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AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION

BY RALPH W. GOSSET.

One of the most noted chapters in the History of Australia, will, (when all the Colonies have decided) be Federation. When this takes place Australia will be one of the largest Commonwealths in the world. A Commonwealth means a political community organised and united for the purposes of self government. The term "Dominion of Australia" or "United States of Australia," might with equal propriety, have been selected, but as the name "Commonwealth" was selected by the Convention of 1891, on the recommendation of Sir Henry Parkes, it has been generally accepted as sufficiently comprehensive and appropriate to designate the coming "Federal Union of Australia." Australia consists of six Colonies, viz: New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. When the Federal Bill was put to the vote in the Colonies of Victoria, Tasmania, Western and South Australia it was readily accepted; and on the 20th June last the people of New South Wales by a majority of 24,000 votes have also decided in its favor. Queensland is now the last of the six Colonies to agree to the Federal Bill. The Government of this place have already passed the "Enabling Act" and will therefore very shortly submit it to the people, and by whom its acceptance is considered certain.

It is anticipated that—if all goes well the first "Federal Parliament" will meet on January 1st, 1901, otherwise about the beginning of the twentieth Century. At the beginning of the present Century New South Wales comprised the whole of the territory now consisting of and form-

ing the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and Queensland.

In the large bay in the south of the present colony of Victoria, in 1835 a settlement called Port Philip was started. The population in and around this Settlement increased so rapidly that the inhabitants in the year 1849 separated from N. S. W. and their new Colony was called Victoria. Their first lot of postage stamps was issued in January 1850; at this date also the mother Colony of N. S. W. issued her first adhesive postage stamps. The final separation of Victoria from its parent Colony was effected on 1st July, 1851.

About the Year 1845 the territory north of the present Colony of N. S. W. was thrown open for selection. The inhabitants of this district also increased to a great extent and on 10th December, 1859, the country north of Point Danger was separated from N. S. W. and declared into a separate Colony by the name of Queensland. The postage stamps of this Colony first appeared on 1st November, 1860.

Tasmania (which was separated from N. S. W. and made a Crown Colony in 1825) issued its first postage stamps in November 1853. Tasmania was originally called Van Diemens Land which name is on the earliest of its stamps. In the Year 1855 an Act was passed changing the name of the Island to its present title, Tasmania, in honor of its discover; however the stamps bearing the name of Van Diemen's Land (the 1st 2nd and 4th) were used up to 1870.

(To be continued.)