made for the Barcoo, and thence to the Warrego, and on May 21st they came to a station of the Messrs. Williams where they were received in a most cordial manner. They were now about eight hundred miles from Melbourne, and seven hundred from Brisbane, and it was decided to make for Melbourne by following the Darling.

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McKinlay and Landsborough on their return were the recipients of a public demonstration by three thousand people in the Melbourne Exhibition Building, and had a splendid reception.

Landsborough died on March 16th, 1886, from an accident caused by his horse falling with him, and he is buried close to the north end of Bribie Passage at Caloundra, where he had resided with his family for some years previously. Landsborough was a very honorable and lovable man, of simple tastes, fond of reading and indefatigable in his love for travelling about the country.

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F. Walker led a party from Rockhampton in search of Burke and Wills in 1861. He was a bushman of varied experience, and he has the credit of originating the system of native police in Queensland. He performed the task of exploration with which he was entrusted creditably and ably. Starting from C. B. Dutton's station, Bauhinia Downs, on the Dawson River, he and his small party went through the Nogoia country to the Barcoo, where he saw traces of Gregory and Leichhardt. They then went north-west to the Alice and on to the Thomson River, and from there on to the head of the Flinders, which was called the Barkly. A marked tree of Walker's exists near the town of Hughenden. Instead of following down the river, he struck across the basaltic ranges

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and tableland northwards till he came to the heads of a river which he called the Norman, but which is more likely the head of the Saxby River; however, he followed it down to its junction with the Flinders, where he saw the tracks of Burke and Wills going down with four camels and one horse; crossing the river he found the same traces returning. Walker now went to the Albert River, where he met Captain Norman of the colonial warship "Victoria" at the dépôt there, and obtaining fresh supplies, he returned to the Flinders. And now commenced a painful march through the ranges and tableland, so hard on the horses' feet that they could be traced along the stones by the tracks of blood from their hoofs. The men suffered from the seeds of the speargrass, which penetrated the skin and caused irritation. The Burdekin was reached, and some fresh supplies were obtained at Bowen; and then passing through the settled districts to the south of that town, Walker arrived at Rockhampton early in June, having been absent about nine months.

He had several encounters with the blacks during his journey—attacks and reprisals. About 1865, Walker was sent out by the Queensland Government to report on the best route for an overland telegraph line to connect the Gulf with Brisbane. On his recommendation, the line was taken up the Carron Creek by way of the Etheridge to the east coast at Cardwell, through some very poor country. He selected this route on account of there being timber suitable for poles; but as the white ants soon destroyed them, the line had to be rebuilt with iron poles.

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Poor Walker died of Gulf fever in 1866 at a miserable shanty on the Leichhardt River, close to Floraville, and is buried there. His second in command on the telegraph expedition was a Mr. Young, who was subsequently telegraph master at Townsville in 1870. Young was a fine honorable man, but, unfortunately, he received an injury whilst in the execution of his duty repairing the telegraph line between Bowen and Townsville, from the effects of which he subsequently died, only a few days after his marriage.

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A small private expedition, under the charge of J. G. Macdonald, started from Bowen, on the east coast of North Queensland, in 1864, for the purpose of discovering a practicable route for several mobs of cattle then being sent towards the Flinders or westward for the occupation of new country. The party consisted of Mr. Macdonald, G. Robertson, Robert Bowman, and Charlie, a native of Brisbane, with seventeen horses, and two months rations. The starting point was from Carpentaria Downs, on the Einasleigh River, then the farthest out settlement, the latitude being 18 deg. 37 min. 10 sec. S., long. 144 deg. 3 min. 30 sec. E. The course generally was westward, following down the Gilbert River, and thence to the Flinders and Leichhardt Rivers. These they crossed, and then travelled on to the Gregory, which was followed down to the Albert. The object of the expedition having been achieved, and the country deemed suitable for stocking, the party commenced their return journey, crossing the Leichhardt River at a rocky ford, where the scenery was beautiful and the site admirably adapted for a head station. Eventually one was formed there, but was swept away in the disastrous flood of 1870, when the waters covered all the surrounding country to a great depth. The journey home was uneventful, the only occurrence being the finding of the skeleton of a horse they had left on their outward journey at the Gilbert River, and which had been killed by the blacks and eaten. The stages made were somewhat astonishing for an exploring party. The time taken by the journey outwards and the return was fifty-three days to Carpentaria Downs, and to Bowen seventy-one days in all; this trip proves what can be done with a lightly-equipped party, in contrast to many of the unwieldy expeditions fitted out in the south. Mr. Macdonald's favourable report of the country was the direct means of a good deal of settlement on the Gulf. Mr. Macdonald, in conjunction with Mr., afterwards Sir, John Robertson, and Captain Towns, of Sydney, took up many stations on the Gulf waters and expended large sums of money in stocking them. They also despatched the first vessel with loading to the Albert, bringing consigned goods to settlers, as well as supplies for their own consumption. This vessel was the "Jacmel Packet," which arrived in the Albert River from Sydney in 1865, thus leading to the establishment of Burketown. Sir John Robertson personally visited the Gulf in 1868, travelling overland from the east coast as far as Normanton and Burketown, and returning the same way.

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Mr. Hann, one of the pioneers of the Burdekin country, was the leader of a small expedition sent out by the Queensland Government for exploring and prospecting purposes through the peninsula to Cape York. The party started from Fossilbrook station, in 1872; they named the Tate and Walsh Rivers, and then went on to the Palmer River, after crossing the Mitchell, which they found a strong running stream. On the Palmer gold was discovered, and the place was called Warner's Gully, after Frederick Warner, the surveyor to the party; this being the first discovery of gold in that country. Travelling still north, they reached the Coleman River, and visited Princess Charlotte Bay. They discovered the Kennedy and Normanby Rivers, taking a few sheep with them as far as this. They then travelled to the present site of Cooktown, and followed up the Endeavour River for thirty miles, striking south to the Bloomfield River, where the dense vine scrubs greatly impeded their progress. On their way back they passed through some very rough country. So successful an expedition, made in so short a time, reflects credit on the leader of the party, who was a thorough bushman, and well acquainted with the dangers from hostile blacks in such a country. This expedition resulted in the development of one of the richest goldfields in Australia;

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bands of prospectors soon followed on their tracks and opened up the great alluvial diggings of the famous Palmer Goldfields, from which nearly £5,000,000 worth of alluvial gold was won.

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W. O. Hodgkinson had been a member of the Burke and Wills expedition in 1860, and crossed Australia as second in command of McKinlay's party in 1862.

In 1876, he led an expedition sent out by the Queensland Government to explore the north-west country from the Cloncurry to the South Australian boundary. The party was only a small one, but the work was well carried out, and the results were satisfactory and justified the expenditure incurred. They started from Cloncurry, which at that time, 1876, was already a settled mining township, but the country west and south was not well mapped out. They crossed the rolling plains on the Diamantina River, and in their reports describe life in the far west in its natural aspect, the game of the country, the vegetation, the spinifex, the awful sand ridges, and all the details of a journey made at the cold time of the year. The country, according to the vicissitudes of the season, may be either a desert or a meadow, for the rainfall is very uncertain. They followed up the Mulligan River in well-watered country, reaching Mary Lake, on the Georgina, and then on to Lake Coongi in South Australia. Mr. Hodgkinson's expedition was described in a diction not much used by the old explorers, whose records were made in a matter-of-fact style, with little attention to effect. Nevertheless, his descriptions are eminently interesting and life-like, and have a charm for all who like to read a traveller's report of an unknown land. Hodgkinson's name is commemorated by the goldfield named after him, as well as the river upon which it is situated.

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G. E. Dalrymple led the north-east coast expedition fitted out by the Queensland Government in 1872. This was altogether a coasting trip by boats, and led to much information about the high values of the rich alluvial lands fringing the banks of the rivers which run into the sea on the east coast of the northern part of Queensland. The Johnstone, the Russell, and Mulgrave Rivers were named by him, as well as the Mossman and Daintree. Here was found most magnificent scenery, and on the Johnstone they discovered some fine cedar (one tree measuring ten feet in diameter), besides a vast extent of rich land fit for sugar growing. All these rivers have since been opened up for cultivation, and sugar-cane, with other tropical products, has taken the place of dense scrubs that then lined the banks of these comparatively unknown rivers—although the boats of the "Rattlesnake" had been into the Russell and Mulgrave Rivers in 1848. The country appeared to Dalrymple to be inhabited by very large numbers of blacks, and game was to be found in abundance. The name of Dalrymple is perpetuated in many places on the map of Queensland. A township on the Burdekin River, as well as several mountains and other remarkable features, have been named after George Elphinstone Dalrymple, who was a splendid type of man in every sense of the word. He was at one time treasurer of the Colony.

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A search expedition for Leichhardt was promoted by the ladies of Melbourne, and although very little is recorded of its work, it has a melancholy interest from the fact that the leader, a man of great promise and energy, lost his life in endeavouring to carry out the task entrusted to him, and he now lies in an unmarked grave on the bank of a lonely billabong near the Cloncurry River, a few miles from his brother's station, Dalgonaally.

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The expedition was entrusted to Duncan McIntyre, who had found on the Dugald River, during a private expedition in 1861, two horses that belonged to Leichhardt's last expedition. Mr. McIntyre went out with camels and horses, and formed a depôt camp at Dalgonaally station on Julia Creek in 1865. He went on to Burketown, then just opened, for the purpose of buying stores; at the time of his visit the Gulf fever was at its worst, and he took ill and died on his return to the camp. He is spoken of as a man of high attainments and of large experience in bushmanship, and his untimely death was fatal to the objects of the expedition, the leadership of which was assumed by Mr. W. F. Barnett. A short trip was undertaken by him, in company with J. McCalman as second in charge, Dr. White, a medical man, Colin MacIntyre, G. Widish, and Myola, a blackboy. They started with nine camels, six of which were young ones, ten horses, and stores for five months. They travelled westward over the Cloncurry to the Dugald to the camp, marked XLV. of Duncan McIntyre on his first expedition to the Gulf, the camp where he found the two horses that Leichhardt lost on his last trip. Near here is the grave of Davy, one of their blackboys, who died from fever. After travelling over the country in the neighbourhood for a few weeks, and not having any fixed plan or instructions, they returned to the depôt camp. The expedition, which was well equipped, was eventually given up and the party dispersed. In consequence of the death of the leader, no notes of his journey were obtainable. The camels remained on Dalgonaally, the property of Mr. Donald McIntyre, for years, and increased to quite a herd. The ladies of Melbourne sent a handsome gravestone suitably inscribed to be erected over the lonely grave of the explorer, but for many years it lay unnoticed on the beach at Thursday Island, and is probably still there.

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The trip of Major-General Fielding to Point Parker is in no sense of the term an exploring trip through new country, but rather an exploratory survey for railway purposes through a fairly well settled tract. Nevertheless, some notes of the journey may be found of interest.

In 1881, negotiations were entered into between the late Mr. (afterwards Sir) Thomas McIlwraith, then Premier of Queensland, and a syndicate called Henry Kimber and Co., to construct a railway on the land grant principle, between Roma and Point Parker, on the Gulf of Carpentaria. These negotiations resulted in the formation of a larger syndicate called the Australian Transcontinental Railway Syndicate, Limited, which initiated their scheme by making certain proposals to the Government of Queensland, and sending out General Fielding to traverse the proposed route in 1882.

The party, under General Fielding's leadership, started from Roma, and went by way of Victoria Downs and Yo Yo to Biddenham, on the Nive, thence by Lansdowne and Barcaldine Downs to the Aramac, and on to Mount Cornish, delays occurring along the route for repairs to waggonettes and harness, and for the purpose of exchanging horses or buying new ones. Following down the Upper McKinlay, they reached the Cloncurry on October 7th, and were joined there by the Government Geologist, Mr. R. L. Jack. More delays occurred here for the want of stores, and it was not until November 1st that all the members of the expedition reached Kamilaroi station, on the Leichhardt River; Gregory Downs was reached on the 7th, and Point Parker on November 15th; the expedition having camped sixty-seven times. On the night of their arrival at Point Parker, the natives surrounded the camp at midnight. There were about a hundred of them, but they left when three shots were fired over their heads; no one was hurt on either side, and this was the only demonstration made by the aboriginals.

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Point Parker is described as having a very limited area for settlement, only about 7,000 acres being available. The Government schooner "Pearl" was waiting here, and after a careful survey of Point Parker and Point Bayley, they visited Bentinck and Sweer's Islands and Kimberley (now called Karumba), at the mouth of the Norman River. Finally, on November 13th, they sailed up the Batavia River in the "Pearl" for about forty miles, and explored it still further in the boats, thence on to Thursday Island on December 4th, 1882. In General Fielding's opinion, the country traversed on his route may be divided into sections; the first part between Mitchell and Malvern was neither fitted for pastoral purposes nor for agricultural settlement; thick scrub, bad soil, and poor timber prevailing. Between the Ward and the Nive, and thence to the Barcoo, Thomson, and Diamantina Rivers was first-class sheep country, requiring a good deal to be done in the way of providing water to enable the country to be fully stocked. The country between the McKinlay and Fullerton Rivers is subject to flood. Approaching the mining district of Cloncurry, the country is not so favourable for sheep, and is better adapted for raising cattle and horses. From the Cloncurry through the Gregory to the Nicholson River is all good cattle country, but the grass seed along the banks of the watercourses, and the flooded nature of parts of the country in the rainy seasons, render it unfit for profitable sheep-farming. From the Nicholson to the Gulf at Point Parker, the country is described as particularly useless. The formation is desert sandstone overlaid with nodular ironstone conglomerate; the vegetation dense, chiefly ti-tree scrubs growing upon spuey or rotten ground, together with spinifex, saltpans, and marshes. Such was General Fielding's estimate of the country through which the line was to pass. Captain Pennefather of the "Pearl" schooner had been surveying the waters between Allan Island and Point Parker. He was very reticent as to the qualifications of the place as a port; but looking at the soundings, and the open nature of the anchorage, coupled with the utterly valueless nature of the soil surrounding the place for over one hundred miles, the less said about it as a shipping port the better.

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The whole scheme was condemned by Parliament, and the general election of 1883 returned a majority against the principle of land grant railways. One of the first reform acts of the new Parliament was to repeal the Railway Companies' Preliminary Act. No doubt, had the scheme been favoured by the people of Queensland, a great impetus would have been given to settlement by the introduction of so much private capital into the colony, while the large annual payment of interest on borrowed money would have been avoided to a great extent. At all events, there is no transcontinental railway as yet, and when it does arrive, Point Parker will not be chosen as the terminus. Mr. Frank Hann, a brother of William Hann, the discoverer of the Palmer Goldfield, accompanied General Fielding as pilot. Hann is a first-class bushman, as hard as nails and full of energy. He was for many years the owner of Lawn Hill, situated on a western tributary of the Gregory River, but ticks ruined his herd. He is now in Western Australia.

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The first surveyor appointed by the Queensland Government in the Gulf was Mr. George Phillips, lately the member for Carpentaria. He surveyed and laid out Burketown, Carnarvon, on Sweer's Island, and Normanton, on the Norman River. In company with W. Landsborough, in 1866, he explored and named the Diamantina and other western rivers. The former was named after Lady Bowen, the Governor's wife, whose Christian name was Diamantina Roma. The party passed close by the spot where Winton now stands, and by Kynuna, and from the head waters of the Diamantina they struck across via the heads of Rupert's and Alick's Creeks to Minamere (then Sheaffe's), thence to the Flinders, and on to Burketown. There were no signs of settlement between the Thomson River at Mount Cornish, and where they struck the Flinders River. Mr. Phillips and Mr. Landsborough were the first to navigate the Norman River, and they chose the site for the township.

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The writer met this party coming down the Flinders on their way to Burketown, in which place he had been laid up for several weeks with the Gulf fever; he was then on his way back to Conobie, more dead than alive. This was in the early part of 1866.

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## CHAPTER V. PIONEERING WORK IN QUEENSLAND.

The narrative of the pastoral industry in Queensland is almost the history of North Queensland itself. The outward flow of that restless and progressive industry can be traced from its infancy, when Mr. Patrick Leslie, of Collaroi, in the district of Cassilis, New South Wales, moved his stock northwards, and after first exploring the country by himself and a man named Peter Murphy, placed his sheep in June, 1840, and formed the first station in Queensland on the Darling Downs (discovered by Allan Cunningham 13 years before). He called this first station Toolburra, and afterwards selected Canning Downs station also. The stock consisted of nearly 6,000 sheep, two teams of bullocks and drays, one team of horses and dray, ten saddle horses, and twenty-two men, all ticket-of-leave men, pronounced by Mr. Leslie to be the best men he ever had in his life. The town of Warwick is built near this classic spot, where first the pioneers of the squatting industry pitched their original camp. The next to reach the Darling Downs were Hodgson and Elliott, who occupied Etonvale in September, 1840. No white man had settled on Darling Downs previous to Patrick Leslie in 1840. After Hodgson, King and Sibley were next to hold Gowrie, and these were followed by others, until in 1844, there were thirty stations formed and occupied in that district, the stock mostly coming from the Hunter River district of New South Wales.

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In 1843, the first station on the Burnett River was formed by Russell and Glover who took up Burrandowan, and they were soon followed by other settlers, occupying all the beautiful country on the Upper Burnett and Mary Rivers. Here the soil is rich, the surface water abundant, the climate equal to any in Australia; and thus a rich territory was added to the young colony.

The names of the early settlers and pioneers of this country are as well known as the stations they formed. The Healeys of Tablinga were settled not far from Burrandowan. Over the Brisbane Range, John Eales, from the Hunter, was the first settler with stock in the Wide Bay District. The Jones', of merchant fame in Sydney, were also among the first over the range at or near Nanango. The course they followed took them down Barambah Creek to Boonara station.

All the centre of the Burnett district was occupied by squatters coming by this line, while the upper, or Auburn portion, from lower down by Burrandowan. Lawless Bros. took up Boobijan; Anderson and Leslie occupied Gigoomgan; whilst McTaggart, H. C. Corfield, Perrier, Forster, Herbert W. H. Walsh, Dr. Ramsay, E. B. Uhr, and others followed soon after.

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Following on this, came the occupation of the runs on the Dawson River, a tributary of the Fitzroy, and onwards to the north and far out to the great west, where the downs rolled towards the setting sun. The Fitzroy River, draining an enormous territory, equal to any river in Queensland, and surpassed by but few in Australia, was gradually and successfully occupied. Through the brigalow and mulga scrubs, dense and forbidding, over mountain ranges, stony and steep, across flooded rivers, and over or around all obstacles, the pioneers still moved on and took up and occupied runs. Westward to the Maranoa and Warrego, and northward by the Fitzroy to the Burdekin and Flinders River, and even over the South Australian borders to Port Darwin, their mission was carried on, to fill the land with the outposts of civilisation.

Before 1853, the Archer family were squatting on the Burnett River, and in that year Charles and William Archer went northward on an exploring trip during which they discovered and named the Fitzroy River, and rode over the spot where now stands the city of Rockhampton, with all its wealth, civilisation, and promise of prosperity. They started from Eidsvold, on the Burnett, simply with pack horses and two men, passed from Dalgangal to Rawbelle, and at the foot of Mount Rannes found the establishment of the brothers Leith Hay, then the farthest out station. They had some very troublesome country to penetrate. Besides hilly mountainous ranges, brigalow and vine scrubs surrounded the base of Mount Spencer, whose thousand feet of height they climbed, and gave to it its name. They crossed the Dee, and passed close to the site of the famous Mount Morgan gold mine. And so on they journeyed to the top of a range, where the most astounding view lay beneath them.

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Through a large and apparently open valley, bounded by table-topped, pyramidal and dominant mountains, with here and there fantastically-shaped sandstone peaks, a large river wound its way towards the sea.

They supposed this river to be the confluence of the Dawson and Mackenzie, and the sea before them to be Keppel Bay. They explored the valley of the Fitzroy, which they named after Sir Charles Fitzroy, they being the first to discover it, and then went on to Gracemere Lake, a magnificent sheet of fresh water, about two miles long and three quarters of a mile wide. They rode on till they came to tidal water in the Fitzroy, and found it a fine navigable stream, with the tide running strongly up it. Near here they came upon a large lagoon covered over with a beautiful pink water-lily (nymphœa), which they called the Pink Lily Lagoon. In the account of their journey, they described the cycas palm growing with clusters of round smooth nuts encircling the top as a crown, under the leaves. After inspecting the country from opposite

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Yaamba to what is now known as Archer's cattle station, and laying it out in blocks, they returned to the Burnett. These pioneers were looking for new country, and being perfectly satisfied with the Fitzroy and its promise of future prosperity, they returned with stock two years later, in 1855, and took legal possession. It was on August 10th of that year that they brought the first stock on to Gracemere and occupied it as a run.

In the same year, 1855, the site of the future town of Rockhampton was examined. The name of the town was chosen by Mr. Wiseman, Commissioner of Crown Lands for New South Wales, who had been sent up from Sydney to confirm the Messrs. Archer in the possession of their discovery. The rocks crossing the river situated above the present suspension bridge and forming the limit of navigation, helped to the choice of a name for the new northern town. Gracemere head station is on the south side of the Fitzroy River, and is distant seven miles from Rockhampton. Till then, Rannes had been the outer limit of occupation towards the north, in which direction settlement was extending. The Archers were a family of pioneer settlers, several brothers assisting in the enterprise of opening up country and forming new stations. They were extremely popular men of high character and attainments; and the name of Archer will be known as long as Rockhampton exists. Archibald Archer represented the town and district for many years in the Queensland Assembly, and acted as Colonial Treasurer in the first McIlwraith Ministry with credit to himself and much benefit to the young colony.<sup>[B]</sup> The Archers may justly be said to be the original discoverers and actual founders of Rockhampton, for although the town took its great start on the road to importance from the time of the Canoona rush in 1858, called in those days the Port Curtis rush, the site of the town had been made known five years previously by the Archer Brothers.

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[B] Mr. Archibald Archer died early in 1902, in London, at the age of 82. Mr. Alexander Archer and his wife (a daughter of the late Sir R. R. Mackenzie) were both lost in the "Quetta," which foundered near Cape York.

Amongst the early settlers in the country about Gladstone were the Landsboroughs, at Raglan Station, James Landsborough, a brother of the explorer William, living there after taking it up. They held a run in the Wide Bay district, called Monduran, on the banks of the Kolan River, a beautiful and picturesque stream of clear flowing water, with varied patches of dark pine scrubs growing down to the water's edge.

William Young, a sturdy self-reliant old pioneer, took up a run called Mount Larcombe, and held it with sheep. Mount Larcombe can be seen from the deck of passing steamers close to Gladstone. Mr. Young was foremost in opening the country between Gladstone and Rockhampton. He obtained a rough sketch from Mr. Charles Archer of country they had tendered for, and on going out came across a large branch of the Calliope which had not been so taken up. This he chose for his new run, and Mount Larcombe being at the head of the creek, he named the station after it. He took his sheep from the Burnett, and settled on his new country on May 29th, 1855. The reason for those of the advance guard pushing out so far was on account of the tendering system for runs then in force. By this system, those who marked out country could hold it unstocked, and unless a few hundred pounds were paid by them for the right of actual occupation, the pioneers in search of land had to go out further. Prospecting thus for new country without any intention of stocking it, but merely of selling the information and the claim to the country to any one in search of a run for their stock, became a regular speculation.

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The Wide Bay district only extended as far as Little's station at Baffle's Creek, and on to Blackman's. When separation took place, and a new district was declared, those who had tendered for new country for the purpose of reselling, had nine months allowed them to stock their country in. Otherwise they were called upon to forfeit it. Mr. Young had a great deal of trouble from the blacks; they made a raid on his shepherds, killing several, but afterwards he found them very useful for minding sheep, etc. At that time, two small trading vessels handled the trade to Sydney, and from this port Mr. Young had to get his rations, as well as shepherds. Many of the latter sent to him were found useless for bush life.<sup>[C]</sup>

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[C] Mr. Young ended his days peacefully in Sandgate in 1899, at an advanced age.

No. 55117.

Crown Lands Office,  
Sydney, 29th January, 1855.

Nos. 2, 5, 11 and 12 of December.

Gentlemen,

Rockhill, No. 3. I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your tenders (opened on the 4th ultimo), for new runs of Crown Lands in the district of Port Curtis, named in the margin, and I beg to inform you, that the same now await the report of the Commissioner of the district, in accordance with the Regulations of the 1st January, 1848.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

GEO. BARNEY.

Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Messrs. R. & F. BLACKMAN,

This copy of the letter from Colonel Barney to the Messrs. Blackman regarding the tenders of their runs shows that they were early in the Port Curtis district, and occupied a run called Warrah, still held by Mr. F. A. Blackman in 1897. The whole of the Wide Bay district had become settled with stations, and the necessity for an outlet for produce and receipt of supplies led to the port of Gladstone being opened. Among the first to establish a business there was Richard E. Palmer, who built a wharf and a large wool shed, so that the wool from Rannes and other stations lately formed could be shipped away. He then took up Targieni station, near Mount Larcombe, and lived there for many years. Among the early settlers in the district about Gladstone were the Bells of Stowe, father and sons, Mrs. Graham on the Calliope; and Charles Clarke, James Landsborough, John Forsyth. Edwin Bloomfield held Miriam Vale; Robinson and Wood had taken up Caliangal; William Elliott passed Gracemere with sheep, and took up Tilpal in 1857. Ramsay and Gaden held Canooka run when the gold rush took place in 1858. Mr. A. J. Callan, for some years member of the Legislative Assembly for Fitzroy, took up Columbra run. All the surrounding country became parcelled out among the early arrivals, and settlement began to spread itself into far-away districts to the north and north-west. Civilisation was pronounced enough when ladies followed their husbands on many of the new stations. Raglan was famous for its hospitality as early as 1860, when Mrs. James Landsborough presided, and her numerous family grew up there.

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From Marlborough, a small village on the outward stock route, the track led out west towards Peak Downs, a beautiful tableland discovered by Leichhardt. Mr. Stuart, known as Peak Downs Stuart, took up one of the first runs in 1861 with sheep brought from Victoria. These sheep were destroyed by order on account of scab breaking out among them. Mr. P. F. Macdonald and Sydney Davis were among the earliest settlers on Peak Downs. Mr. William Kilman, whose name is so well known in the central districts, was one of the enterprising pioneers of the north. In 1854, when he was twenty-five years old, he set out on an exploring trip along the Queensland coast. On that journey, he came to the river on which Rockhampton now stands, and, passing up the coast, went as far as Cleveland Bay, where Townsville was founded some years later. He returned to New South Wales from Cleveland Bay, and in 1856 took up a large tract of country on the upper waters of the Dawson. It would thus appear that Mr. Kilman visited the locality of Townsville ten years before Mr. Andrew Ball came down from Woodstock station to explore the country.

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Captain John Mackay, explorer and pioneer settler, as well as navigator, discovered Port Mackay in 1860. The history of the discovery and settlement of the district and town of Mackay is of interest, showing what individual effort in conjunction with large experience and great physical fortitude and endurance can accomplish. Captain Mackay left Armidale on January 16th, 1860, with a party of seven men and twenty-eight horses, to explore the north country for runs for stocking purposes; they travelled by Tenterfield, Darling Downs, Gayndah, and Rockhampton. After recruiting and refitting here, they started again on March 16th, passed Yaamba and Princhester, on to Marlborough, where Mr. Henning was forming a station. They left civilisation behind them when leaving this place, and bearing to the north-west over the range, which was very rugged and broken, followed the Isaacs and travelled on towards the Burdekin. Returning towards the coast, they found a river they called the Mackay, traced it to the coast, and having marked trees along its course, they decided to return south, having been successful in the object of their expedition.

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The party now fell sick of fever and ague, a most prostrating malady, and were reduced to the utmost extremity for want of provisions, for the sick men were for some time unable to travel. In suffering and pain, hungry and thirsty, and utterly weary, they started again for civilised parts. The blackboy, their faithful companion, died on the journey, while some of the others could scarcely manage to ride. On returning, they met Mr. Connor, who was forming Collaroy station; here they remained a few days recruiting, then crossing the Broadsound Range, they camped with Mr. John Allingham, who was travelling with stock looking for country, passed Mr. Macartney at Waverley, and arrived at Rockhampton after an absence of four months. They tendered for the country discovered in accordance with the Crown Lands Regulations, and the tenders were accepted by the Queensland Government, from which date they were allowed nine months for stocking, failing which, any person putting stock in, could legally claim the country. In order to obtain some compensation for the discovery they had made, Captain Mackay got cattle on terms, and started from Armidale on July 26th, 1861, with 1,200 cattle, fifty horses and two teams of bullocks. The stock travelled by Dalby to the Burnett and Dawson, passing Banana and Rannes, and thence to Rockhampton on October 27th, where supplies were waiting for them from Sydney. They then passed northwards through the Broadsound country, where several stations were then forming, and arrived at the foot of the coast range, when by double-banking the teams, that is, putting two teams on to one dray with only a part of a load on, they managed, after several days' hard work, to get the loads and stock across the terrible barrier. After great trouble in forcing a way through ranges, scrubs, and other obstacles, the stock arrived at the spot selected for the head station on the Mackay River, now called the Pioneer, on January 11th, 1862. The station was named Green Mount, and having turned their weary stock loose on the well-grassed plains, the party set to work to form a station hut and yards. All their stores were exhausted, and after waiting long months for the vessel that was to have come from Rockhampton, they at last discovered that she was below Cape Palmerston at anchor; she was brought up the river four miles west of where the town now stands, and landed the stores on the south bank. Captain Mackay then chartered the vessel at the rate of £8 per day, and spent a few days in taking soundings, bearings, etc.; having made a rough chart of the river and adjacent

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coast line, it was sent with the correct latitude and longitude to the Crown Lands Office, Brisbane, on which report the Mackay River was declared a port of entry. The name of the river was changed to the Pioneer, as Commodore Burnett (afterwards lost in H.M.S. "Orpheus" on the Manakau Bar in New Zealand), had, in 1863, named a stream flowing into Rockingham Bay, the Mackay, and recommended the new discovery should be called after H.M.S. "Pioneer," which he commanded. The Queensland Government not wishing to detract from the merit of discovery, named the town Mackay. There can be no manner of doubt but that the honor of discovering the Pioneer River and the Port of Mackay, and making that discovery public information, so as to be of service in opening up the district, rests entirely with Captain John Mackay.<sup>[D]</sup>

[D] Captain Mackay, in 1902, succeeded the late Captain Almond as Harbour Master at Brisbane.

The discovery of the fine pastoral country in the Barcoo by the Mitchell expedition was soon followed by occupation. On October 12th, 1862, the first mob of cattle arrived on the Thomson River, for Mount Cornish and Bowen Downs. The Thomson River was at that time supposed to be the Barcoo, but Mr. N. Buchanan found out that it was the same river that had been named the Thomson by Kennedy in 1847. The first station was named Bowen Downs, and the first stock to arrive on these waters were the cattle started from Fort Cooper, where they had been depasturing for some time. The mob consisted of five thousand head, and the route followed was by Lake Elphinstone on to Suttor Creek, down that creek to the Belyando, following that river up a short distance, then across by Bully Creek, crossing the range at the Tanks by Lake Buchanan on to Cornish Creek, and down that creek to their destination.

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Suttor Creek station then belonged to Kirk and Sutherland, and was the farthest out station in that direction. On arriving at Bully Creek, a dry stage ahead of forty-five miles, caused the leader to leave 1,500 head behind him, the balance arriving at their destination on October 12th, 1862. Mr. R. Kerr was in charge, with four white stockmen, one blackboy, three gins, and a white man named Maurice Donohue, who died before he had been there very long, and was doubtless the first white man buried in the district. In the following year, 1863, a drought occurred on the Thomson, the plains were left destitute of grass, and the waterhole, on the banks of which the station was formed, was reduced to two feet in depth. When full there would be about eighteen feet of water in it, and it was afterwards found that it took eighteen months without rain to bring it down to that level. In about March of this year, Messrs. Rule and Lacy, as also Mr. Raven, arrived on Aramac Creek with sheep, the former taking up and stocking the country now known as Aramac station. Mr. Raven first settling down higher up the creek, afterwards returned to Stainburne, taking up and stocking the present Stainburne Downs. At the same time that these sheep arrived at the Aramac, three thousand cows from the Narran (N.S.W.) arrived on Bowen Downs, Messrs. Hill and Bloxham in charge; all these stock went out by the Barcoo, and the cattle suffered severely from the effects of the drought, one thousand head being lost en route. Four of the party, Messrs. Hill, Bloxham, Burkett, and Best, who took out these cows to Bowen Downs, decided to go upon an exploring trip on their own account. They went up Landsborough Creek, and on to the Flinders River, intending to go to Bowen; after getting over the Range on the east side of the Flinders, it commenced to rain, and continued an incessant downpour for four days, making the country so boggy that they could not travel; some of their horses died, and some got crippled by getting bogged among the rocks; so they decided to return to Bowen Downs. They got down from the ranges into one of the gorges, and then Mr. Best was laid up with rheumatic fever, and was unable to travel. Their supplies ran short, and they had to kill some of their horses for food; by the time Mr. Best was able to move, they had only three horses left; so they decided to kill one of these, take a portion of the flesh with them, and walk to Bowen Downs for assistance, leaving Mr. Best behind, as he was still unfit to travel. They left the two horses with him, and the remainder of the horse they had killed, jerking the meat for him before they started. The three then began their tramp, Mr. Bloxham being leader and guide; they promised to be back in twenty-eight days, and urged Mr. Best to remain where they were leaving him, but if he did move to be sure to follow their tracks. They also gave him directions as to the route to follow to reach Bowen Downs. They got to Bowen Downs in due course, after surmounting innumerable difficulties. Mr. Bloxham, who was the oldest of the party, was very weak on arrival, and suffering severely from the consequences of subsisting on jerked horse flesh; they were all wearing horse hide sandals, their boots being worn out. After several days spell, Mr. Bloxham made up a party and went to the rescue of the man left behind. The other two left for civilisation. The rescue party met Mr. Best on the twenty-ninth day from leaving him, a few miles from his camp. He had stayed the twenty-eight days as agreed, and started in on the twenty-ninth. They, of course, were very glad to find him, and the meeting was mutually satisfactory. During his sojourn in the gorge, Mr. Best only saw the blacks once; and then he fired his gun off to attract their attention, but they took no notice of him. Another report said that as he had been using his gun as a crutch, the muzzle had got blocked up with mud, and when he fired it off to scare the blacks away the gun burst with such a terrible roar that they never ventured near him again.

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The first pioneer to stock country on the Flinders was James Gibson, who took up a run called the Prairie, in 1861. He also stocked several runs in the neighbourhood and on the Clarke River. He started two lots of cattle from the Barwon (N.S.W.), one in charge of Mr. E. R. Edkins, now of Mount Cornish, the other mob in charge of Mr. George Sautelle, now long settled at Byrimine station, near Cloncurry. These cattle passed by Goondiwindi, through the Downs country, by Yandilla, to the Dawson, by Rockhampton, and then by Fort Cooper and Bowen on to the Clarke River. These, according to the Land Office records, were the first runs taken up in the pastoral

district of Burke. Their cattle were supplemented by other large mobs, all destined to form new stations in the far north, in connection with Mr. W. Glen Walker, of Sydney, an enterprising and speculative merchant. In 1864 the country first taken up by this firm was sold or transferred, and the cattle (as many as ten thousand head), were removed to the Lower Flinders then quite unoccupied. They travelled through Betts' Gorge, a creek forcing its way through the basalt to join the Flinders. A large stretch of well-watered country on the Saxby Creek, known as Taldora and Millungerra was taken up by James Gibson in 1864.

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The first man to open the way to the Albert at Burketown was Mr. N. Buchanan, with cattle from Mount Cornish and Bowen Downs on the Thomson River; he selected Beame's Brook station on the Albert, eighteen miles above the present site of Burketown, and also occupied another run on the Landsborough River, a tributary of the Leichhardt, on a waterhole about twelve miles long. Following him in order of succession came Mr. J. G. Macdonald's cattle from the Burdekin. These travelled by a different route via the Einasleigh and Etheridge Rivers, the latter called after Mr. D. O. Etheridge, one of the overlanders, a man long resident there afterwards, and well known. They followed the route opened up by Mr. J. G. Macdonald when on his private exploring expedition to the Gulf country a year or two before. The country this stock occupied was on the Leichhardt River, at a place called Floraville, situated where a great bar of rocks crosses the river above all tidal waters, the falls being about twenty feet in height. Another run this firm took up at the same time was situated on the Gregory River, and called Gregory Downs; but this country was abandoned later on, and is now held by Watson Bros.; it is an excellent piece of well-grassed cattle country, watered by the finest perennial river in North Queensland, a clear, flowing stream of water, shaded by palms, pandanus, and ti-trees. The Gregory River, named by the late Mr. W. Landsborough in honor of the Honorable A. C. Gregory, M.L.C., C.M.G., the well-known explorer and scientist, has never been known to go dry. In March, 1896, Mr. G. Phillips, C.E., estimated the flow of the river—which was then low—at 133 millions of gallons per day at Gregory Downs. There can be no doubt that the discharge is due to a leak from the great artesian beds underlying the Barkly Tableland, on which the town of Camooweal is situated, on the head waters of the Georgina River.

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The Barkly Tableland was also named by Mr. Landsborough in honor of Sir Henry Barkly, Governor of Victoria, 1856-1863.

Donor's Hills station was settled by the Brodie Bros., who came from Murrurundi, in New South Wales early in 1865. They travelled by Bowen River and along the Cape River route, and took up the country about the junction of the Cloncurry and the Flinders Rivers, near some peculiar isolated ironstone hills, which were named Donor's Hills. It was considered a good run and well watered, and is now held by Mr. Chirnside, of Victoria, being still stocked with sheep. Among the last wave of pioneers was Mr. Atticus Tooth, who brought cattle from the Broken River, near Bowen, and took up a run on the lower Cloncurry, which he called Seaward Downs; the stock belonged to a business firm in Bowen called Seaward, Marsh and Co. It now forms part of Conobie run, taken up by Messrs. Palmer and Shewring, who brought sheep and cattle from Pelican Creek, in 1864. The cattle were driven from Eureka, in the Wide Bay district, by Edward Palmer, one of the firm who from that time resided on the station, and who is the author of these notes. The stock followed the route up the Cape River, and were detained in the desert at Billy Webb's Lake nearly two months waiting for rain to take them through. After the usual vicissitudes of travelling stock down the Flinders, and searching for country all round the Gulf it was decided to occupy Conobie, where the Dugald, Corella, and Cloncurry Rivers form a junction. The sheep were placed on the run in May, 1865, and then the trip back to Brisbane had to be undertaken in order to apply for the lease of the country.

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One of the partners, Mr. W. Shewring, died about a year afterwards from the effects of the Gulf fever, and also several of the men. They were all buried on the bank of the large lagoon, near which the head station was formed.

Supplies to this place were carried from Port Denison by bullock dray, but the first wool was shipped for Sydney from the new port, Burketown. The price of everything was extremely high, flour and sugar often selling at one shilling per pound, while wages for ordinary hands ranged from thirty-five shillings to fifty shillings a week, and men were scarce even at that.

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Pioneers as well as explorers, the settlement of Cape York Peninsula will always be associated with the names of the Jardines. The account of their trip from Bowen with cattle and horses through the most troublesome country ever traversed by stock, will stand as a lasting monument to their superior bushmanship and hardihood. The narrative of the journey adds a most interesting page to the records of Australian exploration, as it was conducted throughout without any mishap, although surrounded with many dangers, through a country almost unknown and during a season when the risks were much increased by reason of the advent of the annual heavy rains. The uncommon task of taking a mob of cattle such a distance with success, reflects the highest credit on the Jardine Brothers.

The origin of the trip was a report made by the first governor, Sir G. Bowen, in 1862, to the Imperial Government recommending Somerset, Cape York, as a harbour of refuge, coaling station and entrepôt for the trade of Torres Straits and islands of the North Pacific. The task of establishing the new settlement was confided to Mr. Jardine, Police Magistrate at Rockhampton, who was qualified by experience and judgment to carry out the work. Mr. Jardine proposed to establish a cattle station there, by sending cattle in charge of his two sons through the Peninsula, in order to supply the requirements of trade with fresh beef. Frank and Alick Jardine, aged

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respectively 22 and 20, carried out the task of overlanding very creditably, being strong, active, and hardy young men, full of resource and inured to bush work and discomforts.

Those who know by experience what a wet season means in the Peninsula, with flooded creeks and rivers, poison plants killing the horses and cattle, and hostile blacks always on the alert to damage anything in their way, will understand the full meaning of the successful issue of such a trip. The writer settled a cattle station on the Mitchell River in 1879, and can thus enter fully into all the troubles of these young overlanders, and appreciate the magnitude of their task.

The party, consisting of ten persons and twenty-one horses, left Rockhampton in May, 1864; they travelled overland to Bowen, where they obtained cattle from Mr. William Stenhouse, of the Clarke River. The furthest out station then was Carpentaria Downs, to the north-west, held by J. G. Macdonald, supposed to be on the Lynd River, but afterwards proved to be on the Einasleigh, a branch of the Gilbert River. On October 10th they were ready for a final start with the cattle from Carpentaria Downs. The party were composed of the following:—F. L. Jardine, leader; A. Jardine; A. J. Richardson, surveyor; C. Scrutton; R. N. Binney; A. Cowderoy; and four blackboys, Eulah, Peter, Sambo, and Barney, natives of Wide Bay and Rockhampton; also forty-one horses, one mule, and 250 cattle, with provisions to last for four months. They started under the impression they were following down the Lynd of Leichhardt, that led to the Mitchell River, hence the troubles and doubts about their journey were much increased, and it was a considerable time before the mistake was discovered. Not long after getting into the wilderness, a fire burnt one half of their camp gear and rations, which was a loss they felt throughout their journey.

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Travelling through poor, flat ti-tree country, covered with spinifex and wire grass that no stock would look at, they encountered the further misfortunes of the loss of horses and cattle by poison and delay owing to their being hunted by blacks. In addition to the loss of cattle, travelling was excessively heavy in consequence of the rains. But the journey was prosecuted in spite of all troubles and risks. The blacks soon commenced to attack them, and had to be checked, although they never ceased all through the journey to harass them. The party struck salt water when following down the Staaten, and then knew that they were out of their course, and not near the Mitchell River of Leichhardt. They saw the marine plains extending along the coast, and finally, about December 18th, crossed the long-looked for Mitchell River, covered here with dense vine scrubs, and having numerous wide channels. They lost some horses that went mad through drinking salt water, and at the crossing had a severe contest with the blacks, who had been daring and mischievous all the time. After crossing the Mitchell, they followed a course along the coast line of the Gulf, meeting with disasters all the way, their cattle being poisoned, their horses failing, their rations exhausted, and hardships accumulating. They finally left the Mitchell and made straight running for Cape York on December 22nd; the wet season came on them then, and nothing but rain was recorded while going through a most dismal, miserable country, poor in grass, and full of obstacles, such as scrub, etc. Heavy storms of rain and wind passed over them frequently, from which they had no shelter, the tents being blown to pieces. They had no salt, and the weather was too muggy to dry or jerk the meat when a beast was killed. In this way they crept along the coast line, crossing all the rivers and creeks in full flood, and by the time they reached the Batavia River they had to do most of the travelling on foot, so many horses having died from the fatal effects of the poison plants common in this despicable country. As all the creeks were lined with vine scrubs, they were compelled to cut tracks through every one of them for the cattle and to swim creeks every day, while the prickles of the pandanus leaves gave them special discomfort.

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Several attempts were made to search for the settlement at Cape York by advance parties, but it was not until March 2nd that the brothers, having met some friendly natives, were piloted into the settlement, and thus this most wonderful trip was concluded, having taken over five months to get through about 1,600 miles, the last two or three hundred being done on foot, and without even boots to their feet. The country passed through was mostly of a forbidding and sterile character, except on the Einasleigh River banks, and in consequence of their report, no occupation of runs followed. As the Peninsula became more explored, better country was discovered near the heads of the rivers flowing into the Gulf; and in after years a few stations were stocked with cattle.

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Frank Jardine, the elder brother, has lived at Somerset ever since, and his house is seen when passing through the beautiful Albany Pass. Alick Jardine became a surveyor and engineer, and for many years was employed by the Government of Queensland. He attained the position of Engineer for Harbours and Rivers, but was among the officers retrenched in 1893.

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## **CHAPTER VI.**

### **THE SPREAD OF PASTORAL OCCUPATION.**

After the Canoona rush in 1858 and 1859, the tide of pastoral run hunting set in; the route northwards followed by stock going out to occupy new country led by Princhester and through Marlborough. Here the route turned off westwards towards the Peak Downs, and extended still further to the interior where the Barcoo, Thomson, and Alice Rivers flowed into a mysterious land. The northern road led on to Broad Sound, where Connor's Range had to be passed; this



spur of the main coast range comes close in to the coast. Overlanders could not avoid crossing it, and this was an undertaking. It was reckoned to be two miles from the first rise to the summit, and to get drays and stock across sometimes took several days, as they had to unload some of their goods at the steep pinches and return empty for the balance of the loading. The road was in a state of nature, and wound round gullies and sidings through the forest trees that grew on the steep sides of the mountain; many a curse was wasted on its stony, dusty inclines ere the long looked for summit was reached. After crossing the range, the first settlement in those early days, about 1860, was Lotus Creek station. From Lotus Creek the road led on to Fort Cooper station, considered one of the best coast stations then discovered. As early as 1863, Nebo Creek, west of Mackay, was made a recruiting centre, where stores could be obtained from a firm named Kemmis and Bovey. Passing along Funnel Creek, still going northwards, the head of the Bowen River was reached.

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The Bowen River country was soon occupied with runs and stock from the south, passing along the coast route that led by Rockhampton, Marlborough, and Nebo. The roads were lined with flocks and herds of those entering on the pioneering work of the North of Queensland, and business men were following in the wake of the early stock settlers to commence a trade wherever an opportunity offered. The settlement was bona fide and genuine; men with means, energy and experience were entering on it with great enthusiasm and high hopes of the future of the new country. The wave of occupation passed on to the Burdekin River, causing a great demand for sheep and cattle for the purpose of stocking new country in the north and west. The requirements of this great augmentation of the stock northwards led to the opening of Bowen or Port Denison as a port of shipment for supplies. The discovery and opening of Port Denison will be treated of elsewhere; its opening to commerce was a boon to those who were occupying the country immediately at the rear of the port. Many overlanders took advantage of the port by shearing or lambing their sheep wherever a chance offered, and after obtaining supplies for the road, were prepared to extend their search for new country still further away. The Bowen River country is very interesting and its scenery most picturesque; it has first-class grazing qualities, small open plains, with patches of brigalow scrub scattered over black-soil country. Sandstone ranges bound the creeks on the coast side, whence they come down to the main stream. The river is a fine stream, with long and deep reaches, in which are found alligators of large size that have come up from the Burdekin River. Among the early settlers to take up country was Mr. J. G. Macdonald, afterwards an early pioneer in the Gulf country, though not a resident there. He took up, in conjunction with others, a large area of country in the Bowen district, afterwards known as Dalrymple, Inkermann, Strathbogie, and Ravenswood. His residence at Adelaide Point was at one period the show place of the North, where Mrs. Macdonald (after whom Adelaide Point was named) dispensed hospitality with a kindly grace which won all hearts. Of all this, nothing now remains but a memory. The house is gone; Mr. Macdonald is dead, and the family dispersed. Carpentaria Downs was also taken up by J. G. Macdonald, on the head of the Einasleigh River, for a long time the outside settlement.

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One of the early sheep stations held by Mr. Henning was located on the Bowen River, while lower down a fine piece of country called Havilah was held with sheep by Hillfling and Petersen—this was before 1862. Other stations occupied somewhere about this time, or even earlier, were Strathmore and Sonoma, held by Sellheim and Touissaint, with stock from Canning Downs. These stations were a stage still further north, the surrounding country being fine open forest land, very well grassed and watered. These runs were the first taken up in the pastoral district called Kennedy.

The main stock route northward followed the Bowen River settlements crossing Pelican Creek, a tributary of the Bowen, through Sonoma run, then to the Bogie, and across to the Burdekin River, following up that stream to the Clarke and Lynd Rivers. Knowledge of a great pastoral country away to the shores of the Gulf and extending far up the Burdekin River was in the possession of many pioneer explorers whose names are unrecorded, and the tide of advancing settlement followed on as fast as was possible, stations being formed to the right and left of the main routes, while others moved forward with a restless energy that nothing would satisfy but the best country for their stock. One route turned on the Bowen River to the west, and crossed the Suttor River above Mount McConnel near the junction of the Cape River that came in from the westward. This stock track soon became a main road owing to the traffic which was carried on from the newly-opened port of Bowen or Port Denison to the western settlements, even to Bowen Downs station. The road led across the Leichhardt Range—another heavy piece for teams, equal to Connor's Range, the sharp stones laming the bullocks, and making the ascent a trial of patience and endurance to man and beast. A station called Natal Downs was held by Kellet and Spry on the Cape River, and by this route a great many of the early settlers in the far west travelled their stock during 1864-65. The blacks were aggressive in those days on Natal Downs, and were in the habit of cutting off the shepherds at outstations; it was reported and believed that as many as eighteen shepherds were killed at various outstations in the first few years of settlement there.

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Onward and westward went the movement of stock. The principal topic of conversation turned always upon new country, the latest discoveries of good grazing lands, and the men who were following with sheep and cattle. The way out west in those first days led up the Cape River through poor country, with a good deal of spinifex grass and patches of poison bush. On the flat tableland dividing the Gulf waters from those flowing towards the Thomson, were a series of large shallow swamps, known as Billy Webb's Lake, a kind of halting place for stock. Between this and the Flinders waters lies a tract of country nearly two hundred miles in width, called the

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Desert—and the name is a well-deserved one. The Desert consists of spinifex ridges and sandy sterile country, covered in large patches with the desert poison shrub botanically known as “*Gastrolobium grandiflora*.” This dangerous plant grows to a height of six to eight feet in separate bushes, and exhibits a bluish-silvery sheen conspicuous afar off. It bears a scarlet blossom like a vetch, and the leaf is indented at the outer end. Its poisonous nature was soon proved by the first stock that attempted the passage. Many of the early drovers lost large numbers of both cattle and sheep from its deadly effects. In one camp, Halloran’s and Alexander’s, as many as 1,500 sheep died in one night from eating it. All the stock passing through this belt of desert country paid some tribute to its evil properties. This poison plant is peculiar to the strip of desert country that extends along the dividing watershed for many hundreds of miles, from the Alice River reaching north as far as the Lynd.

The symptoms of poisoning from this plant are a kind of madness, causing animals to rush about furiously, and then, becoming paralysed, to fall helpless to the ground, and soon expire. There are but one or two varieties of the plant in Queensland, though in Western Australia twelve or fourteen varieties of *Gastrolobium* are found.

Besides the destructive poison plant, there is the evil-smelling repellent spinifex growing through this strip of vile country, as well as a low, close scrub, through all of which stock has to be got before the open plain country is reached. A great scarcity of surface water, and low stony ridges with heavy patches of red sand, are characteristic of poison country. Glad indeed were the pioneers to leave it behind, and with great satisfaction to stand on the rocky eminence that bounded it on the western side, whence they looked down the open valley of the Jardine, and beheld the downs and the grassy plains of the Flinders spreading out before them for many miles. The sight came as a surprise and relief after so much disagreeable travelling through the worst portion of North Queensland, especially should a thunderstorm have passed over the country recently and caused a spring in the herbage. The Flinders River flowing to the west and north-west towards the Gulf of Carpentaria, through most extensive plains and downs, traverses a different geological formation to that which the pioneers crossed when coming from the east coast. The edge of the great cretaceous formation which forms the major portion of the western country, is here entered on for the first time, and a new strange world seems to open up. A new fauna and flora is evident on the very first entrance into the new region; the birds are different and more numerous; galas, parrots, and pigeons abound, and assure the newcomer that he has found a new pastoral country, the grasses and herbage of which are more permanent, enduring and nutritive than those he has hitherto met with. The downs, covered with the Mitchell grass, with scarcely a bush or shrub to break the monotony, stretch away as far as the eye can see; while the heavy timber along the creeks and rivers indicates their course. A dreary monotony prevails on the western rivers, the same everlasting plains, the same great grassy waste of downs like an ocean without its interesting motion. Far ahead can be seen the river timber winding through the brown plains, so that the traveller can see a whole day’s stage ahead. For over a hundred of miles along the north-eastern, or right bank of the Flinders River, is a tableland of basaltic formation, near which the river winds its course; a dark fringe of rocks rises abruptly, broken here and there by indentations through which flow creeks to join the main channel. The cone of eruption for this vast overflow of lava is said to be somewhere about Mount Sturgeon, to the eastward. The lava has flowed over the original sandstone formation, and formed a level tableland now broken and covered with black, porous blocks of lava of every size. It is utilised for pasture purposes, notwithstanding its forbidding aspect.

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Some time after Rule and Lacy stocked the Aramac, Mr. Hodgson arrived on it with sheep and took up and stocked Rodney Downs; he crossed the spinifex country from the Belyando to the Alice River, and lost about six thousand sheep on this track by poison bush, the *Gastrolobium grandiflora*. Mr. Meredith arrived in May of the same year on the Thomson, and took up and stocked Tower Hill station. During June of this year the Thomson and Aramac Creek were in high flood; Rule and Lacy were flooded out of their first camp, and removed to where Aramac station now is. Some stockmen looking after the company’s cattle on an anabranch of Cornish Creek, were surrounded by water, and lived on jerked beef for a month. About July the head station was shifted up to Cornish Creek, taking the name of Bowen Downs with it, which name it has since retained. In 1872 the cattle station was formed into a separate establishment under the management of Mr. E. R. Edkins, who called it Mount Cornish, in honor of the late E. B. Cornish, of Sydney. This year wound up with a wet Christmas. Wages in those days were very high, stockmen getting as much as 40s. a week, and cooks 30s.; any old horse would bring £25. The year 1864 may be styled the year of Hegira or flight of stock outwards to settle new country; they came from all parts, and helped to fill the land everywhere with the beginning of civilisation. A boom had set in for pastoral occupation; the reports of recent explorations told of enormous tracts of grand open country waiting for stock to utilise it, and each one was anxious to be the first to secure some of it for his sheep or cattle. The head of the Flinders River was occupied by a few settlers, and two lots of sheep passed Bowen Downs, en route to the Flinders. They belonged to Kirk and Sutherland, and Mr. J. L. Ranken, and came from Fort Cooper way, losing heavily in crossing the range between Bully Creek and Lake Buchanan, between eight and ten thousand sheep perishing through eating the desert poison bush. They discovered what was the cause of such losses by feeding some sheep on the suspected plant when they died with all the symptoms of the victims in the desert track. The first white man known to have been killed by the blacks on the Thomson was one of the shepherds with Kirk and Sutherland’s sheep. He was killed on Duck Pond Creek, a tributary of Cornish Creek. After he was buried, the blacks dug the body up at night and drove a stake through it, pinning it to the ground. Kirk and Sutherland must have reached the Flinders about April, and then occupied and stocked Marathon. Mr. J. L. Ranken

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occupied Afton Downs, but was dried out the following year, and he lost a number of his sheep in consequence of having to remove them lower down the Flinders. In March of this year Mr. Meredith, of Tower Hill, formed a station on the east side of Landsborough Creek, naming it Eversleigh, and stocked it with cattle. In March also Bowen Downs sent cattle up the Landsborough for the purpose of stocking the west side of the creek. The men with the cattle had a very rough trip, as there was incessant rain, and the country became one vast quagmire; all their rations and ammunition were spoilt, and they had to live on young calf, "staggering bob," as they called it. Mr. E. H. Butler was in charge, and after leaving the cattle, started for home at the Mud Hut, when a thunderstorm occurred that put out their fire and wet all their matches. The river branches were flooded, and during the next two days they had nothing to eat, and no fire, and were drenched to the skin by thunderstorms; their pack-horse with all their blankets had knocked up, and they passed the night without sleep, being wet and cold and hungry; next morning they had to swim the main branch of the river, and then walk four miles to the station, leaving behind one of their mates knocked up on an island in the river. About September of this year (1864), Bowen Downs despatched about fifteen hundred head of cattle in charge of Mr. Donald McGlashen to the Gulf of Carpentaria for the purpose of taking up country and stocking it. These cattle travelled up the Landsborough, crossed the watershed on to Walker's Creek, followed it down to the Flinders, and down that river to the turn off to Sackey's Lagoon, and down the Alexandra to the Leichhardt, then across by Miller's Waterhole to Beame's Brook, where the first station was formed called the Brook, about sixteen miles above where Burketown now stands; they arrived there before the end of 1864, and were the first stock to occupy the Gulf country. When Mr. Landsborough left the Albert River on his trip in search of Burke and Wills, he left a four hundred gallon tank there with a lot of rations in it for the use of any distressed explorers or others, and fastened the lid in such a way that he thought the blacks would be unable to open it; but when Mr. McGlashen found the tank, he discovered that the blacks had solved the problem, and the rations were not there. When they were mustering these cattle before starting, the boss, Mr. A. Scott Holmes, riding along with a stockman, met a blackfellow whose gin had two half-caste children with her, aged about nine and seven years; the blackfellow evidently wanted them to see the children, as he kept pointing to them. Some years after this it was reported that two half-castes were with the blacks out to the west of the Thomson, but nothing more was heard of them.

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It was during this year of 1864 that the first settlers found their way to the Barcoo, although the fame of its pastures had been known years before from the reports of Sir Thomas Mitchell and others explorers. Among the first to settle there was J. T. Allen, who took up Enniskillen in 1862, and who still resides there. Bell and Dutton took up Tambo station, close to where the township of the same name sprang up afterwards. Govett and Parsons took up Terrick, and Yaldwyn occupied Ravensbourne, while Moor and Reid held Moorsland, now called Lorne. Henry Edwards, from the Burnett, took up Malvern, which was sold the same year to the Ellis Bros., who then occupied Portland.

In 1865, C. Lumley Hill, with Allen and Holberton, took up Isis Downs. Then a pause ensued in occupying new runs, and progress was checked; but after the passing of the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869, which gave greater facilities for the occupation of new country, and more liberal terms, many runs were occupied; among them, Mr. Hill held Westlands. A. B. Buchanan took up Wellshot, while Welford took up Welford Downs, and was killed by the blacks in 1872. Among the runs opened in those days were Tocal, Bimerah, Mount Marlow, and Louisa Downs. The stock to occupy all these runs in those early days mainly came from the Darling Downs and Burnett, as in the first days of the Queensland Parliament an Act was passed excluding New South Wales stock. Mr. Hill, in 1874, sold Isis Downs, which was divided into three runs called Albilbah, Ruthven, and Isis Downs. A great deal of the western plain country was occupied during the years between 1865 and 1870, and a great deal of interest and energy was exhibited in taking up and selling large blocks of fine pastoral country. Sheep for stocking country rose to high prices, but when the crisis occurred, there was a collapse in values, and many abandoned a good deal of the country and disappeared from the scene.

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Berkelman and Lambert discovered and settled Elizabeth Creek and Listowel Downs. Mr. H. E. King was the first Land Commissioner, and superintended the laying out of Tambo, the first town on the Barcoo. The price of carriage for supplies in those days was £46 per ton. Cameron and Crombie took up Barcaldine in 1864 with sheep from New England, and, in conjunction with Mr. Allen, they also took up Home Creek, Enniskillen, Minnie Downs, Vergemont, and Evesham. They brought their stock by the Burnett, the Dawson, and Springsure, over the Expedition Range. There was the usual trouble with the blacks after settling down. The natives killed the shepherds and robbed the huts of rations and cooking utensils that were very difficult to replace in those days. The Peak Downs was first reported on by Dr. Leichhardt, but many years elapsed before occupation set in. Among those who were prominent in the opening up and early settlement of the fine tableland of Peak Downs, with its rich soil, were De Satge and Milford, of Wolfgang; Mackay, of Huntley; Gordon Sandeman, of Gordon Downs; Hood, of Hood and Manning; and Lamb and Black, of Yamala.

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As the character of the new country became known, many other runs near Hughenden were occupied by overlanders struggling along with stock, among them was Fairlight, on the basalt ridge, held with sheep by Henry Betts. Afton Downs, as has already been mentioned, was taken up with sheep by Mr. Ranken, who deserted it later with a considerable loss of stock owing to drought. Kirk and Sutherland, who had come from Suttor Creek with sheep in 1863 were also dried out from Marathon, and suffered great losses. Both of these runs now possess flowing

streams in every direction, formed by artesian bores. Notable among the early settlers was the family of the Annings, father and sons, from Victoria. They held Reedy Springs, on the head waters of the Flinders, Charlotte Plains, and several other stations formed by their enterprise; the sons still occupy the same country, and have grown gray in pioneering. Another Victorian firm, Muirson, Jamieson and Thompson, occupied Mount Emu with sheep in 1862, after much travelling about in search of suitable country. Mrs. Thompson, with a young family, accompanied her husband in those early pioneering days of roughness and privation, and lived at Mount Emu for many years, where her large family grew up, and her sons are now occupying runs throughout the district. The hospitality of Mount Emu was proverbial, and the refinement that prevailed in all the arrangements at the head station gave additional value to the welcome that was extended to all travellers. On the Burdekin country, the family of the Hanns, father and sons, possessed themselves of Maryvale, a splendid piece of country.

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The farthest outstation north in 1860-61 was that of W. Stenhouse, on the Clarke, a tributary of the Burdekin. Seventy miles nearer Bowen, was the station of Allingham Bros., and thirty-five miles still nearer port were located the Messrs Cunningham. Ernest Henry very early took up Mount McConnel, at the junction of the Suttor and Selheim Rivers; this is one of the old landmarks of Leichhardt when on his trip to Port Essington in 1844-45. Stock were taken there from Baroodah, on the Dawson, in 1860; and later on Hughenden station was settled with stock taken from Mount McConnel. Hughenden is situated at the beginning of the open plain country on the Flinders; it was one of the first stations settled there in 1864. The present head station is on the exact spot taken up so long ago, but is somewhat different in style to the original slab hut on the ridge in which Mr. R. R. Morrisett and his hutkeeper, old Jack Ryan, dwelt in 1864, when water for the use of the head station was drawn from the junction of the creek with the river, that being the only surface water within miles. Mr. Ernest Henry, a most energetic and indefatigable pioneer carried on a good deal of prospecting on the Cloncurry, and was the earliest discoverer of the mineral wealth of the district. A company was formed in 1868 to work the copper lodes discovered by Mr. Henry, but after expending large sums of money on smelting works, etc., they were obliged to cease operations on account of the expense of carriage and the low price of copper. H. Devilin was one of the most active and venturesome pioneers in discovering and making known to others the country on the Flinders. He opened the way for several stockowners in that extensive district, though he himself does not appear to have had much personal interest in any of the speculations.

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In opening up the highway through the head of the Flinders to the far west, these pioneers were the forerunners of the great wave of settlement that followed on immediately afterwards, notwithstanding the deterrent features of the desert and the poison bush, through which they had to pass with their stock. Up to 1864 the runs that had been stocked on the Upper Flinders downs were Fairlight, by Betts and Oxley with sheep, and Telemon station by Collins and Walpole. This last property is now owned by J. L. Currie, of Melbourne, is mostly freehold, and with the discovery of artesian water, and the introduction of fine woolled sheep, has become a most valuable estate. It consists of open rolling downs, with patches of gidya, a species of acacia. Marathon, on the Upper Flinders, was taken up by R. H. Sheaffe, who for five years represented the Burke district in the Legislative Assembly. The run was sold by him to Kirk and Sutherland, who were in search of grass for their sheep. Marathon is now owned by a Melbourne firm, and by means of artesian wells, carries 200,000 sheep. After being dried out from Afton Downs, John Ranken, a member of a very old colonial family in New South Wales, eventually found his way to Barkly Tableland, where he settled for a time. Afton Downs is situated on Walker's Creek, a tributary of the Flinders on the western side, and is of the usual open rolling downs formation. All these runs, as previously mentioned, were occupied before the discovery of artesian springs, and therefore subject to being periodically dried out. At the present day, with judicious expenditure on artesian wells, and other improvements, this run annually shears close on 100,000 sheep. Following down the Flinders through the great plain country, the next station occupied was Richmond Downs, where a struggling township named Richmond now stands; this was held in 1864 by Bundock and Hays, with cattle from the Clarence River, in New South Wales. They lost many on their way out by pleuro-pneumonia and the desert poison bush already described. Opposite to Richmond Downs, across the Flinders River, Kennedy and Macdonald took up about the same time a run which they called Cambridge Downs, now a large sheep station. All these runs on the Upper Flinders were first settled in 1864, and formed an outpost of settlement by which other pioneers directed their course lower down the river. During 1865 and the following year, another wave of occupation flowed on past these outside stations, and the new pioneers finding country further on, became in their turn a starting point for others, and still the tide flowed outwards and westwards till all available country was taken up. Those who came out during 1864 and 1865 had a serious difficulty to contend with in facing a drier season than has since been experienced up to 1897. The pioneers with their stock were compelled to follow the course of the river, as it was almost certain death to go far to the west looking for water or country. All the tributary creeks of the Flinders were dry, and those who ventured out had soon to return to the main watercourse. The native dogs crowded in on the Flinders in thousands, and the blacks themselves had also to resort to it. During that trying season, none of the rivers ran in their channels, and even most of the large waterholes in the bed of the Flinders dried up, while stages of thirty or forty miles without water were frequent. Notwithstanding these drawbacks to stockowners who were on the search for some unfrequented nook to unharness on, the crowd pressed on in the hope of better country ahead, some Canaan far beyond, where hills were always green and water abundant. These men followed each other in quick succession and took up runs on the Lower Flinders and all over the Gulf country, wherever water could be found.

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This settlement, carried out in those early years, was most extensive and comprehensive, and during the time the western country was being sought out and utilised the Burdekin was being stocked in every part. One of the pioneers was Mr. Robert Stewart, of Southwick station, on Fletcher's Creek, a stream of pure, clear water, flowing from the great basaltic wall into the Burdekin. Reedy Lake station was stocked with sheep by O'Reilly and Reeve, near Dalrymple, where the main route from Bowen to the Gulf crossed the Burdekin River. Many other runs were taken up on the Burdekin and towards the coast, and many soon changed hands, the first settlers passing on to occupy country in the interior. Several of these first-comers took up coast runs and stocked them with sheep, believing they would thrive there. This was found to be a mistake, and from Wide Bay to the north scarcely any sheep are now to be met with on coastal runs. For a few years in some places they did well enough, but they soon began to die from fluke, worms, and grass seeds, and they were accordingly replaced by cattle. The sheep on being removed to western pastures thrived well, and soon recovered health. The seeds of the spear grass (*Andropogon contortus*) were a terrible scourge—they are finely barbed and intensely sharp and hard; once entered they pass right through the skin of the sheep, even into the flesh, causing great annoyance and leading to poverty and death. The soil in which this grass thrives best is in the sandy strips along the banks of creeks. After seeding, the heads bunch together, in tangled masses, and shower the seeds on to sheep passing through. It is of use as a fodder grass only when young and green, although cattle thrive fairly well upon it, and its presence in any quantity at once determines whether the pasturage is favourable to sheep or not. The cattle that were brought from Bowen Downs to stock the runs taken up on the Gulf, were brought to their northern starting point from Fort Cooper and further south during 1860 by N. Buchanan and W. Landsborough, who were both very active and enterprising in opening up new country. This splendid property (Bowen Downs) was settled by the Landsborough River Company, held in shares by Messrs. N. Buchanan, W. Landsborough, Cornish, and W. Glen Walker, with Messrs. Morehead and Young, of Sydney. The first four went out of the company shortly afterwards, and Mr. Cornish, after visiting the Gulf country, fell a victim to maladies contracted during the journey. Mount Cornish was known in the early days as the Mud Hut. Mr. E. R. Edkins, who has now been the manager for many years, was among the very early drovers of stock to the Gulf. He left the Murray in 1861, and started from the Gil-gil in January, 1862, passed Rockhampton, took in charge Mr. R. Stewart's cattle, and brought them to Fletcher's Creek, now Southwick, on the Lower Burdekin, and reached Maryvale in September of that year. He then returned to the Murray, and brought out another lot of cattle, passing Bowen in April, 1864. Here the cattle were placed in quarantine. After being inoculated for pleuro, they travelled on to Mount Emu, in September, 1864. James Gibson also took up a run on Junction Creek, also Wanda Vale and Cargoon stations.

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Among the settlers who were first in the new country on the Flinders were Messrs. Little and Hetzer, who took up a run called Uralla, near the junction of the Saxby and Flinders Rivers. Their stock consisting of cattle and sheep came by Bowen Downs to the head of the Flinders, and then followed the usual route. The blacks made some trouble at the station and several lives were sacrificed. Others of the pioneers to try their fortune in the general rush for new country were the Earle Brothers, who had a station near Bowen; one of them, Mr. Thomas Earle, took up country on Spear Creek, the head of the Norman River, in 1865, and called the station Iffley. The season was so uncommonly dry, that permanent water was the chief attraction, and the splendid waterhole at Iffley, more than two miles long, and very deep, decided the Earles to fix themselves there with their cattle and drays. There was at the time a vast extent of country open for settlement; the terms were fairly liberal, and the prospects good for those in search of new runs. The settlers were like a great advancing army, confident in their numbers and strength; and so they advanced into the unknown land, and left the rest to fortune. They came from all the settled parts of Australia; that was what induced Mr. H. F. Smith, of Barnes and Smith, to bring cattle from Lyndhurst and take up a run on the Lower Flinders, called Tempe Downs, on L Creek, so called from a tree marked L, one of Leichhardt's marked trees when on his expedition to Port Essington, 1844-5. In 1865 James Kennedy took stock from Cambridge Downs, and held a fine run on the Upper Leichhardt River, calling it Pentland Downs. In the same year, James Cassidy occupied country lower down on the same river with sheep. One of the pioneers who went through much personal privation and hardship in the general forward march to discover new country, was Mr. Reginald Halloran, associated with his brother-in-law, Mr. Robert Alexander, of Proston, on the Burnett. They suffered heavy losses among the sheep while going through the desert, from the poison plant, and also from want of water. With the party was a young fellow named Briggs, who was killed by the blacks on Skeleton Creek before reaching Hughenden while a detachment of the party was camped there. The remnant of the stock that survived the trip were placed on a piece of country on the Lower Flinders, which they named Home Creek, but which was soon deserted by this firm, though held as a station years afterwards. Mr. Halloran was a man conspicuous for his utter disregard of personal comfort; he would start on a ride of a hundred miles without rations or blanket, trusting to the chance of accidents for food, and to his saddle cloth for covering for the night, and he was always welcome at any camp owing to his geniality and fund of humour. The young fellow, Briggs, who met with an untimely death, had arrived at the advance camp only the night before for rations, and while alone in the tent next morning, the other man being absent horse-hunting, a party of blacks visited the camp. The white man showed fight, breaking a gun over the head of one of the blacks, but was soon killed, and when the horse-hunter returned, he found Briggs dead and the camp looted.

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A place called Sorghum Downs, on the Lower Cloncurry, now part of Conobie, was claimed by an old colonist and pioneer named Murdoch Campbell; he and his wife (a Devonshire woman), had

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camped on the Bowen River in 1863, but it was a long time before they found their way out so far west. Mrs. Campbell's hospitality and kindness to all travellers was one of the pleasant remembrances of those early hard times. Campbell died in 1867, and Mrs. Campbell ultimately went to New Zealand, where she had friends. A small firm of two men, Anderson and Trimble, successful diggers from the Snowy River, in New South Wales, joined the rest of the pushing crowd, and held a good run on the Saxby River with sheep.

Still the tide of occupation flowed on, and when all the available watered runs around the Gulf were occupied in 1865 and the following year, those remaining unsatisfied, marched on, restless as the surges that beat on the shore. Several of those in charge of stock travelled up the Gregory River southwards, and out far away on to Barkly Tableland, discovered by Mr. W. Landsborough. These were among the first to make known the capabilities of this splendid district. The Stieglitz Brothers held country far away to the south on the Herbert River, called now the Georgina, having passed through all the Flinders and Gulf country unrewarded.

Gregg and Nash, with sheep for the Messrs. J. and E. Brown, of Newcastle, followed on the far-away track to the inland Never-Never, Mrs. Gregg and her daughter accompanying the party in all their wanderings. The attention and hospitality of this lady to all travellers was as conspicuous as it was highly prized, and it will not be easily forgotten. Several other pioneers occupied runs on the Barkly tablelands, which was recognised as some of the finest pastoral land in Queensland. In after years, when this country came to be restocked by a new generation from the south, after being deserted and forsaken by the original pioneers, the new settlers were surprised to find evidences of a previous occupation. Where the early settlers had come from, where they had gone to, and who they were, were matters of curiosity; sheets of galvanised iron they well knew did not grow like the gidya trees, neither were old sheepyards (built of basaltic stones) the work of blacks. But who those early pioneers were, and what their fate, was utterly unknown, and caused much speculation.

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All the country bordering on the Gulf suitable for grazing purposes was portioned out and occupied between the years 1864 and 1868. Though in most cases the number of stock on each run was small, the runs were numerous, and most of the owners were resident. It was recognised that a great future was in store for this vast new territory just opening up to enterprise and capital. The Plains of Promise, named by one of the early navigators (Captain Stokes, of the "Beagle," in 1842), had been much talked of for years, but when they were stocked, the distant fields lost much of their interest. The fine rivers flowing into the Gulf of Carpentaria, through hundreds of miles of open plains and rolling downs, covered with permanent and valuable pasturage, gave to the early settlers good reasons for believing they were the pioneers in opening up a grand and wealth-producing territory.

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Stations were formed, stock brought out, improvements made, and the way opened for permanent occupation. The high hopes entertained seemed likely to be realised, until a change came over the aspect of things—a change brought about by influences far removed from the local scene, and in which the settlers had no voice—a change in which no amount of energy or sacrifice on their part could avail aught. The days of commercial panic set in, culminating in the crisis of 1868-69, the march of settlement was instantly checked, and the outward flow of civilisation turned backwards. The financial crisis was felt all over the mercantile world; banks of old standing collapsed, and low prices for wool and stock, and all station produce, brought the pastoral industry to a low ebb.

In consequence of these monetary disturbances, agents declined to find money to carry on places so far distant as the Gulf stations—even the little required for current expenses. All credit was stopped, and supplies also, and as the newly-formed stations could not be made self-supporting in the absence of local markets, the stock had to be abandoned or removed. The tide began to ebb at a greater rate than it had risen; some of the stock were sent south, while the rest were boiled down, scarcely clearing expenses in either case; the improvements were abandoned as well as the runs. The sheep came in from Barkly Tableland, the Gregory, and the Leichhardt, and by the year 1871, there were but few runs occupied. The great flood of 1869-70 helped to fill the cup of misfortune for the Gulf residents; no such flood was ever dreamt of, or has ever been seen since; it rained all January, February, and most of March, and the rivers covered all the plain country, though the loss of stock was small. A few runs on the Flinders and Cloncurry were still kept in occupation, but they were not many, and these only struggled along, hoping for better times. No value was attached to runs or stock in any of the Gulf country then, as runs could be obtained much nearer settlement for next to nothing, many being thrown up through the general depression. It seemed as if the bottom had fallen out of the pastoral industry, and hope had gone, but relief came sooner than was expected. The Etheridge goldfield was opened, and served to employ a good deal of the floating population. This field is situated to the east of Normanton on the Delany and Etheridge Rivers, about 250 miles towards the east coast. The discovery of auriferous reefs there, as well as some alluvial gold, helped to keep trade alive, until the discovery of the rich fields on the Palmer in 1873, when a great demand set in for cattle. The financial depression lifted, the price of wool went up 100 per cent., and a demand again arose for runs to stock; the old ones were all taken up, new country was applied for, and the voice of the man with money was heard again in the land. In the years following, up to 1884, much speculation was carried on in buying and selling runs and stock, and country for occupation was as eagerly sought after as in the early days.

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Advantage was taken of the liberal provisions of the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869, to take up unoccupied country, even if it was dry. Cattle were selling on the Palmer diggings at £10 and £12

a head cash, and the supply of bullocks was not equal to the demand, because the runs had been so thinned by the exodus of stock south to clear expenses, that no surplus was available to meet such a sudden demand as that caused by the arrival of 20,000 diggers in the north. Then the tide flowed again, and became the flood that helped to fill the country with work and life. Cattle came out in large numbers, and passed on to occupy country in the northern territory of South Australia, and even in Western Australia. As many as 30,000 head passed over the border in one year at Burketown, for the purpose of stocking country around Port Darwin.

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For several years travelling stock went out to the far north-west, and all had to pass through the Gulf country. The route followed from the borders of Queensland was by the track that Leichhardt took on his journey to Port Essington, between the tableland and salt water, crossing the Macarthur, Roper, Calvert, and other rivers. Stations were occupied on the Orde and Victoria Rivers on the Cambridge Gulf side with stock from North Queensland. In those districts some very fine open downs country had recently been discovered. Fisher and Lyons had 20,000 head of cattle sent out to their country in the north-west. Osman and Panton also had large numbers of cattle from Queensland. Dr. Brown is reported to have expended £100,000 in sending sheep and cattle from the Adelaide side to the northern territory. The stocking of this far away country was extremely expensive owing to the distance the cattle had to travel, and the unusually high percentage of losses on the way. Some of the stock were two years on the road, and a new disease called red water attacked them when passing the Roper River. This disease is supposed to be due to cattle ticks (*Ixodes Bovis*), and has since carried disaster into many herds in Queensland. The average cost of some of the cattle when arrived on their country was equal to £7 a head, in consequence of losses and expenses. The Gordon Brothers were among the early drovers to take stock over the borders to West Australia, and they made several trips. The Duracks are another family of pioneer settlers in the northern territory, and held extensive possessions. The country bordering the rivers that flow into the Cambridge Gulf was reported to be of a superior description and of a fattening nature. Though much of the country in the northern territory was reckoned of an inferior description for grazing, the encouraging terms of leasing offered by the South Australian Government induced many to venture on the hazardous undertaking. The markets opened up by the goldfields of Port Darwin repaid some of their enterprise. Bullocks were sold at from £17 to £20 cash for butchering purposes. Eventually a shipping trade in cattle was opened up with Singapore from Port Darwin; a company built special steamers for carrying stock and passengers to the northern ports. The results have proved satisfactory, as the s.s. "Darwin" lately (1897) took a cargo of 190 head of fat bullocks on board, this being her forty-second trip.

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The Cape York Peninsula, within which was found the rich Palmer diggings, came in for a share of settlement between 1875 and 1880. The first of the early pioneers to take up a cattle run on the Mitchell River was Mr. A. C. Grant, now of Messrs. B. D. Morehead and Co. He left the Bowen River with three hundred fat cattle from Havilah station for Messrs. Skene and Henderson, and took up Wrotham Park in 1873, situated between the Mitchell and Walsh Rivers, on Elizabeth Creek, 120 miles N.N.E. from Georgetown, a nice open piece of country, consisting of black soil flats and ridges. The cattle he took up realised £11 5s. per head cash all round; beef was then selling on the field at 1s. per lb. Mr. Patrick Callaghan held a few blocks of country along the Mitchell River, chiefly as a depôt for bullocks for sale on the various diggings, as he became a large buyer of cattle from the local market in conjunction with F. Leslie, J. Edwards, and J. Duff. The transactions and profits of this enterprising firm were on a very large scale, one partner travelling outside buying cattle, another superintending the supply to local butchers, and the other two attending to the gold buying, slaughtering, and financial business of the concern. The next to take up country for pastoral purposes on the Mitchell water was Edward Palmer (the author of these notes), who, in conjunction with John Stevenson and Walter Reid, took up and stocked Gamboola in 1879 with cattle from Ravenswood and Mount McConnel runs. The extent of good pasture land on the Mitchell waters, or anywhere on the Peninsula, further north, is limited. When the Palmer goldfield was opened the farthest outstation stocked on the overland route was Mount Surprise, on Junction Creek, held by the Firths, and this was over 200 miles from the diggings by the nearest practicable road. The road was opened by drovers taking stock, and carriers and miners passing northwards with their faces set direct to the wonderful land of gold.

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The road crossed the Tate, the Walsh, and the Mitchell Rivers, and then followed up the Palmer River through some of the roughest country in North Queensland. When Cooktown was opened as a port for the diggings, the overland route was abandoned for dray traffic, and droving stock alone used it. The consumption of beef on the field for several years demanded an average annual supply of from 15,000 to 20,000 head, most of the cattle realising from £7 to £10 each. The stock came from coastal runs mostly, Dotswood and the Burdekin country supplying much of it, Bowen Downs and Aramac<sup>[E]</sup> also sending in many large mobs. Very few breeding cattle were brought out, but some small runs towards Cooktown were occupied with cattle, the country consisting of open timbered ridges of only a second-class description, but fairly well watered. The Mitchell River was named by Dr. Leichhardt in memory of another explorer, Sir Thomas Mitchell. Leichhardt saw this river where it junctioned with the Lynd, and one of his old camps is still to be seen on the Lynd a little above this junction. It is really a beautiful river, with a clear running stream all the year round, and some deep reaches of still water; the banks are covered with scrubs of pencil cedar and a great variety of hanging vines and thick shrubs. The principal source of the river is near Port Douglas on the east coast, within six miles of the township, on the top of the range, from whence the water flows north-west, and continues its course to the Gulf of Carpentaria, where it empties itself in latitude 15 deg. 10 sec. In its course, it receives the waters of the Walsh, Lynd, and Palmer Rivers, as well as the Hodgkinson, and becomes a mighty stream.

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Indeed it is one of the most picturesque and interesting rivers in Queensland. The upper parts of this stream were explored by J. V. Mulligan and his party of prospectors in 1875. Leichhardt followed it below the junction of the Lynd when on his trip to Port Essington, before leaving it to cross to the Gulf country. The Mitchell River country is famous for its native game; the scrubs abound with wallaby, turkeys, and pigeons; the river and lagoons teem with fish of every variety, and waterfowl cover the shallow waters where the alligators are unable to reach them. The open country surrounding has the large kangaroo and the common bustard (plain turkey) in abundance. The country fattens stock, and is well watered. It consists of alluvial soil and open ridges of a sandy nature, where the grass is coarse and is covered with a low mimosa scrub.

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[E] The word "Aramac" was coined by the late Mr. W. Landsborough, the well-known explorer, and is an euphonious abbreviation of the name of the late Sir Robert Ramsey Mackenzie, who was Colonial Secretary in the first Macalister Ministry (1866) and Colonial Treasurer and Premier 1867-8. Mr. Landsborough was fond of coining words by joining the first syllable of one name to the first syllable of another name—thus the run known as "Willandspey," on Vine Creek, near Mount Hope, just below the junction of the Belyando and Suttor Rivers, is a combination of the names of William Landsborough and Peyton, the first lessee of the run.

Among the many other disabilities that cattle were subject to in this new country was a poison bush or tree, growing along the banks of creeks and rivers, called the peach tree (*Cannabis sp.*) It is said to have been the cause of many deaths, for hundreds of cattle that were unused to the plant died along the bends of the rivers, though young stock bred in the country appeared to be immune to its evil effects. Notwithstanding all these drawbacks and discouragements, runs were taken up on the Archer and other rivers in the Peninsula as far as Cape York, and the rivers flowing into Princess Charlotte's Bay were all occupied by the pioneers of settlement in face of all opposition and discouragement.

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## **CHAPTER VII. THE RISE OF THE NORTHERN TOWNS.**

The site of Rockhampton, now the principal city of Central Queensland, was chosen in 1855 by Mr. Wiseman, a Land Commissioner of New South Wales who had been despatched from Sydney to confirm the Archer Brothers in the possession of their Gracemere run. The town received its name from the bar of rocks running across the river at the head of navigation. Its first expansion dates from the rush to the Canoona diggings, then called Port Curtis rush, which took place in 1858, as it was then the nearest port to the field, and therefore handled all the trade to and from the diggings. When the field was declared a "duffer," and the miners departed in disgust, they left the nucleus of a settlement behind which was subsequently to become the seaport and distributing centre for all the rich pastoral country now comprised in the Central District.

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Among the first settlers to open up Gladstone was R. E. Palmer, who built a large wool store and wharf so that the wool from Rannes and other stations lately formed could be shipped from there. He then took up Targinie cattle station over the harbour on the north side. The town is now noted for its healthiness and pleasant climate, and the beautiful view of the harbour, studded with islands. A North Australian settlement was attempted here when the Gladstone Government was in power, in January, 1847. Colonel Barney was head of the colonising party in the "Lord Auckland." Both these names are perpetuated in Barney Point, and Auckland Creek. The party were recalled after three months stay, and the locality was left alone until 1854, when Captain (afterwards Sir) Maurice O'Connell was sent up as Government Resident.

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The first to discover and report on the grand harbour of Port Denison was Captain Sinclair, in the schooner "Santa Barbara." An expectation had been held out by the New South Wales Government that a handsome reward would be given to anyone who discovered a good harbour north of Port Curtis.

In hope of obtaining this reward, this little craft of only nine tons was fitted out at private expense, and sailed from Rockhampton on September 1st, 1859. The party consisted of Captain Sinclair, master; W. H. Thomas, seaman; and Messrs. James Gordon and Benjamin Poole, passengers. After piloting their way through islands and reefs and heavy storms, besides unknown dangers from the natives, they sailed into Port Denison on October 17th, 1859, and were gratified and surprised to find such a capacious and secure harbour. They landed and examined the bay, surveying and sketching some parts of it, but owing to the hostility and treachery of the natives, who were very numerous both on the islands and the mainland, they were not permitted to extend their knowledge of the port. The "Santa Barbara" left Port Denison on October 19th, and after boxing about for some time among the Cumberland Islands, reached Keppel Bay on her return on October 31st. The harbour is of an oval form, probably some ten miles in extreme length, and about four miles across from Station Island to the mainland; it is

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formed partly by an indentation in the coast, and partly by two islands running across it. Here at last was a port that would be a starting point for further settlement in the interior, a most suitable and secure harbour, discovered and opened up without any expense to the Government, and with such small means and outfit that the journal of those enterprising and heroic voyagers reads like a tale of romance. Although successful in this matter, they were not able to obtain the promised reward, for just at that time the separation of the new colony took place, and their claim was handed over to the new Government. A petition presented to the Queensland Parliament procured no further recognition than that Captain Sinclair was made Harbour Master, and Mr. James Gordon the first customs officer in Townsville.

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Very little was at that time known of the interior comprising the Kennedy district, which was thrown open to pastoral occupation on November 17th, 1859, by proclamation of the New South Wales Government, it being then part of that colony. Leichhardt had passed through it down the Suttor; Mitchell just touched its southern extremity; Landsborough penetrated from the direction of Fort Cooper, into the upper waters of the Bowen, which river he discovered and called the Bonnar.

Bowen was settled by George Elphinstone Dalrymple, Police Magistrate and Commissioner of Crown Lands, and several squatters who had come overland with him, and also by a number of persons, including Mr. James Gordon, who arrived at Bowen from Rockhampton per schooner "Jeannie Dove" with stores, a few days before Mr. Dalrymple.

On the organisation of the new Queensland Government, a proclamation was issued withdrawing the Kennedy district from occupation, and the tenders previously received were returned to the tenderers.

These explorers of a new port and future city were deserving of a much higher and better recognition than was accorded them by either Government.

The first sale of Bowen town lands was held in Brisbane on October 7th, 1861, when eighty-nine lots were sold, realising £2,083. Many of those early investors were Brisbane men, well known in business and the professions. The lots were mostly half-acres in area, and averaged about £25 to £50 per acre, the first Bishop of Brisbane (Tuffnell) figuring largely among the land buyers. In 1863 the demand for land called for several sales, as the town was progressing on account of the large overlanding of stock and the shipments of supplies for parties taking up country to the north and west.

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A land sale on April 20th, 1863, was held in Bowen, when seventy-nine lots were sold, realising £1,718; all the lots went above the upset price. On June 8th, 1863, another land sale took place in Bowen, when seventy-four lots were sold, realising £1,135; among these were some country lands in ten-acre lots, which realised the upset price, £3 7s. 6d. per acre. For town lots the upset price was £20 per acre; the competition for fancy lots was keen enough to run them up to as much as £100 per lot. Still another land sale had to be held to keep pace with the growing town, and the demands of speculators. This was held in Bowen on August 3rd, 1863, when seventy-three lots found purchasers, realising £2,643. This sale consisted mostly of country lands, put up in lots of from seventeen to fifty acres, at the upset price of £1 per acre; 1,518 acres were sold at this last land sale. These figures from official sources testify to the rapidity of the expansion of the new town, and to the high expectations that were formed as to its future rise and progress. Many familiar names occur in the annals of the official register, but most of the purchasers are now dead. Seaward, Marsh, and Genge, who had a large business as storekeepers, figure extensively as buyers, also Mr. J. G. Macdonald, James Hall Scott, Korah H. Willis, Thomas Cavanagh—a well-known celebrity of Bowen—and many other old identities are called to mind by looking through the list of the first land buyers in Bowen. Few now remain of those early speculators. The treasury of the young colony benefited by their ambition to hold land in the future capital of the north by the sum of £7,579.

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The town wore gay and holiday aspect when the Governor, Sir G. F. Bowen, landed in 1865. The jetty at that time was being built, and the town was filled with squatters from all parts of the north, getting supplies or tendering for new country. Flags were flying, addresses of welcome were presented, a bullock was roasted whole on the beach, barrels of beer were on tap alongside the bullock, tons of bread were there to go with it, and an assorted crowd was ready to do justice to both bullock and beer. A levee was held, an undress one, of course, as evening dress had not reached so far north at that time, but coats were found for every one in which to make a bow to the Governor. The only block hat that had reached the latitude of Bowen was worn by Mr. R. H. Smith, afterwards member for the district, who had the honor of escorting His Excellency up to the town. A ball was held in the evening in honor of the event, and many other things took place that this chronicle will pass over.

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Frederick Bode, at Strathdon, W. Powell, of Salisbury Plains, J. G. Macdonald, of Inkermann, Collings, at Eton Vale, A. C. Grant, at Dartmoor, all were settlers in Bowen district in the early days.

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Townsville was named after Captain Robert Towns, of Sydney, of the firm of R. Towns and Co., who held stations inland from Cleveland Bay, and as it became necessary to open some other port north of Bowen, which had hitherto been the distributing centre, explorations were made by

some of the managers of these stations, foremost among whom was Mr. Ball, the result being the discovery of the site of the present town, which was gazetted as a port of entry in October, 1865. On the 10th of that month, Mr. James Gordon arrived to perform the duties of Sub-Collector of Customs, and a great number of other official duties as well.

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Cardwell is situated near the head of Rockingham Bay, opposite the north end of Hinchinbrook Island, and distant north-west from Brisbane about 950 miles, in latitude 18 deg. 16 sec. S., longitude 146 deg. 4 sec. E. Population of district and town, 3,435. The first settlement in the locality took place in 1863, and it became a place of considerable importance, being the nearest port on the east coast to the Gulf of Carpentaria, but since then other ports have been opened, offering greater facilities for shipping.

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The first telegraph line from the east coast to the Gulf of Carpentaria commenced at Cardwell, but the expense connected with keeping the line open across the Sea View Range and through the dense jungle on the coast side thereof, proved too great, and the route was finally abandoned. Up to 1873, Cardwell was the most northern port on the east coast of Australia, and the port of entry for the Herbert River district. The town is now in a languishing state, but the excellence of the port may yet redeem it from obscurity.

It was from here that Kennedy's expedition took its final departure for the north early in June, 1848, and in connection with that memorable event, we may quote a paragraph recently appearing in a Queensland journal:—

"A SAD REMEMBRANCE BRINGS."

Recently a remarkable discovery was made at the foot of the Coast Range to the north of Cardwell—relics of the vehicles left by Kennedy, the explorer, when on his ill-fated journey up York Peninsula. It may be remembered that the party landed at Tam O'Shanter Point, Rockingham Bay, on May 30th, 1848, and that on July 18th the carts were abandoned, the party going on with twenty-six pack horses and fifty sheep. The story of the fate of Kennedy and nearly all of those who accompanied him has been frequently told, and the discovery of the remains of the carts, which have lain for nearly half a century in the jungle, revives interest in one of the saddest episodes in Australian exploration. The exact locality of the relics is kept a strict secret, the possessor of the secret being of opinion that he should profit by it. No doubt the Government would be glad to secure information which would enable it to establish the authenticity of statements which have been made on the subject.

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The first intimation the southern parts had of the existence of gold in the north was a telegram from Cardwell dated September 9th, 1873. It ran as follows:—"Prospectors Mulligan, Brown, Dowdall, A. Watson, and D. Robertson, got one hundred and five ounces on the Palmer River, which they prospected for twenty miles. They say nothing of the country outside the river. Nearly all are leaving here." This news spread like wild-fire and created a great sensation all over Australia; the difficulty was to get to the Palmer quick enough. The Government sent Mr. Bartley Fahey, Sub-Collector of Customs at Normanton, to explore the Mitchell River in order to open communication from Normanton towards the new field. Mr. G. E. Dalrymple, leader of the north coast expedition, was ordered to proceed to the Endeavour River, and he arrived at Cook's Landing on October 24th, 1873, but the expedition was recalled. In the meantime, the A. S. N. Co.'s steamer, the "Leichhardt" (Captain Saunders), left Brisbane on October 15th with some members of the Endeavour River expedition on board. Mr. A. C. MacMillan and his party were taken on at Bowen. The "Leichhardt" arrived at Townsville on October 20th, and took on all the horses, forty-six in number, and one hundred and fifty diggers, all for the new Palmer rush. Mr. Howard St. George and party embarked at Cardwell, and on Saturday, October 25th, 1873, the "Leichhardt" was made fast to the mangroves on the Endeavour River, in sixteen feet of water, and the new township began its existence on the site where the famous navigator, Captain Cook, on June 17th, 1770; beached his damaged vessel for repairs. The gold fever was irresistible, and helped to lift the town into prominence at once, drawing people from all parts of Australia. Four months after the landing of Mr. St. George, J. V. Mulligan, arriving from the Palmer field, described Cooktown as a large progressing township, about half a mile long, with stores, public houses, and shops of all sorts, with steamers and other boats coming in and going out every few days, and containing not less than two thousand people, though some estimated the numbers at a much higher figure. Cooktown dates its existence from the landing of the passengers by the steamer "Leichhardt" in 1873. The first Police Magistrate appointed was Mr. Thomas Hamilton, who also acted as Sub-Collector of Customs. Mr. James Pryde was the first Clerk of Petty Sessions. When the first court was held on December 27th, 1873, it was to deal with the charge of stealing a goat from Townsville.

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Mr. Gold, Commissioner St. George, and Mr. A. C. MacMillan, soon started on their expedition after landing at Cooktown, accompanied by eighty-six diggers, the command being one hundred and eight strong. They reported finding a good track to the Palmer. One reminiscence of their journey remains in the name of the original track, which is now known as Battle Camp, because the natives came down from the adjoining hills to dispute the right of the white men to travel through their country. Things in Cooktown kept booming along, and in April, 1874, there were from three to four thousand people camped between Grassy Hill and the outside boundary of Cooktown. During that month, sixty-five publicans' licenses were issued, and thirty more applied for; there were also twenty eating houses, twelve large stores, twenty small ones, six butchers,

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five bakers, three tinsmiths, four tent makers, six hairdressers, seven blacksmiths, besides doctors, chemists, fancy shops, watchmakers, bootmakers, saddlers, etc., in proportion, and all going full speed ahead. Until the discovery of the Palmer field, and the opening of Cooktown, Cardwell was the most northern port of call on the Queensland eastern coast, and was the telegraphic centre of news from the Etheridge and Gilbert goldfields. The golden news from these far northern diggings was of a most glittering nature, but there was a reverse side of the picture in the hardships and privations endured.

In 1874, the Cooktown "Courier" was started, and shortly afterwards the "Herald." The journalistic standard of the early days of Cooktown was esteemed, comparatively speaking, brilliant. The Queensland National Bank opened a branch there in 1874, followed by the Bank of New South Wales and The Australian Joint Stock Bank. Religion was not neglected either. In 1876, Cooktown was proclaimed a municipality, and from thence to 1878, it prospered mightily. Gold was plentiful, and its export was measured by the ton. The official returns in 1878 showed something over forty tons as having passed through the Customs, but that did not represent the measure of the enormous richness of the Palmer, as thousands upon thousands of ounces of gold were secretly taken away to China. Since then the goldfields have gradually dwindled down in their returns, and the Palmer of to-day, or even the Palmer of a few years ago, was not the grand and glorious field that made Cooktown rise like magic by the side of its splendid harbour. The later discovery of tin on Cannibal Creek, and the Annan River, again caused some stir in business, but of a much quieter description than in the halcyon days of golden light. The beche de mer industry has also been a great help to business people in Cooktown. The great red-letter day in Cooktown was the turning of the first sod for the Cooktown-Maytown Railway, on April 3rd, 1884, by the Mayor, Mr. Edward D'Arcy, when a tremendous public demonstration took place. Mr. George Bashford was the contractor for the first section, and he gave a great banquet on the occasion, inviting people from all parts of Queensland to be present. Like many other towns in Queensland, Cooktown in recent years has suffered from depression, but there is a solid future before it still. With one of the finest harbours on the east coast, it is the key to the Torres Strait route and to New Guinea. The reef-bearing country on the Palmer has still to be developed, and the great extent of this mineral wealth is as yet quite under-rated. Besides containing tin and coal in abundance, North Queensland has other grand resources in its back pastoral and agricultural country.

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The town of Normanton was opened by the settlers as a better port for shipping for the Lower Flinders stations than Burketown, which was inconvenient, being too far to the west, and difficult of access. The Norman River, so called by Landsborough after the captain of the Victorian Government ship "Victoria," is a fine and deep river.

Messrs. W. Landsborough and G. Phillips were the first to navigate the Norman, in January, 1867. They chose the site for the township on the left side of the river, where some high ironstone ridges come close in on the river bank. Here was room for the extension of a large city, naturally drained, and free from the possibility of floods, with ready access to the back country. Unfortunately, the upper reaches of the river are obstructed by bands of rocks running across from bank to bank, that hinder navigation. These, however, could be removed at small cost.

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Among the first to settle in the town was Dr. Borck, a popular medical man; his brother still keeps a store in the town. Another hotel built in the first days was that of Mr. A. McLennan, who had been concerned in the first occupation of Burketown. Ellis Read, trading for R. Towns and Co., soon had a fine store established, and carried on a large business with the stations, and also with the diggings opening on the Etheridge River. The first team to arrive in the town was driven in down Spear Creek by George Trimble from his station on the Saxby, at the head of the Norman River. Then wool commenced to arrive from Donor's Hills and other stations on the Flinders, even as early as 1868, and was shipped away to Sydney by any chance vessel offering. One of the early traders to the Norman was a well-known skipper on the east coast, Captain Till, of the "Policeman," schooner, who made several voyages there. Normanton was never affected by sickness as Burketown had been, and its progress was steady, though slow. The country around was well watered, but not adapted to agriculture. Lagoons of fresh water fringed the river, and were well supplied with game, the river full of splendid fish, some of which ranged up to twenty pounds in weight. Alligators abounded in all the brackish waters, as they do in all tidal rivers in the Gulf, while the crocodile (so called), a smaller but quite harmless creature, is found in fresh water only. Being amphibious in its nature, it can adapt itself to pools and rivers a long way inland, and is found wherever there are deep lagoons, and in all the waters flowing into the Gulf of Carpentaria.

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In the early times, when one of R. Towns and Co.'s vessels was unloading at the bank of the river, one of the Kanakas employed was seized by an alligator. The man held on to a mangrove tree, and his mates beat the alligator over the head until he let go, but not before he had so torn the flesh from the man's leg that he bled to death.

Among those who are to be reckoned as the oldest inhabitants of the Gulf country, was John Harrix, who came over with the first cattle of Mr. J. G. Macdonald from Bowen in 1864, and who owned some teams and a small station near Normanton. A partner of his named Macdonald came down the Flinders early in 1865. Percival E. Walsh, a nephew of Mr. W. H. Walsh, of Degilbo, helped to settle some runs in the Gulf country. He took up a run on the Dugald, naming it

Granada, which was sold afterwards to Messrs. Hopkins Brothers. He also restocked Iffley after its desertion by its first owners, the Earle Bros., now of Yacamunda, on the Suttor River. The early citizens of Normanton include the names of Peter Armstrong, David Swan, Charles B. Hely, Charles Borck, John Edgar Byrne, for many years proprietor of "Figaro," and a hundred others who more or less helped to form this city of the Gulf. Many of them are now resting in the cemetery outside the town.

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R. Towns and Co. had forty thousand sheep on the Leichhardt, near Floraville, and a shearing shed near tidal water lower down the river, where a small steamer (the old "Pioneer," the remains of which are still to be seen at Sweer's Island), came for the wool. The country proving subject to terrible floods and unsuitable for sheep, the numbers gradually decreased until the remnant were finally removed.

The Etheridge goldfield was opened in the early days of Normanton, and found occupation for many teams and much labour.

Prices in the early days were at a really famine level; flour was often sold at £40 a ton, and other goods at a corresponding rate. The writer had experience of these prices when loading his own team in those early days.

Normanton had many advantages over her sister settlement, Burketown, and when the port became known, all the station trade drifted there, and Burketown declined in consequence.

Normanton was, in 1891, connected with Croydon by a railway ninety-four miles in length, which cost £211,000, and was constructed by Mr. G. Phillips, C.E., on a principle new to Queensland, the sleepers being of mild steel, instead of wood, on account of the ravages of the white ants. The line between Croydon and Normanton passes through a perfectly level and very uninteresting country, a melancholy sandy waste of ti-tree flats, covered with the innumerable pinnacles and mounds made by white ants; the pasturage is as poor as the country looks.

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From Normanton a number of carriers are employed to carry goods to Cloncurry and the many stations trading therewith. Many teams are found carrying loading by the side of the railway line to Georgetown and the Etheridge past Croydon, ignoring the services of the railway. A punt service connects the town with the carrier's camp on the opposite side of the river, where loading starts for the Etheridge. The carrier's waggon is loaded fully up to its carrying capacity of from six to seven tons, and is drawn on to the punt by the team; on its arrival on the opposite side, the team draws the load on to the bank ready to depart on its journey. The country to Georgetown is generally of an inferior description. Towards the Cloncurry (southwards) for the first twenty miles, the road passes through timbered country, bloodwood and messmate of a poor class, then it opens out after passing Reaphook Range into open treeless plains and black soil, with excellent pasturage, and this extends for hundreds of miles to the interior, the whole of which is occupied by cattle and sheep stations that draw their supplies from Normanton up to a certain point, when the trade is induced by special arrangements of rebates on traffic rates, to diverge to Townsville, at the expense of the Gulf ports.

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About the same time that Townsville was opened as a port in order to meet the requirements of the new movements in stock on the country surrounding the Gulf, Burketown commenced its rather chequered career as a commercial port in 1865.

The first supplies were brought by the "Jacmel Packet," chartered and loaded by R. Towns and Co., from Sydney. She was the second vessel in the Albert River, the first being the brig "Firefly," in which Mr. Landsborough brought his horses, which were landed a mile below the site of the town. The old vessel afterwards went to pieces in the river. The manifest of the "Jacmel Packet" was perhaps the most varied and strangely assorted that a trading vessel ever carried; the general cargo included pigs, dogs, fowls, houses, building materials, outfits of every kind, drays, rations, rum, and other spirits. In such fashion was the mercantile trade of Carpentaria commenced. On the opening of the goods, a saturnalia ensued, and the times were lively. The overlanders having money to spend, and not having indulged in a "spree" for years, took advantage of the absence of all control, and thoroughly enjoyed themselves in bush fashion; a fight every half hour, horse racing on the plain, or in "the street" as it was called, and strong rum for everyone. Other vessels quickly followed the first venture with more supplies. One of them, the "Gazelle," from Sydney, made a very quick trip of sixteen days to the mouth of the river, where she broke her back on a sandbank; the hulk was towed up the river, and gradually mouldered away just opposite the town. In 1866 the first wool was shipped to Sydney from the Gulf; the first load of wool taken into Burketown being from Conobie station, shorn in November, 1865, on the Cloncurry, about 200 miles distant. The assistance the first settlers received from the Government amounted to little or nothing; the administration situated nearly two thousand miles away, had little care or thought for the struggling outsiders in the far-away Gulf country. The settlers had to protect themselves from blacks as well as from whites, and as it was some years before Burketown was made a port of entry, goods had to be cleared at Brisbane before sailing for Burketown. When the port was opened, the Customs Officer, Mr. Sandrock, was kept at Sweer's Island, where supplies had to be cleared before going on to the mainland. This meant a great loss of time to those who brought in teams for loading. All departmental work had to be done in Brisbane, and there also the first applications for runs and declarations of stocking had to be made.

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The tide of settlement had been too swift and too strong for the authorities to keep pace with, and although a Land Commissioner, in the person of Mr. J. P. Sharkey was sent out in 1866, and the Government were represented the same year by Mr. W. Landsborough in Burketown, the fact was evident that people were pretty well left to do as they liked. Burketown in 1866, and for the two or three following years, made some little progress, or appeared to do so. The drovers and shepherds, paid off after long trips with stock, had good cheques to spend, and their money was laid out in the lavish way peculiar to the old bush hand. Wages were high for all sorts of employment, 35s. to 45s. a week being the lowest. Everything was dear in the new town, but that made little difference to men who had not been in a town for years and had money to spare.

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One of the first vessels to arrive in the Albert River in 1866 was the "Margaret and Mary." She was said to have touched at some infected port in Java, and after arrival a fatal sickness broke out in Burketown that nearly carried off all the population. All hands that came in the ship died except the captain, his wife also falling a victim. A new crew had to be engaged to work the vessel before she could get away. There is little doubt but that the great mortality among the residents of Burketown during 1866 was traceable to the infection brought by this vessel. It was the wet season at the time, and this, in conjunction with the reckless life led by most of the people, and the want of medical assistance, increased the danger of the disease, and scores of strong men succumbed to its malign influence.

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It would be difficult to say how many men fell victims to the epidemic, but there must have been at least a hundred, besides those who died on the surrounding stations. The disease, which ended in fever and delirium, was as fatal to the strong as to the weak, and the little cemetery soon looked like that of an old established town, so numerous were the graves. This outbreak gave Burketown an evil name. People began to leave it, and when Normanton was opened in 1867 with the prospect of becoming a more suitable port for the district, many removed there to carry on their business. Shortly after this, Burketown was absolutely deserted, not a living soul remained, and nothing was left to mark the spot except heaps of empty bottles and jam tins, and some large iron pots belonging to a boiling-down plant. A few stumps remained standing on the open plains where once had been buildings. The hulls of the "Gazelle" and "Firefly" lay falling to pieces in the river, and none were left to sigh over Burketown's fallen fortunes, or sing a dirge in memory of its history; its short and merry life was over, and none lamented.

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In these early days, Sweer's Island was a kind of marine suburb belonging to Burketown, a sanatorium about thirty-five miles from the mouth of the Albert, where the fever-stricken people were taken to recover. Mr. W. Landsborough, the Police Magistrate, or Government resident, lived there with his family. Mr. J. P. Sharkey, the first Land Commissioner, and Mr. Ellis Read, in charge of R. Towns and Co.'s stores, also resided on the island. Life was much pleasanter there than on the dead plains surrounding Burketown, and the sea breezes were constant and refreshing. On Sweer's Island, which is only about nine miles long, and from half a mile to three miles in width, vegetables and watermelons grow in profusion. A township was surveyed called Carnarvon, after the Earl of Carnarvon, allotments were sold and buildings erected. The first Customs House in the Gulf was here, and Mr. Sandrock was the first officer. The soil on Sweer's Island is sandy, and the grass thick in places. The turtle ponds made there by Captain Norman of the "Victoria" in 1861-2, were still to be seen in 1866, as also was the well sunk by Flinders in 1803, from which fresh water was still obtainable. Opposite the island, towards the west, lay Bentinck Island, much larger than Sweer's, though unoccupied, except by the natives, whose fires could be seen every evening after dark. About forty miles north-east of Sweer's Island is Bountiful Island, noted for its oysters, and also for turtles, large numbers resorting there at certain seasons. Sweer's Island has been deserted for many years, and is no longer a health resort. The buildings are gone, and the people also. The only residents now (1897), are a family of the name of Creffield, who keep some cattle, goats and sheep on the island.

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To the south-west of Burketown is a fine run called Lawn Hill, comprising a lot of good country surrounded by mountains, and well watered. This property was taken up by Mr. Frank Hann and Mr. E. R. Edkins in 1875. The former bought up many of the brands of cattle left in the district by former occupiers, and also travelled stock from Lolsworth on the Burdekin, and by this means a large herd was soon raised. At the same time the Watson Brothers stocked Gregory Downs, which is only ninety miles from Burketown. Then Mr. F. H. Shadforth, who had come all the way from Victoria overland with his family, took up Lilydale, next to Lawn Hill. In those days the supplies had to be obtained from Normanton, so Hann, Watson, and Shadforth chartered a schooner, loaded her with station supplies and material for a store for Foulkes and Harris to start business. The schooner arrived, and the store was erected on the site of old Burketown, but disaster followed. Foulkes was drowned, and Harris was killed by his team of horses bolting and dragging the waggon over him. Then Watson Brothers ran the store for a time, Mr. P. S. Watson taking charge and enlarging it in every way. Shortly afterwards Mr. Michael Kelly opened a public house, and the town commenced its second term of existence. Mr. Jack Reid soon opened another public house, and Burns, Philp and Co. began another store under the management of Mr. Theodore C. Amsden. Then police protection under Senior-constable Synnott, arrived, as the people were becoming rather lawless. Mr. P. Macarthur was appointed Customs Officer, and in

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conjunction with this appointment held many other offices. Finally the Queensland National Bank opened a branch. The town now progressed quickly owing to the great number of cattle passing through to the northern territory and the reoccupation of all the deserted runs. A Divisional Board was formed in 1884, and the population of the town rose to three hundred and fifty. Burketown resumed her old activity in business matters, and the evil name died out with the memories of the old days. So mote it be!

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## CHAPTER VIII. THE MINERAL WEALTH.

An expedition under the leadership of William Hann, sent out by the Queensland Government left Fossilbrook station on June 26th, 1872, and on August 5th, reached the Palmer River, named after the then Premier of Queensland, Sir A. H. Palmer. They found traces of gold in the ravines, and on both sides of the river, so that it was Hann's party who first discovered the existence of gold on the Palmer. This expedition went right through to where Cooktown now stands, and on to the Bloomfield River. From the description of the country given in Hann's journal, one of the well-known old northern prospectors named James V. Mulligan, concluded that gold would be found in quantities, and with the restlessness proverbial among his class, formed a party to go out and prospect the Palmer country. His expedition consisted of himself, James Dowdal, Alexander Watson (these two miners leaving Charters Towers with him), David Robertson, Peter Brown, and Albert Brandt, who joined him at Georgetown. Mulligan and his party left the Etheridge on June 5th 1873, passed Mount Surprise and Fossilbrook, the farthest out station in those days, and went on to the Tate River, through poor, rough country, only obtaining colours. They proceeded northwards to the Walsh River, and saw one of W. Hann's camps on their way. After travelling down the Walsh a few days, they crossed Elizabeth Creek to the Mitchell River, where they had some trouble in finding a ford, the river being quite six hundred yards wide, with high and scrubby banks on either side, and a strong flowing stream. After effecting a crossing with their packs, rations, etc., they passed on to Mount Mulgrave, fifteen miles further north. This well-known landmark is a precipitous bare rock dominating the surrounding country, and visible for many miles. They soon reached the Palmer River, where they continued prospecting, and obtained a good show of gold in the river and tributary creeks. Blacks were very numerous along the main river, necessitating guard being continually kept; they caught abundance of fish while camped on the river, where they spent a month, finding gold almost everywhere, some of it coarse, and some very fine. The party started back for the Etheridge, following the same route by which they had come. The scene of their operations was a little above Palmerville, and they prospected thence to Maytown. They were absent from Georgetown three months, and procured one hundred and two ounces of gold, valued at £4 an ounce. It was a prosperous trip, and all the party returned in good health.

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In 1874, J. V. Mulligan went on another prospecting expedition from Cooktown. He named the St. George, a tributary of the Mitchell River, and the party did a lot of prospecting and exploring in the country on the Upper Mitchell, where some fine pastoral country was discovered. While on this trip they made the discovery of the hot boiling springs at the head of the Walsh, mistaking the steam of it for the smoke of a blackfellows' fire.

Before the end of 1873, there were over five hundred diggers on the Palmer, and the escort left in December with 5,058 ounces of gold, leaving a balance of 3,000 ounces in the banks. The first warden on the Palmer was Howard St. George, and the field developed at a furious rate. In the course of two years there were over fifteen thousand white men and twenty thousand Chinese located in and about the Palmer. The discovery of the field came as salvation to the north after the stagnation following upon the low prices and depression ruling since 1867. The price of cattle went up enormously, and horses could be sold anywhere at good prices. The workings were along the creeks and rivers where water was plentiful, and the gold was obtained in quantities on the bars or ledges crossing the river. Rations were dear in the early days; carriage to Maytown was up to £120 a ton, beef was selling at 1s. per lb. A great deal of the loading was carried by pack horses from Cooktown, the diggings being situated among the highest tablelands in North Queensland, and scattered over a large extent of mountainous country. Byerstown, near the source of the Palmer is about fifty-five miles south-west from Cooktown. The situation is elevated, being near the culminating line of the Great Dividing Chain. Tin occurs in the low ranges to the south that separate the Mitchell from the Palmer, and also in the valley of the Bloomfield to the east. The blacks were dangerous, the wet seasons severe on the Palmer, and the first diggers had many and bitter trials. Early in 1874, the last of the flour was selling at 3s. 6d. per pannikinful, and even an old working bullock when killed was eagerly bought up at 1s. per pound; the last pairs of Blucher boots were sold at 38s. Horseshoe nails were exchanged for their weight in gold, and old horseshoes were eagerly sought after. As early as April, 1874, a riot occurred in Cooktown, when the dissatisfied diggers rushed the "Florence Irving," steamer, for free passages. It was said there were three thousand people waiting to get away, and the police and miners had a fierce fight for the upper hand. Then other rushes took place on the goldfield as new discoveries were made, and the "Palmer fever" became bad again.

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In 1871 the following party of prospectors had been in the vicinity of the country that afterwards became so famous for its golden produce, but they missed the rich deposits, and kept a lower

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course down in the level country towards the Gulf of Carpentaria, namely, Messrs. T. Leslie, J. Edwards, Charles Ross, T. Hackett, and J. Duff. Some of these men became wealthy afterwards through buying cattle and retailing them and by buying gold. Leslie, Duff, Edwards, and Callaghan joined in a company and fairly coined money on the Palmer goldfield; all were extremely popular men. Maytown was called Edwardstown for some time after it was opened, and the name was so printed on the bank's cheque forms. Another of these early prospectors was W. T. Baird, known as Bill Baird, who had led a most adventurous life and had amassed several small fortunes; the last one he made was at Mount Romeo tin mines; he led a rough knockabout life, doing bush work or cattle droving when hard up, etc.; he was killed by the natives of Batavia River while prospecting there; he was a general favourite for his good humour and kindheartedness.

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Croydon, a reefing field on the waters of the Norman River was discovered about 1886 by W. C. Brown and Aldridge, who obtained the reward of £1,000. The field comprises several mining centres scattered about in the hill country, which commences here and extends away to the east. No alluvial gold has been discovered on this field; reefing has been the only way of working the gold, which is more or less connected with refractory ores. The future of this field is well assured, as the reefs maintain their character at all depths reached, and the place is decidedly businesslike and stirring. The absence of good timber adds to the cost of working the reefs, but the extension of the railway to Georgetown, which is contemplated, will add to the facilities for obtaining supplies, and will also increase the traffic in other ways.

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Georgetown is on the left bank of the Etheridge River, so called after D. O. Etheridge, one of Mr. J. G. Macdonald's drovers who came out to the Gulf with the first lot of cattle through this country. It is about one hundred and sixty miles west, in a straight line from Cardwell. The surrounding country is gold-bearing, and known as the Etheridge goldfield; silver, copper, tin, and lead are also among its mineral products. This was one of the first reefing districts opened in the North of Queensland, but owing to the expense of carrying on the mines on account of the cost of carriage, labour, and mining appliances, none but the best mines have been worked. The formation is granite, and pyrites with the stone has helped to increase the cost of working. The field is very extensive, and embraces a large number of small mining centres covering an enormous area of gold-bearing country. In the first days, alluvial gold was sought for over large portions of the field. A specimen nugget found in June, 1896, at Mount Macdonald, weighing 151 ounces was dollied and smelted, yielding 85 ounces of gold, valued at £3 5s. per ounce. Other large specimens were found recently in the same locality.

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Cloncurry is the commercial centre of a district rich in various minerals. It is situated on the right bank of the Cloncurry River, a tributary of the Flinders, and is about 430 miles west-south-west, in a straight line from Townsville, and about 240 miles south from Normanton. The copper deposits are very extensive, the whole surrounding mountainous district being more or less copper-bearing. Lodes of gray ore and blue carbonates are numerous, and virgin copper and malleable ore have also been found. The difficulty and expense of carriage has prevented the field from taking that position as a mining centre to which it is entitled; other metals found are gold, silver, lead, iron, and bismuth. The Cloncurry goldfield includes a large tract of country, extending eastwards to the Williams River, and southwards to an equal extent. Reefing has been carried on of late, but not to any great extent. In the early days of gold discovery, alluvial sinking attracted a large population, and some splendid nuggets were found (mostly on Sharkey's Flat), weighing from five to forty ounces, the gold being of the highest Mint value, £4 3s. 6d. per ounce. Gold is still produced at some of the outlying diggings, extending over to the Leichhardt River in the west, where the whole country is mineral-bearing. The Cloncurry Copper Company expended large sums of money in machinery and sinking shafts and prospecting in opening up some of the lodes of copper so abundant there, but owing to the depreciation in the value of the mineral and the great expense of mining and carriage to port, the operations had to be entirely suspended. The first to discover copper and make use of it was Mr. Ernest Henry, in 1865. Henry discovered lodes of copper on the Leichhardt and in several other places, and has distinguished himself not alone as an enterprising pioneer squatter and settler, but also as an early and most indefatigable prospector for minerals. In conjunction with Mr. R. K. Sheaffe, at one time member for the district, and subsequently Mayor of Sandgate, he helped to open much of the Gulf country, and has spent a fortune and a lifetime in pioneering in outside districts.

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The Black Mountain is on the opposite side from the town across the river, and is, as its name denotes, a real black mountain. It is a most extensive outcrop of nearly pure metallic iron ore, and it is calculated the amount in sight is over thirteen millions of tons: great masses of the ore are lying all round the base of this enormous outcrop.

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Clermont is situated on a tributary of the Nogoia River, about two hundred and twenty-seven miles distant by railway from Rockhampton, and well known for its mineral resources. Since 1862 large quantities of copper have been obtained, and the surrounding country is also auriferous, alluvial mining having been carried on with more or less success. Four miles from Clermont are the ruins of old Copperfield, a township prosperous from 1864 to 1870, in the palmy days of the Peak Downs Copper Company, which paid dividends of eighty per cent., and in 1867 sold copper to the amount of £120,000. Owing to a great fall in the value of copper, the property was sold for £3,000, and this mining enterprise collapsed.

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## **CHAPTER IX. INCIDENTS OF THE EARLY DAYS.**

The early arrivals with stock in the Gulf country were obliged to obtain rations and supplies from Bowen, on the east coast, as that was the only port then opened in the North of Queensland. The distance was from five to seven hundred miles through the desert country and down the Flinders, and as the old-fashioned pole bullock-dray with only two wheels was then in vogue, no great quantity could be carried in one dray load. The opening of Burketown in 1865 as the second port after Bowen in North Queensland, enabled the early settlers to obtain supplies more easily, although the cost was still excessive. But the rations were fresher than those the overlanders had been used to. Some of the flour that had come out with the parties had been years on the road, and was very much the worse for the long journey. This flour could only be used after much sifting and airing; it was made into small thin cakes called Johnny cakes, which were cooked in the ashes and eaten hot; even then it was bitter and nearly brown in colour. The grubs and worms had long since left it, or died in it from old age. It was said that some flour from Bowen Downs that had left Sydney years before and come out to the Gulf stations just formed, being too strong to use, was thrown out, and the dingoes and crows were found lying dead round it. The sugar in those days was the dark, treacly kind, that left a stain on the floor like blood; it came in casks. However, people were not very particular as to the quality of the supplies, provided there was anything at all to eat. Pig weed (portulacca), boiled or roasted on a shovel was one of the changes open to travellers; tea was made from the marjoram bush; and very fair coffee was made from the scrapings of the burnt edges of dampers, and was called Scotch coffee. When Burketown was opened, the fresh supply of flour and stores was very welcome to the early settlers.

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For the first year or two of Burketown's existence, a saturnalia of a most original and determined fashion set in. There were only two or three women in the town, and no police, and the crowd enjoyed themselves in their own breezy, sunshiny way. Burketown was the haven of refuge for all the outsiders and outlaws from the settled districts when they had made other places too warm to hold them any longer.

"God forsaken, devil may care,  
Every one with his sins to bear;  
From East, from West, they are camping there;  
Where all the bad lots go."

All kinds of characters made their way out to the Gulf in those early days. Men went there who had been wanted by the police for years. Horse stealing and forging cheques were very common pastimes among the fancy, and Burketown society, in its first efforts to establish itself, was of a kind peculiarly its own.

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An ex police officer (O'Connor), who started business in Burketown, and who hailed from the land of the shamrock, knew many of the "boys," as he called them. One noted character broke out of the lock-up, swam the Albert River, swarming with alligators, got a horse somewhere or somehow, and was followed by Mr. W. D'Arcy Uhr far into New South Wales, and brought back to Burketown, only to be discharged, whilst Mr. Uhr, who was one of the smartest officers of the police was asked for an explanation for leaving his district without permission.

The following case of horse-stealing will serve to show the lawless state of things prevailing in the outside regions when the borders of civilisation were undefined, and no laws could be enforced.

Three men were implicated, all notorious characters, even for those days. They were called Dublin Bob, Firearm Jack, and One-armed Scotty. They had spent some time mustering the horses and in building yards to hold them, on Bowen Downs run. As soon as the theft was discovered, they were followed by Mr. J. T. C. Ranken, the manager, Mr. J. Moffat, Junior, a blackfellow, Jacky, and another man. They overtook the horse-stealers on the range near Betts' Gorge, took possession of the horses, and arrested the thieves, as Mr. Ranken and the other white men had been sworn in as specials before starting. As they were riding along, Mr. Ranken saw a horse down a gorge that he thought he recognised, and leaving the prisoners in charge of the others, giving them strict instructions to guard them carefully, he went to look at the horse.

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On returning, he found the men had escaped, and no satisfactory explanation was ever given as to their departure. This was in the year 1866, when there was a great demand for horses in consequence of so much stock being driven to take up new country. In the previous year, 1865, the first sheep were brought on to Bowen Downs, and another mob of cattle was sent out to the Gulf country in charge of J. Neil, who stocked the country on the Alexandra, a tributary of the Leichhardt River, where there was a large waterhole ten or twelve miles long. The Mud Hut on the Thomson had to be abandoned owing to the scarcity of grass and the waterhole drying up before the end of the year. The year 1865 was a very dry one on the Thomson, the Barcoo, and the Flinders—waterholes went dry that year that have never gone dry in the thirty-five years that have followed. Law and order in those days was a “go-as-you-please” sort of arrangement. At a shanty about twenty-five miles from Burketown, a man was shot by the keeper of the shanty, and died. The man was prosecuted, but owing to his detention waiting trial, and his long sea voyage west about the Leeuwin, and other extenuating circumstances in the case, the man being compelled to keep order in a lonely place amongst a very disorderly crowd, he got off.

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During the year 1864, a man named G. Nicol, and his wife, both of whom had been employed at Bowen Downs, and had left with the intention of going to Rockhampton, were found dead between Bowen Downs and Stainbourne. They had been offered quiet horses for the journey, but they preferred to walk. As they did not turn up at Stainbourne, a search was instituted, and they were found on one of the branches of Bullock Creek, both dead. The woman had been dead much longer than the man, as portions of her corpse were missing, while the body of the man was whole; the woman had a hole in her skull; the man had a revolver with two chambers empty. She was the first white woman on the Thomson, and was a very kind decent little body. The story remains one of the mysteries of the bush that will never be solved. Another tragedy that marked this year was the murder of Mr. Meredith, of Tower Hill station, and his overseer by the blacks. Mr. Meredith had been away from his station on a visit, and when returning passed his teams loaded with rations on the road somewhere between Bully and Cornish Creeks. In passing them he promised either to meet them himself or to send someone else. When he got to Cornish Creek, he saw so many blacks that he decided to meet them himself; therefore, on arrival at the station, he obtained fresh horses, and started back, taking his overseer, Mr. Robert McNeely, with him. He intended to stay with the teams until they were past all danger, but he never reached them. Both men were killed on Cornish Creek, about fifty miles above Bowen Downs. The exact spot was unknown, nor were the bodies ever recovered; but their clothes, watches, etc., were found in the blacks' camp. The men with the teams were the first to find out that something was wrong, for on bringing up their horses one morning, they found some of the Tower Hill station horses among them, one in particular that Mr. Meredith always rode himself. Suspecting trouble, they went on to the Bowen Downs teams, a few miles ahead, and the teamsters went back with them to search, and in the blacks' camp articles were found which left no doubt that both Mr. Meredith and his overseer had been killed. No doubt there had been a night attack when the two pioneers were asleep in their camp, unaware of the approach of the observant enemy. Blacks seldom attacked during the day, but preferred to steal stealthily upon their victims and kill them in their sleep. Numerous cases of this description might be mentioned, and it was the rule among experienced bushmen to either keep watch at night, or else to shift camp after dark.

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In the early days, the blacks of North Queensland, and especially of the Peninsula, used to be troublesome to stock, and never failed to kill horses and cattle whenever a chance offered, cutting up and carrying away the carcass to the scrubs or ridgy country. Great numbers of stock were killed by them in the early days of settlement all over the Cook district. Even teamsters' horses have been known to be killed close to the road during the night, cut up, and carried away, or skinned of the flesh and the skeleton left entire. Not alone to stock did they confine their attacks, for many a white man and Chinaman, of whose death there is no record, fell before their spears, and it is maintained they ate their victims on many occasions. The usual war of reprisals went on between the intruders and the native race, and the latter soon went under, although the tribes inhabiting the country around the main rivers were numerous. In no district in Queensland have the blacks shown themselves more hostile to the settlers than in the Peninsula. The Jardine Brothers' journal of their trip to Cape York is a record of continued and unprovoked attacks by blacks on their little party. One of the early settlers, a Mr. Watson, was killed on his own verandah at his station on the Archer, and Gilbert, the naturalist belonging to Leichhardt's party, was killed in a night attack by blacks, not far from the Mitchell River. The lonely gullies about the Palmer hide the record of many a lost prospector done to death by the savages; while the sight of one of them was enough to cause a stampede among a camp of a hundred Chinese, for the poor Chinamen always fell easy victims to the blacks, as they would never show fight, and seldom carried firearms. It was a very common occurrence for the early settlers to bring in cattle to the yard for the purpose of drawing broken spears out of their sides. Horses were hunted down as readily as cattle, and this in a district noted for its native game.

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## CHAPTER X. THE MEN OF THE NORTH.

There were never lacking men ready for the enterprise and hardship of pioneering when there was such a field of profitable work open before them, work that was for those trained in bush experience, hardy and acclimatised as they were. The life, in spite of hardships, was not without

attraction and satisfaction to many who took part in it. There was a kind of fascination to many bushmen in the idea of being the first to enter upon new and unknown scenes; to note the surprise of native game beholding for the first time the presence of the stranger, and to observe the terrified astonishment of the aborigines when first they saw the white intruders; all this tended to add to the romance and interest of helping to open a new district. But outside pioneer life in early days had a reverse side; there was little or nothing of comfort or relaxation; there was always hardship and exposure; there was no Sunday for rest, no holiday, no Eight Hour Day, nothing but constant movement and watching. The duties were shared by all alike; each had to take a turn at anything and everything, cooking one time, driving a team another, shepherding sheep occasionally, herding cattle sometimes, cutting timber, making bough-yards for sheep, lambing down a flock of ewes, shifting hurdles, and poisoning dingoes, killing and salting beef, ear-marking, washing and shearing sheep, looking for stragglers, yoking bullocks, building huts, tracking and hunting stock, all little duties that made up the routine life of the outside grazier. They all took their turn, and generally there was one dish and one table. Where the ways and customs consequent on the life brought all on a partial level, the man who could turn his hand to anything from shoeing a horse to weighing out a dose of quinine or driving a bullock team, was the most valuable.

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### **THE STOCKMAN, OR STOCKRIDER.**

He was native to the soil and bred,  
Merely a cowboy he;  
A nomad's life was what he led.  
And all he wished to be.

He is a class of his own, and is a man of some importance in the daily life of a station. The term may mean to many any man who can climb into a saddle; but a good stockman is not so easily picked up, nor is he made out of any material to hand. A good and experienced stockman, one who knows his work thoroughly, is active, and can ride well, can command wages all the year round. His work is not by any means easy; there are long hours, in fact all hours, hard fare, and often no lodging but the bare ground; he must endure hunger and thirst, cold, heat, and wet, and often has to take a watch at night. When at work in the yard branding and drafting, he has either to endure tremendous dust, or else he is covered with mud. But the trained stockrider makes light of all these discomforts, in fact he looks on them as all in the bill of fare, and belonging to the day's work. He is hardy, wiry, as well as possessed of a good deal of endurance and pluck, and like all men who ride much, is nearly always lean in condition. He is generally the owner of a couple of horses and an outfit of saddle, swag, stock whip, and spurs, and takes an interest in all racing and sporting matters. As a rule, he is not a saving man, although some may lay up enough money to start a small store. The native youth makes the best all-round stockman; many follow horse-breaking at times, or take a turn at droving. To draft on horseback in the cattle yard, or in the yard on foot, to castrate and brand horses and calves, to ride a young horse, to make a leg or head rope out of green hide, or a pair of hobbles, to counterline a saddle, to cook a damper, all comes within the province of the stockman. Towns and townspeople are not much in his way, any more than the customs of the city are congenial to his free-and-easy style of associations. Moleskin trousers, Crimean shirt, cossack boots, and felt hat, are his rig out. The modern type is less pronounced than he of the ancient school, the flash, hard-riding, tearing, loud-swearing, rowdy stockman of olden days, with a stockwhip sixteen feet long, sporting breeches and leggings, and a loud red shirt. Stockmen have very little to do with unions, but are seldom without employment on stations or on the road.

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### **THE COOK.**

Bush cooks are of every shade of colour, complexion, and social standing, from the foreign count who has been expatriated for political leanings, to the squalid shuffling Chinee, or the wily, treacherous Cingalee. Hut keeper was the term employed in the olden days when two shepherds had each a flock of sheep folded for the night inside a yard made of movable hurdles, and a hut keeper was joined to them to do a bit of cooking, as well as to shift one set of hurdles each day. He was supposed also to watch at night against native dogs, strychnine not being so much in use then to reduce the numbers of these pests. They were men of dirty, lazy habits; their cooking was fearful, consisting simply of boiling a bit of beef or mutton, making a damper, and rinsing out a tin pannikin. Greasy-looking, growling, and drunken they were, with scarcely energy enough to fetch a little wood or water; to wash their clothes was an unheard-of thing. Those who cook for drovers on the road have to be more alert; a good man on the road is a great consideration, and it is no sinecure to cater for a party while travelling with stock. The cook is exempt from watching, as he has to be up during the night to get breakfast ready by daylight for the men to start on with their cattle. Some good cooks will provide hot suppers for the men in all weathers. The shearers' cook is quite another variety. He is often a boss man employs one or two others under him, and gets top wages, but he has to be up to the mark, for our shearer is a fine specimen of an inflated growler, and will have nothing but of the best, and up to time, tea and cake between meals, duff and all the luxuries for dinner; in any case he comes in for a full share of the shearer's arrogance and abuse. Station cooks comprise all sorts, good, bad, and indifferent, clean and unclean; but one who can make real good bread is a rarity, and all are self-taught. They frequently get good wages, but soon become lazy and dirty, and often a Chinaman has to be put on to do the kitchen

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cooking. About the towns it is notorious that European cooks cannot be relied on for any time on account of their drinking habits, and once again the Chinaman has to be resorted to.

### THE SHEARER.

This class of labourer has been very much in evidence of late years in Queensland on account of the numerous strikes that have taken place, brought about by them or their leaders, although it is the best paid of all unskilled work in the colony. The Shearers' Union attempted to rule all labour and labour interests throughout the whole colony, and succeeded for a long time in keeping things in a very disorganised state. There is nothing in shearing that any man could not master in a few days, although the work may be laborious when long continued. The money earned is out of all proportion to what other classes of labour receive, nevertheless the shearer is the most discontented and turbulent of all classes, and very decidedly aggressive. He can earn in a few months enough to keep him for the rest of the year without work, he is gregarious in his habits, and travels about in mounted groups, generally armed. He may be said to be a flash man, given to gambling, dicing, and other sports, and a good deal of his money is spent at roadside shanties. When at work, however, he is sober and industrious, as most of them are desirous of making a good tally at the end of the shearing, and the rules of the shed forbid any latitude for loafing or mischief. Shearing by machine instead of by hand will tend to modify the aspects of the work, and allow more men to learn the art. Shearers travel from shed to shed during the season, and sometimes earn from four to six pounds a week. They live on the best that can be got. Instances are common of men shearing over two hundred sheep per day for days running. Amongst the shearers will be found many respectable men, who have homes or selections of their own on which their families reside, and who travel round a few large sheds to earn enough money to carry on with and support their homes.

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### THE BULLOCK DRIVER.

The man of strong body, and of stronger language, the old "bull-puncher," is going out. He was an institution of early days when the pole-dray was in vogue, a fearful kind of vehicle that tipped up going out of a steep creek with a load on, and going down would bear on the polers fit to break their necks. The four-wheeled waggon has for a long time superseded the old bullock-killing dray, but the driver remains much the same. Instead of driving ten bullocks in a pole-dray, he yokes up eighteen or twenty to a waggon and draws instead of three and a half tons, about seven or eight tons.

His whip is a terrible long plaited thong with a strip of green hide attached, and a handle like a flail, with it he wakes the echoes and his oxen at the same time. The crack of the whip is accompanied by a voice as deep and hoarse as the bellow of one of his own long-suffering yoked-up slaves, and his lurid language makes even his bullocks shudder. To see the "bullocky" at his best is only given to those who travel with him for a whole trip, and observe his style of getting out of difficulties that would dishearten many another man. He is full of resource, and not lacking in energy, and when his team is bogged in a creek in a seemingly hopeless mess, and beyond all appearance of ever being extricated, after exhausting his ample stock of dire profanity, he proceeds in a methodical manner to dig under his wheels and corduroy the track with branches and limbs of trees, weeds out his jibbing bullocks, and with renewed energy and awful voice, he calls on his patient and weary team for a big effort, and out they walk with their load on to the bank. The "bullocky" was a great factor in the early days of settlement, where there were no roads and loading had to be dragged over mountains and through steep creeks and over all obstacles. His bodily strength, great experience, and energy, came in to help in no small degree to keep settlement alive. The arrival of the bullock teams was quite an event, perhaps after being months on the road, and when all supplies had run short—not that the fact of supplies being short on the station would induce them to hasten their progress, for no bullock driver was ever known to hurry or go out of his slow, crawling pace for any inducement whatever. The "bullocky" could drink rum in buckets, and was always given to use his fists. Take him all round, he was about as rough a specimen of a bush artist as could be found; but he was hospitable in his camp; it was always "Come and have a pot of tea, mate," to any traveller. The quicker-moving horse teams and the railways, are elbowing the bullock driver out into the never-never, where there are still opportunities for his special faculties, and it is not often that bullock teams, with their wood and iron yokes, and dusty, hairy drivers, are seen on any roads coming into railway stations. To ask a bullock driver where he got his beef from was not always a safe or prudent question; it was looked upon as a piece of wanton impertinence that would require suppression. After putting down so much on the debit side, something should be said to the credit of the carrier. He must have been hard-working and thrifty to have acquired the necessary capital to purchase his waggon and team. Physically, he must be exceptionally strong to stand the life he leads. Mentally, he must be full of resource to overcome the obstacles he meets with on unformed and often uncleared roads. Morally, he must be passing honest, for he often carries loads of great value, for the safety of which he alone is responsible for weeks and often months. These men take up the work of distributing goods where the railways end. Their duties are arduous and responsible, and they deserve more consideration than they generally receive.

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### THE TRAMP.

“My life is a failure, the weary one said,  
And the days of my youth are past;  
But I still tramp along, and am not afraid,  
While grub in the bush shall last.  
“My shirt is patched, and my trousers are torn,  
My hat is a sight to see,  
The nap of my blanket has long been worn,  
And is patched with an old soogee.”

The tramp is found everywhere in the world. The bush tramp is only another variety, and since the big strikes took place in Queensland some years ago, the tribe has multiplied, as it taught them to loaf on the stations for rations. Now they make a practice of getting all their supplies for the road from the station stores, pleading they have no money, and from policy rations are given them, and no questions asked. Many men carrying their swags on their backs are really looking for work, and deserve encouragement by the gratuity of a little rations to help them along, as stations are far apart in the outlying districts. As station owners are dependent on these same swagmen for the extra labour they require from time to time, it is policy to keep on good terms with a class that can work incalculable damage to station men that have miles of grass in sheep paddocks to burn, woolsheds to demolish, and gates on the main road to be left open, with no evidence forthcoming as to how fires were started, etc., and no police to supervise or control the actions of these irresponsible wanderers. But the tribe of “whalers,” as they were called in New South Wales, men who tramped up one side of the Darling River, and tramped down on the other side, never betraying any desire to find work, these can be found in the Queensland bush too, but not far out, where there are long dry stages between the stations, and a shortness of water which terrifies these old “bummers.” There are men who have tramped all over the colonies—every colony in Australia they have been through, and know all the tracks. They come up to a station and ask for work in a sort of a way, and then ask for rations to carry them on, even asking for a bit of tobacco; they say they have no money (and their appearance confirms all they say), and have done no work, for six months past, or longer, tramping all the way, and never a job. Their rags and swag betray dire poverty; their clothes patched in every colour, so that a blackfellow would hardly wear them, and they are dirty in the extreme. These men are not decrepid or weak, but are simply lazy, whilst the fine dry climate enables them to live without hard work. Occasionally, in order to procure some tobacco or a little money for a spree at a shanty, they will take a job for a time as rouseabout or wood-chopper, but they are soon off on the “wallaby track” again. It is a recognised custom now among stations in the west and north-west to ration the swagmen as they pass along, and the cost to some stations during the year is very considerable; they just bring up their ration bags and get them filled, and go to the creek to camp and cook the evening meal they have walked perhaps twenty miles to obtain, but which cost them nothing but the exercise. Poverty is the inheritance of some, but many of these wanderers are poor because as soon as they do earn a few pounds at odd jobs during shearing time, they march at once to the nearest bush shanty and drink what they have earned until turned away, and then tramp back to the stations, begging rations as they go along, and at the same time regarding the donors with a consuming and persistent malice. The professional tramp is not a nice character, there can be no mistaking him, with his swag done up in a long roll, and hung round his shoulder and down his side, a billycan and water-bag in his hand. He creeps along slowly with sore feet and shuffling steps, camping in the shade when he can to rest; he has no companions generally, and his life is a joyless and miserable one; but there he is, and there he will remain, for his tribe will not die out, because no one will refuse to give a little rations to a wayfarer because he is hard up, ragged, and penniless.

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### THE DROVER.

He knew of every drover’s way,  
From Normanton to Bourke;  
From far Port Darwin’s ample bay,  
Right through to Muswellbrook.  
The desert plains he knew full well,  
Where duststorms blind the eye;  
And oft he had come from Camooweal,  
Drivin’ stock to Narrabri.

The life of a drover, under the most favourable circumstances, is the reverse of a pleasant one, but like all nomadic occupations, it has a fascination for many bushmen. The drover would appear to be regarded as the common enemy of every owner or superintendent through whose run he passes, although in many cases it is a fact that roads are fenced off so that a drover cannot leave them without breaking down the fences. In many instances the only permanent water on the stock routes has been fenced in by the owner of the run. The principal wealth of Australia is stock, and these, both sheep and cattle, to be marketed need bringing down to some seaport or market, either as stores or fats. Sometimes long distances are travelled, from one end of Australia to the other, the journey occupying months. At starting, the stock are counted and handed over to the charge of a competent drover, who delivers them at the end of the journey, and is paid either by contract at so much per head, with an allowance for losses, or else by weekly wages, the owner finding the whole plant and money. Overlanding is a constant source of anxiety from start to finish of the journey. The varying items, such as floods, droughts, disease,

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incompetent hands, lost stock, and the surveillance from the owners of runs through which they pass, make up the daily routine of a drover's life. Stormy nights, when cattle become very restless, keep the drover awake and anxious. His duties are of a responsible nature, and he requires a good deal of tact and patience to manage his men properly, for he may have over a dozen employed with him on a droving job. With sheep the anxiety is not so great as with cattle or horses, as sheep are much easier to manage. The law provides that unless detained by flood, stock shall be driven not less than six miles every twenty-four hours. In most instances this distance is exceeded, but should the drover fail to travel the prescribed distance, through any accident, the owner or manager of the run turns up at the camp and gives the drover the option of either moving his stock on the proper distance, if it is only one mile ahead, or of appearing at the nearest police court, perhaps a hundred miles away, to answer an information for a breach of the Pastoral Leases Act or the Crown Lands Act. Although, perhaps only a nominal fine may be imposed, the vexatious delay, loss, and inconvenience of attending at the court, induce the drover to avoid any needless infringements of the Act. Some managers of runs are ever ready to pounce on any unfortunate drover who may deviate a few yards from the regulated half mile on each side of the road, and then it will be so arranged that the drover will not get a summons until he is a hundred miles away from where the offence was committed, when he has to leave his stock in the hands of the men, while he returns to answer the trivial charge; he is always fined, as he cannot well defend his case, and he is anxious to return to his duties.

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As a rule, the drovers in Queensland are a trustworthy and respectable class of men—of course there are exceptions, but these are soon found out. Cases have come to light where cattle sold on the road have been returned as knocked up lame, or dead from pleuro, and grog has been entered in the accounts as stores supplied. The owner is a good deal at the mercy of the drover after the latter has taken charge of the stock, as he has then very little control over them until they reach their destination. Some drovers have a plant of their own, twenty or thirty good horses, a dray or waggonette, and saddles, and make contracts to shift cattle or sheep at so much per head, paying their own men, and finding everything. The wages of drovers are always high, but not too high when the care and constant work are taken into consideration. Sundays and week days alike, rain or fine, grass or no grass, whatever turns up, it all means that the drover, or man in charge has to be on hand and see to things himself. The life is monotonous, wearying and fatiguing in the extreme. Man and boss alike have to rise before dawn, roll up blankets or swag, get breakfast, catch horses, and move the cattle off the night camp as soon as it is light, then ride all day with them, keep them moving slowly along feeding on any grass to be found, watering them when a chance offers, carrying a bit of lunch on the saddle, and a quart pot to boil some tea in. After the day's journey is over, the cattle have to be rounded up on the camp at sundown and then each takes his turn at watching during the night, which means three hours solitary riding round in the darkness, turning in any cattle inclined to stray out from the camp, and keeping up one's spirits by calculating how long the trip will last. When the weather is fine, the life is bearable, if monotonous, but when it rains, especially in cold rain and wind, the pleasures of droving are limited; with wet ground to lie on, wet clothes to ride in, and scarcely fire enough to cook at, with stock restless and troublesome at night, the drover will sometimes think longingly of the home and the comforts he once despised. Still, droving is a popular calling, and men have followed it constantly for years, procuring a long droving job during the season, and spelling their horses when work is scarce.

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More provision should be made for regular stock routes throughout the country, and the area of these should not be included in the runs on which lessees have to pay rent, as the case is now. The drover's calling is a necessary one, and he should have more protection and greater facilities for getting his stock to market, and not a continual fight for the rights of the road as he has now.

"In my wild erratic fancy, visions come to me of  
Clancy,  
Gone a-droving down the Cooper, where the western  
drovers go;  
As the stock are slowly stringing, Clancy rides behind  
them singing,  
For the drover's life has pleasures that the townfolk  
never know."

—"Banjo."

### A. S. N. CO.

Not least among the forces that worked for the settlement of the north, may be reckoned the steamer services. In this respect, the old A. S. N. Co. held the premier position, as their steamers were the first in all the ports of Queensland, and the colony is much indebted to the energy and enterprise of that Company. From Brisbane to Cooktown, their steamers were the first to cast anchor in the new harbours and help to develop the trade of the coast. Although not always very popular, for the public complained often at the charges made for freight and passages, the Company gave a good helping hand towards the opening up of the young country.

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A few notes about the history of this pioneering Company, obtained through the agency of their secretary, Mr. F. Phillips, may be of interest to some. It was originally established under the name of the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company, in August, 1839, with a capital of £40,000,



and premises at the foot of Margaret Street, Sydney. In April, 1841, the "Rose," steamer, arrived from England, 172 tons burden. In October of the same year, the "Shamrock" arrived from England, under Captain Gilmore, being 123 days out. The "Thistle" had previously arrived. In 1841, the Company advertised their intention of sending one of their steamers to Moreton Bay, and the "Shamrock" sailed thither in December of that year. The fares were £8, £6, and £4; freight, 20s. wool, 20s. per bale. After five months, the steamer was withdrawn, as the trade was not remunerative. In September, 1842, the "Tamar," and "Sovereign," steamers, were purchased by the Company from Mr. Grose for £12,000; they were then carrying on a trade with Twofold Bay, Melbourne, and Launceston. In July, 1844, two water frontage allotments in Brisbane were secured for £50, and Mr. James Paterson was appointed manager in October, 1845. The Company's engineering works were established at Pymont in February, 1846, the land being leased for that purpose. The "Eagle," steamer, a well-known old northerner, was built for the Company at their Pymont works. On March 11th, 1847, their steamer, the "Sovereign" was wrecked in the south passage in Moreton Bay, and forty-four lives lost. In March, 1851, the Company's name was changed to the Australian Steam Navigation Company, it was incorporated, and its scope enlarged. The capital of the Company was £320,000, divided into 16,000 shares of £20 each, and the opposition of the Melbourne Steamship Company, which had been carried on at a great loss to both, ceased. In May, 1858, the Company offered the colonies a mail service to Galle, and in September of the same year the rush to the Port Curtis diggings set in, and land was purchased by the Company at Rockhampton in 1860. Their steam service was extended to Bowen, a port which was just then opening a way to inland settlers to obtain their supplies from, and the Company obtained a contract for a mail service between Adelaide and King George's Sound. In February, 1863, a new opposition was started by the inauguration of the Queensland Steamship Company. The following year the A. S. N. Co. had extensive wharves and stores built for themselves both in Brisbane and Rockhampton. The "Leichhardt," steamer, was built at their works for the northern trade, and the Company's operations were extended to Townsville in 1865, Captain Trouton being appointed manager the next year. In January, 1868, the Queensland Steamship Company was wound up, and its steamers and wharves bought up by the A. S. N. Co. In 1870, the Californian mail service was opened by H. Hall, who chartered the company's steamers "Wonga" and the "City of Melbourne" for that purpose. Campbell's Wharf in Sydney was bought for a large sum in 1876, and the next year Captain O'Reilly leaving the Brisbane agency, Mr. W. Williams was appointed.

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In 1878, three Chinese crews were obtained for the A. S. N. Co. steamers, a circumstance which caused a strike in November, 1879, lasting until the following January. The Company had been engaged in the trade between Newcastle and Sydney, but this was abandoned in September, 1880, when the plant and stores were sold to the Newcastle Steamship Co.

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In January, 1887, the extensive intercolonial trade of the A. S. N. Co. ceased, and all their steam fleet was sold to a new company called the A. U. S. N. Co. The fleet stood at £481,000 in their books, and was sold for £200,000. The shareholders received £20 8s. 9d. per share, the par value being £20 per share; the shares when the fleet was sold were £9 10s. in the open market, but the increase in the value of the landed properties of the Company helped to this satisfactory result.

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### **BURNS, PHILP & CO.**

Throughout Australia, but above all in the northern parts of Queensland, the name of Burns, Philp and Co. ranks foremost among the many wealthy and large companies that have helped to develop trade in the northern parts, and a short account of the growth of this great business may prove interesting. Intimately associated with North Queensland, the business of the Company has grown and prospered with the growth and prosperity of the youngest colony of the group, and much of the rapid opening of new ports and harbours on the northern coast line, and also among the Pacific Islands, is due directly to the natural business capabilities of the founders of the Company.

A number of shipping agencies are also held in North Queensland, Western Australia, and Sydney, and the Company itself owns a fleet of small vessels used in the coasting, lightering, and island trade. Altogether there are between sixty and seventy steamers, sailing vessels, and lighters owned and chartered which fly the flag of Burns, Philp and Co., and the red, white, and blue, with Scotch thistle in the centre, is a flag well known throughout the Pacific Islands and all round Australia. A mail service is run by the Company between Cooktown, New Guinea, and Thursday Island, also a three years' contract was in 1897 entered into with the Government of Western Australia to run weekly between Albany and Esperance. Considerable trade is done with the Solomon Islands, and steamers run regularly from Sydney in this trade. The Company have also steam and sailing services with the New Hebrides, Louisades, New Guinea, New Britain, Ellice, and Gilbert, and many other islands in the Pacific, having a ten years' contract with the Commonwealth Government for regular communication with all the islands which are practically under British control, while branch businesses have been established at Port Moresby and Samarai in British New Guinea, at Elila in the New Hebrides, Nukualofa in the Friendly Islands,

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and elsewhere. The first steam service down the Gulf of Carpentaria from Thursday Island was inaugurated by the senior partner of the Company, Mr. James Burns, in the year 1881, by means of the little steamship "Truganini," which used often to be overcrowded with passengers and freight for Normanton.

The Company is the largest colonial shipper to the European and Eastern markets of Pacific Island produce, such as copra, beche de mer, sandalwood, ivory nuts, tortoise shell, and, above all, pearl shell, for which Torres Straits is so famous; add to this the amount of tallow, wool, and other Australian produce annually exported, and it will give some idea of the export business done. The Company has two fleets of pearl shelling luggers, comprising about forty pearlers in all.

Burns, Philp and Co. is essentially a company of a co-operative character, and a glance at the share list will show that the great bulk of shareholders are managers, employees, and others actually working in the company. This tends to a live interest all round, and each branch vies with the other in good management and success. The business was originally established at Townsville, thirty years ago by the senior partner, Mr. James Burns, and the new offices lately completed there at a cost of £15,000 are the finest in North Queensland, while recently, premises costing £50,000 were erected in Sydney. Mr. Philp, now the Hon. Robert Philp, Premier of Queensland, joined Mr. Burns some twenty-five years ago. Both are Scotchmen, the one hailing from Edinburgh, and the other from Glasgow. The Company was formed into a limited liability company twenty-one years ago.

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Much could be written of the varied character of the business of Burns, Philp and Co., which embraces almost every colonial interest besides, while they are allied to a group of other colonial companies which act in accord with them, notably the North Queensland Insurance Company, and other concerns. For some years the Company engaged in the whaling enterprise with fairly successful results, but the detention of Captain Carpenter, and the seizure of the whaling barque "Costa Rica Packet" by the Dutch authorities in the Malay Archipelago, abruptly terminated what promised to be a most important colonial enterprise. It will be remembered that the Dutch Government had to pay a considerable sum to the captain, owners, and crew of the vessel for this wrongful seizure.

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The total turnover of this Company now exceeds two millions sterling, and it is one of the largest and most progressive of the purely Australian concerns.

In the Sydney office a special telegraphic operator is always at work, and cable and telegraphic messages are sent to, and received from, all parts of the world direct. This is the only company in the colonies which has a Government operator established on the premises solely for its own business.

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## **CHAPTER XI. ABORIGINALS OF NORTH QUEENSLAND.**

Where did the natives come from?

How long ago?

Where did they land first?

Where are their ancestors?

Were they ever civilised?

These and similar questions occur to those who regard the natives of Australia with interest. They live only in the past, there is no future for them, here at least. Their origin is involved in impenetrable obscurity. Scarcely on the earth is to be found a race similar to the aborigines, whilst their antiquity is beyond doubt, and also the fact that they have a common origin. Their speech, habits, colour, customs, and superstitions, proclaim in the strongest terms that they all came from a common source; from the far north of Australia to the farthest south, a hundred proofs are forthcoming to show a common ancestry. Words that have a similar meaning are used on the Darling River and in places in the Gulf of Carpentaria; the weapons are similar all over the continent; their faces and figures are similar, allowing for the effects of varieties of food and climate. In the three hundred years since the first contact between Europeans and the New Hollanders, no change has occurred; they were then spread over Australia, the same in habits and life as they are now, and the only result of the contact of the two races of men, the civilised and the savage, is that the native is fading away before the white man like mist before the morning sun. Nothing can avert the doom that is written as plainly as was the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. And to what purpose would we preserve them? What good could accrue from maintaining a remnant of a race that it is impossible to civilise. The buffalo of America, like the Red Indian himself (the hunter and the hunted), pass over the river in front of the advancing tide of civilisation.

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As a study, the native race of Australia is eminently interesting, for in them we have living representatives of the stone age; remarkable for their pureness of race, having had no admixture

from any other nation through countless generations for their great antiquity, for before the pyramids of Egypt were built, they had occupied Australia and for the silence of all history and traditions concerning them and their destiny of doom; as a race problem they are full of interest.

From Cape York to the Great Australian Bight, and from the Leeuwin to the Great Sandy Spit on Frazer's Island, there is no difference in the type of the native of Australia, although the quality and quantity of their food has caused some of the tribes to be more robust and better developed than others. In the north, where food is plentiful, there are many fine specimens of men over the average height of the European. Many of the northern aboriginals are tall, muscular men, of great activity and endurance, with keen sight and observation, and they often attain to a good old age. Nearly all are bearded, with hair that is wavy rather than straight or curly. They are not a cowardly race, as among themselves they conduct their fights with a certain degree of honour, and with great pluck, not taking advantage of an opponents' accident. They excel in throwing their spears with the wommera or throwing stick, and can hit a mark at a distance of seventy to eighty yards with great force; the boomerang is used for game, such as ducks or pigeons, as well as in warfare, and is really a formidable weapon. On the north-east coast, they use a wooden sword which is wielded with both hands, and seems to have been an improvement or an innovation on the boomerang, where the dense scrubs prohibited the use of the throwing weapon.

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They appear to have been from all time a race of hunters, ever living on the products of the chase, and from the scarcity of game, and difficulty in keeping it when killed, they seldom remain more than one or two nights in one camp, but move about in small parties. Although the tribes or families are always on the move—a nomad hunter race—their districts are well defined, and they seldom trespass on the hunting grounds of an adjoining tribe, unless with consent. This strict delimitation of districts and dislike of trespass, has led to a great diversity in their dialects, and every little tribe seems to have a different language; in a distance of one or two hundred miles, the names for the commonest things may be altered, although the same social system prevails substantially throughout all tribes, with little or no variation.

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In their original state they could not have been an unhappy people; when food was plentiful, they made weapons and shaped their stone tomahawks, which of itself was a work of slow progress; they wove nets for their game, and composed or sang their wild songs, or still wilder corroborrees, or dances. Obedient to the laws and customs handed down from their ancient forefathers, and following out the rites of their marriage laws with great strictness, they lived healthy lives to a good old age, while the increase of the race was checked by the amount of food each district could supply. With the advent of the white race, the social system that held them together for thousands of years, became disturbed and broken into, and their natural food supplies were destroyed. Thus, with the introduction of new diseases, this primitive race of mankind is fast disappearing, apparently without a thought or struggle or hope, and after a few years not a remnant of them, or any sign of their occupation of the country will remain. Some of their customs appear to be very general, such as knocking out the two front teeth among women, and sometimes among men; this is done by a sudden blow on the end of a stick which is placed on the tooth, and then knocked inwards. A very general custom is boring a hole through the septum of the nose, although it is not often that an ornament is put through it. Another manner of adornment is by raised cicatrices made on the chest and back and arms, by cutting the skin with a piece of sharp flint and putting in gum or clay. In their native state, they do not appear to have made any attempt at any kind of covering or dress, either male or female, except that young girls wore an apron round the loins made of fibre or grass hanging down a few inches. For camping at night they used ti-tree or other bark as a shelter when procurable, and always slept between two or three small fires, making a slight hollow in the ground so as to get the warmth of the fire above them, and generally choosing the sandy beds of rivers away from the wind. In the Gulf country, during the wet season, they made small sleeping benches raised on forks driven in the ground, about three feet high, with sheets of bark laid flat, and over them other sheets of bark bent in a half-circle, so as to throw off rain; beneath these structures or sleeping places they kept up a smoke to save them from the mosquitoes, which in the Northern Peninsula, were dreadfully annoying. It was the duty of the gins to keep the fire going during the night. In dry weather or windy nights, a breakwind made of boughs or branches was used as a protection, behind which they made their small fires for sleeping by. The cooking was generally done away from their camp fires, mostly during the daytime.

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In the Gulf country also, the coast blacks make small gunyahs of bent twigs thatched with grass. These are only used during the wet season as a protection, chiefly from mosquitoes.

The treatment of the native races has always been a difficult question. Whenever new districts were settled, the blacks had to move on to make room; the result was war between the races. The white race were the aggressors, as they were the invaders of the blacks' hunting territory. The pioneers cannot be condemned for taking the law into their own hands and defending themselves in the only way open to them, for the blacks own no law themselves but the law of might. The protection of outside districts by the Native Police, was the only course open, although the system cannot very well be defended any more than what was done under it can be. The white pioneers were harder on the blacks in the way of reprisals when they were forced to deal with them for spearing their men or their cattle or horses even than the Native Police. But how were property and the lives of stockmen, shepherds, and prospectors in the north to be protected unless by some summary system of retribution by Native Police or bands of pioneers? The vices and diseases of the white race have been far more fatal to the blacks than the rifles of the

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pioneers, more particularly when they were allowed about the towns, where they always exhibit the worst traits of their character, becoming miserable creatures, useless for any purpose, and an eyesore to everyone. Those employed on stations as stockriders and horse-hunters become very useful and clever at the business, having a special aptitude for working among stock, and they are, as a rule, well treated, clothed, and fed. The Northern Peninsula up to Cape York is the only territory in Queensland where the natives may still be found in their original state, and on some of the rivers flowing into the Gulf they are still numerous.

Their cave drawings show their taste for drawing or sketching to have been of the rudest; just a few marks on their boomerangs, line drawings on water koolimans, and some attempts at drawing figures on rocks in caves are all that have been discovered. The drawings are found wherever sandstone caves are found, and many of these are to be met with on the range about the Normanby River, near Cooktown, where the steep cliffs have been eaten into by the weather or by landslips, leaving hollows or caves in which the blacks have camped and ornamented with figures rudely drawn and coloured with red ochre or pipeclay; many of these drawings represent nothing at all; in some a hand is drawn, occasionally an attempt at some bird, or animal, or tree. Sir George Grey describes some elaborate drawings on the north-west coast of Australia found in caves of a similar nature, and large numbers are found on the coast near the Roper River in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and at Limmen's Bight, in the hollows of rocks, where, sheltered from the weather, the face of the stone is entirely covered with their rude attempts.

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All the lands in the southern seas are supposed to have been populated by castaways, driven by gales out of their reckoning, and landing haphazard at the first land or shore. The first visitor to the unknown and uninhabited land, arriving by accident, would have a struggle for existence, and a hard one too; he would have to improvise his weapons for the chase, and to learn to adapt himself to his new surroundings. His only chance of existence would be to become a nomad, a hunter; and all his spare time would be taken up in finding food and making weapons for the chase; for which Nature provided in a rude way the materials such as flints that break with a cutting or conchoidal edge that would answer very well for carving flesh, fashioning spears, or hollowing vessels for carrying water, though large shells could be used for this; the gum that exudes from many trees would serve to fasten handles to these flint knives. Hard rocks, such as diorite, would be used for axes. These stones require a vast amount of patience in chipping and grinding into shape. To make canoes out of sheets of bark would become a necessity for fishing and visiting the islands, and they would have to be sewn together with twine made from the inner bark of a tree. Wonderfully well made some of those canoes on the coast are; three sheets of thin bark tapered to a point; one sheet for the bottom and one each to form the sides; the fire is laid on some mud on the bottom, with a shell to bail out. Using a single paddle on each side alternately, the natives will make long voyages among the islands on the coast. Primitive Nature would be the castaway's granary or storehouse; the herbs and fruits as they grew naturally, and the wild animals and fish would form the only means of subsistence.

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Arriving in the country with such surroundings and difficulties to contend with, no wonder the castaways remained in a state of savagery. Without any means to better their condition, or even to know that it could be bettered, they remained as they landed, simple savages or children of Nature, quite satisfied with their surroundings, and happy enough if left alone to follow their own mode of life. What spare time they had would be passed singing songs or composing them. The women would assist in all the work of life and perform all the drudgery, collecting roots, nuts, and fibre; grinding the seeds, making the fire, and carrying wood and water to the camp. It is well known that savage women are possessed of uncommon endurance and vitality. In the course of ages, as their numbers increased, they would gradually spread abroad, carrying with them the customs and habits of their forefathers, but not improving or adding to the knowledge of the tribe. The natural instincts of the aboriginals are sharpened by exercise, and their skill in tracking is marvellous; they can follow the trail of another black over bare rocks or on the driest earth; they can recognise an acquaintance by the track of his foot. As bushmen they excel, having the faculty of being able to steer a course to any place they may wish, even in the dark, although, from superstitious ideas, they do not travel about much at night. Most of their quarrels are over their women; one man appropriating the wife of another. It is allowable by their laws for a man to have several wives, and marriage by arrangement is the general course. They are betrothed at a very early age, and the girl remains with her parents till the man comes to claim her. The brother-in-law has the right to marry the widow, and is expected to do so. The mother-in-law never looks on the face of her son-in-law, avoiding him on every occasion, even if in the same camp; this is a custom peculiar to all parts of Australia, and even to other savage peoples outside the continent.

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They are all compelled to marry within their class, and all tribes come under the same system, an equal rule prevailing all over Australia. The system of their marriage laws is puzzling to white people, but it is well understood by every black, male or female, old or young, and will be referred to further on, under the class system, the writer having collected information of several class systems for Mr. A. W. Howitt, of Victoria.

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The blackfellow generally wears his hair long, and usually caked into thick matted rope-like coils, with a band of red above the forehead, or else a native dog's tail. When dressed for a dance or corroborree, the hair is sometimes tied in a tuft with cockatoo feathers on the top. The married women wear their hair shorter, but the unmarried women generally wear it long. When mourning for the dead, the hair is plastered all over with mud, and the eyes and forehead are painted round with pipeclay.

The natives are fond of singing, and their voices are melodious, while they keep excellent time by beating two boomerangs together; they sing a sort of monotonous chant, and keep it up in camp to a late hour. Their songs of mourning are always pitched in a minor key, and convey a dreadfully sorrowful expression; they are sung by both male and female, but the chant is soon varied, as their natural inclination is to be merry, and they look on most things in a ludicrous light. Their sense of humour is very keen and to mimic everything is their chief delight. The clear ringing laugh that they indulge in, and their merry chatter, are an indication of the cheerful nature and freedom from care, that help to make them so contented and easily pleased.

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They believe that the spirits of the dead, which are good and bad, go about at night and hold communication with some members of the tribe, particularly with the medicine men, or doctors. The medicine men claim to have power to talk with the spirits, and the blacks firmly believe that they have such power of communication. These old men are also supposed to preserve the traditions and superstitions of the tribe, and they alone can perform with efficacy the various ceremonies attendant on the healing of the sick; they also instruct the young men in the beliefs of the tribe and as to the proper conduct of their lives, and this they do at special meetings known as bora meetings. It is the special privilege of the old men to hold communication with the spirits of the departed, by which they become possessed of much knowledge which they impart to their tribe. They believe they have the power of making rain and healing the sick. The blacks live in continual dread of death, which they attribute to some spirit agency or to witchcraft. Scarcely any death is put down to natural causes, except those killed in fight; sickness and death are always regarded by them as the works of an enemy at a distance. This belief is universal among Australian blacks. They have various ideas as to how this evil influence is brought about; one of them is by pointing a bone at the victim, and for this a piece of a human leg bone sharpened to a point and several inches long is used. They live in dread of this bone (Thimmool) being pointed at them, and have a great aversion at any time to touch or even look at any bones of deceased members of the tribe. It is supposed that the pointing of the bone causes a gradual wasting away of the victim until death takes place. Another process is to take the pinion of a bird, the two bones fastened together with wax, including some hair of the person whose injury is intended; this is stuck in the ground and surrounded with fire, then it is set in the sun, and again returned to the fire, varying the performance according as to the extent of the harm to be caused; when sufficient sickness has been caused, they place the bone in water, thus dispelling the charm. This process is called "Marro." There is a superstition about abstracting the kidney fat of a blackfellow for promoting luck in fishing, and this is said to be done in various ways. The blacks are very good to the aged and infirm, and carry them from camp to camp; they are also good to the blind, whom they feed and care for, and when death ensues, they will mourn and chant their death song nightly.

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The aborigines believe that the spirit survives after death, and that it walks about on earth for a time, and then departs for another country which is supposed to be among the stars, the road to which is by the milky way, and the ascent by the Southern Cross, as by a ladder. The life supposed to be led there is similar to that on earth, but the food is abundant and shade trees and water are everywhere. They have names for all the constellations, and understand their times and movements. The Pleiades they call "Munkine," the name for a virgin or unmarried girl. Orion's Belt is called "Marbarungal," they believe him to have been a great hunter who formerly dwelt among them. The moon is a male, who, they say, was once a blackfellow, who killed a lot of their people. The latter burnt him in the struggle, and they point to the shadows on its surface as marks of the scars. A paper was read before the Royal Society of Brisbane by E. Palmer on October 2nd, 1885, "Concerning some superstitions of North Queensland aborigines."

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Cannibalism is practised among the blacks everywhere, but more from custom following certain traditions than for the sake of food; certain blacks are eaten, while others are not; those killed in a fight are generally eaten. In some places they skin the dead blackfellow, and twist the skin round a bundle of spears with the hair sticking up on top, and they carry this to different camps, sticking it in the ground by the points of the spears; children are sometimes eaten when they die.

They are expert at all game hunting, and in snaring wildfowl; the plain turkey can be caught with a long reed on the end of a spear with a running noose made of twine and quills; with this in one hand, and a bush in the other, a man with patience will creep up close enough to catch a turkey round the neck. They make strong nets of cordage, having a large mesh to catch emus, kangaroos, or wallabies. These nets they stretch in certain places, and drive the game into them; small hand nets are used to catch fish with; pigeons and ducks are snared in nets which are stretched across creeks. The habits of birds and animals are closely studied, and their instincts are overmatched by the cunning of the savage, who wants them for food.

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All their food is cooked before being eaten, generally on stones made red-hot. It is wrapped in green leaves, and then covered over with hot ashes to steam. In the north they eat the alligator when they can manage to kill one, and the small fresh-water crocodile, found in most of the Gulf rivers, is also an article of food.

Seeds of various grasses are ground into a paste with water and poured into the ashes to cook, while some fruits and nuts require great preparation before using, as they are extremely poisonous without such treatment. In preserving game, the blacks are very cruel, they twist the legs out of joint to prevent them getting away, and keep them alive in this way until they are wanted for cooking.

They eat the dingo, and everything else that lives; and are very clever at discovering the nests of

the native bees; honey, or "sugar-bag," as they call it, is a favourite food of theirs. It is only by constant moving about from camp to camp that a supply of food can be kept up, the women doing their share of providing by digging up yams and roots, fishing for crayfish and mussels, and grinding seeds between two stones. Their life is a constant worry for food from day to day, and nothing passes them that can be eaten. A favourite food of theirs is the tuber of the water-lily growing in lagoons, of this they even eat the stalks or stems of the seed stalk.

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The dugong, a large marine grass-feeding mammal is netted and speared; the flesh, when dried, is similar to bacon, and in the Wide Bay dialect is called "Koggar," the same name they give to the pig. White ants are esteemed a treat, and their nests are broken into, and the young ones, with the eggs winnowed from the dirt are eaten raw, as well as the grubs, which are the larva; of some locusts or beetles, and which are cut out of the trees.

### THE CLASS SYSTEM.

All natives acknowledge the same system of class divisions, and these correspond all over Australia. The blacks are born into these divisions, and the idea is instilled into them from the beginning that they are to observe them as sacred.

Though differing in name or in totem, the classes and divisions prevail everywhere, and a blackfellow knows at once which of the divisions corresponds to his own in a distant tribe.

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All things in Nature are divided into the same classes, and are said to be male and female; the sun, moon, and stars are believed to be men and women, and to belong to classes similar to the blacks themselves.

The following is an instance of the system of class divisions belonging to a tribe on the Upper Flinders River, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, calling themselves "Yerrunthully." They had four class divisions, namely:—

Male	marries	Female.	Children are
Bunbury	...	Woonco	... Coobaroo
Coobaroo	...	Koorgielah	... Bunbury
Koorgielah	...	Coobaroo	... Woonco
Woonco	...	Bunbury	... Koorgielah

Each boy and girl in the tribe is born under one of these divisions, and is subjected to the laws, connected with tribal marriages. These classes are represented by totems, which are different in other tribes lower down the river:—

Bunbury	Carpet Snake	Tharoona
Coobaroo	{ Brown Snake	Warrineyah
	{ Emu	Gooburry
Koorgielah	{ Plain Turkey	Bergamo
	{ Native Dog	Cubburah
Woonco	Whistling Duck	Chewelah

Many other instances could be given, but they all partake of the same divisions and classes. A blackfellow can only marry into one class, namely that opposite to his name, the other three are forbidden to him strictly. The descent seems to be reckoned through the mother, for the child takes its name, not from its mother's class, but from the grandmother's class. The class name always goes back to that of the grandmother on the female side, the father's class name having no influence in the matter. Woonco's daughter is always Coobaroo, and Coobaroo's daughter is always Woonco, and so on through succeeding generations. The father might possibly be of a name representing the proper class, but from a far away tribe, for they correspond in class though not always in name; still the children take their name through the mother in this tribe. The blacks understand these relationships well, and exemplify them with two sticks crossed.

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## CHAPTER XII. PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The annual reports issued by the Water Supply Department of Queensland give detailed accounts of the annual and average rainfall over the whole of the colony, with the results of boring for artesian water, both privately and by Government. It is one of the most valuable and interesting reports issued, and with the rain maps accompanying it, conveys in a moment an accurate estimate of the average rainfall both on the coast and in the far interior. Beginning at Mackay, where the tropical rains commence, and following the coast line to Cape York, the record is higher than anywhere else in the colony, owing to the near approach of the high ranges to the coast. The maximum rainfall recorded in one year is reported at Geraldton, where 211.24 inches

fell in 1894; Cairns can boast of 174.56 inches as its highest rainfall; this occurred in 1886. At Cape York, the average is 60.87; and at Mackay, 72.73 inches; these numbers give a general indication of the humidity of the climate on the east coast of North Queensland. As we advance into the interior a far different climate prevails, and the farther west we go, the lighter becomes the rainfall, till it would almost appear as if it scarcely ever rained in some places in the interior, which are not much raised above the level of the sea. At Birdsville, low down on the Diamantina River, on the borders of South Australia, the rainfall taken for three years, amounted to only 5.72 inches, and on the Mulligan, where for six years an average was taken, it amounted to only 5.77 inches. At Boulia, on the Burke River, the average for nine years was 13.54 inches.

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Between these extremes of great dryness and excessive moisture, the intervening country shows a graduated increase or decrease as one approaches or recedes from the eastern coast. As very few water-ways exist to carry off surplus water, the drainage being often imperceptible to the eye, this seems a merciful dispensation of Nature, as under such conditions any great rainfall would place the whole country under a sea of water long enough for all animal life to become extinct. The water that flows down the usually dry channels of the western rivers southwards comes from the Gulf watershed, where the rainfall is much heavier, averaging at Cloncurry 20.80 inches. The amount of rainfall determines largely the nature of the fauna and flora of a country, and causes it to vary, even in the same latitudes. Between the high coastal districts and the vast rolling plains and downs of the interior these differences are so marked and distinct that they seem like two separate countries; climate, timber, herbage, and even animal life are so different in the two regions that it seems extraordinary such contrasts should exist in the same latitude in one country. All along the east coast, where the rainfall is heavy, we find forests of splendid hardwood and scrubs containing cedar and pine of gigantic growth. In the interior, the timber is as a rule dwarfed, hollow, and crooked; the principal timbers being the acacia family, such as the gidya, myall, brigalow, boree, etc. The grasses of the interior adapt themselves to the climate, and are of a far hardier growth than the coast grasses; one season without moisture does not impare their wonderful vitality; the salt bushes are the hardiest of all vegetation in the interior, and are of the greatest value to pastoralists. Birds are found on the coast that never visit the interior districts; while the galas and corellas are never found in a wild state near the coast. During the wet season in the summer months many seabirds migrate to the interior for a few weeks.

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Accompanying the report of the Hydraulic Engineer is a coloured map showing the sites of artesian bores and tanks and the supposed area of the lower cretaceous or water-bearing strata, as well as the underlying impermeable palæozoic rocks. The whole of Western Queensland may be said to belong to the lower cretaceous formation; here and there, where it has not been denuded by the action of the atmosphere, the desert sandstone may be found overlaying it. The whole of this vast area of water-bearing rocks has been proved by artesian bores, most of which are far below the level of the sea. The knowledge of the area of the water-bearing country in the interior is extending as additional bores are put down. Some of the bores within the known belt of the water area have been abandoned owing to causes that may be generally classified as accidents.

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The Government have sunk a number of wells, while hundreds of flowing bores that now stud the great western country have been put down by private enterprise. The policy of the Government has been to determine the area within which artesian water may be hopefully searched for, and to provide water in arid country or on stock routes, and excellent results have attended the carrying out of this policy. The Winton bore is down in the lower cretaceous beds 4,010 feet, it gives a flow of 720,000 gallons of water a day, at a temperature of 192 degs.; the surface level is 600 feet above the sea; it will take about £8,000 to cover the total cost of sinking, etc. The Charleville bore has the largest flow of any Government bore, giving 3,000,000 gallons in the twenty-four hours, but some bores on Tinenburra, on the Warrego River, give as much as 4,000,000 gallons. About 800 private bores have been sunk in search of artesian water in the western area of Queensland; of these 515 give a total output of 322 millions of gallons in the twenty-four hours, and the total cost of them amounted to nearly £2,000,000. This expenditure made within sixteen years, is creditable to the energy and forethought of the western settlers. Some of the bores are not overflowing, and the water is raised by pumping, though the supply is inexhaustible. By the flow of water thus brought to the surface, the devastating effects of the periodical droughts have been minimised, and large areas have become available to profitable occupation that previously were waste country. The flow of this artesian water from the private and public bores is worth more to Queensland than a river of gold. They have completely changed the face of the country, and removed the anxiety of the stock owners towards the end of the season, when all surface water (except the most permanent lagoons) has dried up and formed mud traps to catch all weak stock that venture near them. These tiny perforations of the earth's surface have helped to solve the difficulty of settlement on the western lands, where we find the rainfall diminishing as we go further west. As these little threads of water find their way across the plains and form into small ponds in the hollows, the wildfowl resort to them as if they were natural waters, while the bulrushes (*typha angustifolia*), soon follow and grow in masses, although these are only to be found round springs, and never in permanent lagoons or rivers. Some curious features are connected with the artesian water supply; sometimes the temperature is very high, that of the Dagworth bore reaching 196 degrees, while the pressure of the Thargomindah bore is over 230 lbs. to the square inch. The water supply tapped is perhaps beyond calculation, and up to the present time there is no indication of exhaustion.

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The source of this enormous pressure of water that is capable of sending a jet over a hundred



feet above the surface, is still unexplained, and many theories are afloat as to its origin; some of these go far afield for reasons for the great supply and strong pressure. The enormous rainfall on the coast ranges, where the intake probably occurs, and where the impermeable rocks approach the surface, carrying the water under the lower cretaceous, or more recent formation (which is shown to be the most extensive in Western Queensland), seems to be the most reasonable to adopt at the present time. These water-bearing strata must cover very large areas in Australia, for a bore at Tarcanina, near the south coast on the Great Australian Bight, is down over 1,000 feet below the level of the sea, and throws the water to a great height above the surface.

Mr. R. L. Jack, the Government Geologist, in a paper on artesian water in the western interior of Queensland read before the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science, in Brisbane, January, 1895, argues in a most convincing manner as to the source of artesian supplies of water, giving the intake or gathering ground at about 55,000 square miles, over a region where the mean average rainfall taken at thirteen meteorological stations along the line of outcrop, amounts to 27 inches annually, which is considerably greater than that of the interior of the downs country. The greater part of the rainfall is not carried away by the channels of the rivers, neither is it evaporated, but sinks through porous strata into the earth, and does not return except through springs or submarine leakage. The fact of all this great supply of water finding its way to the sea at great depths, shows what little effect a few bores can have on the enormous annual supply. It is an encouragement to extend the number of bores, which are so necessary to successfully settle the arid plains of the distant interior, in order to anticipate the waste of water.

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The fact of an artesian bore diminishing its flow may be due to many causes other than shortage of supply, faults in the tubing or caving in of the strata may account for it. We have here the secret of successful settlement in inland Australia—an inexhaustible supply of water fit for all the wants of man.

The Normanton bore, practically on the edge of the Gulf, and sunk from a level of about 30 feet above the sea, struck artesian water at a depth of 1,983 feet, or 1,950 feet below sea level. This bore and the one at Burketown, both of which were successful in reaching artesian water, were put down by the Government during the time Mr. G. Phillips represented Carpentaria in the Legislative Assembly, 1893-5.

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### **THE GRASSES AND FODDER PLANTS.**

An enumeration of all the fodder plants and herbage common to North Queensland would require a long catalogue, as variety is Nature's law in this case, and the western soil teems after the wet season with flowers, herbs, grasses, and fruits all more or less adapted for use as fodder. The prospect on the wide spreading plains after the early thunder showers in November and December is very refreshing to the eye that has been for months staring on the dry stalks of the Mitchell grass, or else on the brown bare earth. Trailing vines of the melon and cucumber family spread themselves in profusion, the fruit of which is eagerly sought after by stock. *Convolvulus* flowers and vines grow among the young green grasses, and many varieties of the *compositæ* show in bright yellow their gleaming flowers, mingled with hibiscus of every hue. The growth of plant life is marvellous after the fall of soft rain on the warm rich soil. *Portulaca*, known as pigweed, is among the first of the plants to spring up, and grows in great masses; the seeds form a principal article of food for the birds that frequent the plains, the young plants are also used by stock, and are not despised by man in an emergency. All life, vegetable and animal, revives suddenly after the surface of the earth has been saturated with the life-giving element; frogs and locusts sing their songs of joy day and night; flies increase beyond conception, and mosquitoes and sandflies torment to distraction both man and beast.

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On the plains, the first vegetation to spring up is the sensitive plant, spreading its delicate foliage over the surface, the leaves closing during the heat of the day, and opening in the evening. The small creeping plant said to be poisonous to stock (*Euphorbia Drummondii*), appears immediately after rain. The climbing vine (*Capparis lucida*), which bears a sub-acid fruit not unlike passion fruit, at this time of year gives out its white flowers and fruit at the same time. The scent of the innumerable flowers on the plains, the tender herbage, the young grasses sending their seed stalks several feet high, and all the soil covered densely with vegetation and herbage suitable for stock present a picture to the eye, so utterly opposed to that which prevailed but a few weeks before the advent of the rains, that the spectator can scarcely believe it to be the same country. The seeds of some plants will remain dormant for years, and then suddenly spring up in profusion; for instance, the plant commonly known as peabush, a leguminous annual (botanically *Sesbania aegyptica*), has only a periodical growth, and at such times, varying for many years, it covers the plains in such rank masses that the stockriders get quite bewildered when searching for stock through its scrublike density; for several years after this abundant growth, the plant will scarcely be noticeable; it is said that every three years is a peabush year, but the writer cannot support the theory, as he can only call to mind four or five really bad peabush seasons in a period of thirty years. The seeds which fall to the ground in great quantities form the sustenance for flocks of pigeons and other birds, but much seed must also fall down the cracks of the earth and bide their time for a chance of springing into life. The flowers of this plant grow in lilac and yellow on the same stalk. Cattle are fond of it when young, and mustering stock in a peabush year has many extra difficulties on account of the prolific growth of this intermittent annual. It will sometimes grow to a height of fifteen feet, and in swampy places is so dense that it is difficult to keep even a few horses in sight when driving through it; after it dries and the seeds

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fall to the ground, the stalks break off, and the sweep of the water over the plains during the succeeding year gathers these dry stems against the trees in enormous masses like small haystacks, and there they remain until a bushfire reduces them to ashes. The masses of peabush carried down creeks and watercourses at certain seasons will yet prove a source of danger to railway and road bridges when such structures come to be built on the western plains comprising the watersheds of rivers flowing into the Gulf of Carpentaria. Though peabush grows strongly on flooded ground, it can be found of a sturdy growth on ridges or high plains or downs during a favourable year, especially where water lodges between ridges. It is an ancient and historical plant, for the flowers that composed the wreath found on an Egyptian mummy of ancient date, when softened and opened with warm water, were found to be identical with the flowers of the peabush of the Flinders River and western plains of North Queensland.

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The native pastures have not been improved by the introduction of stock; the evils of overstocking and the want of bushfires to keep down the under-growth, have in some districts deteriorated or exterminated some of the best of the fodder grasses. The best of all indigenous grasses is known as Mitchell grass, a perennial of strong growth, and capable of resisting the driest weather; there are many varieties of this grass, which is found only on the plains and downs of the interior. It possesses the faculty of shooting green from the old stalks at the joints, and taking up moisture, renewing its youth again. The Mitchell grass grows in isolated strong bunches, and its presence is a sure sign of a fattening country. The following are the best known varieties:—

“*Astrebla pectinata*,” common Mitchell grass, growing in erect tussocks of two or three feet high.

“*A. triticoides*,” wheat-eared Mitchell grass; this plant is taller and coarser than the last, attaining a height of four or five feet.

“*A. curvifolia*,” or curly Mitchell grass; plant forming erect tufts one or two feet high, the leaves narrow and much curved.

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“*A. elymoides*,” weeping Mitchell grass; plant decumbent, the stems several feet long.

The blue grass (*Andropogon sericeus*), is an annual of soft rapid growth, with a branching seed-stalk that breaks off and is blown by the wind in masses into waterholes; the blacks use the fine seeds of this grass for food.

“*Anthistiria membranacea*,” called the Flinders or Barcoo grass, is an annual of a reddish colour, found all over the western plains. It is soft and brittle, breaking easily off to fall on the ground, when stock will pick it up; it makes excellent hay, keeping sweet for years, and is one of the most fattening grasses.

The varieties of the indigenous grasses that cover the great western plains are innumerable; all are more or less eaten by stock, even the triodia or spinifex that is looked on as a desert grass, and of a formidable and forbidding nature. Spinifex is a very drought-resisting plant, and in times of great scarcity and extreme drought, when all other grasses have dried out and been blown away, the spinifex is there with its erect spiny leaves, possibly bitter to the taste, but still life sustaining to stock, as has been proved in many a severe drought. It grows on sandy sterile ridges, and seems to adhere to the latest geological formation, the sandstone or cainozoic period; it is found on ridges adjacent to alluvial flats where the richest herbage and grasses are found in abundance.

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Kangaroo grass (*Anthistiria ciliata*), is found mostly in coastal districts, and although a good pasture grass when green, it soon dries and requires burning.

There are two prominent varieties of spear grass in the north, the worst being the black spear grass (*Andropogon contortus*), which grows in sandy spots along the banks of creeks, or on sandy ridges; it is not of much use as a fodder grass, but becomes a terrible scourge to sheep when ripe and seeding. The seeds are barbed, and as sharp as needles, and having once entered the skin they work into the bone, causing intense annoyance and irritation, and ultimately death. The other spear grass (*Andropogon Kennedeyii*), not so dangerous, but of little use to stock, is a coarse-growing, strong grass, seven or eight feet high, with a reddish bloom, and strong seeds that penetrate saddlecloths and clothes in countless hundreds.

Herbage fills the spaces between the tufts of grasses soon after the rains, and the plains develop a dense growth of pasturage; but after continued dry seasons, all herbage disappears, and the grasses follow in time, until very little is left except the roots, and a few of the more hardy salsolaceous plants. These form a striking feature in the economy of Nature in the plain country, the salt bushes are ever present in one variety or another, and help to keep stock in health and condition. The various species of “*Atriplex*” abound, and being very drought-resisting, they are reckoned amongst the most valuable fodder plants. Sir Thomas Mitchell was the first to make salt bush known after his first expedition over sixty years ago.

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“*A. Nummularia*,” passing under the curious vernacular of “Old Man Salt Bush,” is truly grey enough. Some of these plants have been propagated in north-west America with great success, turning the barren alkali lands that were never known to grow anything, into valuable pastures. Tons of seeds are raised annually for Utah, Arizona, and other States. In Africa the salt bushes are cultivated from seeds and even cuttings, and their value is acknowledged everywhere. They endure scorching heat, live without rains, are eaten by all kinds of stock, proving nutritious and wholesome to them, are easily raised from seed, and can, with a little care, be propagated from

cuttings.

The blue bush (*Chenopodium*), is common all over the Gulf of Carpentaria watershed, growing in swampy spots where water lies; it is a great favourite with all kinds of stock, and is getting scarce owing to its being eaten out so much.

Wild rice (*Oryza sativa*), grows in swampy places throughout the Gulf country; the grain is well-defined, but small; all stock are fond of it, when green; it grows to a height of three or four feet. The rice of commerce is the produce of cultivated varieties of this grass.

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Edible shrubs are extremely plentiful, and are of great value when grass becomes too dry to be nutritive. A peculiar feature in the vegetation of the western plains is the "role-y-poley," which is called in America the "tumble weed." This is an annual of quick growth after rains, growing in a spherical form from a common root; when the stem dries, it breaks off close to the ground, and the ball of dried vegetation is driven by the winds over the plains at a furious rate, topping the fences, and piling up against them in masses. It causes the greatest consternation to horses as it is driven across the downs. It possesses no virtue as a fodder plant.

### FOSSILS OF ANCIENT AUSTRALIA.

The Australian continent has undergone great changes during the past geological ages, and most probably has been connected in remote times with part of Asia, and not unlikely with South America by some now submerged land. But whatever the connection may have been in the very distant past, it has been shut off from the larger northern land masses at so remote a period that the higher forms of mammals have not found their way to it, as in Africa and South America. Great changes have taken place in the continent itself. It is supposed that, at one time, in what is called the cretaceous or chalk age, a great sea spread from the north right across from what is now the Gulf of Carpentaria, covering immense tracts of level plain country in the interior of Australia, including Western Queensland, and part of New South Wales, so that the western half of the continent was separated from the eastern at least in the northern parts. Gradually the land rose and great lakes were formed in the interior, especially in the region of Lake Eyre, and a growth of vegetation sprang up of a more luxuriant type than is to be found now in those western parts, otherwise the enormous animals, such as the giant diprotodon, huge extinct kangaroos, birds larger than the moa, as well as crocodiles and turtles, could never have found sustenance to multiply in such numbers as their fossil remains testify they did in nearly every part of central Australia, and in the interior of North Queensland. In this sea, which washed the base of the mountains on the west, was deposited the sandy formation which has become the level inland plains. From some cause so far unknown, the land became desiccated, the lakes lost their freshness, and became great salt pans, the vegetation and the animals dependent on it became extinct, until a dry and arid region was produced, with a river system that fails to reach the sea, but becomes absorbed in the great sandy interior. The smaller types of marsupials of a hardier nature and capable of removing to greater distances for food, maintained their existence, while the giants of a similar race have left only their bones embedded in the drift to testify to the mighty changes that Nature has wrought out in the past ages. Fossil diprotodons of gigantic size and struthious birds rivalling in stature the New Zealand moa, are found in Central Australia. At Lake Callabonna in the great salt Lake Eyre basin, there are hundreds of fossil skeletons of these animals, many of which have been removed to the Adelaide Museum. In that locality they are found most frequently on the surface of the dry salt lake, and have been preserved by a natural coating of carbonate of lime; the bones are found at various depths.

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Nearly the whole of interior Australia, including Western Queensland, is one vast cemetery of extinct and fossilised species, scattered along the surface, or buried deep in cement or drifts, and in clays hidden beneath the present surface formation. The open plains of the Upper Flinders disclose great deposits of marine fossil shells, belemnites and ammonites, and also remains of extinct animals. On the Lower Leichhardt River, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, forty or fifty feet beneath the alluvial deposits forming the banks of the river, and firmly embedded in the hard cement, which is an ancient drift formed of water-worn stones in an ironstone clay, are found the bones of innumerable extinct gigantic species of animals that found sustenance and multiplied in enormous numbers over the Gulf country in some far back pre-historic age. On the Walsh River are found large numbers of fossils, mostly shells of the ammonite species. The bones that have been buried for countless ages in these ancient drifts are well preserved, and are not very dissimilar in appearance to the bones of animals dying recently on the surrounding plains, although they are completely fossilised and changed into the appearance of stone. The utter extinction of these gigantic species, comprising diprotodon, nototherium, and zygomaticus, and other species, grasseaters and flesheaters alike, can only be accounted for by a great change of climate, and great and long-continued droughts, reducing the herbage and causing the remaining living animals to crowd into the drying-up lagoons and lakes, there to become bogged in thousands, and die as the stock die in the waterholes after a long drought. Some of the fossils are those of animals of a gigantic size, much larger than any existing native animals; the teeth found are twice the size of an ordinary bullock's, and the jaws carrying them are of enormous size and strength. There are remains of alligators over thirty feet long, and turtles of much greater dimensions than any existing in the present day. The vegetation in the marshes and territory forming North Queensland must have been of a luxuriant and tropical description in those days to have supported such large types of marsupials—animals that would require a more abundant moisture, larger rainfall, and heavier foliage, than are now to be found on the western slopes of

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the ranges. Deeply interesting is the study of the ancient forms of life that roamed over the densely-wooded marshes of the interior, when the flora represented a type found now only along the rich alluvial banks of the rivers on the east coast.

### GEOLOGY OF QUEENSLAND.

The following facts are summarised from the geology of Queensland written by Mr. Daintree, as the result of his investigations, whilst prosecuting the search for new goldfields on behalf of the Queensland Government in the northern portion of their territory, as also from the official reports of the Geologist of Southern Queensland, and other sources.

The consideration and history of the different formations will be taken in their sequence of time, as far as the stratified or sedimentary rocks are concerned. The igneous rocks will be described under the various groups of Granitic, Trappean, and Volcanic.

- Aqueous*:—
  - Alluvial (recent).
  - Alluvial, containing extinct faunas.
  - Desert sandstone, Cainozoic.
  - Cretaceous
  - Oolitic
  - Carbonaceous
  - Carboniferous
  - Devonian
  - Silurian
  - Metamorphic*.
- } Mesozoic
- } Palæozoic

Alluvial.—Fresh-water deposits skirt all the present watercourses, but the accumulations are insignificant on the eastern watershed, except near the embouchures of large rivers, such as the Burdekin, Fitzroy, etc. On the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, however, and in the south-western portions of the colony, where the watercourses have scarcely any fall, and where in seasons of excessive rain the country is nearly all inundated, fluviatile deposits are very extensive. Though the dense lavas of the Upper Burdekin (volcanic outbursts of a late Tertiary epoch) are traversed by valleys of erosion, in some cases 200 feet deep, and five miles broad, yet very narrow and shallow alluvial deposits skirt the immediate margin of the watercourses draining such valleys. It is only near the mouths of the larger rivers that any extent of alluvium has been deposited, and even these areas are at the present time in seasons of excessive rain, liable to inundation, showing that little upheaval of this portion of Australia has taken place since the last volcanic disturbances terminated.

The meteorological or climatic conditions during this period were nearly identical with those of the present time, heavy rains during the summer months causing violent floods, removing seaward the aërial decompositions and denuded materials from year to year.

What lapse of time is represented during this period of erosion is a matter of speculation, but it seems certain that the mollusca of the present creeks were also the inhabitants of the waters during the whole period of denudation since the last volcanic eruption.

From the Gulf of Carpentaria in the north, to Darling Downs in the south, however, the fossil remains of extinct mammalia have been found in breccias and indurated muds, which are the representatives of the beds of old watercourses through which the present creeks cut their channels. At Maryvale Creek, in latitude 19 deg. 30 sec. S., good sections of these old brecciated alluvia occur. The fossils from this section, as determined by Professor Owen, are "Diprotodon Australis, Macropus titan, Thylacoles, Phascolomys, Nototherium," crocodile teeth, etc.

Imbedded in the same matrix occur several genera of mollusca undistinguishable from those inhabiting Maryvale Creek.

The fact of these older alluvia forming both the bed and the banks of the present watercourse, goes to prove that Diprotodon and its allies inhabited the Queensland valleys when they presented little difference in physical aspect or elevation from that of the present time. The crocodile (*Crocodylus Australis*), however, had then a greater range inland than it has now. A study of these Diprotodon breccias leads to the conclusion that the remains are chiefly entombed in what were the most permanent waterholes in seasons of excessive drought, and that the animals came there in a weak and exhausted state to drink and die, just as bullocks do under similar conditions at the present time.

No human bones, flint flakes, or any kind of native weapons have yet been discovered with the extinct mammalia of Queensland.

### CAINOZOIC.

Desert Sandstone.—On the eastern branches of the Upper Flinders and elsewhere, fine sections are exposed of lava resting on horizontal beds of coarse grit and conglomerate, which lie in turn

unconformably on olive-coloured and gray shales with interstratified bands and nodules of argillaceous limestone containing fossils of cretaceous affinities. I have called this upper conglomerate series "Desert Sandstone," from the sandy barren character of its disintegrated soil, which makes the term particularly applicable.

Without doubt, it is the most recent widely-spread stratified deposit developed in Queensland. The denudation of the "Desert Sandstone" since it became dry land has been excessive, but there still remains a large tract "in situ," and all the available evidence tends to show that this "Desert Sandstone" did at one time cover nearly, if not quite, the whole of Australia. The journals of the two Gregory's description of the new settlement of Port Darwin, all bear evidence to the continuity of this so-called "Desert Sandstone" over all the extended areas investigated by them. [Pg 248]

Augustus Gregory's description of the sandstones of the Victoria River agrees with those of the "Desert Sandstone" of Queensland, the specimens from either locality being undistinguishable the one from the other, while the same barren soil, the same hostile spinifex, the same fatal poison plant, mark its presence from Perth to Cape York.

In Queensland, the upper beds are ferruginous, white and mottled sandy clays, the lower being coarse alternating grits and conglomerates; the extreme observed thickness has not exceeded 400 feet. A characteristic view of the upper "Desert Sandstone" beds is shown in Betts' Creek, on the Upper Flinders. Whether these are marine, lacustrine, or estuarine deposits, there is hardly sufficient evidence to show.

What may be the value of this "Desert Sandstone" for free gold, is at present unsolved; but the very nature of its deposition seems to preclude the idea that that metal will be found in paying quantities, except where direct local abrasion of a rich auriferous veinstone has furnished the supply.

### MESOZOIC.

Cretaceous.—As early as 1866 a suite of fossils was collected by Messrs. Sutherland and Carson, of Marathon station, Flinders River, and forwarded for determination to Professor McCoy, in Melbourne. They were never figured, but his manuscript names are as follows:— [Pg 249]

#### *Reptilia.*

Ichthyosaurus Australis. "M' Coy."  
Plesiosaurus Sutherlandi.  
Plesiosaurus macrospondylus. "M' Coy."

#### *Cephalopoda.*

Ammonites Sutherlandi. "M' Coy."  
Ammonites Flindersi. "M' Coy."  
Belemnitella diptycha. "M' Coy."  
Ancyloceras Flindersi.

#### *Lamellibranchiata.*

Inoceramus Carsoni. "M' Coy."  
Inoceramus Sutherlandi. "M' Coy" (identical with the English species I. Cuvieri).

In company with Mr. Sutherland, who supplied McCoy with the before-mentioned materials, Mr. R. Daintree visited the Upper Flinders, and carefully collected the fossils from three localities, viz., Marathon station, Hughenden station, and Hughenden cattle station.

At Marathon, which is some forty miles further down the Flinders than Hughenden, there is, close to the homestead, an outcrop of fine-grained yellow sandstone, which has been quarried for building purposes, and below this, to the edge of the waterhole supplying the house, is a series of sandstones and argillaceous limestones, containing numerous organic remains. These were submitted to Mr. Etheridge for examination and correlation, the result of which appears in the appendix to his work. The Hughenden cattle station is twenty miles further up the Flinders than the Hughenden head station. Here hundreds of Belemnites are strewn over the surface of the two ridges which front the cattle station huts, but they are rarely found in the soft shales which crop out from under an escarpment of "Desert Sandstone." The lithological character of these cretaceous strata is such that decomposition is rapid; the resulting physical aspect being that of vast plains, which form the principal feature of Queensland scenery west of the Main Dividing Range; but that the "Desert Sandstone" has extended over all this country is evidenced by its existence either in the form of outliers, or as a marked feature "in situ" in all main watersheds, or by its pebbles of quartz and conglomerate, which are strewn everywhere over the surface of the plains. The height of the watershed between the Thomson and Flinders Rivers is locally not more than 1,400 feet above sea level, and as the former river has to travel as many miles before reaching the sea, it is easy to understand why, in a country subject to heavy tropical rains at one period of the year, followed by a long dry season, the river channels are ill-defined, and vast tracts of country covered by alluvial deposits. Down the Thomson and its tributaries, these mesozoic rocks are known to extend, though much obscured by flood drifts. That this portion of the mesozoic system extends throughout the whole of Western Queensland to Western Australia is also more than probable, hidden, however, over large areas by "Desert Sandstone." [Pg 250] [Pg 251]

Mineral Springs.—There is one other subject of practical interest connected with the great mesozoic western plains, and that is the occurrence of hot alkaline springs, which suggest the possibility of obtaining supplies of water on the artesian principle over some portion at least of this area.

At Gibson's cattle station, Taldora, on the Saxby River, a tributary of the Flinders, a spring of hot water rises above the surface of the plain, and its overflow deposits a white encrustation, which on analysis by Dr. Flight, under the direction of Professor Maskelyne, afforded:—

Water	27.793
Silica	0.600
Chlorine	3.369
Sodium	2.183
Carbonic Acid	33.735
Soda	<u>31.690</u>
	99.370

Apart, therefore, from the 5.552 per cent. of chloride of sodium, the deposit consists of sequi carbonate of soda or native "Trona," and as such is used by the settlers for culinary purposes, etc.

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### PALÆOZOIC.

"Carboniferous."—Whilst the affinities of the southern coalfield of Queensland are mesozoic, a northern field, of even larger extent, has a distinct fauna more resembling the Palæozoic Carboniferous areas of Europe.

The Dawson, Comet, Mackenzie, Isaacs, and Bowen Rivers drain this carboniferous area; and numerous outcrops of coal have been observed on these streams. No commercial use, however, has yet been made of any of these deposits, as the measures generally are too far inland to be made available until the railway system of the country is extended in that direction.

"Devonian."—From the southern boundary of Queensland up to latitude 18 deg. S., a series of slates, sandstones, coral limestones, and conglomerates extend to a distance 200 miles inland; these are sometimes overlain by coal measures, sometimes by volcanic rocks, and consequently do not crop out on the surface over such districts. North of latitude 18 deg. S., however, over the Cape York Peninsula, this series (so far as we have any evidence), is absent, granites and porphyries capped by "Desert Sandstone" forming the ranges on the eastern, and their abraded ingredients the sandy ti-tree flats, those on the western side of that inhospitable tract of country, a never-ending flat of poor desert-looking sandy ti-tree country, stretching away to the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

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In the limestone bands, which form the lower portion of the series, corals are very numerous; in fact, the limestones, where little alteration has taken place, are a mass of aggregated corals; and as this class of rock has resisted aerial destruction better than the associated slates and sandstones, the barriers thus formed mark the trend of the rock system to which they belong, in a very picturesque and decided manner; their bold, massive, and varied outline chiselled into the most delicate fretwork by Nature's hand, is relieved by a wealth of richly-tinted foliage, unknown in the surrounding bush; and the eye jaded with the monotony of the eternal gum tree turns with delight to the changing tints and varied scenery presented by these barrier-like records of the past. This class of country is very much in evidence at Chillagoe. On the track from the Broken River to the Gilbert diggings, Devonian rocks several thousand feet thick may be observed, as they are continuous in dip, without being repeated, for at least five miles across the strike, with an average inclination of 60 deg.

Although on the Broken River and its tributaries a breadth of thirty miles with a length of sixty miles, is occupied by a persistent outcrop of Devonian strata, gold has only been discovered in remunerative quantities in a small gully, where a trapdyke has penetrated the Palæozoic rocks of the district.

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The following districts, however, where Devonian rocks prevail, have been the centres of gold mining enterprise:—Lucky Valley, Talgai, Gympie, Calliope, Boyne, Morinish, Rosewood, Mount Wyatt, Broken River, portion of Gilbert.

In every case here cited, the country is traversed by trap rocks of a peculiar character, either diorite, diabase, or porphyrite; and tufaceous representatives of these are also found interstratified in the upper portion of the same formation, and occasionally throughout the other beds.

At Gympie, the auriferous area is confined to veins traversing a crystalline diorite, or within a certain limit of its boundary, marked by the presence of fossiliferous diabase tufas.

Whatever may have been the solvent and precipitant of the nobler metals in the auriferous veinstones associated with trap intrusions, all other but hydrothermal action may safely be eliminated, the very nature of the reefs, composed as they are of alternating layers of a promiscuous mixture of quartz, calcspar, pyrites, etc., affording unmistakable evidence on this point. The gold also contained in the trap dykes themselves is always accompanied by pyrites,

both (according to Daintree), hydrothermal products separating out during the cooling down of the trap intrusions. Auriferous lodes, occurring in areas where hydrothermal action has attended trap disturbances of a special character in Queensland, are generally thin—to be estimated by inches rather than feet; but taken as a whole they are far richer in gold than those enclosed by sedimentary rocks.

**GRANITIC.**

Outcrops of granite extend along the eastern coast of Queensland from Broad Sound to Cape York, and inland as far as the heads of streams running direct from the inner coast range to the sea.

Very little rock of this character is met with west and south of the Dividing Range which separates rivers flowing to the eastern and northern coast, and those trending south to the Murray or Cooper's Creek.

The granites of Queensland vary very much in their crystalline texture, passing from true granites into porphyry and quartz porphyry.

**TRAPPEAN.**

Much stress has been laid on the value of certain intrusive trap rocks as specially influencing the production of auriferous veinstones in Queensland.

The petrology of these may be divided into four type classes:—1. Pyritous porphyrites and porphyries. 2. Pyritous diorites and diabases. 3. Chrome iron serpentines. 4. Pyritous felsites.

**VOLCANIC.**

Whilst the older trappean rocks have apparently had so much influence on the disturbance and fracture of the sedimentary strata older than the Carboniferous, and by a secondary process have evidently been centres of mineralising action, the volcanic seem to have played the most important part in determining the elevation and present physical outline of north-eastern Queensland. The main outbursts of lava have taken place along the Dividing Range which separates the eastern and western waters, and therefore on the line of the highest elevation of the country. The more northern volcanic areas, are probably contemporaneous with the upper volcanic series of Victorian geologists, so extensively developed in the western districts of that colony. These have issued from well-defined craters still in existence, and are probably of Pliocene Tertiary age.

The southern areas, viz., Peak and Darling Downs, etc., are older, agreeing with the lower volcanic of Victoria, which have been ejected through fissures, and have in no case a very extensive flow beyond the lines of fracture through which they issued. These may be referred to the Miocene Tertiary epoch. The rock masses forming both the upper and lower volcanic are basic in character, and may be all termed or grouped under the general term "dolorites."

The volcanic soils of Queensland are those best adapted for the grazier and agriculturist.

To epitomise:—With the exception of the McKinlay Ranges, a line drawn parallel to the eastern coast, at a distance of 250 miles, would include all the palæozoic, metamorphic, granitic, trappean, and volcanic rocks represented in the colony, both coal groups lying within the same area.

The mesozoic and cainozoic systems occupy the surface area to the westward. The volcanic rocks follow the line of greatest elevation on the main watershed at altitudes from 1,500 to 2,000 feet above sea level. The chief granitic mass extends from Broad Sound to Cape York, with an occasional capping of "Desert Sandstone." Westward from the Dividing Range, "Desert Sandstone" and the cretaceous and oolitic groups alternate one with the other to the extreme limit of the colony.

**AREA OF FORMATIONS.**

Estimating the entire extent of the colony at 600,000 square miles, a rough approximation to the areas occupied by the different geological formations is as follows:—

	Square Miles.
Valueless land, "Desert Sandstone"	150,000
Scrubby and thickly timbered inferior pastoral, but valuable as containing coal, iron ore, &c.	{ Carbonaceous Mesozoic and Palæozoic } 24,000
Fair pastoral, and valuable for its associated minerals and metals	{ Devonian Silurian Metamorphic } 60,000
Fair pastoral	Granitic 114,000



Good pastoral	{ Cretaceous and Oolitic }	200,000
First-class pastoral and agricultural	{ Alluvial Volcanic Trappean }	52,000
		-----
		600,000

Looking at the matter from an economical point of view, we find that one-fourth of the Colony of Queensland is valueless, whereas three-fourths furnish good pastoral land. Of this latter 60,000 square miles contain extensive and very valuable mines of gold, with numerous outcrops of copper and lead ores, to which may be added rich deposits of tin ore; 24,000 square miles are capable of producing illimitable supplies of coal and iron; 52,000 square miles are, as far as soil is concerned, best adapted for the agriculturist and squatter. In conclusion, it may be asserted that there is here a wealth of material resource which compares favourably with that of any other Australian colony.

### THE GREAT BARRIER REEF.

North Queensland owes one of its chief claims to distinction to its numerous ports and harbours. In fact, the whole coast from Lady Elliott Island northwards to Cape York is one large harbour; protected as it is from the ocean swell by the Great Barrier Reef, a natural breakwater, extending for nearly a thousand miles, with a depth from ten to twenty fathoms, and a distance from the main land which varies from twenty to fifty miles. The sea outside is profoundly deep, and a few islets are found on the line of reef, also a few ship canals through the Barrier Reef. "The Great Barrier Reef of Australia; its products and potentialities," by W. Saville Kent, F.L.S., is a splendid work, and beautifully illustrated. This work shows the reef to be full of marine wonders and is intensely interesting; its various forms of life and marine vegetation would fill volumes. The Great Barrier Coral Reef of Australia, the marvellous extent of which was first made known by Captain Cook, is one of the wonders of the universe. Its linear measurement is no less than 1,250 miles, extending from 9-1/2 deg. of south latitude to Lady Elliott's Island, the most southern true coral islet in the chain or system. Its whole area lies within the territorial jurisdiction of Queensland, and the greater portion in North Queensland of which it forms one of the most valuable possessions. Raw material to the value of over £100,000 annually is obtained from the reefs and waters for exportation. The distance from the main land to the outer edge or boundary of this gigantic reef varies from ten or twelve miles to thirty. It is mostly formed of a chain of detached reefs and coral islets, many submerged or partially exposed at low water, with several openings, a few of which offer secure passage for large vessels.

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## CHAPTER XIII. SOME LITERARY REMAINS.

The late Mr. Palmer had some skill as a versifier, although the exigencies of his arduous life in the pioneering days would not permit of his adding the extra finish to the lines which, more often than not, were as he himself phrased it, "strung together as the result of sleepless hours passed during the nights while camping out on a large cattle run in the west." A few of his efforts are here preserved:—

### THE GIDYA TREE.

(Acacia Homœophylla.)

Where roll the great plains to the west,  
Near a homestead pleasant to see,  
With far-stretching limbs and spreading crest,  
Grows a grand old acacia tree.  
Nor winter winds, nor sun's fierce heat  
Can change its staunch solidity,  
For many a century's storms have beat  
On this great, grey, gidya tree.

At early morn, their joyous lay,  
The butcher-birds sing in melody.  
And merrily pass the hours away,  
All under the gidya tree.  
The grey doves in its shade rejoice,  
From eyes of kites they're free,  
And call their loves in plaintive voice,  
From under the gidya tree.

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In scarlet bloom, the mistletoe swings,  
From its branches droopingly;  
And all around its odour flings,  
Right under the gidya tree.  
The milk-plant twines its length along,  
As if 'twould hidden be;  
Creeping its way 'mong the leaves so strong,  
Of this ancient gidya tree.

The panting cattle gladly come,  
And sheltered fain would be,  
From burning heat of noonday sun,  
Camped under the gidya tree.  
Like the shade from a great rock cast  
O'er the land so soothing lay;  
All Nature seeks some rest at last,  
Far under the gidya tree.

When life is o'er and troubles past,  
How sweet that rest will be,  
For weary ones who come at last,  
Safe under the gidya tree.  
"Nunc dimittis," my work is done,  
And soon from care set free;  
That peace I wish will soon be won,  
Deep under the gidya tree.

### MY OLD STOCK HORSE.

(Norman.)

"Norman," a large bay horse, bred on Conobie about 1870, broken in three or four years after, and worked on till twenty-four or twenty-five years old as a stock horse, and then nearly as good and safe to ride as ever. A surer, better stock horse was never ridden, and always ridden by the writer.

I have a friend—I've proved him so  
By many a task and token;  
I've ridden him long and found him true,  
Since first that he was broken.

For twenty years we both have been  
In storm and sunny weather,  
And many a thousand miles we've seen,  
Just he and I together.

From Cooktown's breezy seaborne site,  
By Palmer's golden river;  
Where Mitchell's waters clear and bright,  
Roll on their course for ever.

Across the Lynd and Gilbert's sands,  
And many a rocky river;  
Through trackless desert, forest lands,  
We've journeyed oft together.

Then on the great grey plains so vast,  
Where the sun's rays dance and quiver,  
Through scorching heat and south-east blast,  
We've toiled on Flinders River.

Through tangled scrubs and broken ground,  
We have often had to scramble;  
To wheel the cunning brumbie's round,  
From where they love to ramble.

Old Norman ne'er was known to fail,  
Or in the camp to falter,  
And just as sound to-day and hale,  
As when he first wore halter.

Good horse, you well have earned your rest,  
Your mustering days are over;  
For all your time you'll have the best,  
And pass your life in clover.

The Indian's simple faith is plain,  
That in the land of shadows,  
He'll have his faithful dog again  
To hunt in misty meadows.

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And should a steed a soul attain,  
This surely then will follow—  
I'll meet that grand old horse again,  
And hail him "Good old fellow!"

Conobie, October 8th, 1894.

### THE WATCHER.

The night wind keen and chill is creeping  
Across the plains with moaning sound;  
A rider there his watch is keeping,  
Where cattle camp in peace around.

The Southern Cross shines clear and bright,  
And marks the hour that speeds;  
While Nature's sounds, borne on the night,  
Accustomed to, he little heeds.

The hooting of the mopoke owl  
Floats on the midnight air;  
The prowling dingoe's dismal howl  
Is chorused wide and far.

The curlew's cry, so wild and shrill,  
Pierces the air with startling sound;  
While o'er the waters calm and still,  
The wild fowl chase each other round.

He cares not for the keen wind cold,  
Nor for the hour that's past;  
For thoughts of other days still hold  
His memory to the last.

He minds him of his youth time ever,  
And the farm where he was born;  
The meadows green, and the flowing river,  
And the fields of tasselled corn.

The sweet perfume of the apple's bloom,  
The sight of the mountain's blue,  
The drooping willows and yellow broom,  
And waving wheatfields too.

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He sees the cows from the pasture land,  
As down the lane they come,  
And sister Nell, with pail in hand,  
To wait their coming home.

He sees again his father ploughing,  
In the old-fashioned sturdy way,  
He hears again the cock's shrill crowing,  
That waked him oft at break of day.

His memory takes him back apace,  
To early manhood's prime,  
When a gentle voice and pleasant face  
Impressed him for all time.

For loving lass and wandering lad,  
Since ever the world began,  
Though parted in grief, the love they had,  
Will come to each again.

His wayward life he ponders on  
With anguish deep and keen,  
And as the past he looks upon,  
Sadly thinks—it might have been.

But vain regrets will help him not.  
Nor vanished hopes renew;

He only knows his present lot  
Has duties stern to do.

He cares not now whate'er befalls,  
His faith he still will keep;  
The next on watch in turn he calls,  
And folds himself in sleep.

Conobie, June 21st, 1894.

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Punctuation has been normalized without note.

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Page 72: "horse's" changed to "horses'" (so hard on the horses' feet).

Page 175: "resouces" changed to "resources" (for its mineral resources.)

Page 177: "supples" changed to "supplies" (enabled the early settlers to obtain supplies).

Page 193: "suppression" changed to "suppression" (wanton impertinence that would require suppression.)

Page 195: "swagsmen" changed to "swagmen" (to ration the swagmen as they pass along).

Page 241: "dessicated" changed to "desiccated" (the land became desiccated, the lakes lost their freshness.)

Page 254: "crystaline" changed to "crystalline" (the auriferous area is confined to veins traversing a crystalline diorite).

Page 257: duplicate "the" removed (would include all the palæozoic, metamorphic).

Advertisement Section:

Page 14: "settlement" changed to "settlement" (made its way from settlement to settlement).

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