


the waves of a tempestuous sea. There was, at the first, a little grass on the flats, but at length they became sandy, and the ridges less elevated. It appeared, indeed, that the ridges had been levelled by successive gales of wind, and had filled up the hollows. The whole region was now sand, on which spurifex alone was growing, if I except a few stunted hakea bushes that were scattered about; so that if I had not brought a few oats with me for the horse, he would have starved. On the 13th, at noon, my observations and reckoning placed me in latitude $28^{\circ} 11' 15''$ and at this point my horse failed. I therefore took him out of the cart, and with Joseph walked to a distance of from twelve to thirteen miles, as I wished, if possible, to pass the 28th meridian. I was then nearly abreast of Moreton Bay in point of latitude, more than two hundred miles to the westward of the Darling, and in longitude $141^{\circ} 22'$, as near as I could judge; and yet, as I looked around me from the top of a small sand-hill I had ascended, I could see no change in the terrible desert into which I had penetrated. The horizon was unbroken by a single mound, from north round to north again, and it was as level as that of the ocean. My view to the north extended about eight miles; but I did not venture to compass that distance, only perhaps to have overlooked a similar heart-rending and desolate scene. I turned my back, therefore, upon it, and returned to the cart, and the next day pushed on for the water holes, which I reached on the 16th, at sunset, with great difficulty. On coming to this water-hole, I had kept to the left of my former line across the ranges, and I had observed that a creek, which I had been led to believe exhausted itself in the plains to the eastward, did not really do so, but continued, with some promise, to the westward. This creek I desired Flood to examine during my absence, and he now informed me that he thought it worthy my further scrutiny; I therefore left Joseph with the cart, and, taking Mr. Stuart and Flood with me, rode down the creek the first day, to a distance of thirty miles, when we arrived at two large water-holes—at which a number of natives had been only a day or two before—in which but little water now remained; and at these we stopped and slept. The next morning, in tracing the creek

down, we found that at about a mile it spread over an immense flat. With some difficulty we recovered its channel again, and traced it for about eight miles through a narrow but well-wooded valley; its general course having led us somewhat to the southward of west. At eight miles, it appeared suddenly to terminate against an embankment of white clay and sand. There was, however, a gap in this embankment, thus  over which, it immediately struck me, the superfluous waters are carried off. On ascending this embankment, we saw beneath us a beautiful enclosure of about seven miles in circumference, fenced in by this bank. It was studded with fine trees, and covered with grass. By a reference to the chart, our position, as far as I can lay it down from rough bearings, being in lat. $28^{\circ} 6' 30''$, and in long. $140^{\circ} 44'$: His Excellency will observe that we had again entered the province; and it may be worthy of remark, that the richest piece of land we have found has been within its boundaries. It is into this enclosure that the creek falls; and having satisfied myself that it also terminates in it, I rode on to the N. W.; but I was driven back from the want of water, and because neither could my men or horses bear up against the intense heat to which we were exposed. Flood complained that the crown of his head was burning, and the animals drooped as if overcome by extreme drowsiness. I stopped therefore, to take shelter under a hakea bush until the heat of the day should have subsided, and then returned to the water we had left in the morning, and the next day regained the hills. It may give His Excellency some idea of the heat to which we were exposed, when I assure you that I found the thermometer which I had left with Joseph, and which was fixed in the shade of a large tree, four feet from the ground, stationary at 135° of Fahrenheit at half-past two p.m., and that in the direct rays of the sun it rose to 157° . It had, on a former occasion, when Mr. Browne was with me, stood at 132° in the shade, and 153° in the sun.

I returned from this excursion with the full conviction on my mind, that I had twice been within fifty, perhaps thirty, miles of an inland sea. It was, in truth, impossible that such a country

as that into which I had penetrated, from which the very birds of the air shrank away, should continue much further; but whether such really was the case, remains yet to be ascertained.

It may not be necessary for me to detail to His Excellency, for the information of Lord Stanley, the several minor excursions, of from eighty to ninety miles, that I have made to examine the country, and to break our confinement. We have been locked up here as securely as if we had wintered at the Poles, and have remained until we have been deserted by every beast of the field, and by every fowl of the air. We have witnessed migration after migration to that point to which I have ever looked for success; and every observation I have made, and every occurrence that has taken place, has tended to confirm the impressions I had received of the nature and character of the interior. So far, however, from repining at our position, we have only to be thankful to Providence, in that we have been guided to the only spot in these lonely and desolate regions, in which we could have remained with safety.

We have seen very few natives, but our kindness to those few has been such that I had hoped it would have engendered a confidence; but they have not dared to approach us. Aware that there was a general scarcity of water in the country, I could not but think that we were putting them to great inconvenience by occupying so important a post. I had found a large sheet of water at the termination of a large creek near us; and, in hopes that I should have found nearly the whole of the population of these regions assembled there, I rode with Mr. Browne to it, but was disappointed in finding any number of natives; and it was clear that they were dispersed in families, at the different water-holes that remained unexhausted, as the country is too poor to maintain any number of inhabitants in any one place. One family, indeed, came in from the south whilst we were at this water; having been driven in from the failure of their own supplies.

About three weeks ago, a solitary native came to the camp, and remained with us for a week. He was a stranger, from the northward and westward, and spoke a different language to the

natives hereabouts. What led him to wander to the hills it is impossible to say; but it almost appeared as if he had been sent to encourage us. He guessed the use of the boat the moment he saw it, and pointed to the north-west as the quarter in which we should go. He examined the sheep-netting, and putting his head to the meshes, intimated to us by signs that the fish we should find were too large to get through them. He recognised the turtle, the hippocampus, and several sea-fish, figured in Cuvier's Plates, naming them respectively; but he put his fingers on all the others, and gave them a general name. From these facts, His Excellency and the Secretary of State will be enabled to judge of the prospects before us. Putting my observations and these together, I cannot but think that we are within one hundred and fifty or two hundred miles of some remarkable feature; but whether a river or a sea, it is impossible to say.

On my progress up the Darling, I reduced the allowance of flour from ten to eight pounds a-week. In February I reduced it to six pounds, with a corresponding reduction in the other articles of consumption; and in March, I again reduced the flour to five pounds; below which I should be reluctant to go. These measures have left me with a supply to the present date of twenty-six weeks' provisions; but as, in the event of our finding any sea or river, that time—twelve weeks of which would necessarily be occupied in our homeward return—would be too limited to enable me to prosecute any important discovery, I have therefore determined on sending a third of my party back to Adelaide, under the charge of Mr. Poole, whose strength has, I am sorry to say, failed him. I should, under such circumstances, have adopted this plan, however much I might have felt the loss of Mr. Poole's services. This reduction in the number of my party will give me an additional supply of provisions for two months, with which I shall have it in my power to advance into the heart of the interior. I trust that Lord Stanley will approve this step: it will only put the Government to the expense of wages for nine men, not including the officers, for the period we may stay out over and above the year. I could not bring myself to abandon the enterprise in so advanced and prosperous a stage; and I have been

influenced both by a sense of duty, and an anxious desire to push my investigations to the utmost, in the measures I have adopted.

The chart I have forwarded to the Secretary of State is a rough chart of our course, in which I should wish it to be understood, that I have not definitively laid down my positions; an operation I shall not be able satisfactorily to do, until my return to Adelaide. I forward the present sketch as an approximation only to the truth, that the Right Hon. the Secretary of State may be aware of the position we occupy, to within a few miles; and I am happy to think that into a more favourable position we could not have fallen, as the first rains that fall will enable me to move up at once between eighty and ninety miles to the north-west, when I shall have Lake Torrens close upon my lee, and the wide expanse of the interior before me.

When I left Moorundee, I took a black boy, attached to Mr. Eyre, on the strength of my party, who has had charge of the sheep, and who has taken the utmost care of them; insomuch that we have not lost one. As he will return with Mr. Poole, I shall feel obliged if His Excellency will sanction such reward to him, in the shape of clothing and implements, as he may think he deserves. I have also to call His Excellency's attention to the two natives who accompanied me up the Darling, Nadbuck and Loonda. Both were of infinite service to me; and it is probable they will now escort Mr. Poole down the river, and that I shall again have occasion for their services on my return. I have therefore to beg that they may be rewarded with a suit of warm clothing, and with such implements as they most value, and that the amount may be charged against the funds of the expedition; and I would beg to refer His Excellency to Mr. Poole, who is aware of the wants of the natives, and who would point out what would be most useful to them.

I am happy to state that the men are all in good health, that they have been attentive to their duties, and that they are justly entitled to my praise.

To Mr. Stuart I am indebted for the great attention he pays to his duties, and for the general assistance he affords me.

Mr. Piesse, my storekeeper, has been exceedingly careful with the provisions, and to him I owe the perfect order in which they are. I believe, indeed, that I cannot say more for the general good conduct of the party, than by stating that we have not had an accident or a casualty attributable to the neglect of the men.

I have already informed you that, about the end of January, both my officers and myself were attacked with scurvy. The symptoms did not increase either on me or on Mr. Browne, although they have not abated; but in Mr. Poole's case they became exceedingly aggravated. He became daily worse and worse; the disease settled in his principal muscles; his skin turned black, and he at length lost the use of his limbs. He took to his couch on the 26th of April, and has not since risen from it. Both Mr. Browne and myself were at one time much alarmed about him; but I am happy to say that he has rallied, and that his general health is improving, although his limbs still refuse their office.

To Mr. Poole I am indebted for the most active co-operation at all times, and for an anxiety for the success of the expedition, which has been infinitely to his credit; whilst he has carried on his professional duties with an exactness and accuracy that entitle him to my best thanks. It will therefore be with extreme regret that I shall witness his departure, and in the sincere hope that he will speedily recover from a malady to which his zeal alone has subjected him.

To Mr. Browne, I feel indebted for his great attention to the health of the men, as the medical officer of the expedition; and for the cheerful assistance he gives me in every department in which he can make himself useful.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

CHARLES STURT.

To the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

SIR,—It is my painful duty to announce to you, for His Excellency's information, the death of Mr. James Poole; which sad

event took place on the 14th instant, between two and three o'clock.

Mr. Poole had commenced his journey the day before, as I have already notified to you, with every prospect of amendment before him.

Although weak, he had shaken off his original disease, and had for some time been rallying—and it appeared that a change of diet was all that was necessary to his perfect restoration to health, so that his return was no less necessary to himself than to the public service.

Mr. Browne, who has watched over him for the last three months, with the most unremitting care and attention, accompanied him for the first day, and returned to me on the 15th, with every expectation that he would gradually improve, as he proceeded homewards; but, in the afternoon, the lad who attended him returned to us with the unexpected intelligence that he had suddenly expired, almost without a struggle, between two and three o'clock the same day.

I rode back to the party this morning, with Mr. Browne, who seems to entertain no doubt that Mr. Poole's sudden death was caused by internal hæmorrhage.

This unhappy event will detain me a day or two, as it is my wish to inter his remains at the depôt. It will be a consolation to Mr. Poole's friends to know that every thing was done for him that could be done. Nothing could exceed Mr. Browne's attention to him from first to last; and there can be no doubt Mr. Poole would have recovered, under his judicious treatment, if he had not been taken off by a stroke against which no human skill could guard.

It appearing indispensable to me that the party should still proceed, I have given the charge of it to Mr. Piesse, my storekeeper, with whom I part with regret, for he has been of the most essential service to me, and has merited my best recommendations as a most conscientious and rigid person, and I would therefore very respectfully recommend him to His Excellency's notice.

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In consequence of the sad event I have notified to you, it re-

mains for me to request that you will express to the Governor the obligations I shall feel under, if His Excellency will give such instructions, in reference to the forwarding of the supplies, as he may consider necessary.

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I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

CHARLES STURT.

To the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF
LONDON.

March 26, 1844.

Mr. GOULD exhibited a series of Birds from Australia, collected partly by himself and partly by Mr. Gilbert, viz. :—

Fam. COLUMBIDÆ.

GEOPHELIA PLACIDA. *Geop. facie et gutture cinereis ; occipite, dorso alisque e cinereo-fuscis ; singulis plumis ad apicem nigerrimo fasciatis, alulis spuris primariisque saturatè fuscis, humeris subtùs castaneis, pectore, lateribus, et nuchâ cinereis lineis angustis nigris crebrè fasciatis, et lateribus vinaceis.*

Face and throat grey ; occiput, back and wings ashy brown ; each feather with a band of deep velvety black at the extremity ; spurious wings and primaries dark brown ; under surface of the shoulders chestnut ; chest, sides, and back of the neck grey, crossed by numerous narrow bands of black ; abdomen and flanks vinous ; four centre tail-feathers ashy brown, the remainder black, largely tipped with white ; irides light ash-grey ; bill and orbits bright greyish blue, becoming much paler before and behind the eye ; frontal scales of tarsi and feet dark greenish grey ; remainder of the legs and feet reddish flesh-colour.

Total length, $7\frac{3}{8}$ inches ; bill $\frac{5}{8}$; wing, $3\frac{7}{8}$; tail, $3\frac{5}{8}$; tarsi, $\frac{5}{8}$.

Hab. Port Essington.

This and the next species are very nearly allied, but on comparison of numerous individuals I find that size invariably points out the locality from which they have been procured; the larger bird (*G. tranquilla*) being an inhabitant of the interior of New South Wales, and the smaller (*G. placida*) of the north coast; besides which, the bands crossing the chest are broader and more distinct in the latter than in the former.

GEOPELIA TRANQUILLA. *Geop. facie et gutture pallidè cinereis, occipite dorso alisque e cinereo-fuscis, singulis plumis ad apicem angustè nigerrimo fasciatis; alulis spuris, primariisque saturatè fuscis, pectore, lateribus, et nuchâ pallidè cinereis, lineis angustis nigris crebrè notatis, abdomine et lateribus pallidè vinaceis, abdomine medio crissoque albis; humeris subtùs castaneis.*

Face and throat pale grey; occiput, back and wings ash brown, each feather bounded at the end with a narrow band of deep velvety black; spurious wing and primaries dark brown; chest, sides and back of the neck pale grey, crossed by numerous narrow, irregular bands of black; abdomen and flanks pale vinous; centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts white; under surface of the shoulder deep chesnut; four centre tail-feathers greyish brown, passing into black at the tip; the lateral tail-feathers black, largely tipped with white; irides transparent bluish white; base of bill and nostrils light blue; tip of the bill bluish black; naked skin of the orbits deeply wrinkled and of a beautiful light greenish blue; frontal scales of the tarsi and toes dark purple; hind part of the legs flesh-colour.

Total length, $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches; bill, $\frac{5}{8}$; wing, 4; tail, $4\frac{3}{4}$; tarsi, $\frac{5}{8}$.

Hab. Liverpool Plains and banks of the Namoi, interior of New South Wales.

Family RALLIDÆ.

Genus EULABEORNIS.

Gen. char.—*Rostrum* capite longius, ferè rectum, et leviter incurvum, lateraliter compressum; naribus elongatis, apertis,

singulis in sinu per mandibulæ tres ferè partes a basi excurrente positis. *Alæ* paulò breves atque debiles, valdè rotundatæ; tertiariis elongatis, ferè ad apicem *alæ*. *Tarsi* paulò longi, et robustiores quàm in genere 'Rallus;' digitis attamen brevioribus. *Cauda* longa, cuneiformis, pogoniis laxis et effusis.

EULABEORNIS CASTANEOVENTRIS *Eul. capite et collo cinereis; corpore superiore in toto olivaceo; pectore et corpore inferiore e cinereo-castaneis.*

Head and neck ash-grey; all the upper surface, wings and tail olive; breast and all the under surface greyish chestnut; bill yellow at the base, horn-colour at the tip; legs and feet brown.

Total length, 19 inches; bill, $2\frac{1}{4}$; wing, $9\frac{1}{2}$; tail, 6; tarsi, $2\frac{1}{2}$.

Hab. North coast of Australia.

The "Morduggera" of the aborigines at Port Essington.

Family PROCELLARIDÆ.

PUFFINUS CARNEIPES. *Puff. castaneo-niger; rostro e carneo albo, culmine apiceque fuscis; pedibus flavescenti-carneis.*

All the plumage chocolate-black; bill fleshy-white; culmen and tips of the mandibles brown; legs, feet and membranes yellowish flesh-colour.

Total length, 15 inches; bill, $1\frac{3}{4}$; wing, 12; tail, 5; tarsi, 2; middle toe and nail, $2\frac{1}{2}$.

PROCELLARIA SOLANDRI. *Proc. capite, nuchâ, humeris, primariis et caudâ saturatè fuscis; dorso, alarum caudæque tectricibus e plumbeo-cinereis, plumis fusco marginatis; facie, corporeque subtùs fuscis, abdomine cinereo lavato.*

Head, back of the neck, shoulders, primaries and tail dark brown; back, wing-coverts and upper tail-coverts slate-grey, each feather margined with dark brown; face and all the under surface brown, washed with grey on the abdomen; bill, tarsi and membranes black.

Total length, 16 inches; bill, $1\frac{3}{4}$; wing, 12; tail, $5\frac{1}{2}$; tarsi, $\frac{3}{4}$; middle toe and nail, $2\frac{3}{8}$.