

Victorian Year-Book, 1926-27.

INTRODUCTION.

GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION, AREA, AND CLIMATE.

Area of Victoria.

Victoria is situated at the south-eastern extremity of the Australian continent, of which it occupies about a thirty-fourth part, and it contains about 87,884 square miles, or 56,245,760 acres. It is bounded on the north and north-east by New South Wales, from which it is separated by the River Murray, and by a straight line running in a south-easterly direction from a place near the head-waters of that stream, called The Springs, on Forest Hill, to Cape Howe. On the west it is bounded by South Australia, the dividing line being about 242 geographical miles in length, approximating to the position of the 141st meridian of east longitude, and extending from the River Murray to the sea. On the south and south-east its shores are washed by the Southern Ocean, Bass Strait, and the Pacific Ocean. It lies between the 34th and 39th parallels of south latitude and the 141st and 150th meridians of east longitude. Its extreme length from east to west is about 420, its greatest breadth about 250, and its extent of coast-line nearly 600 geographical miles. Great Britain, exclusive of the islands in the British Seas, contains 88,756 square miles, and is therefore slightly larger than Victoria.

The southernmost point in Victoria, and in the whole of the Australian continent, is Wilson's Promontory, which lies in latitude 39 deg. 8 min. S., longitude 146 deg. 26 min. E.; the northernmost point is the place where the western boundary of the State meets the Murray, latitude 34 deg. 2 min. S., longitude 140 deg. 58 min. E.; the point furthest east is Cape Howe, situated in latitude 37 deg. 31 min. S., longitude 149 deg. 59 min. E.; the most westerly point is the line of the whole western frontier, which, according to the latest correction, lies upon the meridian 140 deg. 58 min. E., and extends from latitude 34 deg. 2 min. S. to latitude 38 deg. 4 min. S., a distance of 242 geographical miles.

Climate.

From its geographical position, Victoria enjoys a climate more suitable to the European constitution than any other State upon the Continent of Australia. In the seventy-one years ended with 1926 the maximum temperature in the shade recorded at the Melbourne Observatory and the Weather Bureau was 111·2 deg. Fahr.,

on the 14th January, 1862; the minimum was 27 deg., on the 21st July, 1869; and the mean was 58·4 deg. Upon the average, on only four days during the year does the thermometer rise above 100 deg. in the shade, and on 19·5 days the temperature reaches 90 deg. or over; generally, on about two nights during the year it falls below freezing point. Sultry nights are of rare occurrence. It is only occasionally that a high minimum is recorded. The minimum reading approximates to 70 deg. on an average on only two nights in any one year. The maximum temperature in the sun ever recorded (*i.e.*, since 1859) was 178·5 deg., on the 14th January, 1862. The mean atmospheric pressure noted, first at the Observatory 91 feet above the sea level, and later at the Weather Bureau 115 feet above sea level, was, during the sixty-nine years ended with 1926, 30·012 inches; the average number of days on which rain fell each year was 138, and the average yearly rainfall was 25·58 inches. The mean relative humidity of the atmosphere is 68 per cent.; on very warm days it is often 12 per cent., and it has been as low as 2 per cent. The severity of the heat is not felt so much as it would be if there were a relatively high wet bulb, as the temperature by such bulb seldom exceeds 75 deg. The average number of hours of sunshine daily is 6·3, and fogs occur, on an average, on only 19 days in the year.

MOUNTAINS AND HILLS, RIVERS AND LAKES.

Mountains and Hills. The highest mountain in Victoria is Mount Bogong,* situated in the county of the same name, 6,509 feet above the sea-level; the next highest peaks are—Mount Feathertop, 6,306 feet; Mount Nelson, 6,170 feet; Mount Fainter, 6,160 feet; Mount Hotham, 6,100 feet; Mount McKay, 6,030 feet; and Mount Cope, 6,027 feet; all situated in the same county; also the Cobboras, 6,030 feet, situated between the counties of Benambra and Tambo. These, so far as is known, are the only peaks which exceed 6,000 feet in height; but, according to a list which appears in the *Year-Book* for 1915-16, there are 39 peaks between 5,000 and 6,000 feet high, and 40 between 4,000 and 5,000 feet high; it is known, moreover, that there are many peaks rising to upwards of 4,000 feet above the level of the sea whose actual heights have not yet been determined.

Rivers. With the exception of the Yarra, on the banks of which the metropolis is situated; the Murray; the Goulburn, which empties itself into the Murray about eight miles to the eastward of Echuca; and the La Trobe and the Mitchell, with, perhaps, a few other of the Gippsland streams, the rivers of Victoria are not

* The highest mountain on the Australian Continent is Mount Kosciuszko, in New South Wales, one peak of which is 7,328 feet high.

navigable except by boats. They, however, drain the watershed of large areas of country, and many of the streams are used as feeders to permanent reservoirs for irrigation and water supply purposes. The Murray, which forms the northern boundary of the State, is the largest river in Australia. Its total length is 1,520 miles, for 1,200 of which it flows along the Victorian border. Several of the rivers in the north-western portion of the State have no outlet, but are gradually lost in the absorbent tertiary flat country through which they pass.

Lakes. Victoria contains numerous salt and fresh-water lakes and lagoons; but many of these are nothing more than swamps during dry seasons. Some of them are craters of extinct volcanoes. Lake Corangamite, the largest inland lake in Victoria, covers 90 square miles, and is quite salt, notwithstanding that it receives the flood waters of several fresh-water streams. It has no visible outlet. Lake Colac, only a few miles distant from Lake Corangamite, is a beautiful sheet of water, $10\frac{1}{2}$ square miles in extent, and quite fresh. Lake Burrumbeet is also a fine sheet of fresh water, embracing 8 square miles. The Gippsland lakes—Victoria, King, and Reeve—are situated close to the coast, and are separated from the sea by only a narrow belt of sand. Lake Wellington, the largest of the Gippsland lakes, lies to the westward of Lakes Victoria and King, and is united to the first-named by a narrow channel. South-east of Geelong is Lake Connewarre, which is connected with the sea at Point Flinders.

A list of mountains and hills, rivers and lakes in Victoria appears in the *Victorian Year-Book* for 1915-16. This was revised by the late Surveyor-General, Mr. A. B. Lang, and contains information in regard to heights, lengths, and areas respectively.

FLORA OF VICTORIA.

An article on the "Flora of Victoria" by J. W. Audas, Esq., F.L.S., F.R.M.S. (National Herbarium, Melbourne), appeared in the *Year Book* for 1924-25, on pages 13 to 24, and an addendum for 1925-26, on pages 3 to 6.

ADDENDUM TO THE ABOVE ARTICLE.

Supplied by Mr. Audas in May, 1927.

The following species new to Science were added to the list of the Flora during the year 1926-27:—

- Acacia oreophila* Maiden and Blakely (*Leguminosae*).
- Acacia Walteri* Maiden and Blakely (*Leguminosae*).
- Brachycome alpina* P. F. Morris (*Compositae*).
- Caladenia preacox* W. H. Nicholls (*Orchidaceae*).
- Pterostylis gracilis* W. H. Nicholls (*Orchidaceae*).
- Swainsona Morrisiana* J. M. Black (*Leguminosae*).
- Swainsona reticulata* J. M. Black (*Leguminosae*).

During the period two species not previously recorded for this State have been added to the list of native Flora :—

Dryopteris glabella C. Chr., "Smooth Shield Fern" (*Filicales*).

Swainsona oroboides F.v.M., "Orobus Swainson Pea" (*Leguminosae*).

The following changes in the names of the Victorian Flora have been made in accordance with the Vienna Botanical Rules of Nomenclature :—

Apium Ammi L. (*Apium leptophyllum* F.v.M.) (*Umbelliferae*).

Centella asiatica L. (*Hydrocotyle asiatica* L.) (*Umbelliferae*).

Colobanthus apetalus (Labill) Comb nov. J. M. Black (*C. Billardieri* Fenzl.). (*Caryophyllaceae*).

Corybas aconitiflorus Salisbury (*Corysanthes bicalcarata* R. Br.) (*Orchidaceae*).

Corybas fimbriatus Reichb. f. (*Corysanthes fimbriata* R. Br.) (*Orchidaceae*).

Corybas pruinosa Reichb. f. (*Corysanthes pruinosa* R. Cunn.) (*Orchidaceae*).

Corybas unguiculatus R. Br. (*Corysanthes unguiculata* R. Br.) (*Orchidaceae*).

NOTE.—In regard to the genus *Corysanthes*, this race of plants was first known as *Corybas*, having been so named by Salisbury. In plant nomenclature priority of naming is usually considered to govern the naming of plants.

Daucus glochidiatus (Labill) Fischer (*Daucus brachiatus* Sieb.). (*Umbelliferae*).

Hutchinsia procumbens (L.) Desv. (*Capsella procumbens* Fries) (*Cruciferae*).

Leptoloma divaricatissima, A. Chase (*Panicum divaricatissimum* R. Br.) (*Gramineae*).

Muehlenbeckia diclina (F.v.M.) Comb. nov. J. M. Black (*Muehlenbeckia stenophylla* F.v.M.) (*Polygonaceae*).

Roripa islandica Schinz. and Thell. (*Nasturtium palustre* Dc.) (*Cruciferae*).

Spiranthes sinensis Pers. (*Spiranthes australis* Lindl.) (*Orchidaceae*).

EXOTICS.

NEW PLANTS RECORDED DURING 1926-27.

Six introduced plants have been recorded as growing wild for the first time, viz. :—

Artemisia tenuifolia Spreng., "Narrow-leaf Wormwood" (*Compositae*). A native of Middle and Southern Europe. It is more aromatic

and less bitter than the "Common Wormwood" (*Artemisia Absinthium*), from which the oily substance "Absinthin" is obtained.

Galium tricornae Stokes, "Three-horned Bedstraw" (*Rubiaceae*). A native of Europe and Asia. It has no economic value.

Kochia scoparia Schrad., "Annual Mock-Cypress," "Summer Cypress," or "Burning Bush" (*Chenopodiaceae*). A native of Europe and North America. It is an ornamental plant and an escape from cultivation.

Mentha viridis L., "Spear-mint" (*Labiatae*). A native to Middle and Southern Europe. This perennial herb is important for its peculiar essential oil. Readily propagated like other mints by division of the root.

Rumex luxurians L., "Trailing Dock" (*Polygonaceae*). Introduced from South Africa. It is sometimes grown in gardens, and is an escape from cultivation.

Paspalidium jubiflorum Hughes (*Panicum flavidum* Retz.) "Warrego Summer Grass" (*Gramineae*). This grass is confined mostly to Northern Australia, Queensland, and New South Wales, and is now recorded for the first time in Victoria. It is indigenous to India, and other warm parts of Asia, and is a long-lived grass and stands stocking very well. It is very hardy under dry conditions.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY OF VICTORIA.

An article on the "Physical Geography and Geology of Victoria," by W. Baragwanath, Esq., Director of Victorian Geological Survey, appeared in the *Year Book* for 1924-25 on pages 3 to 13.

THE FAUNA OF VICTORIA.

An article on the "Fauna of Victoria," by the late T. S. Hall, M.A., D.Sc. (University of Melbourne), and J. A. Kershaw, Esq., F.Z.S., Curator of the National Museum, Melbourne, appeared in the *Year-Book* for 1916-17, and addenda thereto by Mr. Kershaw in the *Year-Books* for 1918-19 and 1920-21.

THE HISTORY OF VICTORIA.

An article on this subject contributed by Ernest Scott, Professor of History in the University of Melbourne, appeared in the *Year-Book* for 1916-17, pages 1 to 31.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF LEADING EVENTS.

The *Year-Book* for 1916-17 contained, on pages 31 to 50, a chronological table of leading events in Victorian history for the years 1770 to 1900 inclusive, and of leading events in Victorian and other history for the years 1901 to 1916 inclusive. The leading events in the nine years 1917 to 1925 were given in the volumes relating to those years.

Some of the principal events in Victorian and other history during 1926 are given in the table which follows :—

1926. 4th January	..	A 44-hour working day came into force in New South Wales.
January and February		Great bush fires occurred in Gippsland and other parts of Victoria. The fires were the most disastrous in the history of the State. Thirty-one lives were lost, and a large amount of property destroyed.
18th January	..	First steel rolled at Newcastle Steel Works, New South Wales, for Sydney Harbour Bridge.
28th March..	..	Death of Sir Harry B. Allen, professor of anatomy and pathology at the Melbourne University, aged 72 years.
15th April ..	..	Death of Rev. J. L. Rentoul, Professor of Theology, Ormond College, aged 80 years.
20th April ..	..	Aviator Alan Cobham started on his London to Melbourne flight.
7th May ..	..	Great coal strike in England. About one million miners left work. The strike lasted many months, and was productive of much misery.
12th May ..	..	Captain Roald Amundsen reached the North Pole by airship.
21st May ..	..	Death of Mr. H. V. McKay, inventor of the Sunshine harvester, aged 61 years.
26th May ..	..	An electric train ran into a stationary train at the Caulfield Railway Station. Two persons were killed and many injured.
4th June ..	..	Death of Mr. W. B. Chaffey, C.M.G., one of the founders of the Mildura Irrigation Settlement, aged 71 years.
8th June ..	..	Death of Judge Weigall, of the Supreme Court of Victoria, aged 66 years.
28th June ..	..	Lord Somers, new Governor of Victoria, arrived in Melbourne.
16th July ..	..	The names of the re-constituted Federal Arbitration Court Judges announced, viz., Judge Dethridge, Victoria, Chief Judge; Judge Beeby, New South Wales; and Judge Lukin, Queensland.
5th August	..	Alan Cobham reached Darwin in his flight from London to Melbourne.

1926.	10th August	..	Announced that a Development and Migration Commission, consisting of four members had been appointed for a term of seven years. Mr. H. W. Gepp was appointed chairman. Two other members appointed were Mr. J. Gunn, ex-Premier of South Australia, and Mr. C. I. Nathan, of Western Australia.
	15th August	..	Aviator Alan Cobham arrived at the Essendon Aerodrome, Melbourne, thus completing his flight from London to Melbourne. It was estimated that 100,000 persons were present when the aeroplane descended.
	4th September	..	Referendum held throughout Australia on the proposals of the Bruce Ministry for the amendment of the Federal Constitution. The suggested amendments were defeated.
	13th September	..	Railway tragedy at Murilla, near Blandford, New South Wales. Twenty-six persons were killed and 40 injured.
	1st October	..	Sir Alan Cobham landed on the Thames, at Westminster. This completed his great flight to Australia and back.
	23rd October	..	Death of Major-General Sir Charles Ryan, aged 73 years, on board the <i>Otranto</i> as it was approaching Adelaide on a voyage from Great Britain.
	9th December	..	It was announced that Mr. Sidney Myer had offered to the Melbourne University 25,000 fully paid up shares in Myer Emporium Limited of a value of £50,000. This donation, which is the largest ever given to the University, was gratefully accepted.
	11th December	..	Sudden death of Mr. G. F. H. Schuler, editor of the <i>Age</i> newspaper.
	" "	* ..	This date is the 100th anniversary of the foundation of settlement on the shores of Westernport, Victoria.
	13th December	..	Death at Terang of Mr. W. G. Spence, former Postmaster-General of the Commonwealth, aged 79 years. Mr. Spence in earlier years was a noted trades union organizer.
	15th December	..	Pacific Health Congress opened at Federal Parliament House by the Acting Prime Minister (Dr. Earle Page). Delegates were present from Great Britain, Australia, British Possessions in the Pacific, France, Japan, United States, and the League of Nations.

PROGRESS OF STATE SINCE 1850.

The following table has been prepared to illustrate the advance made by the State since 1850—the year immediately preceding the separation of the Colony from New South Wales. The subsequent years are census years except the last :—

STATISTICS OF VICTORIAN PROGRESS, 1850 TO 1926.

8

Victorian Year-Book, 1926-27.

	1850.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1901.	1911.	1921.	1926.
Population, 31st December ..	76,162	541,800	747,412	879,886	1,157,678	1,209,900	1,339,893	1,550,686	1,711,827
Revenue .. £	259,433	2,592,101	3,734,422	5,136,011	8,343,588	7,712,099	9,372,637	19,054,475	25,260,756
Expenditure from Revenue ..	196,440	3,092,021	3,659,534	5,108,642	9,128,699	7,072,780	9,362,291	18,941,698	25,559,583
Public Funded Debt .. £	..	6,345,060	11,994,800	22,426,502	43,638,897	49,546,275	57,983,764	97,317,831	140,264,989
Gold produced .. oz.	..	1,967,453	1,355,477	858,850	576,400	789,562	542,074	114,602	54,014
Wool produced .. lbs.	16,345,468	22,640,745	37,177,646	45,970,560	76,503,635	73,235,138	101,803,644	90,250,571	111,260,814
Butter produced .. "	..	..	..	..	46,857,786	46,857,572	86,500,474	64,938,478	81,747,291
Agriculture—									
Land in cultivation .. acres	52,341	427,241	793,918	1,582,998	2,512,593	3,647,459	5,386,247	6,425,250	6,890,628
Wheat .. bushels	556,167	3,607,727	4,500,795	8,714,377	13,679,268	12,127,382	34,813,019	39,468,625	29,255,534
Oats .. "	99,535	2,136,430	3,299,889	3,612,111	4,455,551	6,724,900	9,699,127	10,907,191	4,998,165
Wine .. gallons	4,621	47,568	713,589	539,191	1,554,130	1,981,475	1,362,420	2,222,305	1,637,274
Live Stock—Horses .. No.	21,219	84,057	181,643	278,195	440,696	392,237	472,080	487,503	463,051
" Cattle .. "	378,806	628,092	799,509	1,286,677	1,812,104	1,602,384	1,547,569	1,575,159	1,513,787
" Sheep .. "	6,032,783	6,239,258	10,002,381	10,267,265	12,928,148	10,841,790	12,882,665	12,171,084	13,740,500
" Pigs .. "	9,260	43,480	177,447	239,926	286,780	350,370	333,281	175,275	339,601
Total Imports—Value .. £	744,925	13,532,452	12,341,995	16,718,521	21,711,608	18,927,340	28,150,198*	..	..
" Exports—Value .. £	1,041,796	13,828,606	14,557,820	16,252,103	16,006,743	18,646,097	29,896,275*	..	..
Imports, Oversea—Value .. £	..	10,991,377	9,201,942	11,481,567	13,802,598	12,686,880	21,850,963	57,608,777	50,332,845
Exports .. £	..	12,209,794	12,843,451	12,318,128	11,403,922	13,075,259	18,915,716	34,871,961	33,110,231
Shipping .. " tonnage	195,117	1,090,002	1,355,025	2,411,902	4,715,109	6,715,491	9,907,046	9,314,944	12,980,340
Railways open .. miles	..	214	276	1,247	2,764	3,238	3,496	4,274	4,683
Telegraph wire .. "	..	2,586	3,472	6,626	13,989	15,356	16,405	31,243	43,110
Postal business—Letters .. No.	381,651	6,109,929	11,716,166	26,308,317	62,526,448	83,973,499	159,092,011	180,797,030	213,819,758
" Newspapers .. "	381,158	4,277,179	5,172,790	11,440,732	22,729,005	27,104,344	36,125,728	31,660,611	46,552,400
Savings Bank Deposits .. £	52,697	582,796	1,117,761	2,569,438	5,715,687	9,662,006	18,213,040	48,262,058†	62,374,839†
Factories—									
Number of ..	..	531	1,740	2,488	3,141	3,249	4,873	6,532	7,461
Hands employed ..	..	4,395	19,468	43,209	52,225	66,529	102,176	140,743	152,959
Value of machinery, plant, land, and buildings .. £	..	..	4,725,125	8,044,296	16,472,859	12,298,500	16,613,348	35,492,735	60,396,500
Value of articles produced .. £	..	..	..	13,370,836	22,390,251	19,478,780	36,660,854	106,098,294	119,986,439
State Education—									
Number of Primary schools ..	61	671	988	1,757	2,233	1,967	2,059	2,334	2,530
Expenditure on Education .. £	..	162,547	274,384	546,285	726,711	701,034	1,052,418	2,117,151	3,025,732
Total value of rateable property in municipalities .. £	..	29,638,091	50,166,078	87,642,459	203,351,360	185,101,993	265,083,727	399,502,745	571,683,489
Friendly Societies—									
Number of members ..	..	7,166	35,706	47,908	89,269	101,045	145,439	143,421	156,599
Total funds .. £	..	..	213,004	475,954	961,933	1,370,604	2,246,396	3,375,050	4,280,400

NOTE.—In a few instances in the earlier years, where it is not possible to give figures for the exact date or period shown, those for the nearest dates or periods are given. Gold was discovered in 1851, in which year the return was 145,137 oz. Butter figures were not collected prior to 1891.

* These figures relate to the calendar year 1909. Owing to the Commonwealth authorities having discontinued the keeping of records of Inter-State trade the value of the total imports and exports of the State are not available for a later year.

† Including deposits in the Commonwealth Savings Bank.

The population of the State at the end of 1850 was 76,162; at the end of 1926 it had increased to 1,711,827. During the period 1850-1926 the revenue steadily increased from £259,433 to £25,269,756. There was no public debt until after the separation of the State from New South Wales. In 1861 the State indebtedness was £6,345,060; in 1926 the funded debt had reached £140,264,989, which has been spent on revenue-yielding and other works of a permanent character. The land in cultivation in 1850 was 52,300 acres; it now amounts to 6,890,628 acres. The value of oversea imports in 1861 was £10,991,377; in 1925-26 it was £50,332,845. Oversea exports amounted to £12,209,794 in 1861, and to £33,110,231 in 1925-26. No railways or telegraphs were in existence up to the end of 1855; in 1861 there were 214 miles of railway open, and in 1926 there were 4,683 miles; 2,586 miles of telegraph wires had been erected up to 1861, and 43,110 miles up to the 30th June, 1926. Postal business in letters and newspapers has expanded rapidly during the period covered by the table, and there has also been a large increase in Savings Bank deposits, which rose from £52,697 in 1850 to £62,374,839 in 1926.

The expenditure on education amounted to £162,547 in 1861, and had increased to £3,025,732 in 1925-26. Members of friendly societies numbered 7,166 in 1861 and 156,599 in 1925-26—the funds amounting to £213,000 in 1871 and £4,280,400 in 1925-26. Hands employed in factories rose from 19,468 in 1871 to 152,959 in 1925-26. The total value of rateable property in municipalities, which was £29,600,000 in 1861, was £571,683,489 in 1925-26.

CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT.

The Present Constitution.

After the establishment of the Federal Government it became evident that the representation of the States in the States Houses was excessive, and steps were taken to reform the States Constitutions. Accordingly an Act "to provide for the Reform of the Constitution" was passed in Victoria and reserved for the Royal assent on 7th April, 1903. After an interval of some months the Royal assent was proclaimed on 26th November, 1903. This Act, entitled *The Constitution Act 1903*, provided for a reduction in the number of responsible Ministers from ten to eight, and in their salaries from £10,400 to £8,400 (since increased to £10,000); and decreased the number of members of the Legislative Council from 48 to 35, including one special representative for the State railways and public servants; but increased the number of electoral provinces from fourteen to seventeen, each being now represented by two members elected for six years—one retiring every three years by rotation, except at a general election, when one-half of the members are to be elected for only three years. The

**Reform Act
1903.**