

GENERAL PRODUCTION.

Avocations of
the people.

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.

Classification
unsatisfactory.

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 dependents. 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 Census taken in April, 1891, the results of which are now being tabulated, will afford valuable material for the elucidation of problems which perplex the economist and the statesman, and will serve for a basis by which the future progress of Australasia may be gauged.

Agricultural
pursuits.

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, 1891, was 82,213, and of those regularly employed in pastoral pursuits, 45,847.

In regard to mining there is more information. The following Mining. were the numbers, so far as can be ascertained, for the year 1890 :—

New South Wales	32,338 hands.
Victoria	24,309 „
Queensland	10,969 „
Tasmania	2,920 „
New Zealand*	4,121 „

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

The particulars for these Colonies are as follows :—

New South Wales	46,135 hands.
Victoria	58,175 „
South Australia	13,183 „
Tasmania	2,204 „
New Zealand	25,759 „

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, 24,662 ; Victoria, 30,078, and South Australia, 7,281. The value of the plant employed during 1890 is returned only for New South Wales and Victoria, and is given as £4,526,821 for the first-mentioned, and £6,604,322 for the last-named Colony. With regard to Tasmania, the value of land, buildings, and plant is stated to be £568,008, while a similar return for New Zealand places the figure at £5,275,320. Assuming 40 per cent. of these amounts to represent the plant alone, the values would be £234,400 in Tasmania, and £2,110,100 in New Zealand. The value of plant in Queensland has been estimated at £1,388,100 ; in South Australia, £1,210,000, and Western Australia, £124,500. Power and value of plant.

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 Manufactures yet undeveloped.

VALUE OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES.

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 1890. 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 1890, £86,411,500.

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	26,725,700	24 5 1
Victoria	20,072,100	17 18 11
Queensland	12,370,100	31 16 10
South Australia	7,172,900	22 10 5
Western Australia	1,391,400	29 9 10
Tasmania	2,778,700	19 6 8
New Zealand	15,900,500	25 12 0
Australasia	86,411,400	23 2 2

Primary industries.

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

Primary Industries of Australasia.

Colony.	Agriculture.	Pastoral Industries.	Dairy Farming.	Mineral Production.	Forestry and Fisheries.
	£	£	£	£	£
New South Wales....	4,131,400	13,359,800	2,887,600	5,003,900	1,343,000
Victoria.....	7,520,300	6,041,300	3,606,600	2,384,200	519,700
Queensland.....	2,233,200	5,934,200	989,100	2,518,000	645,600
South Australia	3,569,700	2,176,300	770,400	381,000	275,500
Western Australia ..	366,900	500,200	134,200	94,300	295,800
Tasmania	962,700	748,300	330,300	357,700	329,700
New Zealand	4,829,500	7,110,500	1,830,200	1,523,800	606,500
Australasia.....	23,613,700	35,920,600	10,598,400	12,262,900	4,015,800

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. The following figures are taken from Mulhall's Dictionary:—

Primary Industries of the World.

Country.	Total.	Per head of Population.		
		£	s.	d.
United Kingdom.....	311,000,000	8	2	10
France	470,000,000	12	2	3
Germany	449,000,000	9	4	9
Russia	578,000,000	6	5	8
Austria.....	337,000,000	8	8	1
Italy.....	206,000,000	6	16	0
Spain.....	177,000,000	10	1	1
Portugal	32,000,000	6	16	2
Sweden.....	50,000,000	10	8	4
Norway	18,000,000	9	0	0
Denmark	35,000,000	16	13	4
Holland	39,000,000	8	9	7
Belgium	62,000,000	10	3	3
Switzerland	19,000,000	6	6	8
United States	883,000,000	14	2	7
Canada	59,000,000	11	7	7
Argentina	42,000,000	13	11	0
Australasia (1890)	86,411,500	23	2	2

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 £13,359,800, a sum greater than the total production of every Colony except Victoria and New Zealand from all primary industries. As regards the average production

Aggregate production of New South Wales.

Production per
inhabitant.

per inhabitant, Queensland stands first and Western Australia second, while Victoria is lowest, only about three-fifths of 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 it 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

Production com-
pared with area.

reversed. Thus Victoria occupies first position with an average production of £228 7s. 10d. per square mile, while Western Australia has the lowest return of £1 6s. 3d. 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 £25 12s. and per square mile of £152 4s. :—

Colony.	Total production per square mile.
	£ s. d.
New South Wales	86 0 4
Victoria	228 7 10
Queensland	18 10 1
South Australia	7 18 9
Western Australia	1 6 3
Tasmania	105 18 9
New Zealand.....	152 4 0
Australasia	27 6 8