

Though by no means an indictment on our legislation, it is not a comforting reflection to us, that what is alleged to be good for Australia is certainly not to be taken as good for Europe. Australians who are opposed to much if not all of this species of legislation, which is based on and applied through compulsion, are entitled to ask why Mr. Aves' conclusion does not apply equally well to us. But Mr. Aves has carefully guarded himself against such an embarrassing question if it be presented to him. He anticipates it, and in paragraphs whose reasoning is identical with much that appears throughout this work. He does not draw the distinction either for or against us. He states the facts operating in our favour. For example, he quotes the remark of a South Australian manufacturer: "The most astonishing thing about Australia is its wealth." Another remark by an Australian banker: "Australia is a frame without a picture," alluding to its sparse population concentrated in its capitals and seaboard centres. This feature is brought out prominently in these pages. He adds some significant paragraphs at pp. 7 and 8 of his Report. On this point he says:—

But the remoteness of its geographical position, rather than the limited drawbacks of climate—and in some parts and in some respects Australia has one of the most superb climates in the world—are the chief reasons why Australia to-day has only 4,000,000 of people. . . . Pastoral products, exported with wool as the most important item, amounted to 28½ millions sterling in 1906; wheat and flour to more than £6,000,000; butter to nearly 3¾ millions sterling; timber to more than £1,000,000; gold to 14½ millions sterling; other metals and ores, 7¾ millions sterling. . . . The total exports were nearly £70,000,000; imports, nearly 45 millions sterling—a total sea trade of about £28 per head.

This aspect of conditions peculiar to ourselves and unparalleled elsewhere amongst such a handful of people has been dealt with fully in the chapters of this history dealing with our productiveness on the one hand, and our immigra-