

EMPLOYMENT.

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 suggested by the author in conjunction with Mr. R. M. Johnson, the talented statistician of Tasmania. Under the new system 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

The mercantile element was most strongly represented in New South Wales, where about 3 persons out of every 100 were classed under this head. The proportion of population engaged in agricultural, pastoral, mining, and maritime pursuits in the various Colonies, was as follows :—

	Agriculture.	Pastoral.	Mining.	Maritime.
	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.
New South Wales	11·93	3·07	2·35	0·73
Victoria	12·63	1·77	4·18	0·39
Queensland	10·30	5·27	5·35	0·89
South Australia	10·83	1·60	0·78	0·90
Western Australia	11·23	4·80	0·34	1·45
Tasmania	15·33	1·43	2·67	0·83
New Zealand	8·72	2·39	2·91	0·92

It is probable that the variations in the percentages are to some extent due to differences of classification, a remark which applies equally to the other divisions of occupations. Artificers and labourers include both skilled and unskilled labour, and there are, unfortunately, not sufficient data available to enable any accurate division to be made between the two classes. The great bulk of the male population comes under this head, the proportions in each colony being as follows :—

	Per cent.
New South Wales	15·11
Victoria	14·41
Queensland	12·74
South Australia	15·54
Western Australia	12·17
Tasmania	13·72
New Zealand	13·81

Concerning four Colonies only is there any later information to hand in regard to this kind of labour. The estimated number of hands employed in manufactories, works, &c., if the returns of the various colonies are placed on the same basis, is as follows :—

Colony.	Hands employed.
* New South Wales	45,564
* Victoria	54,472
South Australia	9,946
New Zealand	22,094

* 1888-89.

Value of plant.

The average value of plant in the factories in which these hands are employed is, in New South Wales, £1,849; the average power employed is 8 horse-power; and the hands per factory, 14·6. For Victoria the figures are: Average value, £1,847; power, 8·3; and hands, 18·3; while for New Zealand they are, value, £1,083; power, 7·9; and hands, 11·3. In the Australian Colonies most manufacturing industries are in their infancy, and are small in comparison with the larger establishments of other countries. The classification "Manufactories, &c." is very comprehensive, and the larger proportion of establishments included under this term, in all Colonies, more properly comes under the heading of "works" than of "manufactories."

Proportion of women and children.

Women, children, and domestic servants form 64 to 57 per cent. of the whole population of the various Colonies, the proportion under this head in each Province being as follows:—

	Per cent.
New South Wales	56·85
Victoria	58·48
Queensland	57·34
South Australia	62·54
Western Australia ..	59·88
Tasmania	59·60
New Zealand	64·60

In this class are included not only wives, daughters with no specified occupation, and those engaged in domestic duties, but all children, both attending school, and too young for instruction.

Distribution of employment.

It will be seen that persons of independent means are apparently far more numerous in New South Wales than in any other colony, but it is most probable that the great difference observable is chiefly due to the want of uniformity of classification already alluded to, and to the different meanings put upon the vague term by the compilers of the Census. Under the head of "Supported by the Community" are included all prisoners in gaols, the insane and destitute who are in State Asylums, and all those persons who are supported by charity or are a burthen to the

State. In no colony do these persons represent any considerable proportion of the population, and the figures afford striking evidence of the general well-being of the people of Australasia. In 1881, at the time when the last census was taken, the total population of the combined colonies amounted to 2,742,550, and the numbers in each walk in life may be thus briefly summarized :—

	No.	Per cent.
Engaged in Government Service.....	17,943	0·65
„ Learned professions.....	40,332	1·47
„ Mercantile pursuits.....	61,626	2·25
„ Agricultural „	314,741	11·48
„ Pastoral „	68,958	2·51
„ Mining „	84,875	3·10
„ Maritime „	19,223	0·70
Artificers and laborers	395,803	14·43
Women, children, and domestic servants	1,632,344	59·52
Persons of independent means	9,172	0·34
Supported by the community.....	26,670	0·97
Otherwise engaged, or unspecified.....	70,863	2·58

It is estimated that the total value of production in all the colonies amounts to £95,000,000, derived from the following industries :—

Agricultural.....	£26,830,000
Pastoral.....	35,387,000
Mining	10,790,000
Manufacturing.....	18,870,000
Forest and Fisheries	3,165,000
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	£95,042,000

The value produced by each colony being :—

New South Wales	£27,564,000
Victoria.....	23,350,000
Queensland	12,684,000
South Australia	9,640,000
Western Australia	1,421,000
Tasmania	3,323,000
New Zealand ..	17,060,000
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	£95,042,000

Indigent population.

Total production of these colonies.

Production of
each Colony.

Taking each colony separately the value of its production under the classes already given was :—

	Agriculture.	Pastoral.	Mining.	Manufactures and Works.	Forests, Fisheries, &c.
	£	£	£	£	£
N. S. Wales	4,150,000	13,059,000	3,800,000	5,770,000	785,000
Victoria	7,330,000	6,280,000	2,660,000	6,450,000	630,000
Queensland	1,845,000	6,444,000	2,070,000	1,875,000	450,000
S. Australia	5,200,000	2,500,000	390,000	1,250,000	300,000
W. Australia.....	260,000	661,500	200,000	150,000	150,000
Tasmania	1,270,000	657,500	520,000	625,000	250,000
New Zealand.....	6,775,000	5,785,000	1,150,000	2,750,000	600,000
Australasia...£	26,830,000	35,387,000	10,790,000	18,870,000	3,165,000