domestic. It is, like all the other wild creatures, fast disap­pearing before the progress of cultivation. The “ gigantic crane,” or “ native companion,” is a stately bird, about six feet high, of a pale ash colour, with a reddish tinge on the head. It is gregarious and carnivorous, and haunts the borders of rivers and lakes, where also the black swan is found. The bustard, or native turkey, is a large bird, weighing from fifteen to eighteen pounds, and is good eat­ing. Eagles and hawks are to be found in all their va­rieties. Some are white and very large ; the eagle-hawk measures nine feet from wing to wing, and is feathered to the toes. There are about thirty varieties of the pigeon ; and the parrot species is in boundless variety, and of the most brilliant plumage. The cockatoos are easily domes­ticated, and taught to imitate sounds. Some of them are of a milk-white ; others black, richly variegated on the tail with red, and adorned with superb crests. The *lories,* green, red, crimson, and purple, are in great variety ; and there are numerous birds not yet described by naturalists. The *spotted grosbeak* is of a light slate colour above, bill and tail deep crimson, throat black, and the sides are marked with snow-spots on the dark ground. The rifle-bird is nearly the size of a jay, its bill long and sickle-shaped, and colour a rich dark green, like velvet. The *ring oriole* is of a golden yellow and the deepest black, the feathers on the head resembling the softest velvet. The doves, in variety and beauty of plumage, surpass those in any other part of the world. The spur-winged plover is noted for a large spur upon the shoulder of each wing, with which it fights fiercely. There are two kinds of pheasants, and three of magpies. The common crow and the swallow are everywhere to be found ; also the Australian sparrow, with varied plumage, in which a scarlet tinge is intermixed ; the *butcher-bird,* or *laughing jackass,* which destroys snakes and other reptiles, so called from the resemblance of its note to a coarse and boisterous laugh ; *the coach-whip,* a small bird, whose note resembles the crack of a short whip. Snipes, quails, king-fishers, and coots are abundant; also honey-suckers, woodpeckers, toucans, fly-catchers, warblers, cuckoos, and various species of small birds. Here are likewise to be found the pelican, penguin, goose, duck, teal, widgeon, fri­gate-bird, noddy, peterel, gull, and other sea-birds.@@1

Insects are numerous, and of every variety. Locusts are common in some parts of the colony. The butterflies are neither abundant nor beautiful. Of bees there are three kinds, all without stings. The flies are a great nui­sance in summer, particularly one species, which taints and putrefies every thing it touches. The mosquitoes are dis­appearing with the progress of civilization. The spiders are very large ; and caterpillars, at intervals of several years, swarm in incredible numbers, blighting in a few hours the finest fields of wheat. Measures have been taken to stop the ravages of this mischievous creature. Whence they come in such myriads, and almost in a single night, is un­known.

Reptiles are not at all in such numbers as they are in general in marshy countries. There are several varie­ties of the snake, some of them poisonous, namely, the *deaf adder,* which resembles the puff adder of America. It is thick, short, swelling out in the middle, with a flat head, and a cleft tail which opens and shuts like a for­ceps ; its back is beautifully variegated with rows of red and white specks ; and when irritated it seizes a stick as tena­ciously as a cur dog. The diamond snake, which grows to the length of twelve or fifteen feet, is not poisonous. There is a small hazel-coloured snake, with two little flaps at its sides like fins ; it darts along with great rapidity, and is termed the winged snake. Mr Martin saw a ser­pent at Paramatta, resembling the boa constrictor, fourteen feet long ; its coat of a bright hue, but changing as the animal became irritated. Several water-snakes have been found, and at a considerable distance from the land. Scor­pions, centipedes, tarantulas, and frogs are found. Lizards are numerous, but without the varied hues of those in the east. The guana is also found, of a dirty brown colour, and about four feet in length.

Fish are plentiful along the coasts ; but they are not so plentiful in the rivers, especially in those in the eastern de­clivity of the Blue Mountains, owing to the rapidity of the currents. The fish called the *cod-fish,* though not the same as that known in Europe, is taken in the fresh-water rivers west of the Blue Mountains, in great quantities, of a large size, some weighing seventy pounds, and thirty pounds being very common. They are of a fine flavour ; as are also the eels, which are caught of the weight of twelve or even twenty pounds. Perch, covered with scales and prickly fins, abound in the rivers on the eastern coast. In flavour and juiciness they resemble a sole. There are many varieties of other fish, with which the markets are well sup­plied ; and of late sharks have been caught in Sydney Cove. Shell-fish are abundant. Fresh-water mussels have been found at Bathurst six inches long and three and a half broad, and shrimps are in great numbers. Oysters are found in great abundance around the Australian shores ; every rock is covered with them ; and though generally small, they are of a delicate flavour.

The country of New South Wales having been hitherto but imperfectly explored, its geology cannot be fully known. The line of coast, where the nature of the country has been chiefly ascertained, presents in its general aspect bold perpendicular cliffs of sandstone lying in horizontal strata, and interrupted occasionally by sandy beaches, behind which the country is low and flat. From the sea-coast to the river Nepean on the west, the sandstone seems to spread like a level platform ; and although the country rises into hills and ridges, these seem to consist of a mass of clay, worn into inequalities on the surface by the action of the water, which accounts for the singular fact that the tops of the hills, which contain most of the original clay, are gene­rally more fertile than the valleys, unless they contain allu­vial deposits. Westward, or beyond Nepean river, the sandstone strata are forced upwards, and extend from north to south, forming the lofty ridge of the Blue Mountains. Towards the south the sandstone gives place in many parts to whinstone. On advancing farther to the south and west, granite and limestone are abundant, perforated in all di­rections with extensive subterraneous caverns, exactly re­sembling, in stalactitic decoration, those found in Europe and America. To the north-westward of Sydney occurs a fine limestone formation, which passes in some parts into a beautiful close-grained marble, affording materials to seve­ral skilful artisans in Sydney. In several other places other varieties of minerals are to be found. Hunter’s river flows for a considerable distance over rocks of jasper, and beau­tiful agates, opal, and chalcedony ; while innumerable pe­trifactions are found on its banks. Cornelian and agate have been found near the burning mountain of Wingen ; some of the specimens crested with copper, and others pre­senting a beautiful auriferous appearance. For a more particular account of the mineralogy of New South Wales, the reader is referred to the work of Mr Montgomery Mar­tin, which abounds in the most important information. We may add, however, respecting the coal formation, that this valuable mineral is found in several districts, especi­ally in the country to the south of Hunter’s river, about sixty miles north of Port Jackson, which is an extensive

@@@, See History of Australasia, by Montgomery Martin, chap. iv.