

British ensign on Sydney Cove—the present site of Sydney, the busy metropolis and capital of the Colony—a city “as large as Edinburgh and even more beautiful.” From this “humble and inauspicious root”—a small penal settlement—the Colony of New South Wales and the Australian Empire had their origin, for New South Wales may be said to be the mother of the other Australian colonies.

Victoria, though the smallest, is the most populous and prosperous of the Colonies at the present time. It is about one-seventh smaller than the Province of Ontario, whereas New South Wales is more than three times the size of Ontario.

The Colony of Queensland, the youngest but by no means the least prosperous, is considerably more than twice the size of New South Wales, and



CIVILIZED ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA.

more than four times larger than France; while the Colony of South Australia—a vast belt of territory extending across the continent from south to north, and which might be better called Central Australia—is nearly *half as large again* as Queensland.

A glance at the map will show you that the territory at present assigned to Western Australia—an immense expanse of country, the bulk of which as yet remains untrodden by the foot of man—comprises about one-third of the entire continent.

Such, then, is the extent and distribution of territory. Of its prominent geographical features the map will give you a clue. A system of mountain chains runs up and down the eastern coast. In the south of South Australia is another mountainous district, and there are also ranges on the west coast. Located as it is, partly in the tropical and partly in the temperate zones, it has the advantages and vegetation of each. It would be folly to attempt to enumerate the resources of this truly great country, for it has all the resources of a great continent. The one great draw-back to a more rapid progress is the insufficiency and uncertainty of its water supply. Rivers there are but few, and much of the time they are dried up. Rain may fall abundantly for a few seasons, and again, in the interior, there may be two years together with little or no rain. These great droughts bring disaster to man and beast, and many a “squatter” has lost almost his entire flock or herd in a single season. Out of 100,000 sheep one farmer I heard of lost 95,000 during one of these droughts.

Such catastrophes, however, are now largely averted by not over-stocking “the run” and by storing the water during a plentiful fall in artificial ponds and wells. Artesian wells have also been

bored in various parts with the greatest success and revealed the fact that “under-ground rivers” exist; these wells will, therefore, go a long way towards getting over the scarcity of water, and are a great boon to the interior country. Plenty of rain falls along the coast, and there the land is most fertile in both east and west, but as the interior is approached the fall lessens; where a piece of land or “run” will sustain three sheep to the acre along the coast, it would not be safe to put more than one sheep to three acres in the interior.

Sheep raising is the great national industry in Australia and Australian wool is famous the world over and makes the finest woollens. At the present time it is said to possess over one hundred million of sheep. The mind cannot grasp such enormous figures, so let us form these sheep into an imaginary

procession; we will place them two and two and allow four feet to each pair—just room for them to travel nicely. This great procession of sheep would then extend over *once and a half times round the globe*, and supposing it were possible for them to travel four miles an hour for ten hours a day, it would take them *three years*, lacking a few days, to pass a given point.

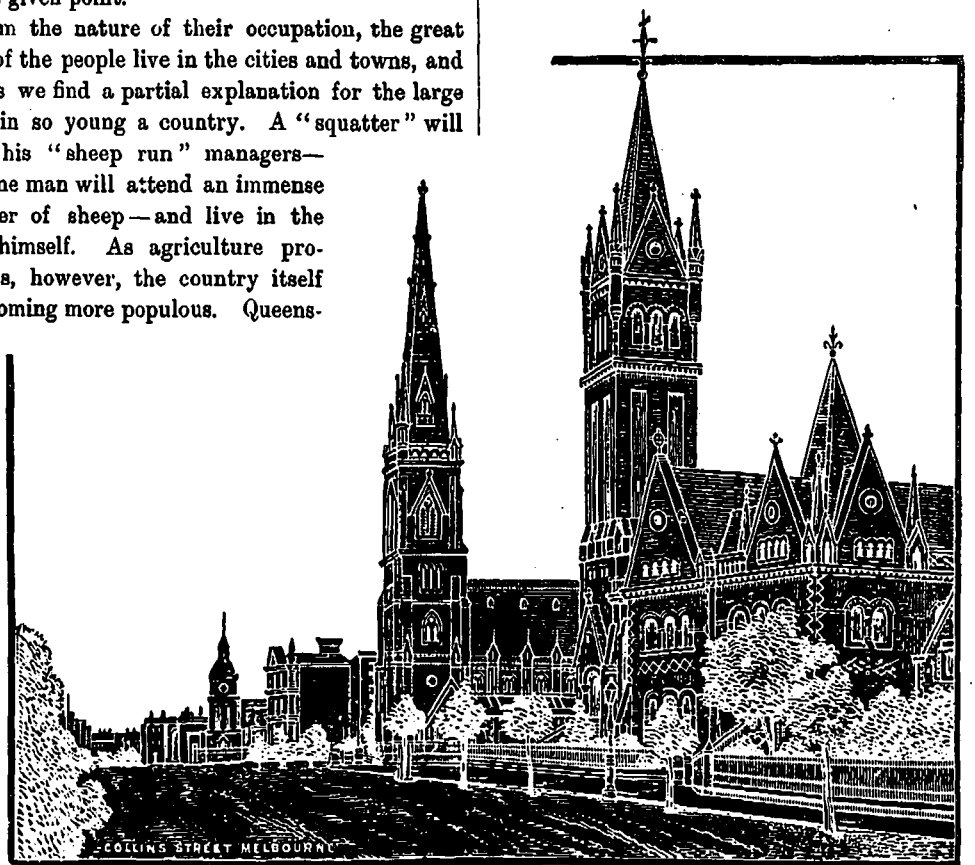
From the nature of their occupation, the great bulk of the people live in the cities and towns, and in this we find a partial explanation for the large cities in so young a country. A “squatter” will have his “sheep run” managers—and one man will attend an immense number of sheep—and live in the city himself. As agriculture progresses, however, the country itself is becoming more populous. Queens-

land and especially New South Wales are essentially sheep-raising colonies; there are in the latter, however, many fine agricultural districts. Victoria is divided, agriculture being a most important industry. The sample of wheat is most excellent and the yield is better.

South Australia is a grain country, though, strange to say, the farmer there is content with a yield of eight or nine bushels to the acre. The “Australian Stripper,” a machine for “stripping” off the heads merely, leaving the straw (some of them equipped also with apparatus for threshing at the same time) has heretofore been almost exclusively used for harvesting. But on account of its wastefulness and the deterioration of the land consequent on its continued use, it is rapidly being superseded by the Binder in all the Colonies except South Australia, and even there the “stripper” is now losing favor.

If the new comer, or “new chum,” as he will be called, arrives in Sydney or Melbourne with a revolver in his pocket—his conception of the country being that of a land of convicts and “bushrangers”—he will find about as much use for his weapon as he would on King St., Toronto. He will probably be amazed to find such a large city, such well-paved streets, such splendid public buildings, and in fact that the general aspect of the city, the habits and customs of the people, differ but little from those of a city at home. He will find there is about as little “roughing it” as there would be in Canada, and for tales of the “bushrangers” he will have to go to men whose heads are white. To see the kangaroos, of which he has heard so much, and to catch a glimpse at the aborigines, he will have to go into the interior—away from the main lines of railway. The former, however, are to be seen in the zoological gardens of the principal cities. Indeed, his ideas of Australia will soon be completely revolutionized.

From inquiries and the little I had read, I was quite prepared to find Melbourne a big city, but not the grand metropolis that it is, with fine wide streets, lined with magnificent buildings of the



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