

GENERAL PRODUCTION.

TO obtain a fair approximation of the number of persons engaged in various walks of life in Australasia is at the present time impossible, the information which might serve as a basis for a calculation of this kind being of a very meagre and incomplete description. In 1881, when a census was taken in all the colonies of the group, the occupations of the persons enumerated were made a feature of the inquiry ; but in every instance the classification was unsatisfactory, and it is only possible to make a comparison between the different provinces by a subdivision into very comprehensive classes.

Avocations of
the people.

The classes, however, are not scientific. In none of the colonies was the strong necessity recognized by the compilers of the Census of 1881, of distinguishing the maker from the dealer, the industrial workers from those employed in commercial pursuits. Hence it is quite impossible to define with exactness each class. To avoid a repetition of this error it was determined at the recent Australasian Census Conference held in Hobart, to adopt a method of classification under which the population will be separated into two great divisions—workers and dependants. The workers are arranged in the natural classes of primary producers and distributors, and these again into their various orders and sub-orders. By this arrangement it is hoped that the forthcoming Census will afford valuable material for the elucidation of problems which now perplex the economist and the statesman, and will serve for a basis by which the future progress of Australasia may be gauged. The figures given in the following tables roughly represent the numbers engaged in the principal pursuits so far as the same can be classified, but must, however, be used with caution, owing to the defective principle on which they were originally classified.

Classification
unsatisfactory.

Occupations at Census of 1881.

Occupations.	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	New Zealand.	Tasmania.
Engaged in—							
Government service	5,787	4,494	1,426	2,129	483	2,963	661
Learned professions	10,184	13,950	2,899	3,895	482	7,263	1,659
Mercantile pursuits	22,901	17,616	3,836	5,569	472	9,677	1,555
Agricultural „	89,682	108,919	22,004	30,330	3,336	42,722	17,748
Pastoral „	23,110	15,283	11,263	4,490	1,427	11,725	1,660
Mining „	17,709	36,066	11,439	2,196	102	14,273	3,090
Maritime „	5,501	3,363	1,911	2,530	431	4,518	969
Artificers and labourers	113,568	124,337	27,211	43,488	3,616	67,705	15,878
Women, children, and domestic servants ..	427,247	504,321	122,438	175,036	17,790	316,550	68,962
Persons of independent means	5,294	1,979	116	729	96	399	559
Supported by the community	7,825	9,901	2,151	1,923	779	3,470	621
Otherwise engaged and unspecified.....	22,660	22,117	6,831	7,550	694	8,668	2,343
Total population	751,468	862,346	213,525	279,865	29,708	489,933	115,705

It would be useless to attempt to make any comparisons or deductions from the foregoing tables, for, since the Census of 1881, very material changes have taken place in several of the Colonies, which would invalidate conclusions drawn from perfect data, and it must also be confessed that the figures just given are far from perfect. Unfortunately, little later information is available. With the exception of New South Wales, none of the Colonies publish statistics in regard to employment in agriculture; in the Colony named the number of persons so employed during the season which ended with March, 1890, was 80,037, and of those regularly employed in pastoral pursuits 26,189.

In regard to mining there is more information. The following were the numbers, so far as can be ascertained, for the year 1889 :—

New South Wales	28,970 hands.
Victoria	24,541 „
Queensland	11,370 „
South Australia	3,694 „
New Zealand*	23,858 „

* Census of 1886.

Concerning five Colonies only is there information in regard to employment in pursuits which are classed under the vague category of works and manufactories.

The particulars for these Colonies are as follows :—

New South Wales	47,610 hands.
Victoria	59,181 „
South Australia	11,964 „
Tasmania	2,179 „
New Zealand	22,095 „

In the table just given the returns from each Colony are put on the same basis.

The horse-power and value of plant is known only in the case of three colonies, viz. :—New South Wales: horse-power of plant, 25,790; value, £5,411,478; Victoria: horse-power, 28,547; value, £5,939,970; and New Zealand; horse-power, 19,315; value £2,108,025.

Manufactures
yet undeveloped

Taking Australasia as a whole, it may be said that manufacturing, properly so called, is in its infancy; most of the hands are employed in works depending on the natural production of the country, or in what may be termed domestic industries, that is, furnishing the supply of goods which must of necessity be produced on the spot. The Colony of Victoria is perhaps of all the colonies the possessor of the most varied classes of industries, but the signs are not wanting that other colonies will soon seek in manufacturing industries outlets for capital which they have hitherto found in other channels.

Value of articles
produced.

No reliable figures are available of the value of articles produced in the manufactories of the various colonies during 1889. Regarding other forms of industry full particulars are given in previous pages. The value of the labor of primary producers, that is to say, of those mainly engaged in the cultivation or acquisition of food products, and in obtaining other raw materials from natural sources, was, for the year 1889, £83,049,700.

The share of each Colony and the value per head was :—

Colony.	Total Primary Production.	Total Production per Head of Population.
		£ s. d.
New South Wales	26,868,900	23 18 8
Victoria	17,024,900	15 4 7
Queensland	11,734,800	28 17 2
South Australia	8,253,100	25 8 8
Western Australia	1,316,100	30 1 11
Tasmania	2,854,300	18 16 10
New Zealand	14,997,600	24 3 7
Australasia	83,049,700	21 18 8

The total production of the Colonies from the primary industries, distributed under the various branches, is as follows :—

Primary Industries of Australasia.

Colony.	Agriculture.	Pastoral Industries.	Dairy Farming.	Mineral Production.	Forestry and Fisheries.	Total Production.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
New South Wales ..	4,931,600	14,725,300	1,652,000	4,470,000	1,090,000	26,868,900
Victoria	6,945,400	4,920,500	2,188,000	2,473,000	498,000	17,024,900
Queensland	1,855,000	5,678,900	765,000	2,743,000	692,000	11,734,800
South Australia	4,730,500	2,054,600	726,000	426,000	266,000	8,253,100
Western Australia ..	298,300	585,800	91,000	64,000	277,000	1,316,100
Tasmania	1,254,900	561,400	260,000	459,000	319,000	2,854,300
New Zealand	4,739,800	6,215,800	1,608,000	1,493,000	938,000	14,997,600
Australasia	24,806,400	34,745,300	7,290,000	12,128,000	4,080,000	83,049,700

Compared with the older countries of the world, the amounts stated above are by no means insignificant, and as regards production per head, Australia exceeds any other country of which the records are available. Although the data are incomplete on which an exact statement can be founded, there is sufficient information to warrant the assertion that from primary industries alone, Australasia produces more per inhabitant than the combined industries of any other country, and a consideration of this fact will perhaps explain the general prosperity which these Colonies have enjoyed, and the ease with which they bear their apparently great indebtedness.

Comparison with older countries.

Primary Industries of the World.

Country.	Total.	Per head of Population.
	£	£ s. d.
United Kingdom	349,600,000	9 18 5
France	461,480,000	12 5 0
Germany	475,400,000	10 10 2
Holland and Belgium.....	116,700,000	12 12 10
Austria-Hungary	330,150,000	8 14 4
Roumania.....	67,000,000	12 13 6
Russia	521,200,000	5 19 8
Italy	181,000,000	6 7 2
Spain.....	142,500,000	8 7 9
United States	681,950,000	13 10 1
Canada	60,450,000	13 19 7
Australasia ..	83,049,700	21 18 8

Aggregate production of New South Wales.

Production per inhabitant.

Production compared with area.

Judged by the aggregate production, New South Wales stands far above the other Colonies, a position which it owes to the largeness of its interests in pastoral pursuits. The value of the return from this industry was £14,725,300, a sum little short of the total production of Victoria and New Zealand from all primary industries, and in excess of the production of the other Colonies from the same sources. As regards the average production per inhabitant, Western Australia stands first and Queensland second, while Victoria is lowest, having less than half the production per head of the first-named colony. Such a condition of things is only what might be anticipated from the circumstances of the Colonies. But a comparison of the production of the Colonies from primary industries per head of population is liable to give a fallacious importance to the Colonies with large territories and scanty population, for it is but a natural expectation that where the population of a country is dense, a large proportion of them will be engaged in other than primary industries. If the production be compared with the extent of territory enjoyed by each Colony it will be found that the positions of several of the Colonies are reversed. Thus Victoria occupies first position with an average production of £193 14s. 5d. per square mile, while Western Australia has the lowest return of £1 4s. 10d. The following, as well as the preceding table, bear testimony to the great natural resources of New Zealand, which has an average production per head of £24 3s. 7d. and per square mile of £143 11s. 2d. :—

Colony.	Total production per square mile.		
	£	s.	d.
New South Wales	86	9	7
Victoria	193	14	5
Queensland ..	17	11	1
South Australia ..	9	2	8
Western Australia	1	4	10
Tasmania	109	3	5
New Zealand.....	143	11	2
Australasia	26	5	5