

CHAPTER XII.

Melbourne to Sydney—Sydney—Excursion to Queensland—The Marsupialia—Sydney to Wellington—Procalistes—Wellington to the Kermadec and Friendly Islands—Tongatabu, Friendly Islands to the Fiji Islands—The Fiji Islands.

MELBOURNE TO SYDNEY.

THE Expedition remained at Melbourne until the 1st April, refitting the ship and obtaining magnetic and other observations on shore, and the stay was greatly enlivened by the receptions and excursions arranged for the members of the Expedition by the inhabitants of Victoria.

The German frigate "Arcona," Captain von Reibnitz, which had also recently visited Kerguelen and Heard Islands to ascertain their fitness as a Station for observing the transit of Venus, was anchored off Melbourne at the same time. The "Arcona" had passed round the south end of Heard Island, so, from the information received from her officers, it was possible to add somewhat to the Challenger's plan of that island. The relations between the officers of the Challenger and those of the "Arcona" were most cordial; visits were frequently interchanged, and several pleasant reunions held on both vessels.

On the 1st April, at 6 A.M., the vessel left Port Philip for Sydney, passing the heads at 2 P.M. When outside a few trawlings were obtained, and at 5.30 P.M. a course was shaped for Rodondo Island.

On the 2nd April, at 5.30 A.M., the Glennie Islands and the land about Wilson Promontory were seen, and the ship was steered to the southward of Rodondo Island, which was passed at 8.30 A.M. During the forenoon an exploring party was landed on East Monceour Island,¹ and dredgings and trawlings were obtained off the island in 38 to 40 fathoms (Station 162; see Sheet 25), after which the ship proceeded to the northeastward. West Monceour Island has two small rocky islets off its southern end, instead of one as marked on the chart, and the eastern island has a rock separated from it by a narrow channel both at the northwest and southwest points. The weather in the forenoon was gloomy, with rain, but shortly after noon a southwest breeze sprang up, the rain gradually cleared off, and the weather became finer.

On the 3rd April the land about Mount Everard was observed at 11.30 A.M., and the ship was steered to pass Gabo Island at a distance of 3 or 4 miles, fixing with Mount Everard, Rame Head, Genoa Peak, and Howe Hill, which objects were easily recognised. At 5.30 P.M. Gabo Island was passed, and a course shaped to get outside the edge of the 100-fathom bank of soundings to ascertain the depth and temperature the

¹ The rock specimens collected were typical granite.