

towards Sydney, Kangaroo Island was inspected, and from here Flinders observed Mount Lofty and Mount Barker, and it was this discovery which ultimately led to South Australia being populated. March 23 next would be the centenary of this discovery, and it would be most fitting if some demonstration were arranged which would adequately celebrate the event. The party afterwards sailed up the Gulf of St. Vincent, returning through Backstairs Passage, and when just opposite what was now known as "The Bluff" a French vessel was met with and the officer in command was interviewed. From thence Flinders went on to Port Phillip, after examining which he returned to Sydney. His next voyage was up to the north of Australia, going over and adding important features to Captain Cook's work. At Timor it was discovered that the Investigator was in a very unsafe condition, and Flinders had to return to Sydney, which he did, however, by way of West Australia. On arrival he laid the matter before the Governor, who gave him three small ships in which to continue his explorations. Two of these, however, were lost on the Barrier Reef, and again Flinders had to return to Sydney. He was now given the *Cumberland* (29 tons), and he at once set out for England to have his charts published. He was forced to put in at Mauritius for supplies, and, owing to hostilities existing between the British and French nations, he was imprisoned by the authorities, who also took possession of his books and charts; thus it was that Australia was transmogrified into a French colony, the "navigators" substituting French names for the English ones allotted by Flinders. After about six years he was suddenly released, and on arrival at Cape Colony he gave information which resulted in Mauritius being captured in 1809. In connection with that event it was interesting to know that Sir John Hindmarsh, afterwards Governor of South Australia, was one of those in command. On arrival in England Flinders wrote his well-known journal on his travels. It was also worthy of notice that he was the first man who discovered how to make the compass fairly reliable by encircling it with a band of iron. Flinders' name, said Mr. SUTHERLAND in concluding a highly instructive address, certainly reflected lustre on the nation to which he belonged, and he trusted that the memory of the man who had done so much towards exploring the coast of South Australia would in future be better treated in this state than it had been in the past.

To-night Mr. Sutherland will conclude the course of lectures by speaking on the explorations of Sturt and Stuart, while he will also have something to say concerning Captain Barker, after whom our township was named.

It was regarded by some as being rather peculiar that Captain Sturt's name was put down as Sir Charles Sturt; but the explanation was that the brave explorer died just at the time when it had been decided to honor him with knighthood, and although he never enjoyed the title still his wife was afterwards Lady Sturt. Sturt came to Sydney in 1826 in charge of a number of soldiers on board a ship which brought out a large contingent of convicts. Soon after arrival Sturt undertook explorations. His first journey was over ground before covered by Major Mitchell and John Oxley (Surveyor-General of New South Wales). Both those explorers, having partly traced the River Lachlan, were of the opinion that the stream ran into an inland sea, which conviction was materially strengthened by the dismal, swampy country which compelled them to abandon a complete inspection of the river. Sturt also held the opinion that there was a large inland sea on the other side of these swamps. Sturt's next expedition (in 1828) was more ambitious than the first, for he set out with bullock drays and also took materials for the construction of boats in case it should be found necessary to call them into use. He followed up the Macquarie River until he came to Mount Harris, where he established a provision depot. He was sorry for this action afterwards, however, as the natives came round and made serious trouble, and the explorer afterwards made it a point never to allow a party to stay long in one place, for sooner or later the natives were sure to make an attack. He followed the river up until it ran into marshes, and these, he thought, must border on the suspected inland sea. He now struck out westward and came upon a large river, the existence of which had never been dreamed of. This was really the discovery of the fact that Australia had a great inland water system and which led to other extensive discoveries later. This river was the Darling (called after Governor Darling), but on Sturt tasting the water he found it to be quite salt, and surely enough he thought that there must be a sea close at hand. It was a remarkable fact, however, that even to-day the Darling was salt in a certain place in summer, the explanation of which was that the salt springs in the dry months well up and make the river water very brackish. A little further down the waterway the party came upon a village of huts. They saw no natives, however, save one old man, who brought a little boy who bore the disfigurement which follows an attack of smallpox. One of the huts contained a number of white balls, and was regarded by the natives as possessing magic powers over the disease. Sturt gathered that between 1800 and 1830 smallpox had worked great slaughter amongst the natives, and the fact that he was powerless to help those then afflicted so impressed him that from thenceforward he showed great sympathy and kindness to the blacks. Provisions were now becoming short, so the party (who had reached Fort Bourke) decided to return to Sydney. In his third expedition Sturt again took bullock drays to carry the provisions, while he also secured a whale-boat so as to be able to follow up the stream if the country was not favorable for travelling with the bullocks, and it was with that boat that the party examined the whole of the main features of the rivers encountered. On reaching the Murrumbidgee the party formed a depot, and here they put their boat together and also made a raft on which to take their provisions. Seven or eight days after they had launched out on the Murrumbidgee they discovered the joining of the Lachlan, while still further on they came upon a much larger river. They decided to go against stream here to see if this was the great waterway which they had struck on the previous expedition, but after going up a little way they found that the river was spanned from side to side by a large net. At the same time they found that there were numbers of natives on either side of them, who gesticulated that they should proceed no further nor interfere with the net. Sturt thought that trouble was at hand, but later perceived that, the season having been bad, the net was stretched across to prevent the fish from going down stream. They therefore decided to leave that part of the Darling unexplored and turned round to go back, at the same time giving three hearty cheers for the natives, who took up the shouting with apparent pleasure and goodwill. After proceeding further down the stream they observed another lot of natives in front of them; these really meant to make an attack. As they neared them they also found that the stream was studded thickly with sandbanks, which were showing above the water. Mr. George Macleay (one of the party, the well-known naturalist) had previously proved his usefulness in amusing the natives and thereby making them friendly disposed, but Sturt foresaw trouble very plainly here. All at once the blacks, armed with boomerangs and spears, hopped from one to the other of the sandbanks in the river and prepared for attack. Sturt levelled his musket and took deadly aim, intending not to run too great a risk, yet not wishing to kill any of the blacks. Just at this moment his eye was attracted by three other natives who had evidently been following in the rear and were running helter-skelter along the bank. When opposite the sandbanks they jumped into the water, and the foremost at once commenced capsizing those who had taken up positions across the stream, and thus it was that further trouble was averted. The party recognized this man to be one whom Mr. Macleay had previously amused and presented with some trinkets, and he had now shown his true friendship. Sturt and party proceeded on their way fully expecting that the river would empty itself into the Gulf of St. Vincent. It took 23 days from the date of embarking for them to reach the sandbank across the mouth of the Murray. Provisions were now getting very low, so the return journey was commenced. The short rations and the great exertion were telling on the

party, and the gallant Captain Sturt and Mr. Macleay each took their turn at the oars. After 15 or 16 days' sailing one of the crew went quite out of his mind as a result of the exertion (but afterwards recovered), while on arrival at the point from which they set out on the Murrumbidgee the party were in a very bad state, some of them being so weak that they could not get out of the boat. Two of the brave

fellows, however, decided to try to reach a station and secure help, and after toiling for two days they succeeded in making the place. A dray with provisions set out at once and arrived just in time to save the other members of the party. Poor Sturt suffered very greatly as a result of the hardships which he had undergone, almost losing his eyesight—a calamity which ultimately befel him. After Sturt's maps had been issued it was found that the mountain which he marked to the east of the River Murray did not exactly correspond with the position in which Flinders had stated Mount Lofty to be, but was several miles farther to the east. Flinders was noted for his careful observation, and the Governor of New South Wales was not satisfied with the decision arrived at by Sturt, who did not take full observation, but merely thought the elevation to be Mount Lofty. The Governor, therefore, ordered Captain Barker, who was stationed at King George's Sound, to proceed to Sydney and on the way to make a thorough examination of the country in question.

Captain Barker, said Mr. SUTHERLAND, had previously been stationed at Raffles Bay (on the north-west coast of West Australia) in charge of a band of soldiers and a number of convicts, the custom of the British Government at that period being to occupy any point of vantage which might, if left unoccupied, be taken up by the French. From Raffles Bay Captain Barker was transferred to King George's Sound. In 1831, therefore, he was instructed to bring those under his charge around to Sydney. They sailed in the *Isabella*, and the captain and a small party landed in either what was now known as the Port River or else at Port Willunga. They followed up the range of mountains until they found a deep gorge (apparently Waterfall Gully). On going to the top of the range and looking in a southerly direction they saw another mountain. Captain Barker proceeded to this elevation, where he found that the view obtainable was immensely superior to that to be had from Mount Lofty, as beyond was much flat country and the Murray River. This corrected the error made by Sturt. The subsequent experience of Captain Barker was most tragic. The party of five (two soldiers, Mr. Kent, Dr. Davis, and the captain) proceeded to the Murray mouth, where the leader asked if any of them could swim across to the sandhill on the other side; none of them being able to do so the captain stripped, securely fastened his instruments on his head, and set out by himself to take some observations. The party saw him ascend the hill and disappear over the eminence—and that was the last they saw of him. They heard a noise as of natives singing war songs, and, as he did not return, feared that their leader had been slain. On the following morning they prepared to try to solve the mystery, and, meeting with a black woman from Kangaroo Island, learned to their great sorrow that the natives had killed Captain Barker and had thrown his body into the water where there was a strong current, so that it was carried out to sea and was never again heard of. Thus it was that on their arrival in Sydney Captain Sturt changed the name of the mountain which he had seen to Mount Barker.

Again referring to Captain Sturt, the LECTURER stated that in 1838 or 1839 Sturt was transferred to Adelaide, where, amongst other offices, he was appointed Surveyor-General. His failing eyesight necessitated his resigning these positions, however, and in 1843 he started out on a long expedition to try to find the inland sea which he still believed existed somewhere in the interior. The party again took bullock-drays, and also about 200 sheep, and made straight for the Darling, where they established a depot—Cawndilla Station. They employed two or three natives, but one of these lost heart after travelling some distance and returned. When the party reached the Barrier Ranges they experienced heavy rains and had to camp, thus forming what was afterwards known as Depot Glen, and which was retained more or less throughout the whole expedition. Soon after the ground had dried sufficiently for them to proceed a dreadful drought set in and they had to fall back on their base for about six months because there was no water after travelling a few miles. The temperature went up to an alarming height—over 127 degrees. Sturt, in testing the heat one day, placed his thermometer (which only registered to 127 degrees) in the hollow of a tree, and when he went to consult it he found that it had burst, showing that the heat was too great for it. The party suffered greatly—their finger-nails became brittle, and their provisions were like bone. Mr. Pool (second in command) fell ill with the scurvy, and there were no proper means at hand of treating the disease. His comrades dug a hole and placed the sufferer in it, fixing bags above to try to ensure a cool habitation for him, but he grew worse. They decided to put him in one of the drays and to try to get him back to the Darling, but the extreme heat caused his death, and a pyramid of stones on Mount Pool now marked his resting-place. At last the weather broke, and Sturt, still anxious to get to the centre of Australia, pushed onward in a north-westerly direction. They arrived at the Great Stony Desert—a terrible place, consisting of nothing but a sheet of stone for an area of hundreds and hundreds of square miles—and then they were forced to give up thoughts of going any further and started to return. They had no water now, and the whole party seemed doomed to a terrible

AUSTRALIAN EXPLORERS.

At the Mount Barker Institute on Friday evening Mr. G. Sutherland, M.A., concluded his lectures on "Three Australian Explorers: Flinders, Sturt, and Stuart." There was a fair attendance, and Mr. A. C. Daw, J.P. (president of the institute) occupied the chair.

At the lecture a week previously Mr. Sutherland spoke on "Flinders," and on Friday evening he opened his remarks with a further reference to the copper tablet which Flinders erected at Memory Cove after the loss by drowning of Mr. Thistle (one of the ship's crew). One portion of the tablet was discovered in a euphorbia at Port Lincoln and another in the scrub, but the greater part of it had not yet been recovered. The inscription, however, had been surmised from the portions of the plate found, and a facsimile of the tablet was handed round for inspection.

Mr. SUTHERLAND introduced his lecture on "Sturt and Stuart," by stating that after Flinders had returned to England from Mauritius there was a strange interval of about a quarter of a century before any further exploration of Australia took place. The wars with Napoleon ended in 1815, and they left England almost exhausted, while France was in even a worse condition than her adversary. Indeed so disinterested did the English Government seem in their newly-acquired territory in the Indian Ocean that Lord Liverpool suggested that England should give back to France Mauritius and Reunion Island, because Britain did not want any more land in the West Indies; which was, as they all knew, a grave error of geography. It was particularly interesting to notice that Captain Sturt fought right through the war against Napoleon. He was a lieutenant in the 39th Regiment (Dorsetshires) in the Army under Lord Beresford and afterwards under Lord Wellington. Then again, also, it was especially interesting to Mount Barker to know that Captain Barker (after whom the township was named) had joined the same regiment in 1805—just at the very darkest period in the Peninsular War; in one engagement some 5000 men were slain in four hours! It was, indeed a desperate school in which Sturt and Barker had been brought up, and that probably was why they did not fear danger in after life. Sturt had spent five or six years fighting in Spain, and had followed Wellington right over the Pyrenees, and got in at the Battle of Waterloo. He was with the first regiment ordered to go into Paris, and Captain Sturt was the very officer who had the proud honor of hoisting the British ensign showing that the British had captured the city. These facts showed how the history of Australia was linked with the history of England at a very critical time.