

the Commonwealth of Australia. The Federal Parliament consists of the King, represented by a Governor-General, a *Senate*, and a *House of Representatives*.

The *Senate* is elective, each of the States appointing by vote of the whole electorate six Senators, who hold office for a term of six years. Half of the *Senate* retires every three years, but the whole body may be dissolved in case of continuous opposition to the House of Representatives.

The House of Representatives has, as nearly as can be, twice as many members as are in the *Senate*, distributed among the States in proportion to population. The Representatives are elected for three years.

Each *State* has a State Legislature, which has control of all matters not belonging to the Federal Parliament.

For the area and population of each State, see page 219.

1.—VICTORIA.

Position—Victoria forms the south-east part of Australia.

Surface—The country naturally consists of three parts, the *coastal plain*, the great *Dividing Range*, and the *country north* of the mountains, sloping towards the Murray River.

Climate and Soil—The climate is warm and genial, the soil rich.

Industries—The chief industries are sheep-farming, agriculture, and mining; and the chief productions are *wool*, *wheat*, and *gold*.

Towns—*Melbourne*, the capital of the state, is the chief commercial centre in the southern hemisphere. Its streets are straight and cross one another at right angles. *Ballarat* and *Bendigo* are famous mining towns.

2.—NEW SOUTH WALES.

Position—This state, the oldest of the Australian colonies, occupies the central part of the eastern division of Australia.

Extent—The greatest length of the state is 850 miles; average length 600 miles; the greatest breadth is 600 miles.

Surface—There are three subdivisions of the state, the narrow coastal plain from 30 to 100 miles wide, the *Dividing Range* which forms the edge of the Australian plateau, and the great plains which slope westward and comprise the great bulk of the country.

Climate and Soil—The climate is warm, dry, and healthy. The plains west of the mountains often suffer from drought. The soil is rich, and, where watered, very fertile.