

kept by an old soldier: and it reminded me of the small inns in North Wales.

18th.—Very early in the morning, I walked about three miles to see Govett's Leap: a view of a similar character with that near the Weatherboard, but perhaps even more stupendous. So early in the day the gulf was filled with a thin blue haze, which, although destroying the general effect of the view, added to the apparent depth at which the forest was stretched out beneath our feet. These valleys, which so long presented an insuperable barrier to the attempts of the most enterprising of the colonists to reach the interior, are most remarkable. Great arm-like bays, expanding at their upper ends, often branch from the main valleys and penetrate the sandstone platform; on the other hand, the platform often sends promontories into the valleys, and even leaves in them great, almost insulated, masses. To descend into some of these valleys it is necessary to go round twenty miles; and into others the surveyors have only lately penetrated, and the colonists have not yet been able to drive in their cattle. But the most remarkable feature in their structure is that, although several miles wide at their heads, they generally contract toward their mouths to such a degree as to become impassable. The Surveyor-General, Sir. T. Mitchell,¹ endeavored in vain, first walking and then by crawling between the great fallen fragments of sandstone, to ascend through the gorge by which the river Grose joins the Nepean; yet the valley of the Grose in its upper part, as I saw, forms a magnificent level basin some miles in width, and is on all sides surrounded by cliffs, the summits of which are believed to be nowhere less than 3,000 feet above the level of the sea. When cattle are driven into the valley of the Wolgan by a path (which I descended), partly natural and partly made by the owner of the land, they cannot escape; for this valley is in every other part surrounded by perpendicular cliffs,

¹ Travels in Australia, vol. i. p. 154. I must express my obligation to Sir T. Mitchell for several interesting personal communications on the subject of these great valleys of New South Wales.