

may be questionable whether, when this source of labour fails, the price will be a remunerating one.

The flocks of sheep kept near Wellington are pastured beyond the legal limits, which is a meridian line, in the neighbourhood of that place. Beyond this line the government refuses to make any grants of land; but any respectable inhabitant, on the payment of ten pounds, may obtain a license to pasture his flocks beyond this artificial boundary.

Each flock consists of from five hundred to a thousand sheep, and is under the care of a single shepherd. There are usually two flocks to each station, where a servant is employed as hut-keeper. The cost of these when convicts, is no more than their food and clothing, which is, however, rendered greater than would at first seem probable, by the necessity of bringing even flour from Sydney.

The land and labour may, however, be put down at an expense merely nominal, for the increase of the flocks at present more than counterbalances this item; but this advantage will cease when the assigned convicts are withdrawn from the colony; the wages of a hired servant will then amount to from seventeen to twenty pounds a year, exclusive of his clothing and food.

The cost of a sheep varies much in different parts of the colony; the average price is from three shillings to one pound, so that the outlay for the smallest flock would be from seventy-five to five hundred pounds. Comparing this with the price of wool, (eighteen pence per pound,) an estimate may be formed of the probable profits.

The climate seems peculiarly well adapted to a fine-woolled sheep, and it is calculated that the flocks double themselves in three or four years. In 1807, the quantity of wool exported was not more than two hundred and forty-five pounds, in 1838 and 1839 it exceeded five millions of pounds. With these facts, the rapid accumulation of fortunes in New South Wales will no longer be a mystery.

It is said that the owners of stock have already pushed their stations one hundred and twenty miles beyond the boundary, and the only impediment to their farther extension seems to be the scarcity of water, of which the more remote country is almost destitute.

The country about Wellington becomes almost impassable during heavy rains, for the waters are then so much swelled as to put a stop to travelling. Mr. Hale was detained a week from this cause; and at Wellington, the Macquarie, which was before only a string of pools, became a large river, flowing with a rapid current; yet at a distance of twenty miles farther down, it had ceased to flow, thus exhibiting the phenomenon of a large stream losing itself. This remarkable cir-