

## CHAPTER XI.

### *VICTORIA. NEW SOUTH WALES.*

Excursions into the Bush near Melbourne. Opossum Snare. Tracks of the Aborigines on Tree trunks. Town of Sandhurst. The Highest Tree in the World. Aborigines on a Government Reserve. Ornithorhynchus paradoxus. Leaves of Australian Trees, why Vertically Disposed. Fur-Seal in the Open Sea. Sydney Harbour. The Blue Mountains. Excavations in the Ground caused by Rain. Shooting Opossums by Moonlight. Fruit-eating Bats. Hunting Bandicoots. Browera Creek. Intimate Relation of Land and Sea Animals. Geological Import of this. Medusæ in Fresh Water. Kitchen Middens. Drawings by Aborigines. Handmarks. Trigonias and Cestracion.

**Melbourne, March 17th to April 1st, 1874.**—We sighted Port Otway in a glassy calm, and steamed past Hobson's Bay Heads into Port Phillip on March 17th, and anchored off Sandridge, the seaport suburb of Melbourne.

The English house sparrow may be seen quite at home on the beach at Sandridge in flocks, picking up the refuse from the ships, and also about Melbourne generally. The bird is beginning to be a pest to the Acclimatization Society which introduced it, and finding good food in the cages of the animals in the Society's Gardens, refuses to leave them, but consorts with the parrots in the trees and bushes, and steals the food on every opportunity.

I made three excursions from Melbourne. The first was with Mr. Stephenson, the chief of the railway department, to a piece of wild bush-land belonging to him, about 25 miles distant from the city. We started with our host in a light bush waggon, with materials for camping out. We were not seven miles away from the city before the road became a sort of slough, through which the horses could hardly drag the waggon, although we all got out; and before we reached a camping ground it was pitch dark, and one of the springs was broken.

We had some difficulty in finding our way in the bit of bush to the best camping place, and then in finding the water hole and leading the horses to it. We set fire to a great fallen log,