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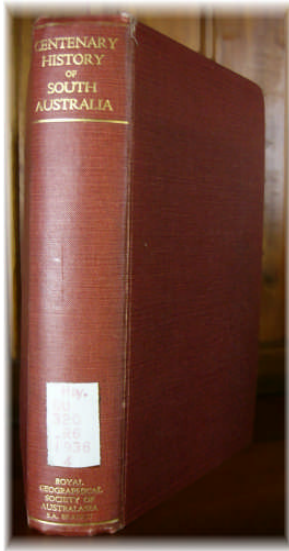
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THE
CENTENARY HISTORY
OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*Supplementary to Volume XXXVI of the Proceedings
of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia
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CHAPTER I

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Many an aeon moulded earth before her highest, Man, was born.
Tennyson.

Slumbering under her southern skies almost from the beginning of geological time, South Australia long awaited the quickening touch of civilization. So late as the year 1726, when King George the First sat on the throne of England, when Defoe and Pope lived and wrote, and when Walpole governed, a great Irish satirist sought out some part of the habitable globe so far remote from knowledge and reality as to form a suitable home for his fabulous Lilliputians. He found it on the southern shores of New Holland, in the Land of Nuyts.

A few years earlier (1718) a Frenchman, Jean Pierre Purry, an advocate for the founding of a Dutch colony in Nuyts Land, had suggested that this unknown country was perhaps peopled by giants, "not only in stature, but even in intelligence". Such literary incidents are not without significance. They indicate the extent to which Southern Australia was then, as it continued to be for a further century and more, a remote and unknown land.

Throughout the ages, with infinite slowness, the stage has been prepared for the playing of the century-long drama of the Foundation and Development of South Australia. The story of this preparation, except for the recent and obscure interlude of the coming of the aborigines, does not concern itself with people; it is a story of areas and latitudes, rocks and soils, hills and valleys, rain and sunshine, plants and animals.

No part of this work is to be ignored if the present actors are properly to understand the course of the play

CHAPTER V

PIONEERING DIFFICULTIES

The calibre of the early settlers gave me trust in the new Anglo-Saxondom of the Southern Hemisphere. There was a worth, a sincerity, a true ring about them which could not fail of great things.—Sir George Grey.

The Foundation Act determined the location of the colony. There remained the vital choice of the site of the first settlement.

The land to which the pioneers sailed in 1836 was the subject of widely varied opinions. Flinders and Baudin had given highly contradictory accounts of places such as Port Lincoln and Kangaroo Island. About 1803 Grimes, of the Van Diemen's Land Survey, had condemned Kangaroo Island as fervently as Captain Sutherland had overpraised it after a visit in 1819. Far more satisfactory and conclusive were the Sturt and Barker reports, which converted the Colonial Office as to the fertility of the region between the River Murray and the Gulfs. Although Barker proved that the Murray did not flow into St. Vincent Gulf, as hoped, he discovered the Port Adelaide inlet and such fertile country that Sturt advised a settlement at the mouth of this so-called "sixteen-mile inlet".

Long before 1836 white people had been living in South Australia. As early as 1803 or 1804 American sealers built a schooner, the *Independence*, on Kangaroo Island, and from 1806 onwards gangs of lawless sealers and runaway convicts—"a complete set of pirates"—had settled on the island, and even discovered Lake Alexandrina before Captain Sturt. There is evidence, however, that the New South Wales authorities removed the worst offenders. At any rate, in 1836, the only settlers on Kangaroo Island were

CHAPTER IX

THE CHARACTER OF THE POPULATION

We want no idlers, no drunkards; but steady, sober men not ashamed to live by the sweat of their brows will be welcomed, and cannot fail to become independent in a few years.—
Emigration pamphlet, "The Great South Land", 1838.

In July 1836 the first immigrant ship reached South Australia. Up to that time, except for its aborigines and certain whalers and others who formed temporary settlements on its coasts, the province was uninhabited. Now the white population of South Australia approaches 600,000 souls. The numerical steps towards this result are shown in the following table:

TABLE 1. Increase.

Date of Census.	Total Population.	Numerical.	Per cent.
1844	17,366	—	—
1851	63,700	46,334	267
1871	185,425	121,725	191
1891	315,533	130,108	70
1911	408,558	93,025	29
1933	580,949	172,391	42

A comparison with the figures of the other Australian States proves that the population growth of South Australia has been more rapid than that of Tasmania, almost equal to that of Victoria, but much slower than that of any of the other States:

TABLE 2.

States.	Population in Thousands.		
	1881.	1901.	1933.
New South Wales -	749	1,354	2,601
Victoria -	861	1,201	1,820
Queensland -	213	498	947
South Australia -	276	358	580
Western Australia -	29	184	438
Tasmania -	115	172	227

CHAPTER XVI

THE CITY OF ADELAIDE

As wealth and population increase Adelaide will approach nearer the harbour than six miles. Those miles will then become a vast suburb studded with shops and warehouses.—Boyle Travers Finnis, 1837.

The first reference to the land on which the city of Adelaide now stands will be found in "A Voyage to Terra Australis", the journal of Captain Matthew Flinders, R.N., the virtual discoverer of South Australia, who surveyed the seaboard in 1801-2 in H.M.S. *Investigator*. Flinders wrote, under date 28th March 1802: "At daylight I recognized Mount Lofty" (which he had seen and named from Kangaroo Island on 23rd March) "upon the highest part of the ridge of mountains, which, from Cape Jervis, extends northward behind the eastern shore of the inlet [Gulf St. Vincent]. The nearest part of the coast was distant three leagues, mostly low and composed of sand and rock, with a few small trees scattered over it; but a few miles inland, where the back mountains rise, the country was well clothed with forest timber, and had a fertile appearance. The fires [of the natives] bespoke this to be a part of the continent."

Actually the first white man known to view the Adelaide Plains from the landward side was Captain Collet Barker, of the 39th Regiment of Foot, who, on 19th April 1831, beheld the scene from Mount Lofty and discovered the Port River. It was Captain Charles Sturt, also of the 39th Regiment, who, by his great River Murray journey, more closely focused attention on what is now South Australia, and led to the establishment of the province.

CHAPTER XXI

EDUCATION

The sole objects of this society shall be to establish and conduct . . . schools in the colony of South Australia, and to render their influence subservient to the advancement of true religion, the promotion of civilization, and the general welfare of the inhabitants of that colony.—Prospectus South Australian School Society, 1835-6.

The Act of 1834, which established South Australia as a British province, made no provision for public education. Nevertheless, the promoters and pioneers of the new venture had education much at heart. Even before the province had yet been proclaimed, the South Australian School Society was founded in London in 1836, largely through the influence of George Fife Angas. "I consider it a duty," he said at the meeting at which this Society was constituted, "before even a tent be set up in the new province, to provide for education."

It was decided to establish three grades of school—infant schools for children under eight, elementary schools for children between eight and twelve "combining study with a small unoppressive portion of bodily labour," and others for pupils between twelve and sixteen, affording instruction in agriculture and various trades as well as in "the higher branches of education". Thereafter boys were to be apprenticed for five years, and there was a scheme for publicly rewarding industry and good conduct. J. B. Shepherdson, who "had studied the plans of schools where mental work is combined with labour", was appointed schoolmaster.

The first settlers landed in Kangaroo Island in 1836, and it augured well for the future of the children of

CHAPTER XXII

THE GROWTH OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

Their first duty would be to make themselves acquainted with South Australia, and having done that to make themselves acquainted with neighbouring countries, not only for their own information, but in order that knowledge might be disseminated far and wide.—Sir Henry Ayers, at the Preliminary Meeting of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, S.A. Branch, 10th July 1885.

GEOLOGY

It is to the observations of the early navigators that we owe the earliest statements as to the geology of South Australia. Robert Brown, of the Flinders Expedition, landed near the head of Spencer Gulf, ascended the mount that is named after him as Mount Brown, eastward of Port Augusta, and after visiting the rocks on the western side of the gulf, decided that they represented one and the same geological formation as those on the eastern side. Flinders was quickly followed by Baudin's French Expedition, with Peron as the chief scientific expert on board, who with an excellent geological insight described the dune formations of the southern coast, the primitive schists of Kangaroo and King Islands, and the newer fossiliferous limestones resting on them.

J. Beete Jukes, who was the naturalist to H.M.S. *Fly*, was commissioned to survey parts of the Barrier Reef, and in a work entitled "A Sketch of the Physical Structure of Australia" (1850) this writer published a geological map of Australia, as far as it was known to him, including portions of South Australia, as far as the Mount Lofty Ranges, which are described as "metamorphic", and the fossiliferous rocks of the Lower Murray and the Australian Bight as of Tertiary age.

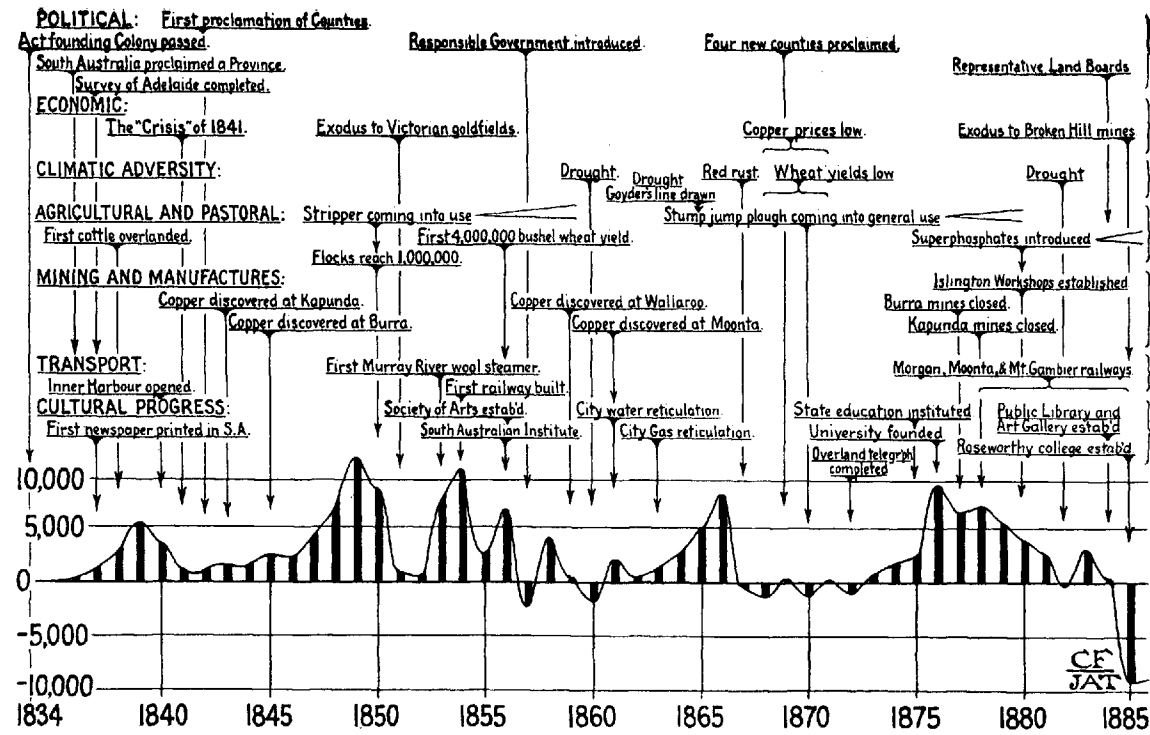


FIGURE 25.

"Prosperity Curve", 1834-85. Based on the annual gain or loss by immigration and emigration respectively, with annotations showing the outstanding events in politics, economics, agriculture, mining, manufactures, transport, and culture.—Continued on the opposite page.

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