

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA: ITS
HISTORY AND PROGRESS, THE
NATIVE BLACKS, TOWNS,
COUNTRY DISTRICTS, AND THE
GOLDFIELDS, PP. 12-119**

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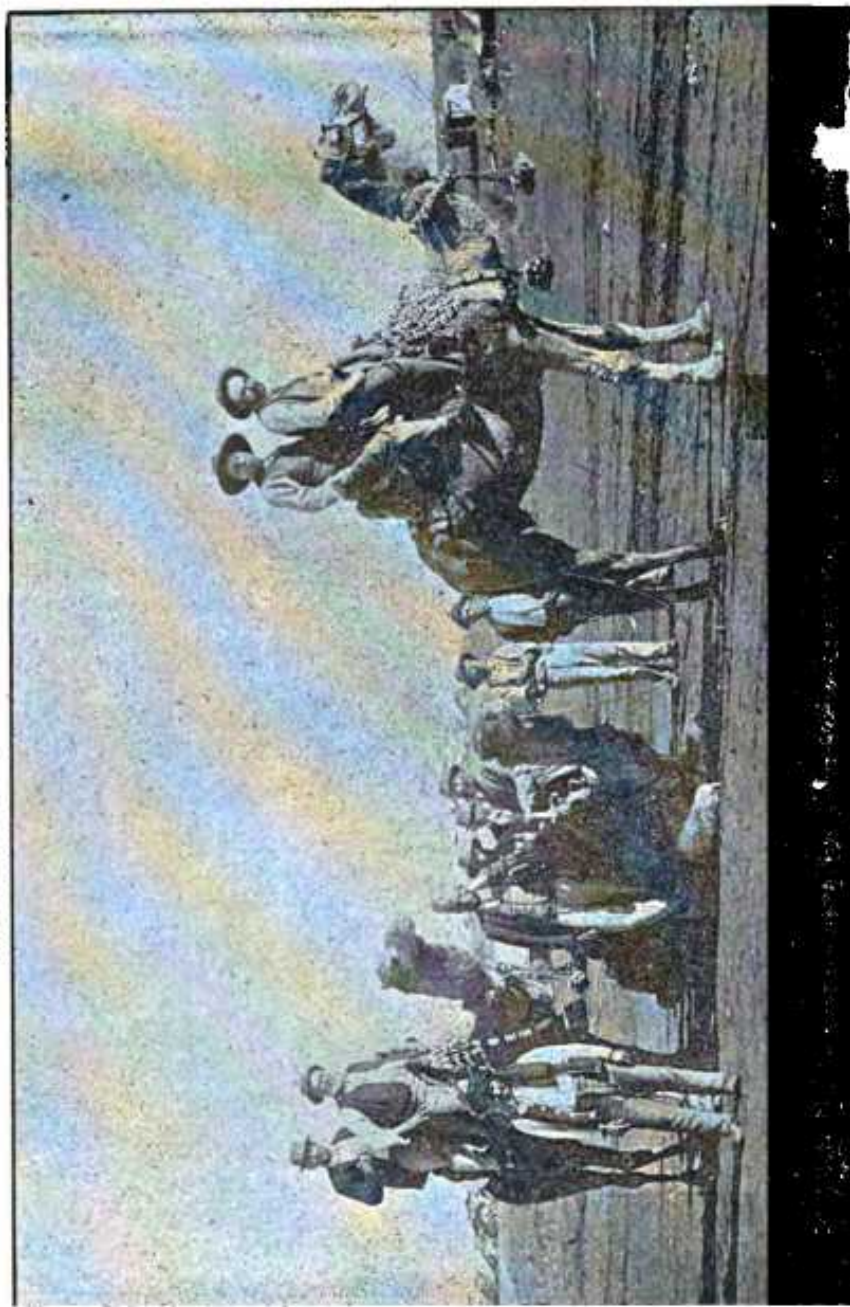
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JONATHAN CEREDIG DAVIES

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TRAVELLING ON CAMELS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.



WESTERN AUSTRALIA :

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AND THE GOLDFIELDS.

[WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.]

BY

JONATHAN CEREDIG DAVIES.

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1902.

Undoubtedly the great drawback of Western Australia, if not of Australia in general, is the total absence of a great mountain system in the interior to give rise to large rivers.

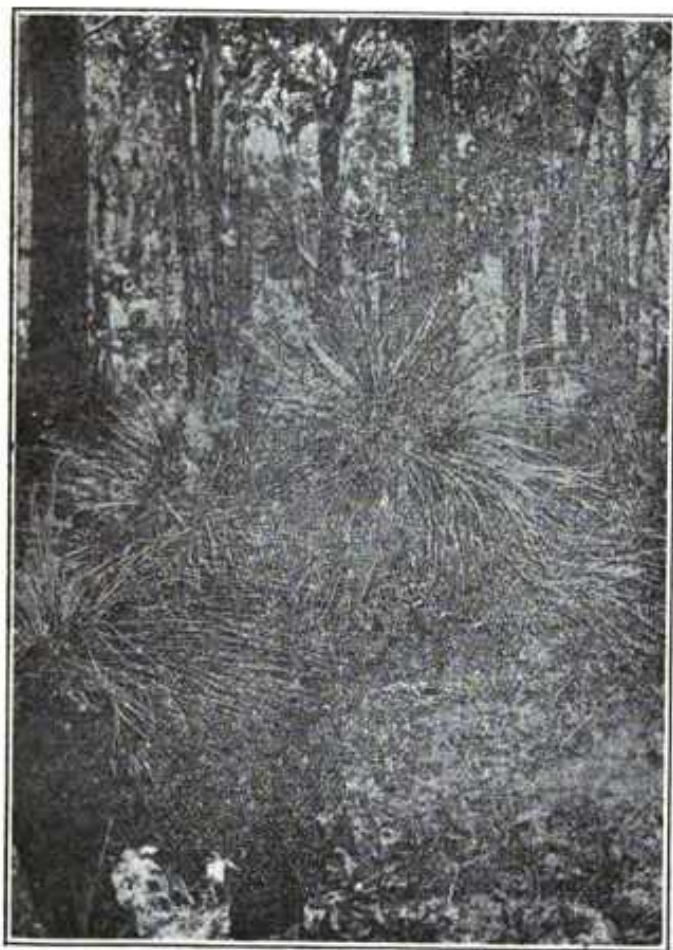
The interior is, according to accounts of explorers, a vast tableland about 1,500 feet above the sea level, though not without its dunes and depressions at intervals. Some of these depressions are sometimes incorrectly called "lakes," but in reality they are only salt clay marshes, perfectly dry except after heavy rains, which do not occur very often, as the rainfall in the interior is very small.

This dry tract of country runs right through a large portion of Western Australia, from Eucla on the south-east seaboard through the interior of the country, about 1,100 miles or more in a north-westerly direction to the north-west Cape. This immense belt of dry tableland has often been regarded as a vast howling desert from one end to the other, but this in many respects is rather misleading, as some tracts of it contains excellent soil and covered with grass, but the drawback is the want of sufficient rain. But it must be remembered that the whole of Western Australia is not a dry region. In the south-western portion of the State, which is about twice as large as England, rain is abundant and regular. At Cape Leeuin, for instance, the very south-west point of the country, the annual amount of rainfall is not far short of 40 inches, but from this point, however, it gradually decreases both northward and eastward.

In the country around Perth, the capital city, which is situated about 180 miles north from Cape Leeuin, the rainfall is about 31 or 32 inches, but from Perth to the east it decreases gradually into the interior, and in the far inland tableland it cannot be more than 7 or 8 inches as far as it has been ascertained.

The whole of the south-west part of the Colony is very heavily covered with trees, except here and there where patches have been cleared; but in the north and east the timber gives place to bush and shrubby trees.

The forest region covers an area of about 30,000



A BUSH SCENE.

the first two years of life (2000–2001). In 2002, the number of children who were not vaccinated against measles was 10.4% (95% CI 9.2–11.6), which was significantly higher than the 7.4% (95% CI 6.8–8.0) in 2001 (Table 2). The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 13.7% (95% CI 12.5–14.8) in 2003, which was significantly higher than the 10.4% (95% CI 9.2–11.6) in 2002 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 16.9% (95% CI 15.8–18.0) in 2004, which was significantly higher than the 13.7% (95% CI 12.5–14.8) in 2003 (Table 2). In 2005, the number of children who were not vaccinated against measles was 19.3% (95% CI 18.1–20.5), which was significantly higher than the 16.9% (95% CI 15.8–18.0) in 2004 (Table 2). The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 20.2% (95% CI 18.8–21.6) in 2006, which was significantly higher than the 19.3% (95% CI 18.1–20.5) in 2005 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 23.1% (95% CI 21.6–24.6) in 2007, which was significantly higher than the 20.2% (95% CI 18.8–21.6) in 2006 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 25.2% (95% CI 23.6–26.8) in 2008, which was significantly higher than the 23.1% (95% CI 21.6–24.6) in 2007 (Table 2). The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 27.5% (95% CI 25.8–29.2) in 2009, which was significantly higher than the 25.2% (95% CI 23.6–26.8) in 2008 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 30.3% (95% CI 28.5–32.1) in 2010, which was significantly higher than the 27.5% (95% CI 25.8–29.2) in 2009 (Table 2). The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 32.6% (95% CI 30.7–34.5) in 2011, which was significantly higher than the 30.3% (95% CI 28.5–32.1) in 2010 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 35.3% (95% CI 33.3–37.3) in 2012, which was significantly higher than the 32.6% (95% CI 30.7–34.5) in 2011 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 37.8% (95% CI 35.7–39.9) in 2013, which was significantly higher than the 35.3% (95% CI 33.3–37.3) in 2012 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 40.2% (95% CI 38.0–42.4) in 2014, which was significantly higher than the 37.8% (95% CI 35.7–39.9) in 2013 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 42.7% (95% CI 40.4–45.0) in 2015, which was significantly higher than the 40.2% (95% CI 38.0–42.4) in 2014 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 45.1% (95% CI 42.7–47.5) in 2016, which was significantly higher than the 42.7% (95% CI 40.4–45.0) in 2015 (Table 2).

The proportion of children who were not vaccinated against measles rose to 47.6% (95% CI 45.1–50.1) in 2017, which was significantly higher than the 45.1% (95% CI 42.7–47.5) in 2016 (Table 2).

square miles, and the matured timber growing on it has been estimated by an expert at the value of above 120 million sterling. These big trees for the most part belong to the Eucalyptus tribe. The tree which is most abundant is the jarrah, which covers an immense tract of land.

The jarrah, I believe, grows only in Western Australia, but it is exported at present to all parts of the world, for it is well-known for its durability, and so well adapted for bridges, harbour works, railway sleepers, telegraph poles, paving, etc.

Jarrah boards look rather rough unless planed, but with little labour the carpenter is able to make it look as beautiful as mahogany. Indeed, jarrah is called by some West Australian mahogany.

One characteristic of the jarrah is that it grows on soil of inferior quality. In my many wanderings through the forests, I noticed it was often the case that the larger the trees, the poorer the soil.

It seems as if these trees take away the substance of the soil, or poison it. It must be admitted, however, that after cutting them down, or even "ringbarking," the land improves gradually till at length green grass springs up where hardly anything would grow previously.

Another excellent tree, which is much imported from the country, is the karri, which is perhaps of equal value to the jarrah, but more confined to one particular district. Some of the karri trees are of extraordinary height, about 300 to 400 feet high, and over 30 feet in circumference, and of all the West Australian trees this is undoubtedly the most graceful in its proportions.

Besides the jarrah and karri West Australia has several species of gum trees, such as the Red gum, White gum and York gum; and as the presence of large jarrah trees is often a sign of inferior soil, so does the presence of gum trees, especially the York and Salmon gum, indicate good soil.

Perhaps the most remarkable tree, or rather bush shrub, is the grass tree or "black boy," so named from its appearance at a distance. The "black boy," which is impossible to describe to those who have never seen it,

has a black stem around which the leaves are formed in a circle. Fresh circles of decayed leaves are added annually and pressed down by the new leaves which are putting forth. As the tree does not seem to grow during a year more than the thickness of the circle of leaves which is added to the plant, it must have taken hundreds of years to grow a few feet. It exudes a dark resinous substance in great quantities. This shrub makes excellent fuel, especially for lighting the fire. It is widely dispersed over the country, and supposed to connect the vegetation of the present with that of the carboniferous period.

Timber is undoubtedly a source of wealth to Western Australia. Timber mills are numerous in different parts of the south-west, employing hundreds of men, and the latest statistics show that a million and a half acres of land are held under timber leases at present. It must be admitted, however, that owing to keen competition and other reasons, many of these mills are not in such a flourishing condition as one might have expected, and some of these Companies are, to a certain extent, disappointed; but there is no doubt as to the ultimate success of the timber industry, and it will take generations to cut down all the trees. It is not timber, but gold, that has attracted so many to Western Australia during the last ten years.

DISCOVERY OF THE COUNTRY.

The discovery of America by Columbus in 1492 led some to entertain the probability of the existence of a continent in the far unknown South, and after Vasco de Gama discovered the Cape of Good Hope, thereby finding a passage to the Indian Seas, several of the maritime nations of Europe determined to send out expeditions to explore the south seas. Although it cannot be ascertained who was the first discoverer of Australia, everybody agrees that the west was the first part sighted by Europeans, and that it was known for many years before the eastern coasts of the great island-continent.