

## APPENDIX E.

CENTENNIAL INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION,  
MELBOURNE.

(The following account has been supplied by the Secretary, Mr. G. T. A. Lavater.)

Prior to the prorogation of Parliament at the end of the year 1886, a resolution was arrived at to hold an Exhibition of Arts, Industry, &c., to be called the "Centennial International Exhibition," during the year 1888.

By this it was proposed to commemorate the founding of the first Australasian colony, New South Wales. For this purpose it was determined to utilize the permanent buildings which had been erected in Carlton Gardens during the years 1879 and 1880 for the International Exhibition which was held in the latter year, and to add thereto such other buildings as might be necessary.

His Excellency the Governor, by and with the advice of the Executive Council, issued, on the 6th January, 1887, a Commission for the purpose of such Exhibition, consisting of the undermentioned gentlemen and a secretary:—

*President:*

His Honor Chief Justice George Higinbotham, succeeded by—  
The Honorable Sir James MacBain, Knt., President of the Legislative Council.

*Executive Vice-President and Treasurer:*

Colonel the Honorable Frederick Thomas Sargood, C.M.G., M.L.C.

*Vice-Presidents:*

The Honorable M. H. Davies, M.L.A., Speaker of the Legislative Assembly;  
The Honorable Sir William John Clarke, Baronet, M.L.C.;  
The Honorable Peter Lalor, M.L.A.

*Members:*

The Honorable James Munro, M.L.A.;  
The Honorable William Mountford Kinsey Vale;  
Joseph Bosisto, Esq., C.M.G., M.L.A.;  
Robert Murray Smith, Esq., C.M.G.;  
William Cain, Esq., J.P., Mayor of the City of Melbourne;  
Thomas Houlden Thompson, Esq., J.P., Mayor of the City of Ballarat;  
Patrick Hayes, Esq., J.P., Mayor of the City of Sandhurst;  
Lambton L. Mount, Esq., President of the Victorian Chamber of Manufactures;  
William Arthur Trenwith, Esq., President of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council;  
John Blyth, Esq., J.P.;  
Henry Byron Moore, Esq.

*Secretary to the Commissioners:*

George T. A. Lavater, Esq.

In February, 1887, the official prospectus was issued and circulated over the civilized world. In this it was notified that space and a reasonable amount of motive power would be granted to all exhibitors free of charge.

The date of opening was fixed to take place on the 1st August, 1888, and that of closing on the 31st day of January, 1889.

The following countries and colonies appointed Commissions for the purpose of being officially represented at the Exhibition, viz.:—Great Britain, Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, United States of America, New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, and New Zealand; a large number of other countries were also unofficially represented.

It soon became evident from the number of applications for space which poured in that very large additions to the permanent buildings would be required, and on the 5th July, 1887, advertisements were inserted in the public press calling for designs for the construction of the necessary temporary annexes. On the 14th July of the same year the design of Mr. G. R. Johnson, architect, of the city of Melbourne, was adopted by the full body of Commissioners.

On the 3rd September the contract deed was executed by the contractor, and building was commenced on the 5th of the same month.

The buildings when completed covered, including the galleries and basement floor, 1,455,824 square feet, or a total of 33 acres 1 rood 27 perches, whilst the open space available was 236,027 square feet; so that altogether there were 1,691,851 square feet, or 38 acres 3 roods 14 perches available for the display of exhibits, including passage-ways. The gardens covered an area of 295,534 square feet, or 6 acres 3 roods 6 perches, making total space under control of the Commissioners 1,987,385 square feet, or 45 acres 2 roods 20 perches.

The opening ceremony took place on the day appointed, viz., 1st August, 1888, and was inaugurated by an imposing outdoor procession of the Imperial and local military and naval forces, the friendly and trade societies, &c.

In the buildings a grand procession was formed, consisting of the Governors of the Australasian Colonies, the Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and Executive Commissioners of the countries officially represented, the Foreign Consuls, the President, Executive Vice-President, Vice-Presidents, and members of the Executive and general body of the Victorian Commissioners with their Secretary, the Speakers of the Colonial Parliaments, the members of the Houses of Legislature in the different colonies, Her Majesty's Ministers in Victoria and the other Australasian Colonies, the Judges of the Supreme Courts, the Mayor and Town Clerk of the city of Melbourne, and the Imperial Naval and Military Officers of all nations then in Melbourne.

The procession proceeded up the Grand Avenue of Nations to the dais under the great dome in the main building, the national airs of the nations officially represented being successively played as the procession passed their several courts.

On the Governor's arrival on the dais, "God Save the Queen" was played and sung by an orchestra of 70 performers and a chorus of 750 voices, accompanied on the Grand Organ.

A Royal Salute had been fired from the batteries near Prince's Bridge on His Excellency the Governor leaving Government House to proceed to the Exhibition, and on his declaring the Exhibition open to the public, during the ceremony, the salute was repeated.

An address was presented by the President, Sir James MacBain, the text of which, and the Governor's reply thereto, being as follows:—

#### THE ADDRESS TO THE GOVERNOR.

To His Excellency Sir Henry Brougham Loch, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Victoria and its Dependencies, &c.

Your Excellency,

We, the Commissioners for the Centennial International Exhibition of 1888, appointed under the seal of the colony, desire with great respect to accord you our heartiest welcome, and to convey to you, as representative of Her Most Gracious Majesty, the assurance of our devoted loyalty to Her Majesty's Crown and person.

In response to a general feeling that the centenary of the foundation of the first Australian settlement should not be allowed to pass without a commemoration in every way worthy of the event, the Victorian Government incurred the responsibility of proposing to the Victorian Parliament the holding in the city of Melbourne of an Exhibition of Works of Art and Industry, to be called the Centennial International Exhibition, 1888.

In undertaking this important work, the Government and people of Victoria desired that an opportunity should be afforded to all the colonies of Australasia of combining their efforts to do honour to the mother colony (New South Wales), to demonstrate their progress in the arts and industries of life, to foster the sentiment of Australasian federation, and generally to exhibit the varied resources of this great country, which, in the providence of God, we have been called upon to occupy.

Parliament having given its assent to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government, Your Excellency, with the advice of the Executive Council, was pleased, on the 6th day of January, 1887, to appoint a Royal Commission with powers to carry out the necessary measures.

The Commissioners at once issued circulars to all the nations of the civilized world, earnestly inviting their co-operation, and setting forth the objects and scope of the Exhibition, together with the necessary preliminary rules and regulations for the guidance of exhibitors.

In response to their invitation, a British Royal Commission was appointed, which was distinguished by having for its President His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who thus gives further evidence of the deep interest he continues to take in the Colonies, and in exhibitions of works of art and industry in all parts of Her Majesty's dominions. The Commissioners desire also to express their indebtedness to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Knutsford, for his many good offices in connexion with this undertaking, and to the Vice-President, the Earl of Rosebery, through whose untiring exertions the Exhibition has been largely benefited.

The following countries and colonies also appointed Commissions, viz. :—Germany, Belgium, France, Austria, the United States of America, New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, and New Zealand; and their representatives are here with us this day to assist in this celebration.

The necessity of large additions to the permanent buildings (in the main hall of which we are to-day assembled), and which were, as will be remembered, specially erected for the purposes of the International Exhibition held in this city in 1880, calling for early attention, competitive designs were, on the 5th day of April, 1887, invited by advertisement in the public press; and on the 14th of July the design, from which the present annexes have been erected, was unanimously determined upon by the full body of Commissioners; the contract deed was executed by the contractor on the 3rd of September, and the work was commenced on the 5th of the same month.

As the different nations represented here successively accepted the invitation of your Commissioners to send examples of their various products in arts, manufactures, and other industries, it soon became apparent, from the gratifying support accorded to the Exhibition, that the space which had at the first been considered sufficient by your Commissioners would be totally inadequate, and hence it became necessary to increase the area of the annexes to about 26½ acres, which, with the permanent buildings, make a total covered space of about 35 acres, as compared with about 20 acres occupied by the Exhibition of 1880.

In addition to the countries officially represented, Canada, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Holland, India, China, Japan, Fiji, New Guinea, and many others have evinced a warm interest in the success of our undertaking by forwarding numerous and interesting exhibits of their various productions; and your Commissioners may fairly claim that the magnitude and value of the artistic, industrial, and other exhibits which have been gathered together in the Exhibition about to be declared open by Your Excellency far surpass anything heretofore displayed in the Southern Hemisphere.

Your Commissioners desire, through Your Excellency, to express to the Government and Parliament of Victoria their sense of the liberality with which the necessary funds required for the successful carrying out of this great enterprise have been voted. They desire also to return their sincere thanks to the Governments and people of the several exhibiting countries and colonies for the very flattering manner in which they have responded to the invitation of your Commissioners.

To the public of Victoria your Commissioners also desire to tender their best thanks for the hearty support accorded to them in their endeavours to have the colony well and worthily represented.

To the general body of exhibitors of all nationalities who have assisted in the splendid display to which the attention of Your Excellency will shortly be invited, the thanks not only of your Commissioners but of the whole people of Victoria are due.

We have the honour to present, with this address, a copy of the official catalogue of the Exhibition for Your Excellency's acceptance. The diversity of character of the exhibits which are scheduled therein may enable Your Excellency to form some idea of the magnitude of the work which has been carried out by your Commissioners, and the onerous nature of the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted.

Your Commissioners trust that the results of this undertaking will prove that the confidence reposed in them by Your Excellency and your constitutional advisers has not been misplaced, that the Centennial International Exhibition of 1888 may redound to the credit of Australasia, and that the inspection of so many products of the world's thought and labour may, under the blessing of Divine Providence, educate our people to greater enterprises in arts and industry in the future, and thus enhance the prosperity and happiness of all.

It now only remains for me, in the name of my fellow Commissioners, to request that Your Excellency will be pleased to declare the Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition of 1888 open, in the name of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, whom God preserve.

JAS. MACBAIN, President.

---

#### HIS EXCELLENCY'S REPLY.

Mr. President, Vice-Presidents, and Gentlemen—

It will be my most pleasing duty to convey to Her Majesty the assurance of your devoted loyalty to Her Majesty's Crown and person, and I thank you on behalf of the Queen for the welcome you have accorded me as Her Majesty's representative.

The general feeling which was entertained, as you observe, that the first centenary of British settlement upon this great continent should be marked in a manner worthy of the occasion found expression in the great gathering of representative men from all parts of Australasia, in January of this year, in the capital city of the mother colony. There prevailed, however, a strong desire that a further and durable record should be left to mark for future generations the progress that these great colonies have made during their first centennial of life; and through the action of my Government, and the liberality of Parliament, a warm response has been given to that feeling, of which the outcome has been the Exhibition which we are met here together this day to open.

I congratulate you, Mr. President and the Commissioners, upon the result of your labours, and I apprehend that the building which has been carried out under your auspices covers a larger area on one floor and under one roof than any which has yet been erected in any other part of the world; and, although the site on which the Exhibition stands is in the great metropolis of Victoria, it is one in which all the colonies may take an equal pride, as it is purely Australasian in its inception and in its representative character.

We desire to record our deep obligation to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, not only for his acceptance of the position of President of the British Commission, but especially for the influence he has exerted to secure the finest and

most valuable collection of loan pictures that has ever been sent from England; while we gratefully recognize the gracious and generous manner in which Her Majesty the Queen and the other owners of these pictures, to their own deprivation and risk, have enabled the people in these colonies—who are to a certain extent shut out from the museums and galleries of Europe—to study some of the most beautiful specimens of art that can be produced in the old world, and enjoy a collection which will alone mark this Exhibition as unique in the annals of like-undertakings.

The thanks of my Government and of the people of this colony are also due to those foreign countries, and to the sister colonies, which have, either through their Governments or through their commercial representatives, responded so cordially to the invitation of the Commission to send to our shores examples of their various products in arts, manufactures, and other industries.

I should not omit reference to the successful efforts made by the Commissioners to provide an exhibition of musical talent hitherto unequalled in any part of Australia, as the highest talent from this and from the other colonies have united together in giving their support and encouragement to one of the great leaders in the musical world at home, who, at the invitation of the Commissioners, has placed his services for the next six months at their disposal.

We may entertain the sanguine hope that great and beneficial results will be derived by the people of these young and energetic countries from a careful study of the great works and industries of the world, whether these be connected with the highest branches of art, of science, or of those practical inventions the result of study, directed to the discovery of ever-improving methods in the application of chemistry and of machinery, leading to the development for the benefit of mankind of the unlimited wealth that lies hidden in the great storehouse of the world.

To bring home to future generations the full value of the instruction that may be derived from an intelligent study of the works and exhibits which this Exhibition will bring within the reach of thousands, steps will doubtless be taken to secure an impartial record from which true deductions may be drawn that will be of inestimable value in the future.

I earnestly share the hope expressed by you, Mr. President, and your colleagues, that the Centennial International Exhibition of 1888 may conduce to the credit of Australasia, and that the result of bringing together art treasures, machinery, and industrial products from all parts of the world may teach what cultivated art and skilled science have done for the elevation and solace of man, and, by directing discussion to their respective merits, lead to their further improvement and development. But the good that results from this and other institutions should not be weighed, I venture to think, by the mere consideration of the advantage that doubtless accrues to the world by the encouragement they offer to competitive rivalry between competing firms in the production of works, however great may be their value; but they should likewise be viewed, as is so well described in one of the eloquent addresses delivered at the Exhibition at Philadelphia, as “being the means of bringing together nationalities; which lead to extended relations; promotes the acquisition and diffusion of a better knowledge of natural resources and products, and of national methods and industries; creates and enlarges mutual respect and esteem; softens prejudices; and contributes to the preservation of harmony and peace, the noblest aim of modern civilization.”

I now declare open, in the Queen’s name, and on Her Majesty’s behalf, this great Centennial International Exhibition of 1888.

---

The musical performances on the occasion consisted of the Hundredth Psalm, a Song of Thanksgiving (specially composed by the conductor, Mr. F. H. Cowen, who had been engaged by the Commissioners to come to Victoria to direct the performances of the Exhibition orchestra and chorus), a Cantata specially composed by Mr. H. J. King to words by the Rev. W. Allen, the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel’s Messiah, and in conclusion “God Save the Queen.”

The juries had commenced their labours on the 12th September, and were pressing forward with the work of judging the exhibits.

The final results as regards the Exhibition, as to cost, number of awards, and to whom given, and other detailed particulars, cannot be ascertained until after its close in 1889; but the following is a statement of the attendance and receipts during the first five months of its being open:—

STATEMENT OF ATTENDANCE AND RECEIPTS AT CENTENNIAL INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, MELBOURNE, FROM 1ST AUGUST TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1888.

Attendance	...	...	...	...	...	1,449,088
Receipts	...	...	...	...	...	£86,712 12 2

*Analysis of Receipts.*

Admissions	...	...	...	...	...	£62,057 5 5
Aquarium Receipts	...	...	...	...	...	6,068 19 9
Concert Receipts	...	...	...	...	...	7,165 13 11
Dome Receipts	...	...	...	...	...	826 17 9
Closets and Lavatories	...	...	...	...	...	716 0 7
Licences and Rents	...	...	...	...	...	6,937 5 11
Commissioners Wine Bars	...	...	...	...	...	1,038 18 7
Switchback Railway	...	...	...	...	...	1,163 14 6
Shooting Gallery	...	...	...	...	...	22 1 5
Electric Railway	...	...	...	...	...	43 2 0
Catalogues	...	...	...	...	...	672 12 4
						£86,712 12 2

NOTE.—The Exhibition was officially closed by His Excellency the Governor on the 31st January, 1889, but was kept open informally for some days afterwards. To the 2nd February, the total attendance was 1,962,976, and the total receipts were £103,795. The largest attendance on any one day was on the Saturday before the closing (26th January), the number of visitors on that day being 42,395, viz., 24,308 in the day time and 18,087 in the evening.—H. H. H.