

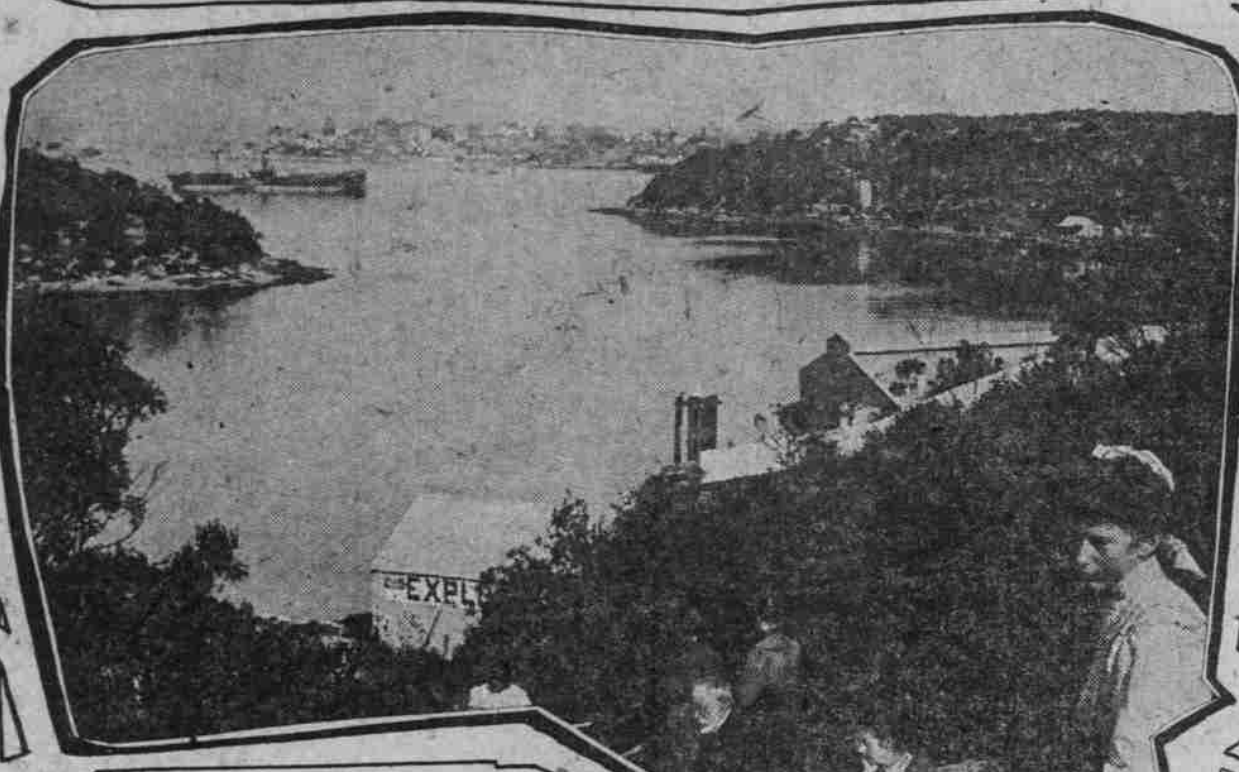
"EVER NEVER LAND" - AUSTRALIA

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A CONTINENT OF CONTRARIES THAT THE BOYS OF OUR FLEET WILL SEE THIS WEEK



THROWING BOOMERANGS



SYDNEY HARBOR, AUSTRALIA
WHERE THE AMERICAN
FLEET WILL DROP ANCHOR.



THE
CHALLENGE
OF AN 'OLD MAN'
IN MELBOURNE
ZOO. A FULL
GROWN KANGAROO
IS CALLED AN 'OLD MAN'

BY PROFESSOR JAMES RICALTON.

In a new country the traveler is looking for unfamiliar things. He will find them in Never-Never-Land. In no country in the world can one find so many opposites and eccentricities in nature as are to be found in Australia. From the beginning when this austral continent first emerged from the sea, her physiography was a blunder; she never had important rain producing mountain ranges in the interior, consequently she is well rich riverless, and has only a few good harbors. Her geology, her zoology and her flora all prove her cosmic antiquity; they show that nature was serving an apprenticeship when she was lifted from the waters and even for vast periods afterward when animated with her fauna and flora. But these facts do not make her less interesting to a visitor from the Northern hemisphere. Nature's tentative efforts in animal and plant life lend some of the most attractive features to travel among our antipodean continents. We want to see trees in the south of their development, before they knew how to turn the broad side of their leaves to the sun, and before they had learned that it is more convenient and advantageous to send their leaves rather than their bark! It is a novel experience to dwell in a latitude where the sun makes his daily course to the northward and where the firmament is spangled with unfamiliar twinklers. What an opposite to hear the owl hoot, not to the moon at night, but to the meridian sun during the day!

How convenient for the honey-thief to have been without stings as they are in Australia. When traveling in many parts of India the knowledge that one is often exposed to attacks by the most ferocious flesh-eaters is apt to be disquieting; in Australia the carnivore have no representative except the dingoo (wild dog), and he is probably an early importation. As carnivorous animals do not exist, ruminating animals are unnecessary, if I may express it in that way. To make it plain, cud-chewing is, according to naturalists, nature's way of enabling defenseless animals to feed quickly and retire to places of security where they can chew at leisure; so in Australia, where flesh-eating animals do not exist, there are no ruminants. While there are no flesh eaters and no cud-chewers indigenous to Australia, there are plenty of importation of both orders; foxes abound, but the fox is a forefeign, so is the pestilential bunny. The fauna is essentially marsupial, the most important representative of which is the kangaroo; of course, I mean by marsupial, the pouched animal, of which there are several different species; in America the opossum is the only pouched specimen. It may be necessary to state that a marsupial or pouched animal is one whose young is born in almost embryonic immaturity and placed by the mother in her abdominal pouch, where it remains until well developed. The marsupial is wonderful inasmuch as it represents a stage in animal life midway between egg-birth and live birth, or between a white egg and a fully developed chick. It is known in natural history as oviparous and viviparous life; therefore the marsupial order denotes a very remote period in the development of the animal kingdom, and the fauna of Australia is essentially marsupial, you see why reference is made to the anomalous condition as coming from nature, appropriate, both for both plant life and zoology, in cases to which I have referred, are aecous remote in nature's history.

In the animals of Australia there is a still more extraordinary example of Nature's caprice: it is in the duck-billed platypus (ornithorhynchus paradoxus) sometimes called the duck-mole, and is perhaps the most paradoxical of all Australian freaks. It is almost a faunal trinity embodying the qualities of fowl, fish and bear; it has webbed front feet for swimming, tunneling hind feet like those of the mole, the beak of a duck and a beautifully furred body not unlike that of a young otter. It lays eggs, usually two, and broods them as does a hen; when the young are hatched they receive their supply of milk in the most unusual and wonderful fashion. The mother platypus has no teats; but the skin over the milk glands is porous and the little "duck-bills" pressing the giant causes the milk to exude. Here then is the most paradoxical example of composite animal life known to natural history, and wherein Nature seemed to hesitate or to attempt a trinity.

Surely Australia is a land of queer things—an insular continent of contradictions; but I must not dwell altogether upon natural history; for, besides her ancient order of plants and beasts, Aus-

tralia has scenic wonders which the "round-the-world" traveler cannot afford to ignore.

Owing to the absence of mountain ranges in the interior, as already stated, there is no adequate river system, and this has led some people to think that the entire country is mountainless. This is a mistake. Several broken ranges extend along the east and southeast coasts from 20 to 50 miles from the sea, known as the Australian Alps. Some parts of the ranges are known as the Liverpool Mountains, another part of the system as the Blue Mountains. Most of these mountains are in New South Wales and embrace several peaks, the highest, Mount Kosciusko, being 6500 feet. Although these ranges do not compare with some other great ranges of the world in elevation, yet their abrupt and irregular formation, the overhanging walls, the numerous cascades and waterfalls springing from rocks 3500 feet overhead, fern-shaded gorges, and deep, wide valleys filled with the blue haze of gum trees, all combine to produce an effect of Himalayan grandeur.

Many parks in these ranges and sub-ranges have been set apart as Summer resorts for the city folk. The most popular and picturesque region in the Blue Mountains is called Katoomba. It is in New South Wales, 65 miles from Sydney, and is one of the most charming mountain regions imaginable. It has already several thousand inhabitants; several hotels and countless villas all perched on outlook points. Katoomba has become a sanitarium, a comfort-seekers' retreat in hot weather. It is an ozone station, a picnicking ground, an artists' paradise, a trysting place of the commonwealth. Katoomba is only the rendezvous point. The wild rugged ranges continue for miles. The valley between the precipitous walls is often 2000 feet in depth filled with the fragrant bog-ke of the eucalypti, beneath which are giant fern trees. At great expense the government has constructed shady walks midway between the top and the bottom of these stupendous walls, from which one can peer downward a thousand feet and upward a thousand feet, except where his vision is obscured by the gauzy mists of floating cascades. Rustic tables and rock-constructed daisies for luncheon parties have been placed in quiet, cozy nooks. Ladders and rustic steps lead to the valley below where paths may be followed for miles through fern tree bowers.

The whole region, extending over many miles, is so full of varied scenery—the wild, the rugged, the beautiful, the grand, that I was disposed to reprint the New South Wales government because the entire Katoomba region has not been set apart as a national park. The only person whom I met at Katoomba who showed due respect for and paid worthy homage to the grandeur of the Blue Mountains, was a mouldy-visaged cab-driver who conveyed me to Wentworth Falls (a scenic point in the region). After I had completed my survey of all that was grand in the surrounding scenery and returned to my cab, the cab-driver said:

"Would you like to listen to a recitation?" Of course I would, certainly. He placed one hand on the wheel of the cab, and turned his eyes upward toward the tree tops at the proper elevation for sublime contemplation, and delivered the following apostrophe to the Blue Mountains, which is offered with the other Australian curios, it being the product of the cabbie's own incubations:

A "Cabbie's" Apostrophe to the Blue Mountains.
Ye Blue Australian Mountains,
Superb thy summit rises,
Stupendous heights ascending
The southern sunny skies.
Thy valleys fair as Eden
Emits' the cascades spray,
Where soft the bell-bird's chiming
And sweet the lyre-bird's lay.
Blue mountain, chain of grandeur,
Each Peak a Palace dome,
Where reigns the god immortal,
Thou fair Australian home.
Ye Blue Australian Mountains
Where endless wealth abounds,
Through wild-woods caves and caverns
The harp of freedom sounds;
And flora spreads her mantle
With many a fragrant flower,
And nature wreaths in splendor
Rock-rugged walls and tower.

It must not be inferred that the Blue Mountain range is a single line of elevation; it is a table-land broken up into spurs and valleys extending westward for 15 or 20 miles, and embracing a vast area of mountain, valley and forest. It is reached from Sydney by railway, and, if the seeker after the wonderful in scenery desires a change from the wonderful above to the wonderful below ground, let him proceed by railway westward from Katoomba to Mount Victoria Station, where he will find waiting a coach which will convey him over a fine mountain highway for 30 miles to the famous Jenolan caves. Here the mountain scenery is still magnificent above ground, but here he may also penetrate the earth and traverse miles and miles of stalactitic and stalagmitic caverns. These series of under mountain halls and galleries—the Jenolan Caves—are among the most extensive and beautiful in the world. It is claimed that if all the rooms and galleries in the Jenolan Caves were in line they would extend 25 miles. Every conceivable formation that can be produced by the dripping of mineralized water for ages can be seen in these caves. They are under the control of the provincial government; they are lighted by electricity; steps and ladders and passages have been made at necessary points; a boat has been installed in what is known as the River Styx, which is 500 feet below the top of the mountain. A very obliging caretaker aids the role of Charon, and if the real Charon is as considerate and gentle-hearted as the Jenolan one, we may entertain some scruples about the necessity for being so very good.

It is impossible to particularize in 25 miles of beautiful subterranean witchery; and these are not the only



THE COLONIALS ARE
RICHLY ENDOWED WITH A HORSE-
RACING FANCY, AND AT ELEMINGTON,
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COURSES IN THE ENTIRE WORLD

caves in Australia. At two other points in New South Wales wonderful caves may be seen; the Yarrigobilly and the Wombyan Caves are almost as extensive as those at Jenolan. In Victoria also are fine caves recently opened. I was astonished to learn, while in Australia, that what was once a pestilence has become an industry. I refer to the prolific rabbit, whose rapidly increasing numbers threatened to deprive the sheep of their pasture lands, and rewards were offered for their destruction. Now that freezing plants have been installed, rabbit venison has found a good market in London; and there are men whose regular occupation is to trap rabbits. Tasmania is a great rabbit-shipping station, which I visited, that I might see a peculiarly Australian industry. Bunny is not a wary animal like the fox, but is easily trapped.

The rabbit catchers use ordinary steel traps in great numbers; these they set on the feeding ground in localities where their prey is known to be numerous. Rabbits feed at night chiefly; the traps are examined every morning. A hundred a day would be a big catch; 50 at times a pair would be \$2.00 a day, 10 cents a pair being an average price. Each morning's catch is suspended by the roadside in front of the rabbit-farmers' home. Rabbit-buyers often with two-team trucks pass along daily gathering in the cotton-tails which they transport to the nearest shipping station. On the road to Tasmania I found two trucks carrying to the station over two tons of rabbits; thence they are conveyed by train to a freezing plant. At the freezing place often may be seen a train leaving for the seaboard with 200 tons of frozen rabbits. These are shipped to London like other frozen meat. There is a use for everything when we know what it is, and it is to be hoped, ere long, the utility of mosquitos will be discovered.

Industrial Australia shows advanced conditions, especially in the wool industry, but neither this nor the other interesting agricultural features can even be touched upon in this necessarily brief sketch. I cannot, however, omit a word about primal man of Never-Never-Land. It has been the universally expressed opinion, oral and written, that the ab-



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origine of Australia is about the lowest primitive race of man known. But the latest writers are beginning to modify this estimate and place them more nearly on an equality with other aboriginal tribes, and my own observation accords with later estimates. Of course, they do not show the physical dignity, nor the classic facial lines of the American Indian, who is probably the highest type of an aboriginal. Some have essayed to trace the origin of the Australian to Babylonia, others have found in his language indications of a Malayan descent; others again have located his prehistoric forbears in Africa. Many have a way of discovering historic and anthropological evidence as people see form in the fire. I believe no one knows where the aboriginals of Australia came from any more than we know where the American red man hailed from. We know they incline towards the negroid appearance, nearly black, some with frizzly hair and other tribes with hair nearly straight. They have low, repulsive faces; they are lazy and shiftless. Many of them near the towns are maintained by the government. In their wild state they erect very crude places of shelter and use stone implements. They show no signs of ever having had any connection with even a semi-civilized ancestry.

Their marital usages are barbarous in the extreme. Their courtship is antiquated to say the least—when a man falls in love—no, that's not the right language; they don't fall in love—when a man sees a woman he wants for a wife he may buy her from her father, or if she be in another tribe he may steal her; or he may lie in wait, capture her and pound her into submission with a club. If a daughter is bought from a father, and she refuses to accompany the negotiated groom, she is clubbed; if she attempts to run away the father will spear her with his leg so she cannot run. Sometimes brothers in different tribes will "swap" sisters, entailing a double wedding.

Any mention of Australian natives, however brief, would be incomplete without some account of their most remarkable weapon—the boomerang. The boomerang is an instrument which seems to defy all the laws of mechanics and projectile; because when it is hurled off into space in any direction for 50 or 100 yards it will return to the point from which it is thrown. Try to imagine a force acting contrary to itself; a force acting in diametrically opposite directions. This constitutes the mystery of the return boomerang. There are two kinds of boomerang, the hunting or war-boomerang; and the return boomerang; the former gyrates rapidly end over end and plunges into the quarry or the enemy. The return instrument is a plaything and rotates horizontally; it is made with the

ends so leveled that the resistance of the air continually changes its course without nullifying the propelling energy. A returning boomerang may be thrown from 50 to 100 yards, a fighting one much farther. It is said that no European has ever been able to throw this paradoxical instrument successfully, while a native under favorable conditions of wind will bring it within a six-foot circle of the initial point in nearly every instance. We know how the erratic flight of this instrument has become a figure in speech and literature, as when any act performed returns against the actor it is called a "boomerang."

In the Cascade.
Eden Phillips in the London Nation. Here Shelley wrote: the immortal trees Have felt his passing through each dense and glade; and whispered while the mysteries Of deathless things were woven in their shade. The wind that turns the shivering poplar while The nightingale that throbs upon the night, Still haunts the shadows where a poet's soul hath strayed. And I have moved upon the self-same earth He trod, have gazed upon the golden tide Of Arno, where her far-fung, rippled mirth Meets with Mugnone, leaps and broadens wide. By banks of sward and sandy beach She dims and shrinks again, long reach on reach. While the tall slender trees rade off on either side. The tasseled hyacinth crossed his feet; The great red rose and rustled where he stood. Upon the river's bank, in dingle sweet The young leaves bowed before him through the wood. Peace was about his passing; heaven's light Fell cool upon his gracious forehead bright. And saw that he was fair and knew that he was good.

The dome of blue wheresome his winged soul Wheeled like an eagle through the ether still; The plain that melt and glow and onward roll; Carrara's mist and marble where they all The far horizon—all together brought Under the ragged Apennines—have wrought The dim and auree cup wherein he drank at will. Not so the hour when from his spirit rose The solemn anthem of the great west wind. Then, through red gloaming and the stormy sky, Of Autumn, he went forth in might to die. The river burdened with her latter rains; Earth's thickened breath lie heavy on the plains. And open to his cry the immortal mothers' maid. Harper of all the ages, giant free, Roaming on earth's deep bosom as of yore. Greater than thou is this he wrote of thee, Enduring as thyself for evermore. Shelley's unobscured miracle shall reign For generations' joy, and still maintain While the last boat on the cloud and bring the wave to shore. Florence, May 21.