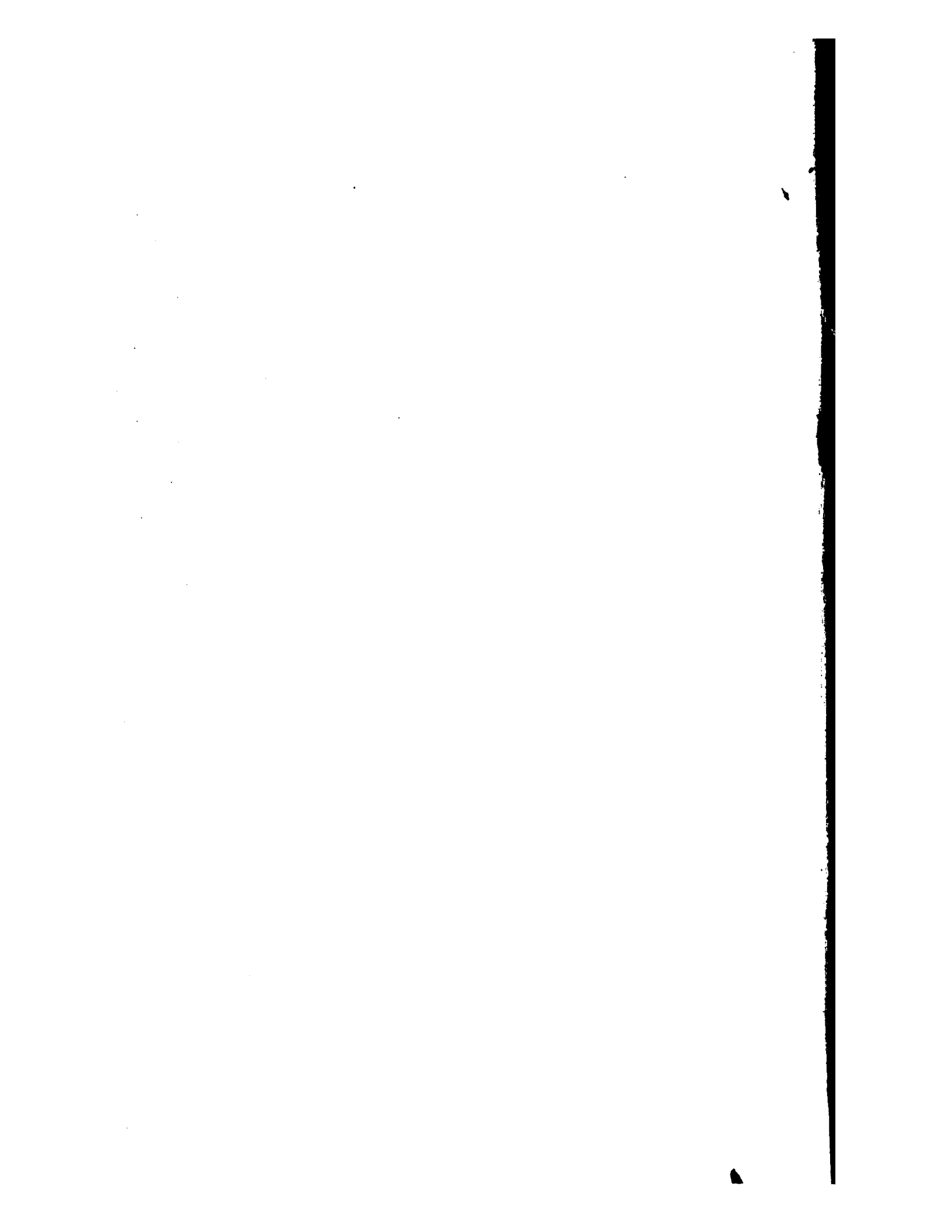


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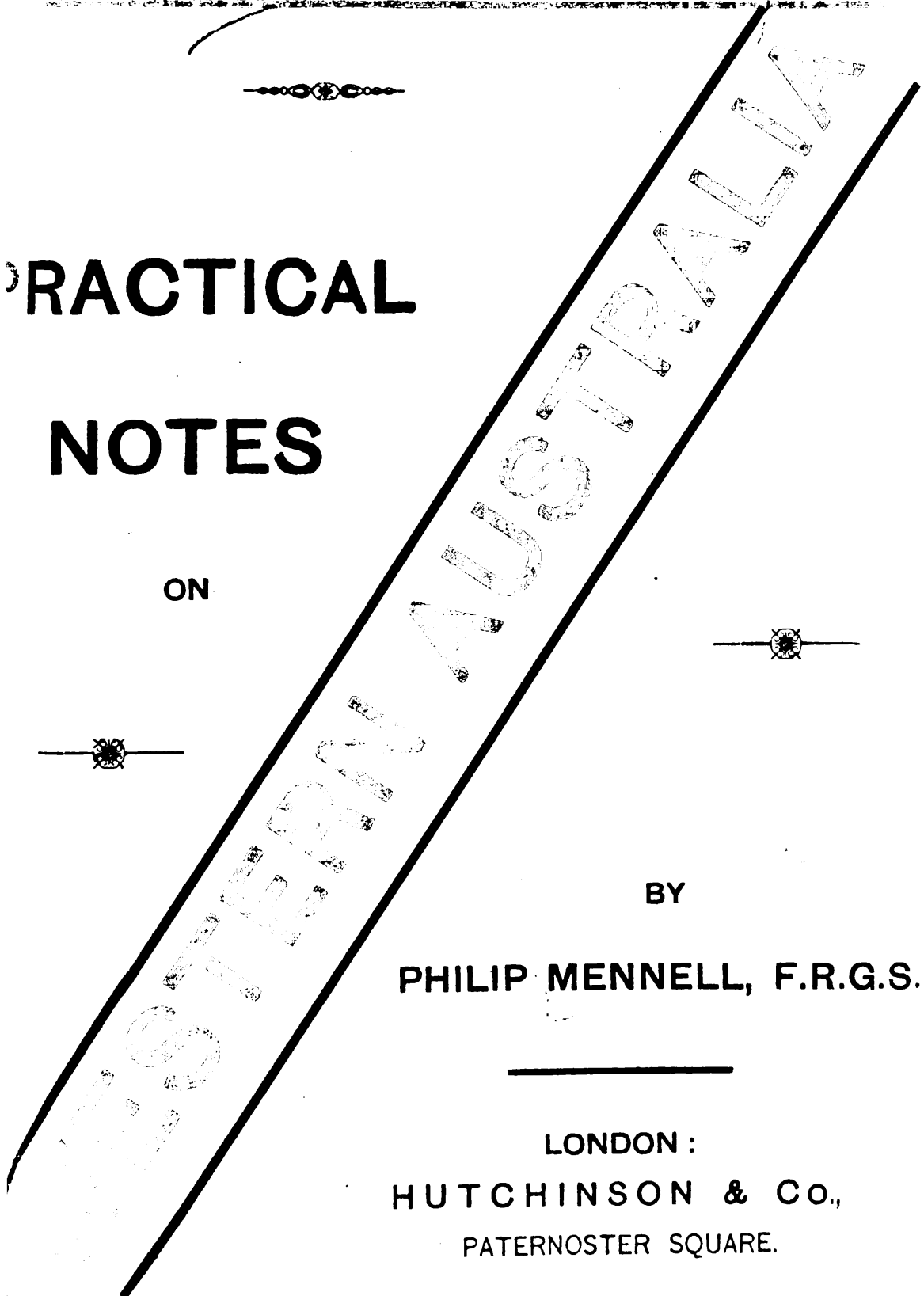
ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

THE COMING COLONY.

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PRACTICAL NOTES

ON



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BY

PHILIP MENNELL, F.R.G.S.

LONDON :
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PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

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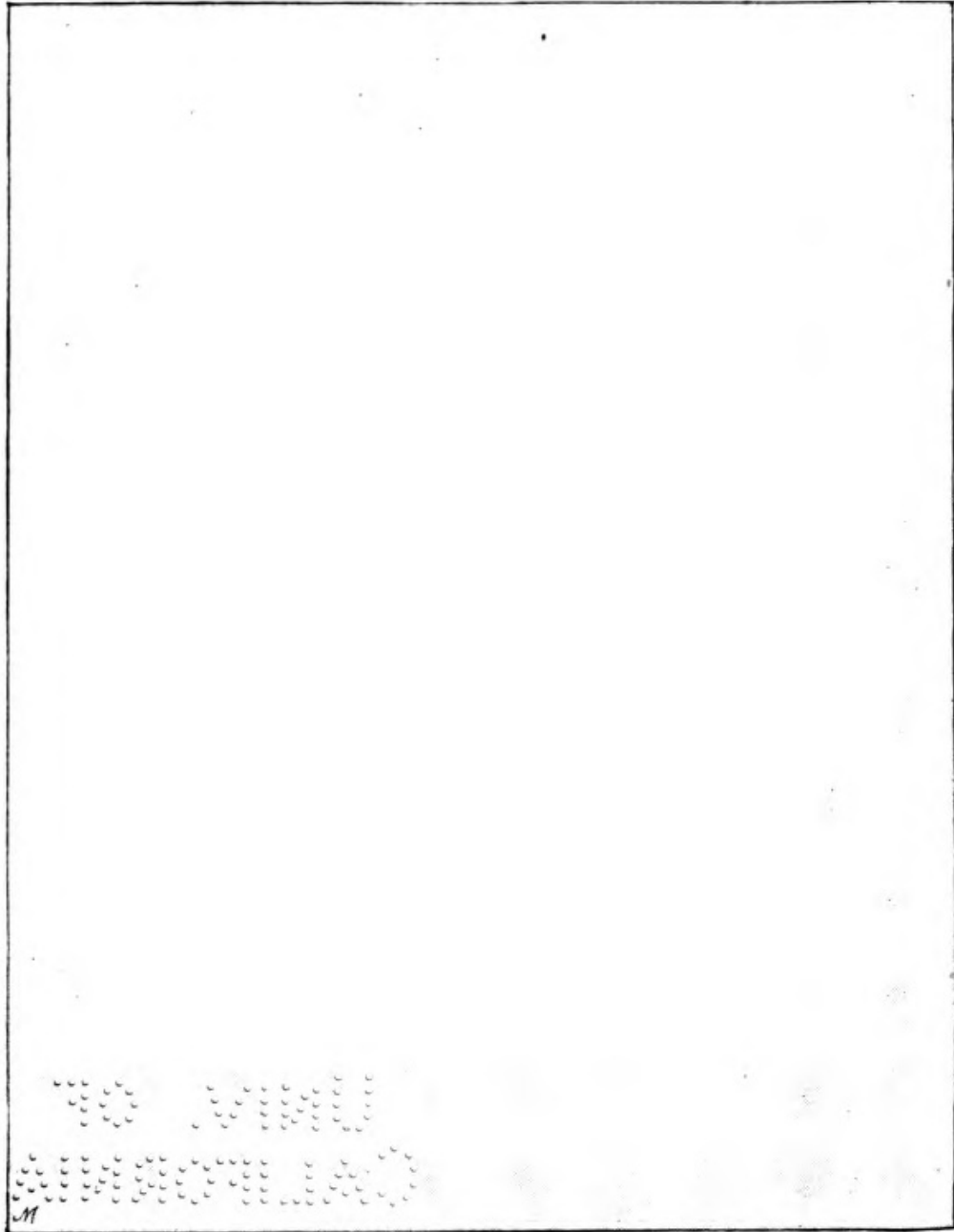
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LONDON, July, 1892.

THE COMING COLONY



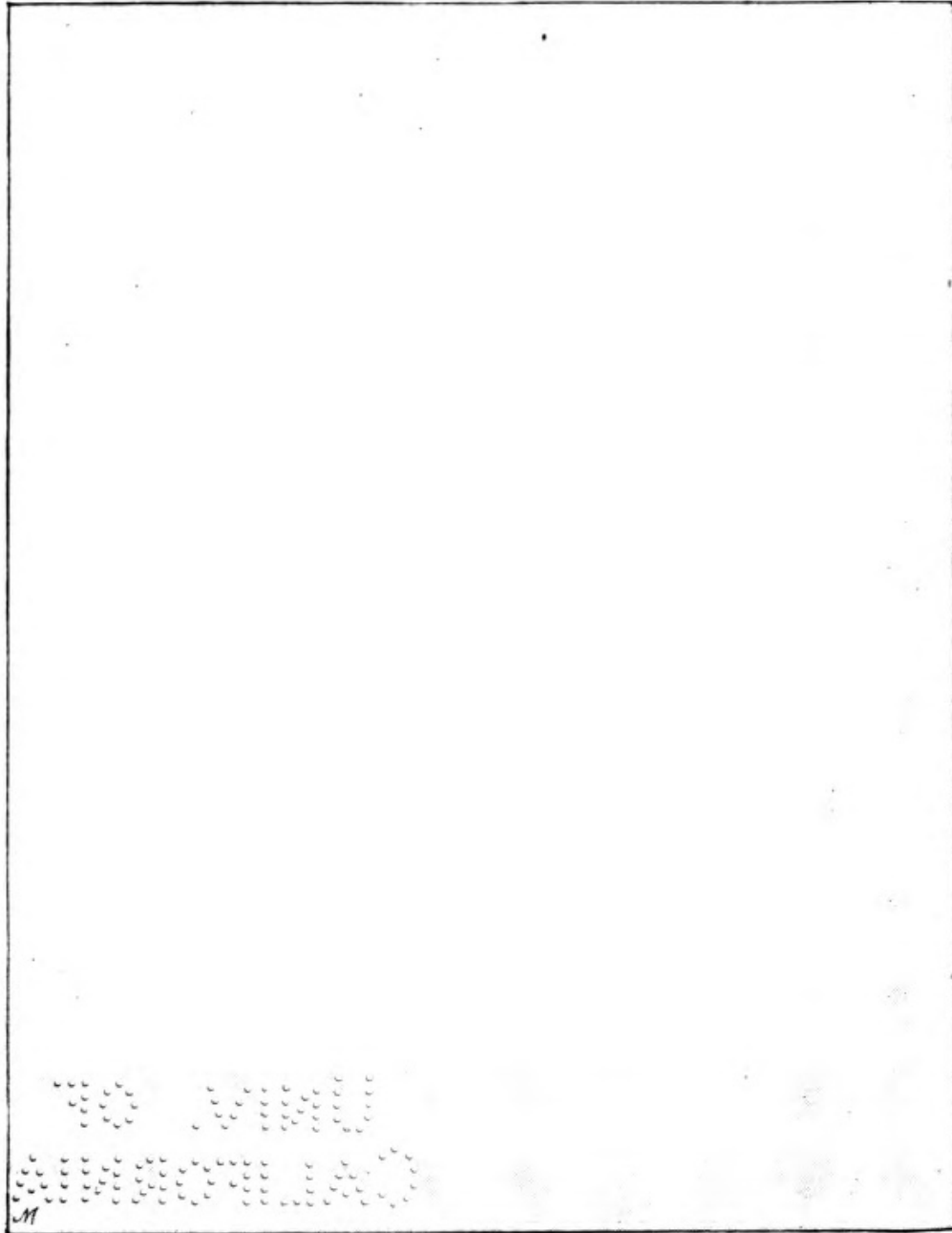
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SIR W. C. F. ROBINSON, G.C.M.G.,
GOVERNOR OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Frontispiece.]

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



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Frontispiece.]

THE
COMING COLONY.

PRACTICAL NOTES

ON

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

BY

PHILIP MENNELL, F.R.G.S.

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LONDON :

HUTCHINSON & CO.,

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LONDON:
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THE
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OF
ARTS
AND
CRAFTS

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

SIR WM. C. F. ROBINSON, G.C.M.G.,

GOVERNOR OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA,

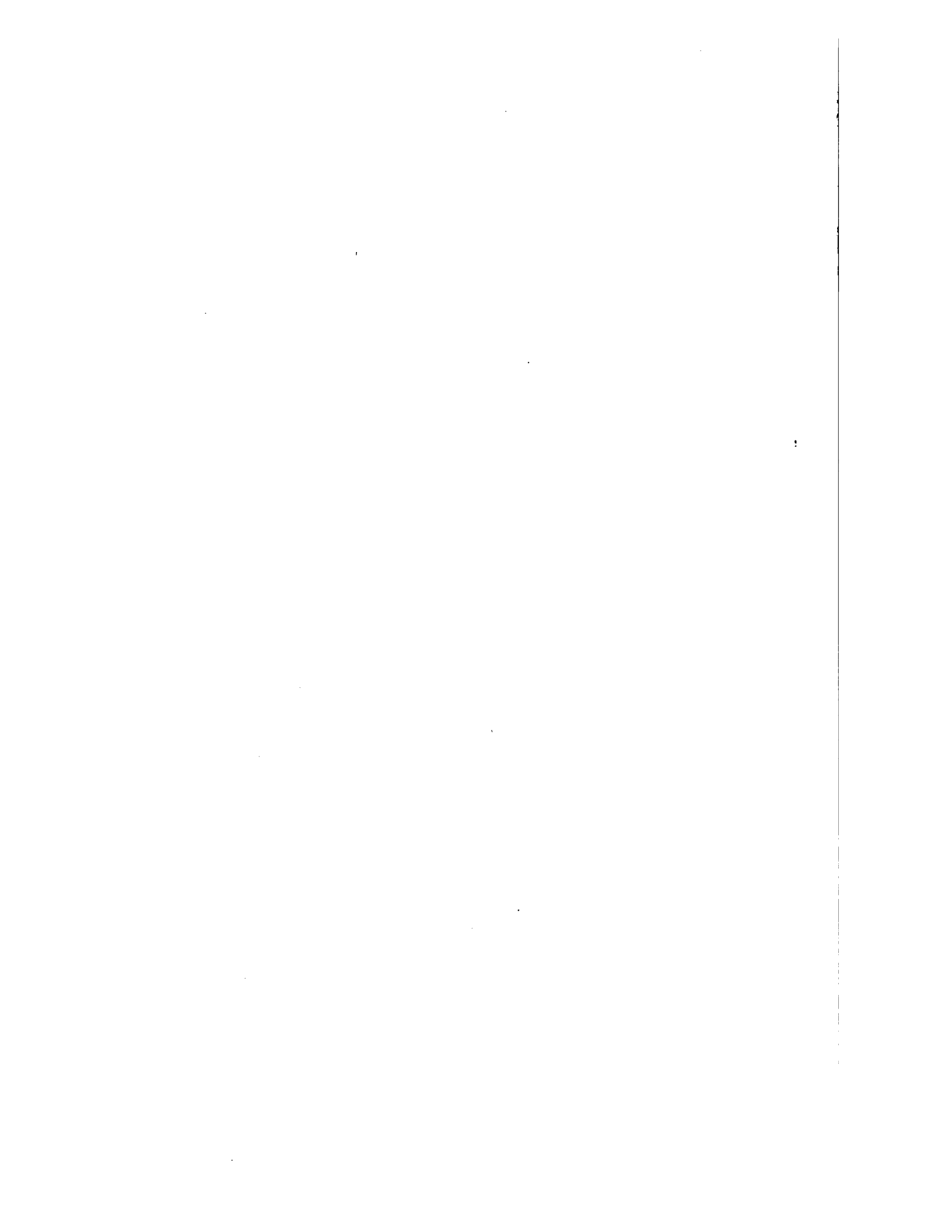
THESE NOTES

ON THE COLONY WHICH OWES SO MUCH

TO HIS WISE ADMINISTRATION

Are Inscribed.

865913



INTRODUCTORY.



IN the preparation of the present "Notes" on Western Australia, the writer's personal observations of the colony, made in June of last year, have been supplemented by much valuable information derived from Mr. Nicolay's "Handbook of Western Australia"; "The Western Australian Year-book for 1890," edited by the Registrar-General of the colony, Mr. Malcolm A. C. Fraser; "The Western Australian Hand-book," issued by the Emigrants' Information Office in London; Pierssene's "Albany Guide and Hand-book of Western Australia"; the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture (1887 to 1890); Mr. James Martin's excellent report on the operations of the West Australian Land Company, Limited, written in April, 1890, and the descriptive prospectus of their lands issued by that Company. The writer has also derived much additional and confirmatory data respecting the Midland Railway Company's concession from the report compiled by that unusually honest and outspoken observer, Dr. J. R. M.

Robertson, M.E., F.G.S., who went over the area from which the Midland will select their territory at the end of last year in company with Mr. Herbert Bond.

The work is much indebted to the revision of Sir Malcolm Fraser, K.C.M.G., first Agent-General for Western Australia, late Colonial Secretary and previously Surveyor-General of the Colony. The writer is also under great obligations for the facilities extended and the information afforded to him when in the Colony by his Excellency Sir William C. F. Robinson, G.C.M.G.; Sir John Forrest, K.C.M.G., the first Premier of Western Australia; Sir Thomas Cockburn Campbell, Bart., President of the Legislative Council; Sir James G. Lee Steere, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly; Hon. George Shenton, M.L.C., Chief Secretary; Hon. H. W. Venn, M.L.A., Minister of Railways; Hon. W. E. Marmion, M.L.A., Minister of Lands; Hon. George Leake, M.L.C.; Dr. Waylen; Hon. J. W. Hackett, M.L.C.; Mr. S. H. Parker, M.L.A., Q.C.; Mr. A. Y. Hassell, M.L.A.; Mr. F. C. Piesse, M.L.A.; Mr. Traylen, M.L.A.; Mr. John Hassell, Agent for Lord Brassey; Mr. Parry, Agent for Mr. T. W. Powell; Mr. Woodward, Government Geologist; Mr. F. Hart, and others, whose names are mentioned in the text. Mr. Henry Bull and Mr. Charles Bethell, of London, have also afforded valuable aid.

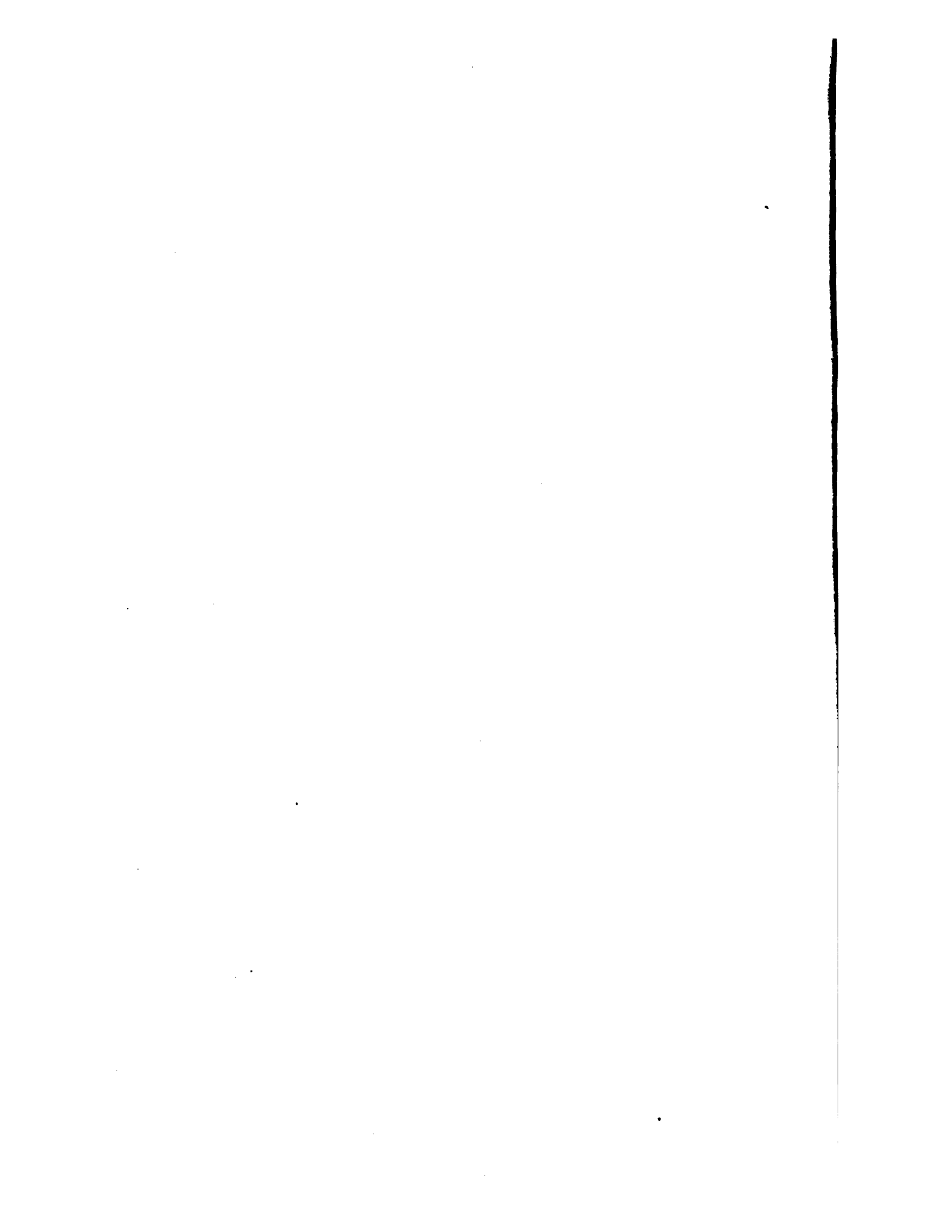
Whilst this work has been passing through the press, Sir John Forrest has made a very important statement with regard

to the intention of the Government to introduce a measure authorising them to make free grants of 160 acres of land to settlers who will clear, fence, improve, and reside. The Premier also proposes that the Government shall advance money to the extent of half the value of the improvements made, not exceeding a maximum in any case of £150 at five per cent. interest. This intelligence only comes by cable, and is still a matter for parliamentary consideration.

PHILIP MENNELL.

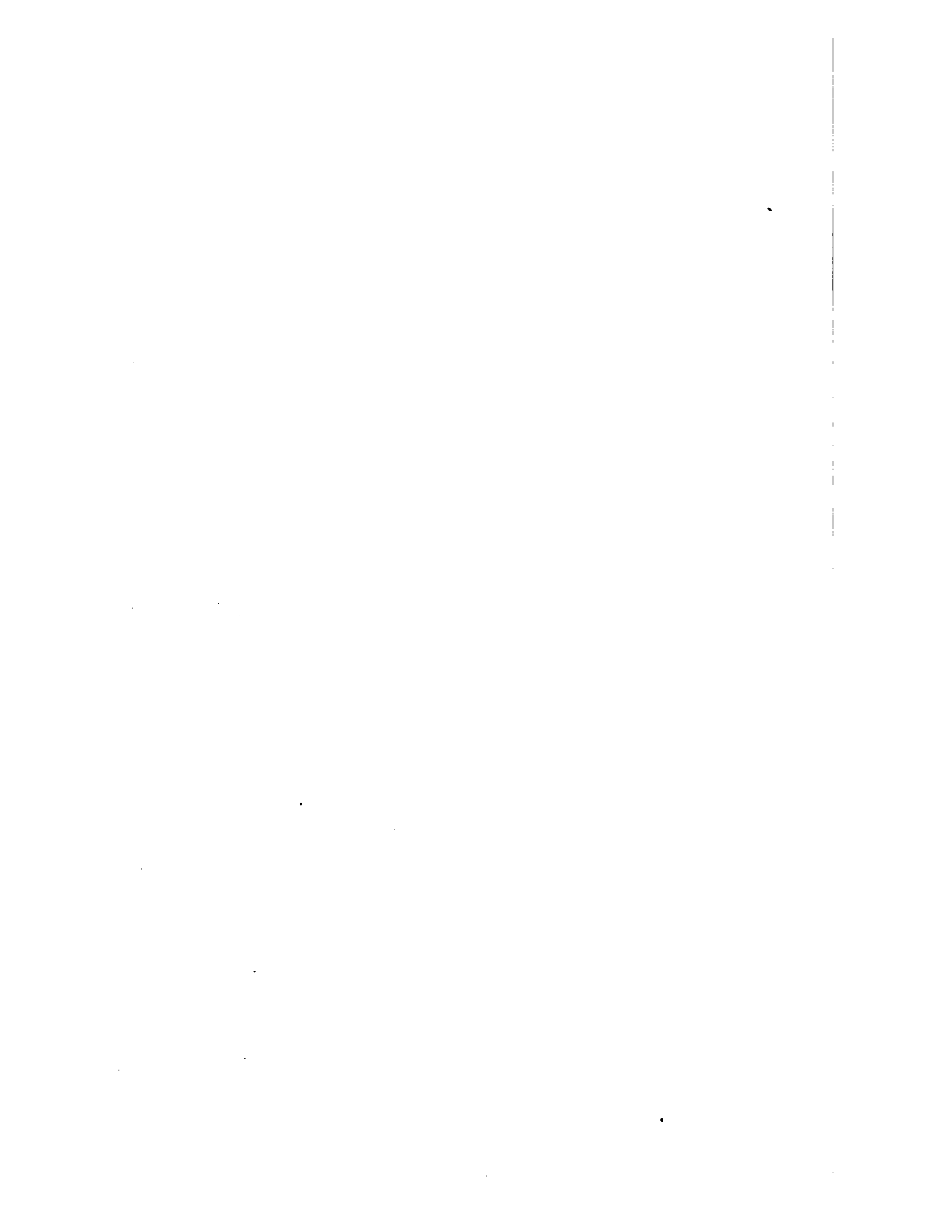
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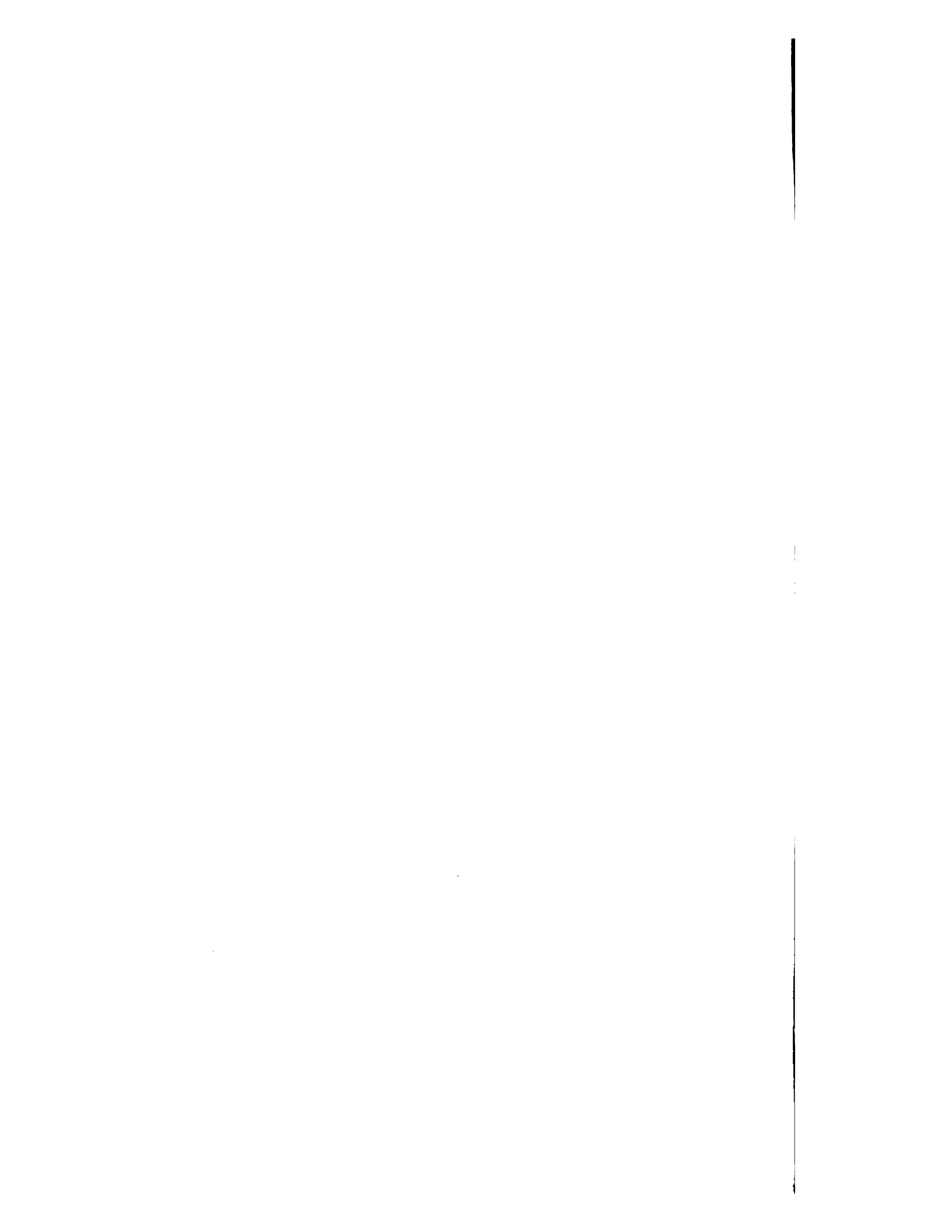
August 1st, 1892.



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STRALI

i-century representatives of the "gentlemen adventurers"





THE COMING COLONY.

I.

Boom in Western Australia—Outlook for Emigrants—Production behind Consumption—At the Beginning instead of End of “a spirited Public Works Policy”—Cinderella again!

I HAVE no desire to get up what is called a “boom” in Western Australia, though that peculiar phenomenon has often arisen on slighter grounds than those which are now directing public attention to the undeveloped resources of what, in a sober and sensible spirit, may justly be styled the “Coming Colony.”

The “outer man” of Australia, as a whole, is monotonous and unattractive from a picturesque point of view, and its fauna and, to an extent, its flora, present characteristics which, even in the tropical regions, make tameness their chief attribute. Even the fast-disappearing natives lack the nobility of the Maori or Zulu, and though occasionally dangerous to the detached settler, have shown no disposition to war with the white intruder in the open. South Africa, on the other hand, with its more luxuriant vegetation, its man-devouring animals, and its warlike aborigines, presents just that element of romance and danger which renders colonisation piquant to the “young bloods” of the time. Western Australia, though a veritable land of flowers, participates in the prevailing characteristics of the rest of the continent. In a word, whilst to the nineteenth-century representatives of the “gentlemen adventurers”

of the days of Raleigh its tranquil conditions might prove disappointing, to the industrious pioneer, desirous of securing a home amidst broader and brighter surroundings, with somewhat less of convention, and somewhat more of elbow-room than the Old World has been able to afford him, Western Australia may be recommended as possessing possibilities of success for the steady man for which he might seek in vain in "Merrie England."

At home, no doubt, we meet instances on every hand of men who have raised themselves from humble positions to the front ranks in commerce and politics, but they mostly belong to the exceptional class of men who possess the temperament of success, and would "do" anywhere. The attractions which Australia seems to me specially to offer are, to the ordinary-going man, who looks not so much to palaces and purple and fine linen as the goal of his hopes, as to the humbler, but not less praiseworthy aim of owning his own home and homestead, and of seeing his children, before he dies, lifted up some way on that ladder of social ascent which his own lot forbade him to climb in the land of his birth. Social contrasts are, no doubt, becoming accentuated, and social distinctions defined, even in Australia, but where all are avowedly engaged in the material development of the country, there cannot be quite the same line drawn between the officers and the rank and file of the great army of industry, which prevails amidst the more complicated conditions of the old world, in which everything has had to broaden slowly down from precedent to precedent. Entrenched on his own holding, and with the certainty that life will be better worth living for his children than it has been for himself and his predecessors, he may feel himself the equal of any one.

Comparing Western Australia with other parts of the Australian continent, it is not only possible to acquire virgin land from the State on easy conditions, but even the area that has been already alienated is more cheaply purchasable than is the case in similar situations in the older colonies. Then, too, there is the advantage of going to a country where production is behind instead of in advance of consumption, no small

matter in computing the chances of success from a farming point of view; whilst as regards the general outlook for the industrious colonist, it is a fact of no little moment that Western Australia is at the beginning instead of the end (as in the case of the other colonies for the time being) of a "spirited public works policy." This alone is a vital feature, especially when it is borne in mind that in this regard financial exigencies, as well as common prudence, will compel her statesmen to profit by the experience and mistakes of their more advanced compeers to the eastward. The evidences of a vast mineral wealth are also daily accumulating, with the certainty that a large mining population will shortly enormously enhance the local demand for agricultural and industrial products of all descriptions.

Under these circumstances it has been thought that the republication, in an expanded form, of some letters recently contributed from the spot to one of the London daily newspapers would not be unacceptable to the large class who, in the United Kingdom, and even in Australia and New Zealand, are from various causes on the *qui vive* for "fresh fields and pastures new."

An article from the pen of one of the most trusted financial authorities in Australia is also appended, as well as some important excerpts from the summarised report of the Agricultural Commission of 1887, which is understood to have been drawn up by the Hon. H. W. Venn, the present Minister of Railways of Western Australia, than whom very few even of "old colonists" have had a more varied and practical experience of pioneering life in the vast territory which he now assists to administer. As regards Mr. Turner's "impressions," they are entitled to even more than ordinary weight, because, as I myself can bear witness, he visited Western Australia with a "mind" that was rather "shut" than "open" to a favourable recognition of the immediate prospects of the colony. It is also on record that Mr. F. G. Smith, of the National Bank of Australasia, a gentleman regarded as the very type of the cautious and astute financier, was equally favourably impressed with the outlook for what (though the phrase has grown trite

by repetition) was happily styled "The Cinderella of the Australian group."

A synopsis of the Land and Mining Regulations of Western Australia is also appended ; in addition to which there is a Table of Wages, particulars as to passages and outfit, and assisted emigration, as well as new matter with respect to the almost incalculably valuable timber resources of the colony.

II.

“ Ancient History ” of Western Australia—Discovery and Exploration—Stirling’s Glowing Report—The French Frustrated—British Flag raised at Fremantle — Stirling appointed Lieutenant-Governor — Pioneer Settlers arrive at Kangaroo Island — Foundation Day — The First Chaplain, Immigrant Ship, Printing Press, Newspaper, and Bank.

THOUGH the “ ancient history ” of the colony may be thought to have little interest for the latter-day settler, there is innate in the human mind a turn for genealogical investigation, whether as applied to family or national antecedents. In the case, too, of the colonist, there is a certain gratification in hearing of the hardships and failures undergone by his predecessors on the very spot on which more favourable conditions, or, as perhaps he prides himself, his own superior energy have enabled him to plant himself with security and success. No excuse is thus necessary for commencing with a few preliminary words as to the discovery and early history of the colony.

In 1527 a Portuguese navigator named Menezes touched upon its western shores, and gave the name of the Albrohlos to the group of islands lying westward of what is now known as Champion Bay. In 1598 these islands, which contain valuable guano deposits, were sighted by a Dutchman named Houtman, the projector of the Dutch East India Company ; and in 1629 Francis Pelsart’s frigate *Batavia* was wrecked upon them. Cape Leeuwin (or Lioness) was first sighted from a vessel of that name in 1622, and in 1644 Tasman, on his second voyage, gave the name of Tasman Land to what is now known as the Kimberley district in the far north. In 1688-9 Dampier in the *Roebuck* sailed along the north-west coast, entering and naming Shark’s Bay, the scene since of a profitable pearl fishery. In 1697 the entrance to the Swan River .

was discovered by Vlaming in the *Gielvink*, and in 1791 Capt. Vancouver discovered King George's Sound, Flinders ten years later taking his vessel, the *Investigator*, in as far as King George's Island. In the same year (1801) the western coast was visited by the French corvettes *Géographie* and *Naturaliste*, the officers, Baudin and Freycinet, giving their names to various points to which they still attach. From 1820 to 1824 the northern coasts were explored and surveyed by Capt. P. G. King, and his work was continued by Captains Whickham and Stokes between the years 1837 and 1843. The colony was first permanently settled from Sydney by Major Lockyer, who in 1826 landed at what is now Albany, with a detachment of the 39th Regiment and a party of convicts, the whole contingent numbering some seventy-five persons in all. Five years later the settlement was transferred to Rockingham, a port about fourteen miles to the south of Fremantle, which was named after Capt. Fremantle of H.M.S. *Challenger*, who hoisted the British flag near the mouth of the Swan River on a site included within the confines of the present town, which there seems a strong determination to make the main port, not only of Perth, the capital, but of the entire colony. The settlement under Major Lockyer had been formed in consequence of rumours of an intended French aggression, and with a view to still further securing the country for British colonists. Capt. Stirling, R.N., was sent from Sydney in 1827 in H.M.S. *Success* with instructions if he were pleased with the country to select a site for a settlement, at first intended to be a "penal" one, on the western coast. Captain Stirling, whose views were endorsed by Mr. Frazer, the colonial botanist of New South Wales, who accompanied him, gave a glowing report of the country, with the result that on their return to Sydney, after examining the mouth of the Swan River, Governor Darling decided to recommend to the Home Government to form a settlement there on an extended scale. Captain Stirling took the despatch to England, and personally afforded additional information to the Imperial authorities, who resolved to act on the suggestion, and appointed the bearer of the despatch Lieutenant-Governor of the infant colony, which was at first styled

the Swan River Settlement, as marking the narrow limits at first assigned to it. Capt. Fremantle was sent in advance in 1829 in the *Challenger* to hoist the British flag, and was quickly followed by Capt. Stirling in the *Parmelia*. The latter landed on Garden Island, which lies off the coast between Fremantle and Rockingham, on June 1st, and this date is still celebrated year by year as the Foundation Day of the colony. The pioneer party comprised an official staff of eight persons, ten artisans and mechanics, with their wives and families and servants; also fifty-one head of cattle, two hundred sheep, thirty-three horses, and pigs and poultry on a similar scale. In July the first colonial chaplain, the Rev. J. B. Wittenoom, arrived, and on August 5th came the *Callista*, the first purely emigrant vessel. She was freighted with a human cargo of one hundred souls, comprising persons of both sexes and all classes and ages. Numbers of the tiny vessels in which the ancestors of the present colonists were not afraid to trust themselves for the long and dreary voyage, followed in the wake of the *Callista*; so that in January, 1830, the Governor of the settlement was able to report the British population in Western Australia as numbering 850 persons, and the assessed value of property at £41,550. The present capital of the colony had in the meantime been founded on the north bank of the Swan River on August 12th, 1829, and by January, 1830, thirty-nine "locations," as they were called, had been effected by the principal settlers, round whom clustered the smaller fry. The number of cattle was, however, still only 204, the horses for riding and draught, 57, the sheep, 1,096, and the pigs, 106. The year 1830 brought an increased influx of emigrants, and in the same year the first settler was murdered by natives at the Murray River. In 1831, the first overland journey from Perth to King George's Sound was made by Capt. Bannister, and in December, 1832, that great symbol and promoter of progress, the first printing press, was landed from England. In 1840, the first newspaper, the *Perth Inquirer*, was printed, and in May, 1841, the financial requirements of the settlers were thought worthy of being specially catered for, by the opening of a bank.

III.

Hardships of the Early Settlers—Champagne Cases as Flooring Boards—Dissipation of the Public Territory—"Eyes" of the Country picked out—Australind—The Convict Influx saves the Colony—Lethargy of the Colonists—The Early Governors—The Crown Colony Régime—Give Downing Street its Due—A Country without a Pauper—Fifty-four Thousand People too few—Colonisation Schemes and Land Grant Railways.

THE colonists who landed on 1st June, 1829, did so with very little conception of the hardships which lay before them. They and their immediate successors were of a superior class socially to the majority of the immigrants who have formed the staple of the influx into the other colonies. They brought with them champagne in cases, which had ultimately to be used as flooring boards for their primitive dwellings, and carriages, in which, instead of driving, they had to sleep during the first weeks of their novel and disillusionising experience. Sir James Stirling, who commanded on the China station during the Crimean War, and who became a Lord of the Admiralty, had after his expedition in 1826 described the country in the neighbourhood of the Swan River as a land flowing with milk and honey, and evidenced his own *bona fides* by inducing a number of personal friends to avail themselves of the liberal land grants given by the Imperial Government in exchange for the introduction of capital and labour into the infant colony. He himself accepted land in lieu of salary—though he afterwards got both land and salary—and large allotments were given for every immigrant introduced by the early settlers. The latter were also subsidised in the same way for all property which they brought with them, and as the "property" was assessed at a very high rate and the land at a very low figure, vast tracts of virgin country were alienated to a few persons before the colony got a fair start. It is needless to say that the first settlers did not

choose the worst territory, and the fact that the "eyes of the country" were thus picked out, and new-comers driven to go far afield for decent land, had a most depressing influence on the progress of the colony, which thus offered inferior attractions to the more concentrated settlements in the eastern part of the continent. The "bone and sinew" imported by the early settlers failing to get land within easy reach, and finding the Conservative tendencies of the Administration less propitious to the legitimate expansion of industrial energies than the system pursued in the other colonies, transferred to the latter their vivifying presence. Ere the colony had been started three years 1,350,000 acres had been squandered. These vast alienations scattered the sparse settlers over a wide area, and rendered them an easy prey to the hostile natives. As a palliative, colonisation schemes were proposed, and an agricultural settlement, grandiloquently named "Australind," was started about 1841, near what is now Bunbury, on the south-west coast, under the auspices of the West Australian Company, which was formed in London to purchase the property of Colonel Latour in that locality, with a view to cutting it up into 100-acre farming blocks. Some 450 unfortunates had been imported to settle on these when the company collapsed, and the colonisation scheme was nipped in the bud before it had time to prove whether it was destined to fructify.

Many of the Australind settlers went to South Australia, which was just then being colonised under the Wakefield system, whilst others succumbed to the attractions of New South Wales. The colony was thus plunged into a slough of despond from which it was only rescued when on the verge of ruin by the deportation of convicts to its shores, which, at the earnest request of the settlers, was commenced in 1850, and which, with the usual concurrent disadvantages, proved a boon and blessing to the colonists until, owing to the hostility to the system evinced by the rest of Australia, it was stopped in 1868. During the greater part of this period the convicts sent out were of a superior class, many of them being transported for offences which would now be lightly treated or hardly considered criminal. They supplied the settlers with plentiful and

cheap labour, so that pastoral and agricultural enterprise was encouraged, whilst the public works executed by their instrumentality opened up the country, and provided the conveniences necessary for the growth and maintenance of an external and internal commerce. The convicts not only made excellent servants, but many of them, on their emancipation, took up land, and did well on their own account. Having every incentive of self-interest to well-doing, most of them preserved a clean record in their new sphere; but quite contrary to what occurred in New South Wales, the line of demarcation between themselves and the free settlers has been rigidly preserved, "society" refusing them her magic hall-mark, no matter how prolonged may have been their period of reformation and respectability. It remains to be seen when their time of expiation will be deemed complete and their descendants be admitted to those social privileges which are most greedily coveted just in proportion as they are most rigidly withheld. With the large influx of new blood which is certain to be witnessed during the next few years, probably the last vestige of disability will disappear in the case of those who now suffer for sins committed by their sires, and for which no theory of life yet propounded can attribute to them any responsibility.

For the twenty years which followed the cessation of transportation to Western Australia emigration was assisted in a more or less spasmodic manner. In 1888, however, so far as State aid was concerned, it was virtually suspended, except in the case of female domestic servants and of males nominated by their friends in the colony; the latter method giving a reasonable guarantee that the emigrants assisted out would stay in Western Australia, instead of, as often proved to be the case, getting half their passages paid by the Western Australian Government, and then immediately "making tracks" to the other colonies, which the plenitude of highly-paid employment and the mineral discoveries rendered considerably more attractive to the adult manhood. Much merriment has been made at the expense of a local politician who opposed the extension of harbour accommodation, on the ground that the advent of more shipping would only tend to damage the colony by affording

greater facilities to the inhabitants for getting away and locating themselves in more go-ahead regions. It will be seen, however, that in the state of things which prevailed there was considerable basis for this gentleman's vaticinations.

It is easy to exclaim against the somnolence of a community which, with vast areas of virgin agricultural land awaiting the plough, is content to import many thousand pounds' worth of breadstuffs annually, and which, with every facility for dairy farming, still largely relies on South Australia for its butter supply. The scarcity and uncertainty of labour were, however, a handicap on all regular cultures and industries, and in a country where nature itself was so bounteous to the handful of inhabitants one cannot be surprised if they preferred to rely for a living on pursuits such as sandalwood cutting, which, with a few days' exertion now and then, provided them with ample means of sustenance, rather than embark in corn-growing, which involved sustained diligence and possibly doubtful results. A truly Arcadian community; a living, not a fortune, was the general ideal, and as they had done themselves, so the average West Australians thought their descendants in the future might do for uncounted generations—*i.e.*, as long as the hated stranger was kept out. The oft-told tale of the Albany man illustrates the lethargy which prevailed. The individual in question, having sold his oaten hay for a pound or two per ton more than the price obtained in previous years, is represented as remarking, with a sigh of relief, "Thank Heaven, I shall be able to put in an acre less next year." Whether literally true or not, the tale points a genuine moral, the aim being, not at an increase of outputs and profits, but at how little expenditure of toil the bare necessities of life might be obtained. It is only fair to say, however, that there were not wanting signs of a different spirit—as is shown by the exploitation of minerals of various descriptions in various districts, which was only abandoned when the absence of suitable labour and means of communication and transport rendered it unprofitable after an outlay of many thousands of pounds out of the pockets of an impoverished community.

The old order changeth, giving place to new; but though

no one with a head on his shoulders would now care to recall the past and restore the old autocratic régime, it is only fair to Downing Street and the series of able men who under its auspices administered the Government, to bear testimony to the enlightenment and enterprise which, in the midst of somewhat somnolent surroundings, on the whole characterised their rule. The impulse to advance certainly came rather from above than from below, and when Western Australia becomes what her friends wish for her, and which her vast resources justify them in wishing with more of certainty than hope, the names of her early Governors, as well as of Sir Frederick Weld, Sir William Robinson, and Sir Frederick Broome, will deservedly be held in high esteem. Responsible government is evidently going to do marvels for the country, but this should not make the people forget that the impulse which is likely to swell into the full tide of progress and prosperity came before autonomous institutions were persistently agitated for, much less conceded.

Exploration, one of the first duties of government in a new territory, was certainly fostered with no niggard hand. Postal and telegraphic facilities were also afforded to an extent which may seem trivial in comparison with the vastness of the territory included in the colony, but which is extraordinary when considered in connection with the smallness of the population and the way it is scattered over the huge area which it cannot be said to occupy. Under the Downing Street régime roads were constructed, and a railway system was inaugurated, which some years ago broke the ice of the old lethargy, and without which the thriving agricultural settlements at Newcastle, Northam, York, and further south, at Katanning, could never have been called into prosperous being. The heritage which is now handed over, and a share in which there is no disposition on the part of the present inhabitants to grudge to suitable new-comers from the old country, if it has not given rise to a "bloated plutocracy," has, at any rate, no cancerous growth of pauperism to blight it in the bud. Throughout the wide bounds of Western Australia there is not a single able-bodied pauper, so that the Government have done well to substitute for the unpopular name of "poorhouse," as applied to

the State receptacle for the aged and infirm, the more euphonious and Christianlike title of "invalid depôts."

One might as well dogmatise about the concerns of every state in Europe on the strength of having seen Italy, as pretend to fully diagnose the outlook in Western Australia after a cursory visit such as I paid to its south-western corner. Of one thing I am convinced, from personal observation and from the accounts of trustworthy experts, that the public estate of the colony—patchy as the land is—presents a magnificent asset, and one which, in the name of reason and common sense, its present fifty-four thousand owners cannot be allowed to much longer monopolise in face of the vast numbers of the British race in the old country whom necessity is compelling to seek new fields. The want of population is the one thing which keeps Western Australia in the rear rank of the Australian Colonies, and her necessity is thus in the best sense of the word England's opportunity. It is a monstrous absurdity that fifty-four thousand people should be holding—certainly not utilising—a territory which it would be equally ridiculous to deny is capable of supporting several hundreds of thousands, even without those mineral discoveries which, if persistently exploited, would very soon attract thousands from the other colonies, and thus create a consuming population. Only by a judicious influx of bone and sinew can this "ugly duckling" of the Australian family be converted into the similitude of the stately swan which adorns her postage-stamps. The room for mere labourers without capital is certainly limited, and a few shiploads of emigrants would render the supply very much in excess of the demand. Everything which I saw in Western Australia leads me to concur with Sir Charles Dilke in thinking it admirably calculated for the practical working-out of well-conceived schemes of colonisation on a large scale. I do not, however, agree with him in thinking that the work should be undertaken under Government auspices or at the public expense. The people must be placed on the land and supported there until they are put in the way of supporting themselves. This office would, it seems to me, be much better performed by one or other of the great companies who are constructing the railways

of Western Australia on the land-grant system. They have an immense estate to manipulate, and on their ability in fructifying it the profits of their shareholders must depend. Some scheme of homesteads, partially prepared in advance for the new-comers, and purchasable on easy terms by time payments, could surely be developed and worked out, to the material advantage of owners and tenants. To this subject I will, however, revert when I come to deal in detail with the operations and opportunities of the two great Land Grant Corporations of the colony, the "West Australian Land Company" (Great Southern Railway of Western Australia) in the south, and the "Midland Railway Company of Western Australia" in the north, of the south-western district which, as comprising the only suitable area for immediate agricultural settlement, as we understand it in the old country, I shall almost exclusively notice in the course of these, I fear, somewhat sketchy hints for emigrants.

IV.

The South-western District as large as France—Salubrious Climate and Abundant Rainfall—Only Part of Colony immediately available for Agricultural Settlement—Sir Frederick Weld's Description—King George's Sound—Advance Albany !

THE south-western district, as it takes its place in the Government land system of the colony, is a narrow strip of country extending from the Murchison river in the north to the sea coast on the south. The most easterly point on the north is Bompas Hill, at the great northern bend of the Murchison, and on the south at the mouth of the Fitzgerald river. The average width of the strip is about 100 miles, but it bulges out a good deal towards its lower extremity and stretches eastward inland from below Busselton, which is about to be connected by railway with Perth, to a depth of 150 miles.

The south-western is often spoken of as "the settled district," and was described by the late Sir Frederick Weld in the following terms in an oft-quoted passage :—"The whole of the settled district, nearly the size of France, is usually level, often undulating, but never mountainous. The western seaboard is generally comparatively flat country, of a sandy character, composed chiefly of a detritus of old coral reefs, which has been again deposited by the action of the water. More inland, a formation which is here called ironstone is met with ; it appears to be chiefly a conglomerate of disintegrated granite, stained with iron ; granite, slates, quartz, pipeclay, and in many places trap, are all found in this country. The Darling Range, for instance, presents these characteristics ; it runs from north to

south in the central district inland of Perth, and appears once to have formed the coast line. The whole country, from north to south, excepting the spots cleared for cultivation, may be described as one vast forest, in the sense of being heavily timbered. Sometimes, but comparatively seldom, the traveller comes upon an open sand plain, covered with shrubs and flowering plants in infinite variety and exquisite beauty, and often, especially in the northern and eastern districts, low scrubby trees and bushes fill the place of timber, but, taking the word 'forest' in its widest sense as wild, woody, and bushy country, Western Australia, as far as I have seen it, is covered with one vast forest, stretching far away into regions yet unexplored. A very large proportion of this is heavy timber country. The jarrah, sometimes erroneously called mahogany, a tree of the eucalyptus tribe, covers immense tracts of land; its timber is extraordinarily durable, and as it resists the white ant and the *Teredo navalis* it is admirably adapted for railway sleepers, and for piles for bridges and harbour works. This timber, when properly selected and seasoned, has stood the severest tests, and no term has yet been discovered to its durability. It is believed that with increased facilities for transport, the trade in jarrah may be indefinitely increased. The sandalwood already affords an export; the tuart and karri, both eucalypti of enormous size, are valuable timber trees." Governor Weld further says, when speaking of a tour made by him in the southern districts:—"I have ridden for miles amongst karri trees, some of which, lying on the ground, I have ascertained by actual measurement to reach 150 feet to the lowest branch; many, I estimate, when standing, to attain nearly double that height from the ground to the topmost branch, thus emulating the great Californian 'Wellingtonia,' the kauri (*Dammara australis*) of New Zealand, or the *Eucalyptus purpurea* of Tasmania, a kindred tree, reported on by Sir W. Denison; the difference being that there they are instances of rare and exceptional growth, whilst in parts of this country there are forests of these giants of the vegetable world." So much for the natural features of this West

Australian Land of Canaan, Sir Frederick Weld's description of which I can fully endorse from personal observation.

The south-western district contains both the capital, Perth, and its port, Fremantle, but access to the colony is largely obtained at Albany, its southern port, situated on King George's Sound ; this being the only West Australian harbour which is at present frequented by the great ocean liners, though strong efforts are being made to gain a share of their attentions for Fremantle.

Englishmen who know very little of Australian geography and Australians who know very little of the westernmost colony of their own continent, are pretty well acquainted with Albany, which as the first port of call on the way out to Australia, and the last port of call on the way home to England, is much better known to globe-trotters than even the capital of the colony. It is nearer home by three days' steaming than Adelaide, and is prettily situated at the foot of two hills, known respectively as Mounts Clarence and Melville. It is not entirely at their foot either, for despite the presence of so many craggy boulders the town has extended up the rugged sides on the seaward slopes of both mounts. One wants to be sound of wind and limb to ascend very far up either of them, but those who do so are rewarded by a beautiful view of the, in calm weather, almost lake-like expanses of King George's Sound. The inner basin, on which Albany stands, is called Princess Royal Harbour, and into this the steamers of the P. and O. Company's service penetrate, but not as a rule those of the other lines. This is not, however, a point of very great importance, as in any case passengers have to go off and come ashore in a boat or launch, and it does not matter very much when you have once embarked whether you have to go one mile or four to get to or from the mail steamer. The trouble is mainly in connection with the transhipment of luggage, and this is as onerous in the one case as the other. The temperate climate of Albany makes it much sought after as a sanatorium by the denizens even of districts as far south as Perth. Whatever betides, its splendid harbour cannot be taken

away from it, and though the preponderance of population and property in the vicinity of the capital, and the convenience of settlers still farther north, has led to Fremantle being regarded as a more desirable port for improvement and development at the hands of the State, it is quite clear that as the colony advances Albany must advance too, being, as it is, the *entrepôt* of a large portion of the southern district tapped by the Great Southern Railway.

V.

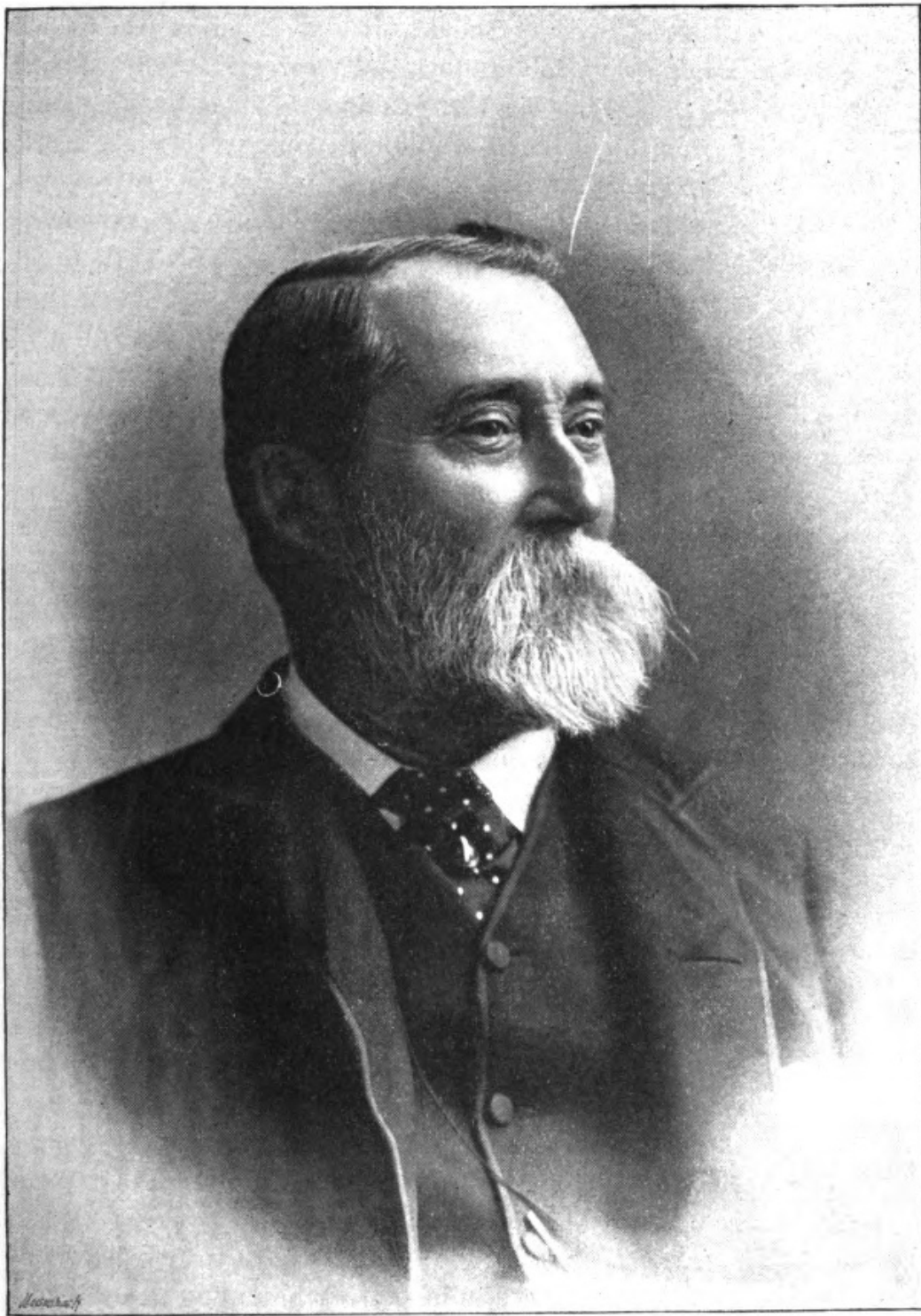
Two Anthonies—Perth to Albany—The West Australian Land Company and the Great Southern Railway—In the Bush at Beverley—Description of West Australian Land Company's Concession—A Colonising Enthusiast—Hordern on Hordernsville—Dies within Sight of the Promised Land.

THANKS to the initiatory genius of the late Anthony Hordern (whose monument has recently been reared on a conspicuous site overlooking King George's Sound) and the complementary enterprise of the West Australian Land Company, the traveller from Albany to Perth is no longer compelled, as was the case when another great Anthony—Mr. Anthony Trollope—visited Western Australia, to ride or drive the whole 300 miles or so which divide the port from the capital. By railway over the Great Southern and Eastern lines the distance is about 339 miles, of which the company have constructed 243 miles in consideration of a land grant of 12,000 acres per mile, and the Government the remaining ninety-six miles out of the public funds. The junction of the company's line, the Great Southern, with the Government's Eastern line is at Beverley, a mere "bush" station, where the traveller north or south, in the case of the ordinary trains, is compelled to pass the night at one or other of the two hotels, which seem to be the only excuse for the existence of the township. There are, however, weekly special trains which run the mails to and fro in about nineteen hours. By one of these I started for Perth. There are no sleeping-cars on the line, which is a single one of three feet six inches gauge, but I found the travelling smooth and easy, and the line has been managed with so much economy that though it showed a small loss in the first of its two years of existence it is now paying working expenses. In the meantime settlement is progressing, and there has been a consider-

able return from the purchase moneys of alienated areas. No dividend was anticipated by the English speculators who found the needful capital—£300,000 in shares, and £500,000 in debentures—for a period of ten years, but it looks very much as if their period of patience would be considerably abridged at the rate things are going at present.

Travelling through the night we reached Beverley (evidently so named by some expatriated Yorkshireman reminiscent of his home in the old country) at about six o'clock in the morning. Not having walked through the real "bush" since 1882, I spent the time whilst breakfast was being prepared in a ramble through the forest, encountering for the first time a genuine specimen or two of the West Australian aboriginal—of course of the tame order—who are very much like the remnant of their brethren in the other colonies. There is great sameness about the scenery of the "bush," but its silence and its vastness are supremely impressive. The denizens of the "bush" are not, perhaps, able to gush about its charms, but they feel them all the same; and this will account for the love of the bush which those who have had to make their home in "Australian wilds" retain for it ever afterwards.

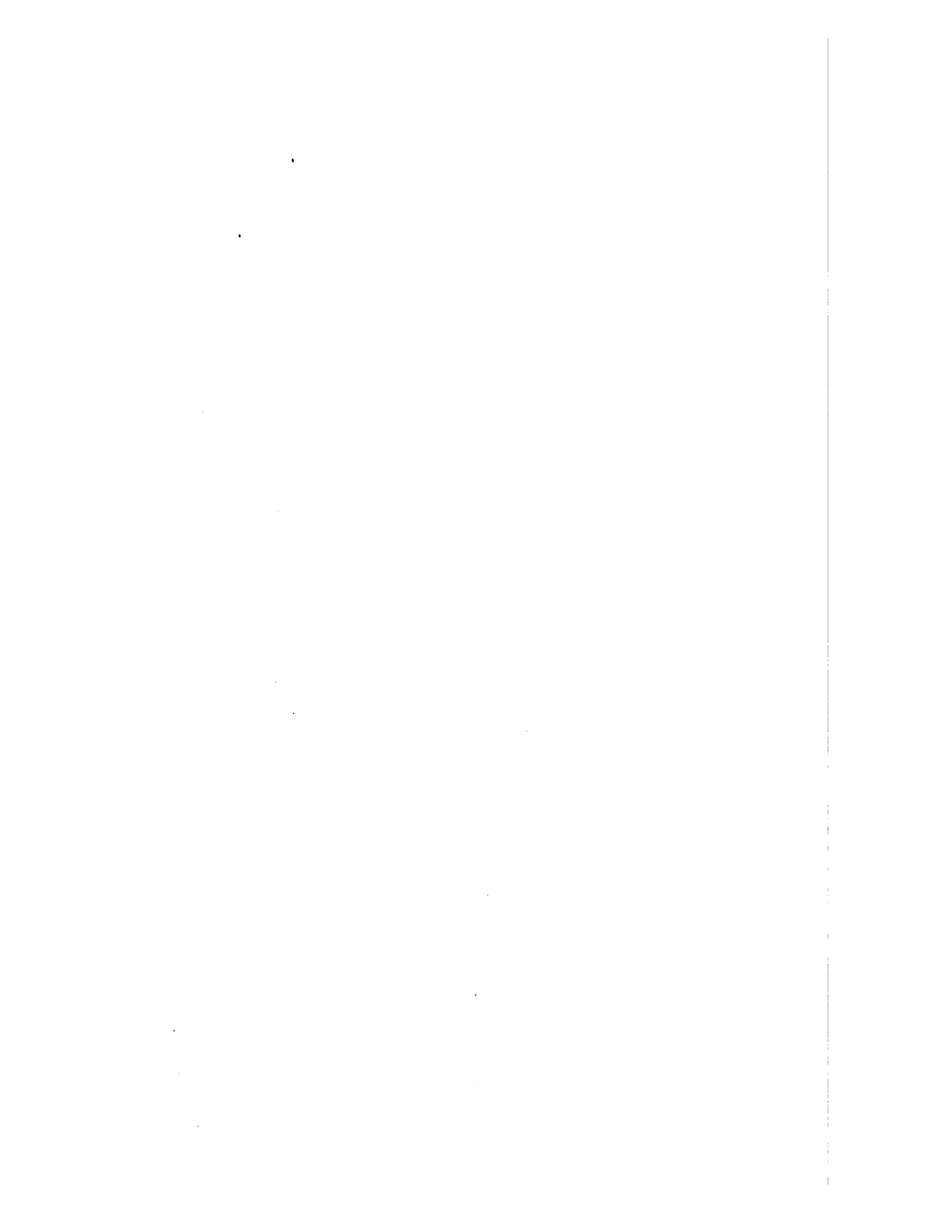
The Great Southern line is, as I have said, managed with a great regard to cheapness. The portorage is about in the same proportion to the traffic as the population of the colony to its acreage, there being only one porter employed on the whole length of the line between Albany and Beverley. The station-masters handle the goods, and their wives sell the tickets. There is thus an air of admirable domesticity about all the arrangements. To the casual voyager the stoppages seem unnecessarily prolonged, and better calculated to suit the convenience of the caterers along the line than of their customers, who desire to see the last of it. It must, however, be borne in mind that, as all the trains are "mixed," a great deal of shunting is involved in taking up and discharging goods, whenever there is anything to take in or to take out. On occasion, at some of the stations there is a dearth of either, but it would not do to alter the time-table, which must be regulated on the principle of the average strain. The run from Albany to



SIR MALCOLM FRASER, K.C.M.G.

FIRST AGENT-GENERAL FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

[To face p. 20.]



Beverley does not show the lands of the West Australian Company to advantage, for the line is taken along the ironstone ridges, so that the land in its immediate neighbourhood affords no criterion of the fertility of the lower country further afield, which, about Katanning and Broome Hill especially, is very great indeed. The minimum sale price is now from 12s. to 15s. per acre, whilst small areas in choice spots have realised as much as £5. Town sites are also proclaimed in the vicinity of stations, and have realised as much as £35 for the eighth of an acre lots; profits of as much as 500 per cent. having in favourable instances been made on the re-sale of the latter by sagacious purchasers at the original auctions. From Beverley I travelled with Sir Henry Wrenfordsley, who in his youth twice unsuccessfully contested Peterborough in the Conservative interest. He has discharged judicial functions in five colonies, and years ago was Chief Justice of Western Australia, which, in view of its rising fortunes, he must regret having exchanged for the dubious fleshpots of Fiji, where he was disabled by illness and compelled to retire. Since then he has been utilised as a sort of "emergency man," and at the time I speak of (May, 1891), was Acting Chief Justice of the colony, in the absence of Mr. Onslow.

As the part of the south-western district which is bisected by the Great Southern Railway is a part which is primarily available for settlers, I took some pains at a later period to see sample portions of it, and fair samples, too, as far as I could gather. I will begin by giving a sort of official description of the country, which was drawn up by Sir Malcolm Fraser, K.C.M.G., the present Agent-General, who was one of the first, if not the first, to advocate the construction of this railway, when the line, now successfully completed, was only in contemplation. "The sections of the country under review," so the report runs, "is a plateau having a mean surface level of about one thousand feet above the sea, though in places the river beds and valleys below and above this general level are found cropping up ranges and peaks, which, however, with the exception of the Stirling Range, are not of any considerable height. From this plateau flow all the

principal storm-water channels of the southern part of the colony, including the Swan River, the upper portion of which is called the Avon, and its branches. The Murray River, with the Hotham, the Williams and affluents, break through the Darling Range by a series of gorges and cañons, and empty themselves into the sea on the western coast. The Blackwood River, with the Arthur, the Beaufort, and the Balgarrup, find the sea east of Cape Leeuwin, at Flinders Bay. The Frankland, with the Gordon as its main tributary, finds a mouth at Nornalup Inlet, near King George's Sound. The physical geography on this side of the Australian continent, in respect to the condition of its rivers or storm-water channels, shows a reverse to those of the eastern side, and which are found existing in most other parts of the globe. The so-called rivers merely serve to bear away seawards the surplus storm-waters from the by no means unfertile interior which they drain, which is a belt extending in different parts fifty miles in width up to a distance of two hundred miles from the sea coast. The best land is high up away from the coast, whilst in other countries the rivers have made the lowlands fertile by what they have borne from the highlands."

This, then, was the field of enterprise which attracted the eager mind of the late Mr. Anthony Hordern, a Sydney merchant whose aspirations soared far beyond the restricted limits of the ledger and counting-house. His prophetic eye saw in this neglected region vast future possibilities; and as he pondered its future over in his imaginative mind, he saw it peopled with a prosperous multitude who would hail his name as the founder of their fortunes. I have often sat with him in his dingy London office, and listened with somewhat too much of the scepticism of "the impartial critic," to the glowing picture which he painted of happy homes and prosperous settlements in the land which he looked on in the transfigured light of his sanguine but by no means wholly dreamy temperament. Perhaps he dwelt too much on the gardened and terraced city which he saw rearing its stately head as the centre and cynosure of the great settlement of his dreams. Hordernsville was, perhaps, somewhat of a chimera, and he possibly overlooked a

little the toils of the march in dwelling on the glories of the goal. Still, there was a strong vein of practicality running through all his idealisations, and he induced others to participate in a guarded way in his enthusiasms. Given permission to construct the railway, and getting in return a substantial land grant, this born projector proposed, by pouring in a steady stream of emigration, to fertilise the adjacent territory, to the equal benefit of himself and his co-partners, and of the industrious population which he meant to plant upon the soil. In 1886 he went out from England with the view of organising the operations of the West Australian Land Company, which he had initiated for the execution of his scheme. As fate would have it, however, he died on board the steamer, almost in sight of the promised land of so many eager hopes and sanguine calculations. The emigration scheme which he had projected as an essential concomitant of his design dropped through after his death, and it is affixing no stigma on his coadjutors and successors to say that it probably failed as the consequence of his demise. Had he lived no mere emigration scheme would have been attempted, but one of thoroughgoing colonisation on comprehensive lines. Lacking his personal supervision, the influx glutted the labour market instead of developing the agricultural resources of the country, and it had to be abandoned; soon, however, in some shape to be revived under the more favourable conditions which now obtain. In this respect Mr. Hordern seems to have found a worthy successor in Mr. James Martin, the chairman of the West Australian Land Company, who has visited the colony, and, in a manner equally broadminded and businesslike, given the necessary fillip to the practical realisation of Mr. Hordern's conceptions.

VI.

Conditions of Concession to West Australian Land Company—Suitability for Settlement—Three Million Acres to select from—Eight Town-sites proclaimed—Lord Brassey's Property.

To return to the conditions under which the railway from Albany to Beverley was constructed. The West Australian Land Company received a land grant of 12,000 acres for every one of the 243 miles of line they built. This they were permitted to select within a belt of 40 miles east and west of the line, subject to the important condition that the Government retain half the frontage to the line in blocks alternating with those chosen by the Company. The latter thus had a wide area of selection for the 3,000,000 acres odd of which their concession consists. The West Australia Land Company have sold the comparatively small acreage of which they have yet disposed at an advance of about 50 per cent. on the Government price of 10s., but they have done "bigger" things out of the town-sites, which they have laid out at judicious intervals along the line. These are up to date eight in number, and in each case give their names to stations, viz. : Lakeside, Mount Barker, Cranbrook, Broomehill, Katanning, Wagin, Narrogin and Pingelly. Taking them in order—

Lakeside, so called from being situated on a large fresh-water lake, is about nine miles from Albany. Here a town-site has been laid out upon the northern slopes of the lake, affording a healthy and excellent site for residential purposes. A reserve of 100 acres, on the west side of the lake, has been set apart by the Company for a public park and for recreation purposes, and land has been offered to the Albany Horticultural Society as a show ground. Steps are also being taken to make Lakeside a holiday resort, the banks of the lake, which is

admirably suited for boating, affording capital facilities for picnickers. A distillery has been established for the extraction of oil from sandalwood, &c, within sight of Lakeside. The station is the junction for a branch line constructed by the contractors for the Great Southern Railway, Messrs. Millar Bros., of Melbourne, with the view of establishing connection with and developing a great timber concession which they have taken up at Torbay, a few miles away on the coast to the west of Albany. Here they have a large freehold, and their idea is, after clearing the ground of the timber, to dispose of the land to small cultivators in a partially prepared state. Mr. C. G. Millar, the head of the firm, is the owner of the fine yacht *Saide*, and is a member of the Royal Yacht Club, to whom he has recently offered for competition a fifty-guinea cup, to be known as the Australian Cup. He is plucky in all his ventures, and it was due to his pecuniary fostering that Mr. Louis Brennan, C.B., the able mechanical inventor, was enabled to bring to fruition the well-known torpedo which bears his name. The titbits of this district (as a whole, a somewhat barren land), which the Company has been able to secure, consist principally of alluvial flats of humus, or peaty mould, well watered and sparsely timbered, and specially suited for root crops, garden produce, and dairy farming. The close proximity to Albany, with its present and, still more, its prospective markets, are the main attractions at this point. Mr. T. W. Powell, of the firm of Heseltine & Powell, 1, Drapers' Gardens, London, is one of the largest shareholders in the West Australian Land Company, and was the first Chairman of the Board of Directors in London. He came to Western Australia in 1889, and was so impressed with the character of the country traversed by the railway for agricultural purposes that he resigned his chairmanship, purchased large areas of land from the Land Company, and is now engaged in making such improvements as will enable farmers with moderate capital to start at once by putting in crops on land ready prepared for their reception, thus saving the pioneer the usual heavy primary outlay, and ensuring him a quick return for his money. One of Mr. Powell's purchases is the "Eastwood" Estate, of 5,000

acres, situated in the Lakeside district, about seven miles from Albany, on the Great Southern Railway. It has been cut up into farms varying from 10 to 100 acres. The land in the valleys is a rich peaty soil suitable for potatoes, onions, and all sorts of market garden produce, maize, oats, barley, lucerne, and rye grass. The hills are timbered with banksia, sheoak, and jarrah. The soil on them is of a lighter nature, but owing to the heavy rainfall it is very productive, and well adapted for the growing of fruits of all sorts. The terms on which the improved farms can be obtained are easy. The land can either be bought outright, leased, or paid for by equal instalments on the deferred payment system. The climate is everything that can be desired ; in fact, it is admitted to be about the best in Australia.

As Mr. Powell has gone to great expense in improving and laying out the Eastwood estate, he naturally seeks to recoup himself in the price of the land, and it thus requires capital to come to terms with him. As, however, the better parts of the property are rather suitable for gardens than for farms, a small area only is requisite, and the returns are likely to be much heavier than in the case of ordinary agriculture. I cannot disguise from myself that Mr. Powell will have more or less to act the philanthropist in relation to this portion of his land purchases, as he has gone to an outlay with steam ploughs, and other "latest" cultivators, for which he is hardly likely to be speedily or, indeed, ever recouped. His work at Eastwood has been one of experiment and exploitation, and I do not think I misjudge him in believing that it was not wholly the idea of personal profit which induced him to go in for a venture which, he may have the satisfaction of feeling, will benefit the colony even if it leaves him somewhat out of pocket. I may add that in addition to the general local and colonial market for garden produce, there are the mail and other steamers to be supplied with fruit and vegetables by the future horticulturists of Eastwood and other similar localities. It is true that at present the P. & O. and other great liners replenish their stocks at Adelaide and the eastern ports ; but this has only grown into a custom through the impossibility of getting

regular supplies at Albany, which, as the last and first port of call on the Anglo-Australian voyage, should very soon be able to establish a flourishing traffic with the shipping.

Mount Barker, the next combined station and town-site, is about 40 miles from Albany. The land in this neighbourhood consists of several qualities of soil, and is specially adapted for fruit-growing and general produce. Mr. C. G. Millar has purchased 5,000 acres in this district, which he intends clearing, improving, and putting under cultivation. About seven miles to the east of Mount Barker is the Porongrup Range, covered with a remarkably fine growth of karri timber. Many of the trees are of immense size, some measuring 100 feet to the first branch and being 18 feet in girth. From Mount Barker onwards there is a great improvement in the quality of the country.

Cranbrook is the third station and town-site on the railway, and here the traffic from the Blackwood River district will join the line. A large tank, containing 2,250,000 gallons, has been excavated by the Company for the purpose of the railway, and is full of pure fresh water, showing how easily water can be gathered and conserved at a moderate outlay. From indications in the ranges in this district, it is confidently anticipated that valuable mineral deposits will be discovered.

Broomehill, the fourth station and town-site, is 104 miles from Albany, and is the centre of a fine agricultural district. Three miles to the west of the line is the settlement of Ettacup, where there are several fine farms, the principal being Gobrup, recently purchased by Lord Brassey. The climate and rainfall in the district are so regular that settlers state *they are always certain* of an abundant crop, eighteen to twenty bushels to the acre being looked upon as an ordinary occurrence. On the east of the line is the Martinup district, where Mr. Powell and Mr. Hassell have together purchased 34,800 acres, which are being cleared, fenced, and brought under cultivation. In Mr. Hassell's purchase water has been obtained, by ordinary sinking, within twelve feet of the surface. The Company contemplate establishing a training farm here, where young men will be trained to colonial life, and be placed on farms suited to their

means when considered capable of managing on their own account.

At present, to quote from the prospectus, no system is adopted with a view of placing young men on suitable colonial farms when they have completed their course of training at the agricultural colleges in Great Britain, the students being left to select their own colony, land, &c. This want the Company proposes to supply. Believing it is impossible to give a complete colonial training on English soil, and in an English climate, the Directors of the West Australian Land Company, with a view of working in connection with these colleges, have established, at Broomehill, a training farm, at present 1,000 acres in extent, but capable of unlimited expansion, where students will receive one or more year's practical training, prior to being placed on selected farms suited to the amount of capital they have at command. It is assumed that the scientific and theoretical part of the students' education will have been acquired before leaving England; it is therefore intended to give a thoroughly practical training in clearing, fencing, ring-barking, tank excavating, erecting their own houses, out-buildings, &c.; also in sheep-farming, wheat-growing, dairying, vine and fruit culture, and general agriculture. The services of a practical man as farm manager have been secured. Part of the students' training will consist of clearing and preparing portions of the land selected for purchase by the senior students, so that each one on starting for himself shall have a house erected, and a certain number of acres cleared and prepared for cultivation, the intention being to place the students on their own selected farms as soon as the Company's farm manager considers they have acquired sufficient experience to be trusted to start on their own account; at the same time they will always have the great advantage of being able to fall back upon the farm manager for advice and assistance whenever required. The students will be met at Albany, and at once taken up to the training farm, thus placing them under control from the time of their arrival in the colony, the railway company granting them free passes to their destination. The moral well-being of the students will be carefully looked

after, and arrangements made for clergymen of various denominations to periodically visit the farm, and hold religious services. Farms can be selected suited to a capital of £200 and upwards, and the Directors propose that parents or friends shall, if they so think fit, deposit with the Company the amount of capital they can give the youths, the Company undertaking to select and place them on farms suited to their means, and after paying the purchase money, or the first instalments thereof, hand over the balance as required for the further development of the property. Parents and friends would thus be certain of their money being judiciously expended for the object intended, which might not always be the case if the lads were entrusted with the capital. As it is not wished to make the training farm more than self-supporting, it is intended to fix the annual charge for board, residence, and tuition of students, at a very low figure.

The pecuniary necessities of the Company in the embryo stages of its operations induced it to alienate several large blocks of its territory to single large holders, with the view of obtaining an immediate return in ready cash. Lord Brassey, at Ettacup, a settlement three miles away to the west of the line, has thus become possessed of 26,000 acres at, I understand, 13s. 3d. per acre, Mr. Hassell (who manages for Lord Brassey), and Mr. Powell, of London, dividing another area of nearly 35,000 acres to the east of the line at Martinup. Lord Brassey is fencing his property, and erecting dams for water storage, and it is understood that he is willing to set an example in the way of subdividing his large holding into suitable farming lots, and assisting the right class of tenants to take them up on a basis of time payments, both for the land and the needful primary improvements. Lord Brassey has always shown himself a public-spirited as well as a practical man, and great hopes are entertained that he may see his way to illustrate both characteristics by initiating a colonisation scheme which will benefit the colony, a deserving class of immigrants, and his own pocket into the bargain. The thing could be managed on much the same lines as have been so successfully followed in the case of his lordship's Canadian properties, and from what Lord

Brassey himself has told me, I gather he is by no means adverse to assisting a well-considered scheme of the kind. It is essential to the interests of the West Australian Land Company that small settlements should be encouraged along the route of their railway, as what they want to make traffic for their line is not a few wealthy proprietors, but a numerous and thriving population, embracing all sorts of interests in addition to the pastoral. Then, too, as regards the fructification of their estate, there is all the difference in the world between the value of arable as distinguished from mere grazing land.

VII.

Katanning—The Show-place of the West Australian Land Company's Concession—Marvellously rapid Growth of the Settlement—The Messrs. Piesse—Model Colonial Pioneers.

ONE hundred and eighteen miles from Albany one comes across a settlement which is not only the sample one on the West Australian Land Company's concession, but is destined, it is to be hoped, to be the model for many such another all over South-western Western Australia. Katanning is not only the central station of the Great Southern line, but it is the centre of what bids fair to be in the near future a splendid agricultural district, supplying any amount of corn for conversion into flour at the newly erected roller mills, which are the boast and pride of the township. Without being over-sanguine, one may assert that this district in the course of a few years will do great things towards reducing and, in fact, altogether obliterating that humiliating import of £150,000 worth of rural produce which stands recorded against the colony in its truth-telling statistics. It is not to be supposed that everything in this district is virgin in the shape of agriculture. On the contrary, some of the oldest farmholds in the colony are situated in this vicinity, and I should be accused of exaggeration if I were to put down precisely as I was told them the yields of wheat per acre which the settlers hereabout have drawn year after year, for a score of years past, from lands wholly innocent of manure and only rarely recuperated by fallowing. Twenty-three miles to the westward of Katanning is the old settlement of Kojinup, on the now little-used main road from Albany to Perth. Here, too, are a number of settlers to whom the innovations of the Land Company and the rapid rise of Katanning can be little less than revolutionary. As yet, of course, Katan-

ning is a mere nucleus of the town that is to be. The weather-board store, hotel, school, and blacksmith's shop are of the regulation pattern of the "bush township," with all the present crudeness and future potentialities of the type. Despite its go-aheadism, too, I noticed on the hotel verandah a more perfect specimen of the torpid young rustic than, I dare be bound, could be produced in the most antiquated Sleepy Hollow in Old England, for when the Australian, especially the young Australian, does "loaf" he "loafs" with a vengeance. Nowhere is this sample of bush humanity to be seen to more advantage than at a roadside railway station, where, if anything so objectless could be credited with an object, he is trying to put himself forward as the antipodes of all that the train advent typifies in the way of movement and progress.

If anything could justify the land grant railway system from the attacks of its opponents the progress made by Katanning in the less than two years of its existence ought to do it; and though at present it is the high-water mark of what has been achieved in this line in Western Australia, there is no reason why Katannings should not be indefinitely multiplied along the course, not only of the Great Southern and Midland Railways, but of the various lines which the Government is on the eve of constructing. The Company have been lucky in securing coadjutors such as the Messrs. Piesse (relatives of the famous Bondstreet scent manufacturer of that name), who have started a store, ironfoundry, and roller mills in the infant township, the result being that, with the railway facilities afforded for transport to the port of Albany, the conditions of settlement have been revolutionised throughout the district, which boasts a large area of good red loamy soil, previously very imperfectly tilled and persistently over-cropped. Mr. F. C. Piesse, the Member for the district, is a firm believer in the desirability of some scheme of colonisation being adopted on the lines I have suggested, but which will have to be worked out by experts. Could a score or so of colonists of the same type as this gentleman and his brother be scattered about the colony at suitable intervals, and be backed up by a suitable immigration, there would not be much doubt as to its future prosperity. The fact that the

colony has produced men like the Piesses effectually gives the lie to the idea too common amongst a certain class of the old residents that no good thing can come out of Western Australia, either in the shape of men or material.

The next three stations and town-sites combined on the Great Southern line are Wagin, 148 miles, Narrogin, 180 miles, and Pingelly, 211 miles from Albany. Of these embryo townships no more need be said than that they are centres of a fine agricultural and wheat-growing country, as much as thirty bushels of wheat to the acre having been taken off a small farm at Pingelly.

Another thirty miles of easy travelling through similar country brings the passenger to Beverley, to which I have already alluded as the junction of the Great Southern and Government Railway lines. Here passengers between Perth and Albany are compelled to pass the night in rough bush quarters, both going and returning—a primitive arrangement which might suit the old slow pace in Western Australia, but is hardly in keeping with the go-ahead notions now coming into vogue. It may be added, for the information of would-be settlers, that the rainfall on the Company's territory averages thirty-six inches at Albany, diminishing to seventeen inches at Beverley. So regular is the supply of moisture, and so reliable the climate, that from eighteen to twenty bushels of wheat to the acre can be reliably counted on. It is needless, however, to multiply details, but I think I have said enough to put those in the old country who desire a change of condition on inquiry. The curtain has at length been lifted on this long-buried Land of Promise, and those who have the pluck to throw in their lot with the renaissance of Western Australia may, I honestly think, do so with the reasonable hope of reaping the harvest of a steadily rising tide in its development and prosperity. Every day brings news of fresh discoveries of the precious metal, and if even the greater number of the fields prove failures, sufficient permanent finds are likely to eventuate to furnish fresh consuming centres for even the largest accession of producers which the coming years are likely to witness in Western Australia.

VIII.

Account of West Australian Land Company's Concession (continued)—Climate—
Water Supply—Markets and Products—The Poison Plant—Prices of Town
Allotments and Rural Lands—Long Terms and Deferred Payments—Pur-
chasers' Improvements—An Expert's Opinion.

It may be interesting to the would-be settler to know that an abundant supply of stone suitable for building can be obtained almost throughout the whole of the West Australian Land Company's concession, whilst timber for building, fencing, and firewood is very plentiful. As regards climate, the south-western portion of Western Australia is believed to be one of the healthiest countries in the world, not subject to excessive heat or cold, but temperate and healthful. Water is readily secured by tanks and dams, and sufficient rain falls during the winter to last the summer through when stored. In most parts water can also be obtained at a depth of from 10 to 25 feet, and in districts where ring-barking has been carried out not only does grass grow in profusion, but springs frequently make their appearance. As the Company point out in one of their prospectuses—

“A great variety of fruits are grown in the colony, amongst which may be mentioned the grape, apple, orange, lemon, pear, fig, peach, apricot, gooseberry, Cape gooseberry, plum, loquat, banana, quince, strawberry, melon, mulberry, currants, cherries, almond, and olives. All these are capable of being produced in large quantities, particularly grapes, oranges, apples, pears, peaches, plums, apricots, &c. Large areas of the Company's lands are highly suitable for fruit-growing, and one day fruit-preserving will be a profitable industry.”

To quote from the same source—

“The vine grows anywhere well between latitudes 29° and 34°, and the Company has a large extent of land suited for the various kinds of grape

required for the white and red wines, raisins, currants, &c. Vine culture is at present in its infancy. In 1888 only 891 acres were under cultivation, producing 135,888 gallons, or an average on the whole (including newly planted vineyards) of 152 gallons per acre. One grower writes that his are the 'Muscatel' variety, and his average yield is about eight tons of grapes and about 400 gallons to the acre. Another that his consist chiefly of the 'Burgundy' and 'Hermitage'; that he gets about three tons of grapes and 250 to 300 gallons per acre. Some day the manufacture of wine is destined to assume very large proportions, as the climate and soil are specially suited to its production, and it is notorious that West Australian grapes are finer and better than those grown elsewhere. The olive grows luxuriantly in the same districts, and olive oil will no doubt form an important item of export. Sheep, horses, and cattle thrive well throughout the colony, India providing a ready market for any number of good horses fit for military purposes. The export of wool is increasing rapidly. In 1881 4,107,038 pounds were exported, whilst in 1888 it had reached 8,475,240 pounds, and it is a fact that West Australian wool fetches a very high price in the European markets. A great deal of misapprehension has been raised in the other colonies against Western Australia on account of the poison plant growing in certain districts. The lands selected by the Company are to a very great extent free, but where it does exist it can be easily and cheaply eradicated, in proof of which a large employer of labour recently offered to clear the Company's land at sixpence per acre. Western Australia is celebrated for its valuable timber forests, the most useful being jarrah, karri, York gum, yate, sandalwood, and jam tree. In the Company's selections several ranges of extensive forests have been included, and the timber will form a valuable article of commerce. The area of the colony is so great and the population so small that practically very little is known as to its mineral resources, but rich gold discoveries are continually being made, showing that this colony is likely to prove as rich in reef gold as Victoria, thus bearing out the opinion of Sir R. Murchison that Western Australia would prove to be very rich in precious metals. Tin, lead, and copper have also been found of great richness, and coal has been discovered in various parts of the colony. In the Company's selection of land are included some ranges in which there is every indication of valuable mineral properties, including tin and gold, offering great inducements to prospectors and others. The Government of Western Australia allows immigrants to introduce to the colony, free of duty, tools and instruments of trade to the extent of £10 value for each statute adult."

Having generally described the quality and situation of the West Australian Land Company's lands, it only remains to say that the terms on which allotments, varying in size, may be acquired by would-be settlers, are fully set out in Appendix G.

The casual visitor may get a good general idea of the country through merely driving or riding through it, but when he comes to the responsible task of advising others he is glad to have his opinion supplemented by the pronouncements of expert

authorities. The following is therefore taken from the report of Professor Brown, for many years head of the Ontario College of Agriculture, Canada, and now Principal of the Longerenong Agricultural College, Victoria:—

“ During the month of February, 1890, I had an opportunity of examining a considerable portion of the extensive lands that belong to your Company in West Australia, ranging all the way from Albany to Beverley, a distance of 243 miles. The first most noticeable fact is the judicious selections made by the company. In a country of such extent there is necessarily great variety in the character of the soil and herbage, and anyone familiar with these and the other things that go to make up the most suitable conditions for settlement cannot fail to recognise how well the selections have been chosen for your Company, so that without doubt you hold a great deal of the best of that district of the colony. I have ascertained from official sources and the evidence of several old settlers, as well as from personal observation, that the southern portion of your property possesses a climate of the most delightful character for residence and certain agricultural productions. An examination of the map will show how this is secured. As all the southern portion has a large water frontage in the proportion to the area of land thereby affected, with much timber, and a great variety of aspect by hills and valleys, there are some of the most favourable conditions for rainfall and its conservation. The average annual is about 40 inches, and is distributed over no less than 130 days, which, with the unusual fact, for Australia, that the thermometer seldom gets over 85°, and never under 35° in the shade, tells of a south of England climate. Further north it gradually increases to the ordinary seasons of this continent. A prominent feature of a great deal of the country is quantity and value of timber, with the other flora so characteristic of West Australia. The smaller herbage in some parts is not the most suitable for live stock, but in the more open lands and along the plains the natural grasses are increasing in quantity and value. But the question is not one of want of favourable conditions for the best pasture, but simply of nature having to be brought under in order to give it a chance. The karri and jarrah timbers occupy a place of high value upon your property, which, with the sandalwood, are already developing into great wealth. There are soils of all kinds, from the pure sand up to the brick-making clay, and a large proportion consists of that light clay loam so suitable for a variety of purposes. The conformation of the country into numerous hills and valleys gives in many cases a variety of soil in small area, and also affords abundance of water. There are several valuable fresh-water lakelets and creeks that never go dry all the seasons through. The natural drainage of the country is, therefore, of a decided kind, and will aid materially the reclamation and settlement of the valley soils that are made up principally of vegetable deposit with the sand. With such a geographical range, then, as you possess, the variety of soil and shelter, the water supply, sea coast resorts, together with abundance of timber and open valleys, there are attractions of the most substantial sort for settlement. Indeed, the question is one of ‘What is it you want?’ and not of ‘What can I get?’ Of course, as in all lands of great extent, there are poor soils and unfavourable conditions for settlement, but I have no hesitation in saying that these are not what regulate

your extensive domains. It is evident, then, that any branch of farming and gardening can be entered upon *under proper choice*. On the sea coast and along the southern selections English grasses and green fodders will luxuriate, and thus induce to dairying as a leading pursuit, though there are also culinary crops and some fruits will be successfully cultivated. The international seaport of Albany cannot fail in drawing out the capabilities of that district. Mount Barker, with its more suitable soil and climate, will unquestionably look to the production of fruit; the Stirling Range is decidedly one best adapted to sheep raising; while those of Broomehill and Katanning are evidently for the cereals, and, indeed, if required, for any other thing in agriculture and gardening. The latter selections are of high value. I have pleasure in acknowledging that my examination of your property has entirely swept away my own preconceived views, and those of many others, of the possibilities of agriculture in Western Australia, for much ignorance still prevails about this new colony. Very little has yet been done to show that a great deal of it is one of the best portions of this continent."

I have entered at more length than would otherwise have been justified into the particulars of the West Australian Land Company's concession on the ground that what applies to their land applies equally to a considerable portion of the far greater area in the same locality which the Government retains in its own hands, and which is obtainable on the terms and conditions of which a summary is given in Chapter XII. of the present work. When the Government railway from Perth to Bunbury is completed there will be a second line running parallel with a great portion of the Great Southern Railway, and between it and the coast. The whole of the intervening country to the westward will thus be opened up and given optional access to the ports of Albany and Fremantle, to say nothing of Bunbury itself, which a reasonable expenditure would vastly improve as a harbour.

The Land Corporation of West Australia, too, which possesses a territory extending in blocks from south-west of Broomehill to north-east of Perth, has planned a connecting railway from Broomehill on the Great Southern line to Bunbury, which would afford additional facilities for the opening up of this fertile portion of the South-western District. It would also have the additional advantage of connecting it with what may, if the investigations now being conducted under the auspices of the Government eventuate in success, become a great coal-field on the Collie river. It lies on the track between Broome-

hill and Bunbury, and specimens of the coal taken from it have been favourably reported on by English experts. If the latter is proved to be obtainable in reliable quantity and quality the conditions of life in this portion of Western Australia would be revolutionized after a fashion which would petrify the old identities.

Amongst the pioneer land companies of Western Australia this Land Corporation of West Australia, Limited, occupies an important position. The Company was incorporated in 1885 under the Joint Stock Companies Acts, and is managed by a London board of directors, at No. 5, Copthall Buildings, London, E.C. The Company had the good fortune to obtain from the Government in 1885, under the old land regulations of 1878, leases for about 1,250,000 acres, situated on the main Perth-Albany road and in proximity to the Great Southern Railway on the east and the Perth-Bunbury Railway on the west. Under these regulations the terms to purchasers were made very easy with a view of inducing settlers to take up and work the land, leases being granted for twenty-one years, subject to the nominal rent of £1 per annum per thousand acres, and on the condition of the lessees erecting a fence round each block and eradicating the indigenous poison shrubs which grow more or less over the colony. The leases thus granted are known as "conditional freeholds," and are readily transferred on payment of some small charges. The Land Corporation had the advantage of being associated with Mr. Alexander Forrest and Mr. W. H. Angove, who certainly showed sound judgment in selecting the lands in the South-west District. The quantity of land surveyed and selected by the Corporation was more than 1,800,000 acres, but the Government, in view of the very favourable terms on which they would be alienating their good land, hurried the Act of 1887 through the Legislature, the time allowed for obtaining the freehold being thereby reduced from twenty-one years to three years, and refused to grant leases for about 600,000 acres, thus reducing the quantity to be acquired by the Land Corporation to about 1,250,000 acres. Now that the colony has its own Government, and so many buyers of land are coming

in, the granting of further similar leases has been discontinued on any terms whatever. The directors of the Corporation have turned to account a considerable portion of their leases at prices which have enabled them to pay during the past two years large and regular dividends. The tenure of the land acquired by the Land Corporation of West Australia was granted by the Government of Western Australia in 1886 in one hundred and eleven separate and distinct leases, containing from 1,000 to 164,000 acres. Each lease is a separate contract in itself, and is readily transferred on payment of a small *ad valorem* duty and fee; so that the work of clearing and fencing can be carried out on any block without reference to any other part of the estate (see page 141).

The land acquired under each lease has been accurately surveyed and measured, the plan with every line marked being attached to each lease and signed by the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The boundary posts are easily found on the land and purchasers from the Company of their rights have no difficulty in identifying blocks and erecting their fences.

The Land Corporation have dealt with several sub-companies, of which the most important is the West Australian Pastoral and Colonisation Company, Limited, which was incorporated in November, 1890, in order to acquire certain lands from the Corporation, with a view to clearing and fencing, and acquiring the freehold title, and cutting up into farms suitable to meet the requirements of intending settlers. Their idea is to import settlers who will carry out the Government conditions as to the extirpation of the poison plant, &c., and who in return will receive long leaseholds at nominal rents.

As we travelled along the Great Southern Railway towards Beverley, I saw something, and heard more, respecting the vast jarrah forests of the south-western portion of the colony. As regards the character of the jarrah wood (*Eucalyptus marginata*), which seems the prince of Australian timbers, it is of straight growth, attaining 100 feet in height, and yielding solid timber 40 feet long by 2 feet square. In appearance it somewhat resembles mahogany, and, like that wood, is capable of a very high polish, and having enough figure to make it suitable for cabinet-

makers' work. It is chiefly adapted for piles, sleepers, dock work, and shipbuilding, the peculiarity being its resistance to the teredo and white ant, so that copper sheathing in shipbuilding is rendered unnecessary. It is classed at Lloyd's (for twelve years) in the third category of timber used for shipbuilding purposes. It has recently been employed with success for street-paving purposes in London, and the surveyor of one of the great vestries writes thus regarding the respective qualities of jarrah and deal for that purpose :—"Jarrah is more expensive, and, therefore, a smaller area can be provided at the same cost, but is more uniform in texture and quality, which makes it wear with much more evenness than deal, as deal varies considerably even in the length of a plank, and is liable to wear into holes where soft or sappy. Jarrah will wear much longer, and, taking this into account, it will be found the more economical in the end, besides having the advantages of less scavenging and requiring little or no repairs. This, combined with infrequent renewal, causes considerably less inconvenience to the public."

IX.

The Government Railway—York, Northam, Newcastle—An Agricultural Paradise—The Yilgarn Gold-fields—Primitive Wine-making—Cash conquers Barter — A Conservative Country—Intercolonial Federation and Fiscal Protection.

HAVING transferred ourselves to the Government railway train at Beverley, we proceeded northwards twenty miles to York, which is one of the titbits agriculturally of Western Australia. It is situated sixty miles east of Perth, and is seventy-eight miles distant by railway. I was unfortunate in arriving in the absence of Mr. J. H. Monger, whose pre-eminence in the district (he died a few months ago) was designated by his popular title of "The Duke of York." His place as a cicerone was, however, admirably supplied by Dr. O'Meehan, a magistrate, and the principal medico of the locality. The chocolate loam about York is marvellously rich, and the crops are phenomenal. These farming oases were especially interesting to me as evidencing what may be accomplished in the way of prosperous settlement when other portions of equally fertile territory are opened up by judicious railway extension.

It was hoped that the line to the Yilgarn gold-fields, which the Government are about to construct, would have branched off from York, but legislative wisdom has decided in favour of a starting-point at Northam, which will bring the fields considerably nearer to Fremantle, and will, I am confident, open up a valuable area of good country immediately eastward of Northam.

Northam is another agricultural centre, and is twenty-two miles from York and fifty-eight from the capital, with which it is connected by a railway branching off from the main Government, or eastern line, at Spencer's Brook. The soil of Northam

is a splendid chocolate loam, like that of its rival, York, producing wheat crops of from eighteen to thirty bushels to the acre. I explored the district under the intelligent ciceronage of Mr. Madden, the local manager of the National Bank of Australasia, which in other directions has prominently associated itself with the rising fortunes of Western Australia. From observations I made, farming in the Northam district is something more than a profitable pursuit, the advent of railway communication and the establishment of roller mills having given an immense spurt to wheat production, where formerly grazing predominated in connection with a very old-fashioned style of agriculture. Where wheat was grown in the old times an exhaustive method of continuous cropping was resorted to, whereas now a rotative and fallowing system, accompanied even by some rudimentary manuring, is beginning to prevail. What with the railway, and what with responsible government, a new spirit possesses the people, the colony, to use Mr. Madden's expressive phraseology, having virtually been "born again" after the bad start it made in the days of its early and premature inflation. The advent of the banks has been nearly as beneficial as the advent of the railways. Formerly cash was almost unknown, and a barbarous system of barter all-prevailing. One or two store-keeping monopolists supplied the farmers with provisions and necessaries, receiving their produce in exchange. The charge for supplies was more than double Perth rates, whilst the price given for the agricultural produce went to the opposite extreme. The storekeeper wanted an exorbitant profit both on what he sold and on what he bought or took in exchange. The farmer had thus very little chance of making more than a bare living, and was lucky if he did not labour under a load of debt, which the periodical advent of harvest only partially extinguished. Now that the banks have come into the field, the Queen's head on the coin of the realm has become a more familiar object. The farmer gets reasonable advances to enable him to develop his holding at 8 per cent. on deposit of his deeds, and is thus able to buy his provisions in the cheapest and to sell his produce in the dearest market, Perth being now rendered reasonably accessible by railway. Even

the storekeeper has gained by the change, as, despite his huge profits on paper, the credit system and the uncertainty of the market sadly hampered his operations in practice. The Northam district is admirably suited for sub-tropical cultures, the grape production per acre being in some cases almost fabulous. The fruit is generally converted into a crude wine, which sells readily in the locality at 5s. to 6s. per gallon—a figure which leaves a large profit. Of course, if the production increased the price in the local market would fall. But there ought to be a good opening for an export trade, and at 2s. per gallon the growers would do well.

As I said before, it is from Northam that the Government railway to Yilgarn, the newly discovered region of gold-producing quartz reefs to the eastward, will proceed. A good deal of its course of something under two hundred miles will be through the barren country, but it will open up a large area of fertile and fairly well-watered territory during the first fifty miles of its course, its construction being primarily justified by the expense of horse carriage (amounting to from £16 to £19 a ton) to what there seems every probability will prove a permanent gold-field, capable of supporting a large population. The drawback to Yilgarn is the scarcity of fresh water, plenty of brackish being obtainable, which by the use of condensers is being rendered adaptable for driving the crushing machinery; whilst with greater care in the conservation of the rainfall sufficient water for drinking and domestic purposes may be available, as at Broken Hill, for even a greatly increased population.

There is another agricultural centre hereabouts which completes the trio. This is Newcastle, a nice little town on the left bank of the Avon River, eighteen miles from Northam and fifty-three from the capital. It is not favoured, like York, with being on the main line, but, like Northam, it is connected with Perth by a feeder which branches off from the Eastern Railway at Chidlow's Wells. Newcastle, as regards soil, is another York, only, if one is to believe what the inhabitants assert, more so. It is roundly stated by a good authority to be one of the finest agricultural districts in Australia; but this I cannot vouch for, as I

had not time to visit it, and can only speak generally of the fertility of the *locale*.

The next station of importance is at Guildford, a flourishing town at the junction of the Swan and Helena rivers, only eight miles by rail from Perth. Here farming is carried on upon fine alluvial soil, and a good deal is done in the way of viticulture, Dr. Waylen having started a vineyard there many years ago, from which he draws a supply of wine, not wanting in body and potency.

In a few minutes we were steaming into the station at long-expected Perth. It does not take long to convince the visitor to Western Australia that he has come to the most conservative, and consequently the most English, of the Australian colonies. The original emigrants were persons of higher social status than the majority of the early settlers in the other colonies, and they entertained a strong sense of the virtues of caste and of the home connection, which their isolation from the other communities of the continent never offered them any temptation to exchange for sentiments of intercolonial amity. Down to the present time an Englishman is much surer of a friendly reception in Perth than a visitor from what, with an admirable insensibility to the status of their own community, they style with something of disdain "the colonies." It does not do to come to Perth without letters of introduction, unless you are already personally known to some of the local magnates. Your credentials once scrutinised, and not found wanting, you are welcomed with a hospitality of the old English sort, which takes no heed of the "dollars" of the visitor, as is too much the case in the more moneyed of the Australian capitals. The Weld Club of Perth is unique as a centre of sociability, and once you are admitted within its somewhat exclusive portals you are brought into pleasant contact with everybody who is "anybody" in the small capital of the largest colony of the Australian group.

I was not very long in perceiving that whatever may be the state of public feeling elsewhere in regard to intercolonial federation, in Western Australia it is utterly out of the question at present. It would most certainly wreck Sir John Forrest's

Government to-morrow if he were to move in favour of adopting the decisions of the late Sydney Convention. There is, however, not the remotest chance of his doing anything so foolish. Like every other publicist of standing, from the Governor downwards, he recognises the desire of the people not to part at a moment's notice with their newly acquired treasure of self-government. The other colonies may have tired of the bauble, but the West Australians are determined to have full experience of the troubles of working out their own destinies before surrendering their fate to the control of a central Executive in which many of the colonists have infinitely less faith than in the benevolent despotism of Downing Street, which they would never have shaken off with the alternative of being incorporated in an Australian Commonwealth staring them in the face. They thoroughly endorse Sir Robert Stout's sentiments when dealing with the case of New Zealand. If the latter colony is separated by 1,100 miles of sea, they are separated by nearly the same amount of land from the nearest centre of population in Eastern Australia. If the people of Western Australia are disinclined to part with their newly-acquired political privileges, still less are they willing to give away the material advantages which the newly awakened life that is visible in all directions is likely to confer on their commercial prospects. Whilst with one hand they are inviting settlers to come and cultivate their almost limitless wheat and vine areas, they are not likely with the other to abolish the tariff restrictions which at present prevent South Australia flooding the markets of her more backward sister with the produce of her cornfields and vineyards. Whatever may be the economic notions on the subject, such a policy would be regarded by the vast majority of the colonists as nothing less than rank suicide. When her resources are developed and her infant industries firmly planted, then possibly Western Australia may reconsider her position. But in any case she will insist on conditions for coming into the Federation, of which one of the first will be the construction, at the Federal expense, of the transcontinental railway line from Adelaide to Fremantle.

X.

Responsibilities of Responsible Government—A Capable Governor—The Premier,
a Son of the Soil—The Leader of the Opposition—Practical Parliamentarians
—A Model Speaker.

BEFORE entering on a more detailed description of such portions of the vast colony of Western Australia as it was possible for me to traverse in a stay of three weeks, I will make a few general observations, suggested to me as I travelled along, on the success which has attended the introduction of responsible government, and will attempt to give your readers some idea of the feeling with which the proposal to federate with the rest of the Australian colonies is regarded in this—the Cinderella of the group. Those who fought the battle of West Australian self-government during the crucial period in which the Enabling Bill was under discussion in the British Parliament, and who assisted in obtaining its concession upon an even broader basis than was at first contemplated by some of its promoters on this side of the world, have up to date no reason to be ashamed of their attitude.

As one crosses the south-western corner from the natural harbour of the colony at Albany to its less favoured rival of Fremantle, which the exigencies of the capital and the present trend of settlement will, to all appearance, compel the local parliament to convert into the main port for ocean-going shipping, one realises what a tiny area out of the total of a million odd of square miles has yet been subdued by right of actual tillage under the constitutional sceptre wielded from Perth. Looking to the pregnant fact that there is only .04 of a man to each square mile in Western Australia, and that the

larger part of even this small population is aggregated in the close vicinity of the capital, one might be inclined to think that it would have been judicious to have adopted Sir John Forrest's suggestion, and, whilst conceding responsible government to the south-west, to have reserved a large area to the north-west, and another large area to the east, under imperial control. If such a policy would have had the effect of concentrating the attention of the publicists of the colony on the more limited area allotted to their care, such a subdivision might have proved a boon and blessing to the community, as even in the more settled districts of the south-west the resources of the country are only yet in the first stages of exploitation and development. But this was scarcely feasible in view of the immense pastoral interests held in the north-west and east by the inhabitants of what may be called "Western Australia proper," and who, whilst they would have had one hand on the plough in their own colony, would have been using the other to influence territorial legislation in the reserved areas. That Western Australia will be subdivided when its population and circumstances approximate to those of Queensland does not admit of doubt, and in the meantime the interests of the inchoate states to the north-west and east are not likely to suffer seriously under the sway of the Government at present centralised at Perth. From time immemorial the Britisher has reconciled himself to the anomalies of his own much-boasted Constitution on the plea that it "works well," and the same justification seems likely for the present to cover any blemishes in the almost excessively generous measure of self-government conceded to this colony by the Imperial Parliament last year. Hitherto, at any rate, there have been no symptoms of the wild "rush" to dissipate their territorial patrimony which was predicated of the colonists by Sir George Campbell and his supporters during the discussions on the Enabling Bill; neither has any justification been afforded for the sinister predictions indulged in as to the stoppage of immigration under the new régime. On the contrary, there seems to be a general desire for the influx of a suitable class of immigrants—a desire which is strikingly emphasised by the fact that Western Australia has not as yet adopted the

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SIR JOHN FORREST, K.C.M.G.,
FIRST PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

[To face p. 48.]

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was regarded as something more than the "rising hope" of the Conservative party in this essentially Conservative colony. His heart, however, does not seem to be in politics, and unless a man is ambitious for himself he cannot expect to have a party at his back ambitious for him.

In Mr. Septimus Burt, the Attorney-General, who went home to supervise the loan arrangements of the colony, rendered necessary by the inauguration of responsible government, the Ministry possesses one of its most weighty though withal most unassuming members. He is associated with the "first families" of the colony, and may be regarded as a standing guarantee against any financial or other extravagance on the part of the Administration, the other members of which, Messrs. Shenton, Venn, and Marmion, are men of varied colonial experience, and honestly desirous of doing their duty in the station to which they have been called. In fact the Ministry as a whole seems more likely to fall into the error of doing too much than too little. It is, no doubt, desirable that they should become familiarised with the details of the working of their respective departments. But there is reason in all things, and when once they have become "initiated" they will see the wisdom of doing less work and accepting more responsibility. There is at present no real parliamentary opposition to the Ministry, but when this becomes intensified, as it is sure to be as time goes on, no doubt the pressure of work in the House will correct any harmless tendency to fussiness in the public offices. To the Legislature of the colony praise is due equally with the Executive. High-flying notions seem as much at a discount in the Lower House as one would naturally expect to find them in the nominated Upper Chamber. The thirty members returned are of the right type, men who have proved themselves centres of light and leading in their several districts, and who in combination may be expected to do as much to advance the colony generally as they have done locally in their single capacity. The Speaker of the West Australian House of Commons, Sir James Lee Steere, is a master of precedent, and would preside as competently at St. Stephen's as he does over his thirty novices in Perth. He comes of a good old

Surrey stock, and his father, who died very recently, was formerly one of the representatives of that county in the House of Commons. Sir James is a sturdy Conservative of the best sort, and acts as a brake on the wheel of Western Australian go-aheadism with a straightforwardness and steadiness which stamp him as a true Englishman as well as an invaluable colonist.

XI.

Area of the Colony—Alienated Territory a mere bagatelle—A Charming Climate—The Coastal Rain Belt—Female Immigration—A Sample Importation—Working Men's Freeholds—The Parliamentary Franchise—Educational and Religious Advantages.

TAKING Western Australia from a territorial point of view, it may be pointed out that the greatest length of the colony north and south is 1,280 miles, and the greatest width from east to west 800, the whole being bounded on the west, north-west, and south by a coast-line of 3,000 miles. As virtually the whole of the close settlement is comprised within a radius of 250 miles from Fremantle, the Port of Perth, on the south-west coast, and as even within this area the greater part of the land is still unalienated by the State, it may be judged how wide a field still remains open for agricultural and pastoral settlement, albeit there is a large amount of the latter further away to the north-west, where the sheep runs are held in vast areas on the usual leasehold tenures. Out of a total acreage of 678,400,222 acres, only about 5,154,673 acres have been alienated, whilst there remains at the disposition of the Government the gigantic total of 673,245,549 acres. The amount of cultivated land in the colony is 117,833 acres, and of uncultivated 678,282,389. Of the land still available a very large quantity is, of course, worthless, and a still larger quantity of inferior quality. Then, again, the adaptability of the balance of good land for profitable cultivation must be considered in connection with its nearness to markets and accessibility to railways and other means of transport. Making all these allowances, however, there remains an immense, if scattered, area suitable for the reception of agricultural immigrants either from Europe or from the other

colonies. Amongst the advantages of Western Australia is its climate, which for the greater part of the year is one of blue skies and bright sunshine, enrapturing, indeed, to the unaccustomed Londoner, who might well put up with the three months of somewhat excessive summer heat for the sake of the splendid spring and autumn weather. Even the summer temperature presents the important alleviations of dryness during the daytime and coolness at nights. Then, again, the rainfall is plentiful on the west and south-west coasts, and regular and sufficient for at least one hundred miles inland from, say, Gantheaume Bay on the former, to the mouth of the Fitzgerald River on the latter. The summer dryness of the atmosphere is an agreeable feature even in the north-west, and renders the tropical portions of the colony sufficiently bearable, droughts of the severity of those experienced in the eastern colonies being unknown. Whilst there is plenty of room for pastoralists with capital in the north-west, the small agriculturist may get good land in a temperate latitude on lower terms than would be the case in any other colony possessing a similar quality of soil. The latter has specially good prospects from the fact that the production of cereals has not yet outrun the local demand, nor does it seem likely to do so for a long time to come, if the promise of the large increase in the consuming population is borne out by the success of the Yilgarn goldfields and other mineral developments in various parts of the colony.

At present, as I have said before, very little is done by the Government in the way of subsidising immigration. The Immigration Board, to whom under the Act of 1883 the expenditure of the funds available is entrusted, have confined their operations of late to granting free passages to labourers from Europe nominated by their friends in the colony, and to paying half the passage money for labourers nominated by colonial employers desiring imported hands. In each case the nominators are required to enter in an undertaking to indemnify the Government against any expenses incurred between the debarkation and arrival at destination of the immigrant. It is also made a misdemeanour punishable by a fine of £50, with or without twelve months' imprisonment, for any free or

assisted immigrant to quit the colony within three months after his arrival, unless in cases where the amount advanced is previously repaid to the Immigration Board. Some few ship-loads of female immigrants have also been from time to time imported under the auspices of the Board. Some of these importations have not proved very satisfactory, consisting, as they did, partially of penitents, whose pledges of reformation failed to withstand the temptations of the voyage, followed by the freedom from restraint experienced on their landing in Western Australia. No blame can be attributed to the Board for failures of this kind, as a depôt for the new arrivals is established at Fremantle, and every care exercised for the protection of those not obstinately determined to go astray.

A batch of forty-two girls arrived on April 11, 1891, by the ship *Gulf of Martaban*; but as I heard some sneering remarks made with reference to their qualifications, I made special inquiries of the Governor, Mr. Shenton, the indefatigable and experienced chairman of the Immigration Board, Mr. Dale, the inspector of Charitable Institutions, and Sir James Lee Steere, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, all of whom concurred in the opinion that the girls (who were sent out under the auspices of the Honourable Mrs. Joyce and the Girls' Friendly Society) were highly respectable and likely to do well for themselves and prove a benefit to the colony. The party arrived on a Saturday, and, with the exception of two Catholics, all went to the Protestant Church together on Sunday. On the Monday the whole of them were engaged as domestic servants at wages ranging from £2 to £3 10s. per month, according to the supposed extent of their previous experience. Of the forty-two girls, three left their places almost immediately, but were quickly re-engaged. As far as I could gather, any complaints made by mistresses arose from the inexperience of the girls in making wood fires (coal being unknown), in cooking with colonial ovens, pumping water, &c. Of course, in a batch of forty-two girls all-round equability of temper was not to be expected, and the want of this in the case of one of them led to a police-court charge, which created a considerable sensation in Perth. The girl in question, Carrie

Hall, having disobeyed some command of her mistress, quarrelled with her, and left her place without giving the month's notice stipulated for on her engagement. The mistress, taking advantage of an obsolete statute, applicable enough in the old convict days, summoned the refractory maid to the local court, where, in the absence of the stipendiary magistrate, two honorary justices of much the same bent of mind as certain of their brethren in England, sentenced her to pay a fine of £4, or undergo a month's imprisonment. When those present had recovered from their astonishment at the severity of the penalty imposed, they subscribed the required amount just in time to anticipate the action of the Immigration Board, who as soon as they heard of the result sent one of their functionaries to liquidate the fine on the girl's behalf. I mention this matter as it excited a good deal of attention in Western Australia, and has been distorted into a wholesale indictment against the *Gulf of Martaban* contingent. For the information of servant-girls thinking of emigrating I may add that 10s. per week is about the normal wage in Western Australia, although £36 per year, and even more, is paid to cooks and very superior domestics in the towns. As much as £4 per month is given in hotels, but this class of service is not desirable for respectable girls, who would find it very difficult to get employment in private service afterwards. Whilst I am on the subject of wages I may add that unskilled labourers' wages in Perth are from 5s. to 7s. per day, more commonly the latter, since railway extension under Mr. Keane's liberal auspices has rendered labour scarce and dear to an extent which would cause some of the "old-timers" of Western Australia to turn in their graves with incredulity and disgust.

As is the case in most of the Australian capitals, two-thirds of the working men of Perth have built houses on their own freeholds. Those who did so a few years ago have had their properties vastly enhanced in value by the general rise in price of town lands in Perth. Even now working men can purchase allotments of nearly a quarter of an acre little more than a mile from the city for £50, on which they can erect a decent brick cottage for, say, £150, and thus, by a payment of 9s. 11d.

per week to the Perth Building Society, become in eight years possessors of excellent freehold residences.

At present Western Australia is almost untouched by the influence of trade unionism ; but this halcyon state of affairs for the employers is not likely to last long now that emigration from the other colonies is imbuing the minds of the local working men with more advanced ideas of the rights and destinies of their class. The eight hours system is adopted in a good many trades where there is no great difficulty in regard to its applicability. But even this great palladium of the workers in Australia is advocated with considerable modesty in Western Australia. I was dining with Sir John Forrest on June 1, the anniversary of the inauguration of the colony, when a deputation, representing a crowd of several thousands outside, arrived at the house to interview him on the subject. Instead, however, of enforcing on the Premier their views as to the legalisation of the eight hours system, they merely asked him for his own opinion, and apparently went away quite satisfied when he assured them that statutory interference was quite out of the question, and that, as in the other colonies, the adoption of the eight hours rule must be left to the influence of time and the friendly co-operation of employers and employed in the several trades. At present there is no public opinion in the colony to speak of in reference to any matter of political concern. Very naturally, considering its long stagnation, the people regard the material development of its immense area and equally immense resources as the main and immediate duty of the Government. This the Forrest Ministry recognise, and as long as they go forward in their present prudent fashion, and there is no hitch over finding the sinews of war, there will be nothing in the way of serious parliamentary opposition to their proposals. There is one thing that the working man who emigrates to Western Australia will not enjoy in the same full measure as would be the case were he to go to one of the other colonies, and that is the electoral franchise. Before he can vote for a Member of the Legislative Assembly he must either be a £100 freeholder or a leaseholder, householder, or lodger paying an annual rental of £10. Universal suffrage must, however,

shortly be adopted as in the other colonies; and then we shall no longer witness the absurdity of Members being returned to the popular House by a score or so of electors, 249 being the highest number polled for a single candidate at the General Election last year. Though at present a nominated body, the Upper House is to become elective in five years' time. Voting papers being allowed on the top of a property qualification, Western Australia is at present the farthest removed of any colony from the one man one vote system which Sir George Grey, the great New Zealand publicist, so much desiderates. Though the election is by ballot, there is no payment of members, the Government side (Liberals though they call themselves) being as hostile as the Opposition (so called) to the reimbursement of members and the establishment of universal suffrage.

The education system, which is on the model of that established under Mr. Forster's English Act, appears to give satisfaction at present, and as the Board opens a school wherever twelve scholars between four and sixteen years of age can be got together, there is little fear of the children of settlers, except in the most out-of-the-way locations, being deprived of proper instruction. There is power to compel the attendance of children between six and fourteen residing within three miles of Government or assisted schools, and school fees are charged as follows—viz., one shilling per week per child when the parent has an income in excess of £100 per annum; sixpence in case of the children of persons receiving salaries of not more than £100 per annum, and threepence when the parent is a person employed by others at a daily or weekly wage not exceeding £75 per annum. A reduction of one-third is made when more than two of one family attend, and scholars can be admitted free on the recommendation of the District Boards. With the influx of new blood no doubt a free system all round will be substituted for the present complicated tariff, even that laggard in this matter, South Australia, having last year made her education absolutely gratuitous, despite the fact that her ex-Premier disbelieves in elementary education at all, and has carried his principle into practice in the case of his own children. All the main religious bodies are represented in

Western Australia, the Church of England being the most numerous, the Catholics the most active, and the Salvation Army having little or no hold. A State grant of between £3,000 and £4,000 is divided annually between the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, and Presbyterian bodies; but this is almost certain to be discontinued in the course of a year or two, the feeling against the State endowment of religion being a growing one even in Conservative Western Australia. The monetary part of the matter has all along amounted to only a paltry pittance, but the lands granted to different religious bodies for Church sites and all imaginable purposes total up a very considerable area in the aggregate, and may be a source of future difficulty, every recognised communion getting as many glebes as it wants of 100 acres.

XII.

The Government Land Regulations—The Poison Plants—The Agricultural Commission—What Constitute Improvements in the official sense.

THE sale and occupation of the public lands in Western Australia are still governed by the "Regulations" issued in March, 1887, which, as Sir John Forrest has often stated, were specially framed with a view of limiting lavish alienation and rendering the acquirement of the soil conditional on its improvement. For the purposes of these "regulations" the colony was divided into six divisions, viz., the South-west, the Gascoyne, the North-west, the Kimberley, the Eucla, and the Eastern.

Roughly speaking, the South-west Division includes four-fifths of the present population of the colony, and comprising, as it does, the whole of the reliable coastal rain-belt from Gantheaume Bay to the mouth of the Fitzgerald River, may be regarded as covering all the territory at present available for agricultural purposes. The Eucla and Eastern Divisions comprise the vast scantily-watered area lying between this favoured region and the western boundary of South Australia, whilst the Gascoyne, North-west, and Kimberley Divisions embrace the tropical and semi-tropical portions of the colony to the north of the other three. In the pastoral divisions, as all except the South-west may be called, areas of many thousands of acres may be leased by runholders at rentals of from 2s. 6d. to £1 per 1,000 acres, and subject to varying conditions as to stocking and improvements. As I only propose to deal in detail with the suitability of the colony for agricultural settlement I shall refer to the regulations merely so far as they affect the South-western Division. Subject to such reservations as the Government may see fit to make for public purposes, and

to the sale by public auctions of town and suburban lots, any person desiring to take up land in the South-western District may purchase a maximum amount of 1,000 acres by deferred payments, either with or without residence, and either in agricultural areas specially selected and surveyed by Government, or outside of the latter on still unappropriated and unsurveyed lands—in all cases, be it remembered, under improvement conditions of varying stringency. As the agricultural areas are laid out with proper roads and reserves for public purposes, and as the Government choice of them is at least some guarantee of their suitability for purposes of cultivation, probably, all things being equal, the new-comer would be well advised in trying his luck in an “agricultural area,” especially as he need not in the first instance take up the full quantum of 1,000 acres, but is allowed subsequent opportunities of increasing his holding to the maximum extent. Any conditional purchaser under this portion of the “regulations” must be at least eighteen years of age, and is charged not less than 10s. an acre, payable by equal instalments extending over twenty years. For the first five years the purchaser merely holds a licence, and is, in fact, a probationer, with no disposable interest in the freehold. If, however, he pays the rent, fences in the land, and resides upon it during the five years, he is then granted a Crown lease for fifteen years, and if at the expiration of that time, or at any time previously thereto, he can show that he has effected improvements, exclusive of fencing, equal in value to the full purchase money, a Crown grant will be issued to him placing him in full possession of the freehold. Of course if he takes up his grant at any period anterior to the expiration of the lease he has to pay up the whole of the balance of the twenty years’ rents in a lump sum.

To sum up, for an expenditure of £1,000, spread, if he likes, over twenty years, with the addition of the cost of fencing, the settler from England can become the possessor of a farm of 1,000 acres. This he must have cultivated very carelessly if, with the unearned increment of a rising colony, he does not long before the twenty years expire, besides getting a good living off it, render it worth several pounds an acre more

than the original Government price. I should have mentioned that one of the conditions is that he must fence the tenth of his land in the first two years, the remaining three of the licence period being allowed him to complete the rest. Conditional purchasers who prefer making a free selection outside of the "agricultural areas" may do so on terms similar to those prevailing within them. Persons desiring to take up land free from residential conditions may also do so by paying a double rental and executing the same amount of improvements as those enjoined on the residential purchasers. In case a man wishes to purchase land in the South-western Division on cash terms he can acquire not more than 1,000 acres in an "agricultural area," or 5,000 acres outside of one, for a minimum price of 10s. per acre. He must, however, fence the land within three years of the date of survey, and execute improvements to the extent of 5s. an acre within seven years, or the Crown grant will not issue. Though not a pastoral division in the same sense as the other five, land can be obtained in the South-west for grazing purposes in blocks of not less than 3,000 acres, at a rental of £1 per annum for every 1,000 acres. This style of tenure is, however, to expire in 1907, when fair compensation will be given the lessees for any permanent improvements made in the interim. As these pastoral holdings (even prior to 1907) are at all times liable to the incursions of "conditional purchasers," it follows, as a matter of course, that the latter must compensate the runholders for any permanent improvements effected on the areas they may select. The value of the improvements is fixed by the Commissioner of Lands, and the conditional purchaser pays the amount in five yearly instalments with 5 per cent. interest added. Perhaps the cheapest mode of obtaining land in the South-western Division—at any rate in large blocks—is by taking it up under the regulations with regard to what is called "poisoned land," the freehold of this being obtainable for something under 6d. an acre, payable, if preferred, in twenty-one annual instalments, subject to the condition of fencing the land and eradicating the poison within three years. Of the poison plants, which are dangerous and in most cases fatal to the sheep, cattle, and horses eating them,

four, according to Mr. Nicolay, the local historian, are small shrubs, known as the York Road, the Box, Heart Leaf, and Rock poisons. A fifth, Kandinup poison, is a small herbaceous plant with a blue flower, common near the south coast. There is little danger to stock from these plants while the grass and other herbage is plentiful, but in summer, when the poisonous shrubs present an especially green appearance, they tempt the unfortunate animals to their doom. To eat of them, with sheep and cattle, is nearly always fatal. Immediately after doing so they are seized with a species of madness and rush straight ahead, ultimately falling down and dying in a state of paralysis. With horses the effects are not nearly so serious, so long as they are not ridden immediately after feeding on the poison plants. The owners, being generally unaware of their horses having browsed upon the poison, frequently lose valuable animals. Disastrous as the ravages of the poison plants are, they are easily got rid of when the areas containing them are enclosed with fencing. Contracts for their eradication have been taken as low as 6d. per acre, and 2s. 6d. might be regarded as a fair price. Vast tracts of the poisoned country have been assimilated by the Land Corporation of West Australia, which is doing a roaring business in reselling the land in small blocks, at, I believe, about 1s. 6d. per acre, to persons who, in addition, carry out the conditions which the Government impose upon the Corporation.

In 1887 a commission was appointed by the then Governor of Western Australia, Sir F. N. Broome, to inquire into the condition of agriculture in the colony, and make suggestions for its improvement. The commissioners traversed the whole of the South-western Division, taking a vast body of evidence, their labours being conducted with so much care that they did not hand in their final report till March, 1891. This very able document, understood to have been drawn up by the chairman, Mr. H. W. Venn, now Commissioner of Railways, taken in connection with the minutes of evidence appended to it, will amply repay a perusal on the part of intending settlers, giving, as it does, in addition to a general survey of the state of agriculture throughout the South-west Division, much de-

tailed information as to the climate and rainfall, the several localities, and the special cultures for which each respectively is suited. They arrive at the conclusion, which the impartial observer will endorse, that the productiveness of the different areas of the colony under a fair system of farming is in no way behind the sister colonies, and that its backwardness hitherto is in no way traceable to any inherent infertility of the soil, but is due rather to the isolation of the colony and to the difficulty of obtaining a cash market for the products of agriculture.

The commissioners in their report, whilst they advocate a mixed system of farming, divide the country visited for purposes of convenience, into wheat, fruit-growing, and dairying areas. Taking the first of the areas, they consider the average cost of wheat production to be 2s. per bushel, which leaves a handsome profit on the present local price of 4s. Having regard, too, to the fact that the average yield of wheat in Western Australia exceeds that of South Australia to the tune of six bushels per acre, and that the wheat areas of the former possess an average rainfall of thirteen inches, the commissioners contended, with considerable show of reason, that Western Australia will ultimately be in a position to enter into profitable competition with the sister colony in the foreign corn market. It may also be remarked that the local farmers are protected from the effects of outside competition by an import duty of 4d. per bushel of 60 pounds. A vast portion of the South-western Division is admirably suited to the growing of nearly every variety of fruit-trees, especially the vine. The latter is already a good deal cultivated and with very profitable results, as I shall show later on; but of course if viticulture were gone into on a large scale the present local prices both for the grapes and the wine would be considerably lowered, and the export market have to be looked to. Dairying is certainly in its infancy in Western Australia; and even with a very gradual increase in the population—which, by the by, the latest returns assess at just under 54,000—might be most profitably carried on, the large amount of butter imported from South Australia being some measure of this, and by no means a credit to the energy of the West Australian farmers, who, however, have had the excuse, as I

have pointed out before, that they could make a living easier than by undertaking industries requiring capital to start and constant care and exertion to sustain them. The commissioners think that the average size of a profitable farm should be from 500 to 700 acres, and this I found was a very common opinion, but it is subject of course to considerable modifications to meet individual exigencies and capacities and climatic and other conditions; men who combine the wages of labour with the acquirement and cultivation of vastly smaller areas being amongst the most successful of the old colonists, and likely to make some of the most affluent of the new. Sir F. Broome thinks that 300 acres is quite enough for a good farm in Western Australia, and that a capital of £250 to £300 is about the right thing. Indeed, it may be taken, I think, as an axiom that about £1 per acre capital is what the pioneer farmer in Western Australia should possess. The Lands Department, I understand, are very obliging and liberal in placing what information they have about the available territory at the service of intending settlers, and even bear the expenses of their transport when inspecting likely locations. But what is now done spasmodically and without much method might, I think, be done more systematically by an Intelligence Department established for the purpose, and the expenses of which might be defrayed out of the £50,000 rather indefinitely allotted in the schedule of the new loan for immigration purposes. The idea of an Intelligence Department was suggested to me by Mr. Woodward, the Government geologist, a most capable officer, whom the administration seems utilising in a very worthy and practical manner for developing a knowledge of the mineral and other natural resources of the colony.

With regard to what constitute "improvements" under the Land Regulations, as previously explained, they must have been *bonâ fide* made for improving the land and increasing its carrying capacity, and must consist of wells of fresh water, reservoirs, tanks, or dams of a permanent character, and available for the use of stock, or of fences, sheds, and buildings erected for farm or shearing and station purposes, not being dwelling-houses (except where such dwelling-houses exist upon

a pastoral lease); or of cultivation, subdivision fences, clearing, grubbing, draining, ring-barking (at not more than 2s. per acre). It may, however, be presumed that whilst the above definition of what in an official sense are recognised as improvements would be strictly construed against an outgoing Crown tenant who was wanting to be paid by an incoming conditional purchaser, for the improvements he had effected, a much more literal interpretation would be put on the term as between the Government and the conditional purchaser, when his compliance with the regulations regarding improvements came to be considered on his asking for his lease or Crown grant. There is plenty of land for the would-be conditional purchaser, without his taking up areas which are subject to the incumbrance of paying for the improvements effected by some previous occupier, but in case he should choose land so weighted it is as well to remind him that he need not pay for the improvements (the value of which is assessed by the Government) out and out, but may do so in five yearly instalments with 5 per cent. interest added.

It must always be borne in mind by the intending settler that though he may be inclined to deal with the Land Companies for the land he wants alongside of their railway lines, yet that in each case the Government frontages alternate with those of the Companies, so that he can always have his choice of Government or Company land, the former being available on the terms and conditions above stated. Then there are still large areas available alongside of the existing Government lines, and will be still larger and more tempting ones so available on the Northam to Yilgarn and Perth to Bunbury and Busselton lines, which the Government are about to commence constructing.

XIII.

Not "All Barren"—Another Land Grant Railway—Guildford to Walkaway—
The Midland Company's Concession—Three Million Acres available for
Settlement—Million Acres suitable for Cereal Growing—Probable Colonisation
Project—An Industrial King—Room for General Booth.

I GAVE in the previous chapter a summary of the land regulations of Western Australia, and spoke of the provisions with reference to the "poisoned land," as affording a possibly cheaper and easier means of acquiring a freehold than might be the case under the ordinary conditional purchase rules. The settler must, however, consider the matter in the light of accessibility to markets and means of transit; and in any case he might find it more to his advantage to pay the extra price for the fee-simple rather than "camp" in the midst of a tract of poisoned country, where if he went in for stock they might browse unawares on the noxious plants in adjacent areas not yet subjected to the necessary process of eradication, which in some exceptional instances costs many times over the amount I mentioned as the fair average expense. What needs to be borne in mind is that where the poison-plant is only sparsely present, upon what would not be regarded in the official sense as "poisoned land," it can be got rid of very cheaply, and that where pure agriculture only is gone in for, it need not be taken into consideration at all, as it will be eradicated in the ordinary process of clearing and ploughing. In fact it is my belief that the poison, like the "bunnies" in the other colonies, will only be entirely extirpated by close settlement, as the case of Mildura proves in regard to the rabbit-ridden Murray country. Taking them as a whole, the land regulations of Western Australia admirably lend themselves to the development of schemes of colonisation such

as have on various occasions been mooted in the interests of the unemployed at home. After the particulars I have given, no elaborate exposition of their elasticity and adaptability in this respect will be required. I may add, as a matter of useful information, that as all dealings in the public lands are now carried out under what is known in the other colonies as the "Torrens" registration system, the cost to the settlers of Crown grants and subsequent transfers is a trivial matter. In the case of the former only 30s. for preparing and recording. It is now a condition in Crown grants that one-twentieth of all agricultural lands may be resumed for purposes of State utility without compensation, except ground on which buildings have been erected or gardens laid out, or ground necessary for the efficient utilisation of any buildings.

Not wishing to be in the position of numerous preceding travellers who, after merely seeing the vicinity of Albany or sticking to the road or railway line between that town and the capital, have incontinently described the colony as "all barren," I determined to inspect at least a reasonable stretch of the average agricultural country within the coastal rain belt of the settled districts. After taking the opinion of Sir John Forrest and several other competent advisers, I decided to investigate the land along the route of the railway now in course of construction from Walkaway, some two hundred and seventy-three miles north-east of Perth, to Guildford, which lies about nine miles to the north-east of the capital on the Government's Eastern Railway line, with which it forms the point of junction.

I chose the route along the Midland Railway, as it is called, because on its expected completion next year it will supply reasonable means of communication and transit to a vast area of excellent agricultural land, which has been locked up from settlement since 1886, under the arrangements for the construction of the railway on the land grant system entered into between the Government of Western Australia and what was known as the Waddington syndicate in England. This agreement was dated February 27, 1886, and stipulated for the construction of a line, the general route of which should be from Guildford viâ Gingin, Victoria Plains, Upper Irwin, and

Dongara, to the southern terminus of the Geraldton-Greenough (Government) line at Walkaway. The concessionaire was in return (as in the case of the West Australian Land Company and the Great Southern Railway) to receive 12,000 acres of land per mile of line constructed, to be selected by him in blocks of not less than 12,000 acres within an area of forty miles on either side of the line. From the date of the agreement the Government were precluded from otherwise alienating any lands within the forty miles until the completion of the line; and though prior to that time a good deal of land had been disposed of within the forty-mile boundary, and could not of course be affected by the agreement, the company have still a vast area of good country from which to make their pick of the 3,540,000 acres which they are entitled to select from time to time, on completion of the various sections of the railway.

As, however, half the frontage to the line in alternate blocks of not less than five miles in width and fifteen miles in depth is reserved to the Government, the latter will have a large area of good land at their disposal as well as the company, so that between the two a numerous body of settlers may be accommodated with good soil, in a temperate climate, with an average rainfall of a reliable character approaching twenty inches. The company can have a grant of 6,000 acres per mile out of their allotted quantum on the completion of each twenty-mile section of their railway, the other moiety not being absolutely transferred to them until they have performed their whole contract. There is nothing, therefore, to prevent their making an early start on a small scale with any plan of alienation and settlement on which they may decide. The syndicate which originally obtained the concession had a career of vicissitude, and the whole undertaking would have fallen through had not the scheme been fortunately adopted by Mr. Herbert W. Bond, the present managing director of the company, who, after a couple of years' negotiation with London capitalists under circumstances of difficulty which would have daunted almost any other man, at last succeeded in putting the matter on a business basis, and getting the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia, Limited, formed. The nominal capital of

the concern is £1,240,000, in 20,000 ordinary shares of £6 each (£1 called up) and 40,000 founders' shares of £1 each. The money for starting the construction of the line was, however, mainly drawn from the proceeds of the sale of £500,000 of six per cent. first mortgage debentures, forming part of an authorised issue of £1,000,000, the whole of which was subscribed on the London market at the time, but owing to the financial depression following the issue, a portion was surrendered for non-payment of calls.

I will not entirely trust my own judgment as to the general value of the Midland Company's concession, but will quote the opinion of a gentleman not famed for giving rose-coloured reports of the properties even of his clients, as many of the latter have found to their grief. Writing on the subject towards the end of last year, Dr. Robertson says: "The district intersected by this railway, and within your area of selection, contains, I think, beyond all question the richest and most valuable agricultural land in the whole colony. Portions are of importance in a mineralogical aspect. The selections of the Railway Company will, undoubtedly, embrace the very eyes, or most valuable areas of agricultural land in the colony.

"The settlers along your line of railway are men who, as a rule, commenced with no capital, yet who have struggled bravely through many vicissitudes and years of trouble successfully, and have eventually made money. They are not a complaining class, but men of individuality and courage, sturdy yeomen, worthy of the old land from which they came. Hitherto they have been unable to till the soil in a way or to an extent that, with the convenience of a railway and enlarging markets, is now possible. Systems of husbandry hitherto unpractised will by degrees be introduced, and crops and products best suited to the soil, the locality, and the climate, be raised. This is particularly the case with cereals, vines and oranges, in the cultivation of which great ignorance prevails. In respect to vines, the absurdity of growing many varieties in one plot or locality, and of attempting to make as many varieties of wine, badly, is a feature of the eastern colonies; instead of which, greater success would assuredly reward the efforts of those who,

by careful experiment, first ascertain the variety best suited to their land and the conditions, and confined their attention exclusively to its cultivation. To my mind the successful settler of the future will be one who is not bound by hard and fast and arbitrary lines, but one who will cultivate thoroughly and well every product that his land will produce, and for which there is a market. A farmer must combine pig and cattle rearing and dairying operations, on as large a scale as possible, along with that of growing cereals."

Granted the value of the territory, it requires to be handled in a manner at once bold and prudent—*i.e.*, if the shareholders are to see what they ought out of their magnificent estate, and the colony to benefit as it should do by the introduction of some thousands of desirable settlers. England too, with her congested population, has a stake in the fortunes of this and other similar concerns, which are or may be shortly working on the same lines, so that even General Booth might have done worse than devote a few weeks to a careful inspection of the available parts of Western Australia when he made his tour of the Australian continent. But if he intends to operate on the vicious residuum of the East End the reception of his project in Western Australia will be as cold as it would be in the other colonies; whilst if he means to manipulate the depressed rather than the degraded classes, and, after "emigrating" them, to supply them with the means of sustenance until they are able to support themselves, he will, as far as my cursory observations go, find himself and protégés better welcomed and better accommodated in Western Australia than in any of the sister communities.

The colony is now in much the same position as the older colonies occupied thirty or forty years ago, and has, as far as one can judge, to say the least, just as good a chance of a prosperous development as the best of them. With money to spend on public works, employment will be brisk; and, though I do not advocate the influx of men wholly without capital, it must be remembered that every man who comes to the colony with capital makes room for the arrival of men with none. The colony is just now admittedly on the rising tide, as there

is room for the exercise of enterprise in a variety of directions which it would be difficult to particularise, but which colonists of the right mental and physical stamp will soon find out for themselves.

These impressions I formed during my long drive across country on the route of the Midland Railway line, which, in its 300-miles course, will not only tap the agricultural resources of some of the richest unalienated lands in the settled districts of the colony, as Dr. Robertson avouches, but will complete the line of railway communication from north to south, from Northampton, viâ Geraldton, Perth, and Beverley, to Albany, a distance by rail of nearly 700 miles. I drove the needful distance in company with Mr. Stafford, the engineer of the railway, and with Mr. Kellett, who had recently come from England to test by boring the coal-seams which have already been discovered on the Upper Irwin, and which, if found in superior quantity and quality, may turn this portion of the Company's territory into a thriving manufacturing as well as agricultural district, and thus enhance its resources beyond the dreams of avarice, and these are pretty well developed in the modern shareholder. Thanks to the energy of Mr. Keane, the contractor for the line, who may be regarded as the industrial "king" of Western Australia, I had not to drive by road the whole of the distance which the railway is to cover. It was begun from both ends, and had been completed to a distance of some twenty miles from Walkaway on the north, and over forty from Guildford on the south. Across these distances I therefore travelled by rail, going in the first instance by steamer from Perth to Geraldton, and making my start from the northern end. It took me altogether six days to accomplish the overland journey, which traversed rich country, intersected by dreary sand-plains. If one could hazard a guess I should say there must be about 1,000,000 acres of first-class land fit for wheat-growing in the Company's concession. There is a still larger area well fitted for pasture and the growth of vines and fruit trees, whilst the timber resources of some of the inferior country should constitute a source of large ultimate profit. In spite of the competition of the Government, who are selling at

10s. an acre, the West Australian Land Company are getting 15s. for their better land between Beverley and Albany, so that in all probability the Midland Company may do likewise. A large return will also come in from town-sites, which will be proclaimed at suitable intervals, and a large amount netted out of their sale in small sections for business and residence purposes. Indeed, Dr. Robertson estimates the average value of the Company's concession of over 3,000,000 acres at £1 10s. per acre.

XIV.

Fremantle Harbour Works—Sir John Coode's Views—Steam to Geraldton—
Mr. Maitland Browne—Fine type of Colonial Pioneer—A Gameless Land—
Over the Midland Company's Concession—Greenough Flats—The Upper
Irwin Country—A Land of Flowers.

IN order to get to Geraldton, the main port of the district which the Midland Railway of Western Australia, when completed, is to traverse, I had to proceed from Perth by railway to Fremantle, its port at the mouth of the River Swan. Fremantle is only some 3,000 behind the capital in population, and in hotel accommodation and some other matters seems to have even surpassed it. It might be thought that, with only a river length of fourteen miles separating it from the sea, Perth would have insisted on being its own port, and at all risks have cleared away the rocky bar which alone would prevent vessels of large tonnage loading and discharging at its wharves were the river channel deepened and narrowed at certain points, at a cost which need not, one would think, be prohibitive. The Perthites have not taken altogether kindly to the idea of admitting the maritime supremacy of Fremantle; but there appears to be a doubt whether in any case the largest class of ocean-going steamers could ever come up to Perth, whilst the claims of Fremantle were strongly reinforced by the reports of the late Sir John Coode. This eminent engineer, after personal inspection and the most minute soundings, came to the conclusion, even if costly sheltering works were erected, that, looking at the large quantity of sand in motion, particularly near the coast-line, the limited backwater available for scouring purposes would prove insufficient, even when aided by training

and protective works, to keep open a deep channel through the rock barrier after the latter had been formed. Accompanying this condemnation of a scheme to which every loyal Perthite naturally inclined, Sir John made a recommendation that Fremantle should be constituted the principal harbour of the colony under plans which would, in the first instance, provide efficient harbourage for vessels drawing from 24 to 26 feet, and which by a process of extension might ultimately be made to accommodate the largest vessels of the P. and O. Company, with a depth of 34 to 36 feet. It is in the direction of Sir John Coode's project that the amount included in the schedule of the loan, of which a part has already been floated, will probably be applied, though recently the Government favoured a wholly different scheme, which was also endorsed as practicable by Sir John Coode before his death. That eminent engineer considered that fair harbourage should satisfy the wants of the present generation; but the people of Fremantle are not likely to be long content with any improvement which will still keep them in the rear of Albany as a port of entrance for ocean-going steamers, especially in view of the tempting advances which the Orient Company are believed to have made in the direction of constituting Fremantle a regular port of call on the passage between England and the Australian colonies if safe harbourage is guaranteed. I interpose these allusions to the harbour question as they formed the topic of much heated discussion between the advocates of Fremantle and all sorts of other supposititious harbours before I found myself on board the little steamer *Flinders* bound for Geraldton, which promising port, with its population of 1,000, we did not, however, reach by this method, the weather proving sufficiently fine to allow of our putting in at Dongara, 41 miles south of Geraldton, where we availed ourselves of the opportunity of travelling along the finished section of the Midland Railway to Walkaway, and thence by the Government line to Geraldton itself.

From the point of view of the Company the original syndicate no doubt committed a mistake in agreeing to make a line which left in the hands of the Government the key of the

whole position—viz., the command of the outport. This the Company have not been slow to recognise, and negotiations are now, I believe, in progress for the purchase from the State of the twenty miles of line from Walkaway to Geraldton which the latter have made to meet the Company's line at Walkaway, at a cost of some £60,000. As money is not too plentiful, the Government may also find it to their advantage to hand over to the Company the construction of the projected line to Mullewa, which would tap the rich pastoral districts of the Upper Murchison, and for which a sum of £100,000 appears in the loan schedule already referred to. The main argument in favour of leaving the work to the Company is that it will mainly run through land which the Company meditate taking up under their original concession. It may be said that the tide of opinion in the abstract is against land-grant railways, and that they are objectionable in principle as tending to aggregate too much territory, and, *par conséquent*, too much power, in a few hands, as has been done with such undesirable results in the United States. On the other hand, the indisposition of English investors to take up colonial loans is bound to have the effect of compelling the Australian Governments to look elsewhere than to public borrowing for the construction of railroads which they deem necessary to provide means of transport and to open up the public domain, whilst it would be by no means impossible to introduce clauses into these land-grant concessions rendering alienation in moderate blocks compulsory within a reasonable time.

The harbour at Geraldton, though little more than an open roadstead, is not a bad one in moderate weather, and when the £25,000 which is placed on the loan estimates for its improvement, on the lines suggested by Sir John Coode, has been expended, it will satisfy all reasonable requirements in fair weather for many years to come, though there are not wanting sanguine persons who already regard the advent of ocean mail steamers and the establishment of a large export trade in frozen meat as amongst the possibilities of the not distant future. I bore an introduction from the Premier to the Government

Resident, Mr. Maitland Brown, who, in addition to his functions as the judicial and official factotum of the district, has performed as many heroisms, as an explorer and a rescuer of his fellow men from multiform perils by flood, bush, and blacks, as would have entitled him to half-a-dozen Victoria Crosses had he been in the British Army. As I talked to this perfectly alert specimen of the bushman—and a gentleman withal—I could not but regard him with as much respect as one of those old Wardens of the Marches, whose fame has come down to us in song and story, but who had hardly a more difficult duty to perform than is now cast upon the Maitland Browns in all parts of the world in holding the outposts of the British Empire.

As Geraldton was to be my most northerly point of travel, I was naturally led to cast a glance at the vast regions still further north, where a handful of pastoral pioneers are feeding their flocks in regions where all the characteristic Anglo-Saxon persistency is required to meet the exigencies of isolation, climate, and temperature. This brought us to talk of the relations which existed between the new settlers and the expatriated lords of the soil, whose wrongs have been ventilated perhaps neither wisely nor well, as those affected affirm, but still doubtless with some substratum of fact, in such brochures as "Dark Deeds in a Sunny Land." Mr. Brown spoke kindly on the whole of the aborigines, amongst whom, he said, there were some of "nature's gentlemen," and expressed the view that, though there had been abuses in the past, there was very little in the shape of bondage or oppression at the present moment. Of one thing he was sure, that public opinion in the colony was thoroughly on the right side in the matter, and that the local government would not wilfully wink at acts of cruelty against the natives. The pearl fisheries of the north were, it is undoubted, the scenes of something some like native slavery, but the divers are now nearly all Malays. In this connection it may be pointed out that besides supplying an export of pearls and mother-of-pearl totalling a large amount per annum, the fisheries worked by native labour, for which they paid nothing beyond rations, in many cases provided the early

northern pioneers with the means which subsequently enabled them to improve and stock their pastoral holdings.

There seems no end to the splendid sheep country of the north, and the tenures are easy and the runs of vast extent. For plucky young men with money, who will make up their minds to face a tropical climate with very few tropical advantages on the prospect of doing well in a few years out of wool, this fly-tormented region may present attractions, and there is this to be said for it, that droughts on the scale experienced in the other colonies are unknown, no such prolonged cessations of rainfall having been recorded as, say, in some of the best pastoral portions of Northern Queensland.

Mr. Brown was obliged to admit to me that the Geraldton district was practically a gameless one, with the exception of kangaroos, emus, wild ducks and wild turkeys, which latter he asserts to be the true bustard. There is not very much, therefore, to tempt the sportsman. There had not been any rain to speak of when I left Geraldton on May 19th, 1891, since the previous October, so that I saw the country in its least attractive autumnal jacket. Mr. Brown said that the best season for farmers was when the rain commenced on May 20th, and curiously enough, on the second day of our cross-country journey, down came the rain in torrents, very much to our discomfort in the open wagonette, but immensely to the joy of the whole countryside. We did the first 40 miles back to Dongara, on our way to Gingin, by the railway, which in this part of its course runs through the famous Greenough Flats, which the Agricultural Commission class amongst the richest agricultural land in all Australia. These flats, which run parallel, are severally about 25 miles in length, and about three-quarters of a mile to two miles in width. They are already taken up, so I only dwell on their deep loamy richness, averaging wheat crops of 30 bushels per acre, because they may be regarded as samples of a good deal of the best land on the Upper Irwin River further south, which will shortly be at the disposal of the Midland Railway Company to alienate as they will. The journey across the sand plain after leaving Dongara was dreary

enough in the steady downpour, but even these desolate expanses have their use, as they afford excellent summer feed for cattle. They are pretty enough in their way, too, the banksias with their vari-coloured cones and several kinds of heather and innumerable flowering shrubs making the plains bright enough even in winter, and encouraging a belief in all that was told us of the glorious display of flowers which the summer sun brings forth, making the country a veritable Florida after a fashion which the English imagination can hardly compass.

XV.

The Drive across the Midland Company's Concession—A Bush Jehu's Opinion of Chinamen and Aborigines—An Irish Gentleman—Comfortable Quarters.

WHAT with the help of the completed portions of the railway at either end, my buggy journey along the course of the inchoate "Midland" resolved itself into a south-easterly drive of a little over 200 miles from Dongara, which, like the far-flowing Greenough, also boasts its "flats," to Gingin. This was, however, quite enough for comfort, and quite enough to give me a good general idea of the quality of the country. At first our four-in-hand team was somewhat of the "scratch" order, but about midway the contractor's buggy met us, with a crack team, and the most skilled imaginable of bush Jehus. The first day's journey was mostly in the valley of the tortuous Irwin, which, like most of the rivers of Western Australia, is a mere storm-water channel, assuming sometimes the dimensions of a torrent during the winter rains, but becoming dry as a bone in summer, with here and there an occasional water-hole in its parched and deeply-scored bed to remind one of its winter destiny. The next day we were on the sand plains which intersect the whole of this rich loamy and red ironstone country, and which are really more "downs" than plains. Forty or fifty miles of "sand plain" might well damp the ardour of the most sturdy of would-be settlers, and enabled one to realise, as our team ploughed painfully through it, what sort of chance the old denizens on the adjacent good land had had of making farming remunerative, with from 40 to 80 miles of such cartage in front of them before they could get their produce to the nearest market. What with the present rain and the prospect of railway facilities in the near future, the latter all seemed cheerful

enough, and had somehow managed to "pull through" up to date, with sandalwood and kangaroo-ing to eke out their primitive agriculture. This is not a region of large timber, though there is plenty for every needful purpose. The species of grass-tree known as the "blackboy" rears its brown rough trunk and grassy topknot in every direction, whilst of real timber trees the jarrah and York gum, both of eucalyptus origin, are the main features in the landscape, in addition to the little raspberry jam tree, which is greatly in demand for fencing, but should be reserved for nobler uses considering its adaptability for furniture making and all the mysteries of the wheelwright's art.

Dr. Robertson's account of the "sand plain" is one of the most interesting portions of his report. Talking of the region which I have just described, he says the sand plains "represent the wear of the oldest rocks, probably deposited by aerial currents."

"These sand plains," Dr. Robertson continues, "are a striking feature of Western Australia, and to a material extent regulate the climate. In some parts they are redolent with flowers of every hue and are by no means unproductive or useless. These are not desolate barren wastes such as those of Central Asia, Egypt, Arabia, Algeria, Arizona or Chili, but are covered by rough grasses, herbs, bushes, and flowers. To some extent they resemble the country surrounding Madrid, the capital of Spain. Nor are they so thoroughly desolate and useless as large tracts of the other colonies. North of Perth sand plains exist parallel with the Darling Ranges, and between them and the sea, broken at intervals, in the course of brooks and rivulets, by irregular 'straths' (valleys) of rich and fertile soils. North of Bindoon, in breaks of the range, zones of sand having a south-easterly bearing stretch inland and are of varying width. The coastal sand plain is divided by a long strip of excellent land forming the famous farming and agricultural districts of Yatheroo and Dandaragan. This is separated by about sixteen miles of sand plain, from and parallel to the route of the Midland Railway, while a south-easterly branch forming Long's sand plain connects the coastal with those of the interior.

Long's sand plain is 25 miles wide and is crossed by the Midland Railway. In it several good patches of land occur, while several springs yield water for travellers and stock. Further north the squatters, withdrawing their flocks of sheep from the drought now prevailing in the interior, are depasturing them on these much-despised sand plains. They really afford fair summer feed for sheep, as in Chinchilla, near Dalby, bounding the famous Darling Downs of Queensland, or the weary steppes of Algeria (where esparto grass is now successfully cultivated), or the vast waste to the east of the Rocky Mountains of America. The small area crossed by the Midland is insignificant in extent to

any of those referred to. One remarkable and valuable feature of the colony is the abundance of water found at shallow depths. Innumerable wells a few feet in depth furnish water for the requirement of stock and settlement."

The next day we stopped at the station of a Mr. Whitfield, where we made acquaintance with that ingenious instrument of torture, the American buckboard buggy. The worst that we could wish the inventor was that he might have to sit on the back seat of his contrivance and be driven perpetually over such country as our kindly host drove us through, whilst our own horses were resting, in order to show us some of the copper deposits which abound over the whole of this portion of the country. The latter have never been profitably or systematically worked, but they may show another face in the good time coming. Close to Mount Scratch are the 5,000 acres which Sir John Forrest was allowed to select as part of the recompense for his services in the exploration of his native colony, of which it then seemed hardly likely that he was the predestined Premier. He sold his rights for 8s. 6d. an acre, and the land was now, Mr. Whitfield told us, worth £2. Some twenty miles to the north-east lies the famous coal seam on the Upper Irwin, which has inspired so many sanguine hopes for the future development of the district, and which the Midland Railway Company are now having tested in a business-like way, which promises to set at rest for all time the quantity and quality of the deposits, hitherto disclosing poor shaly stuff, which are traceable over a vast extent of country.

Dr. Robertson was inclined to class the product of the Irwin seam as lignite, and poor at that; but Mr. Robert Etheridge, F.R.S., of the British Museum, who was appealed to as an expert by Mr. Woodward, the Government geologist of West Australia, gives an opinion more favourable to the Company's hopes, though not quite on a par with their original wishes, which fathered a more sanguine belief.

Mr. Etheridge pronounces as follows on the sample sent him:—"It is a dull, soft, impure, sooty coal, ignites quickly, and burns to a fine ash, giving out great heat. This example, although impure, is not a lignite. It resembles 'Mother-coal,' bands of which often occur in the coal measure seams, inter-

bedded between thick coals of the best quality. It appears to me to have been taken from near the outcrop, or at a little depth from the air. No woody, earthy, or sedimentary matter occurs in this sample, and although far less valuable than Nos. 1 and 2 (samples from another part of the colony), *yet it is quite equal to much of the coal used on the North German railways, and is (although inferior) a true coal—measure coal, and not a lignite.* No evidence of the ligneous structure could be observed under the microscope. It is to be regretted that such very small samples of coal were furnished for examination. Larger pieces would have been much more satisfactory to study."

On the evening of the third day, after passing the Carnamah lakes, which contain large salt deposits, we reached the farmhouse of a Mr. Long, where, as everywhere else along the road, we were hospitably accommodated with sleeping quarters and the best the larder afforded. Here Mr. Kellett, the Company's mineralogist, left us, and Mr. Stafford, the Company's engineer, and I went forward in Mr. Keane's buggy. The driver of the latter amused me by his racy converse as we all sat down at the common table to tea. He was talking of having overtaken a Chinaman whilst crossing the dreary sand plain alone in the buggy earlier in the day. Apologising for the momentary weakness, he confessed that he had at first thought of offering him a "lift," but at once said to himself, "No, you nasty beast; I'd see you hanged first." I asked him if the man had been an aboriginal instead of a Mongolian whether his decision would have been any different, and he confessed it would. This will illustrate how deep-rooted in the minds of the "bone and sinew" of this country is the hatred of the "yellow agony." There is not much love lost in the feelings with which the working class regard the "niggers," as they call the natives; but the slightly more humanitarian light in which they are viewed is due to the existence of a sneaking remembrance that the latter are the original owners of the soil and the whites themselves only interlopers.

XVI.

The New Norcia Settlement—Welcomed by the Lord Abbot—Rosendo Salvado.
His Life and Labours—The Most Popular Man in Western Australia—
Disappointing Result of his efforts to Christianise the Aborigines—Return
to Perth.

WE were now nearing the great Benedictine settlement at "New Norcia," and were reminded of the fact on the fourth day by reaching one of the out-stations of the great central establishment at Marah. Here we were kindly received by the one "father," who directs the operations of the lay brethren employed in sheep-tending in this portion of the vast pastoral estate, held in fee or on lease by the Lord High Abbot, Bishop Salvado, on behalf of the community, which is composed exclusively of Spanish and a very few Italian monks and lay brethren—the latter being largely in the majority. It was Friday, and, of course, a fast-day, so the brethren were obliged to restrict their hospitalities to some tinned salmon and a plentiful mass of stewed lentils, followed by some excellent fresh figs and pomegranates, and a dish of dried almonds locally grown. All were served in tin dishes, and the modest beer we had also to imbibe out of the common or garden "pannikin." None of the wine for which New Norcia is famous appeared to have found cellarage at Marah, or perhaps it was not *de règle* to produce it on a fast-day. With our refreshed horses, for whom it was no fast, we bowled steadily along to Mr. H. B. Lefroy's station at Wale or Welbing, which we reached shortly after dusk, and were very hospitably received by Mrs. Lefroy, who comes of the well-known Western Australian family of Wittenoom. And here it may be remarked that entertainment for man and beast is a due which every traveller claims as of

right, and which every rural householder concedes as of course, throughout the whole scantily peopled, wide-stretching realm of Western Australia. The custom is not often subjected to abuse, but it is open to it. On the other hand, in these out-of-the-way locations, a visitor from the outside world is a godsend to the pastoral exile, and if five out of every ten prove bores they are endurable for the sake of the other five who make themselves entertaining by their intelligence or their idiosyncrasies. It was indeed a joy to sit once more at a brightly set flower-adorned table, and to luxuriate in the comforts of a downy bed and well-furnished English-like bedchamber. Our host, whom we met further along the road on his return home, is a grand-nephew of that doughty old Lord Chief Justice of Ireland who, long after he was an octogenarian, held on to his office, in order that the privilege of appointing his successor might not fall to the lot of the Liberals whom his soul loathed. An inscribed cup in the dining-room showed that he had been "first in the mile" at Rugby as far back as 1870. We were thus in the midst of bush surroundings tempered by a pleasant admixture of English traditions.

The next morning we tore ourselves away from pleasant Welbing, and a little after midday found ourselves at the gates of the far-famed monastery of New Norcia, where Bishop Salvado for more than forty years past has conducted the most successful mission to the aborigines which exists in any part of Australia. The cruciform church and the brick monastery, with its wooden wings, its swarthy brethren, and its groves of oranges and almonds, loomed up before us like a piece of old Spain in this shrineless land. The abbot himself—a veritable "gentleman of Spain"—walked slowly across the courtyard to welcome us to his domain. With his whiskers and moustache and everyday style of dress he looked very little of the ecclesiastic, and still less of the mitred abbot of the Protestant imagination. Courteously entreating us, we were very shortly seated in his modest sanctum drinking of the home-made wine and eating of the home-dried almonds which are the speciality of the establishment. Guest-chambers having been assigned to us, the good bishop, who bears his eighty years better than

common mortals bear sixty, showed us over the garden, with its acres of vines, its golden orange and lemon trees, its flourishing tobacco plants, which supply snuff to the brethren, and its wealth of various kinds of healthy vegetables. Wheat cultivation is carried on over a large area, but the sheep are the mainstay of the mission, the wool-money supplying funds for the purchase of clothing, farming utensils, and other things which are not producible on the spot. Horse-breeding is also found profitable. There are a score or so of married aborigines about the place, each of whom is provided with a separate cottage and paid an average wage of £1 a week. Having full liberty to leave when they like, they rarely or never exercise the privilege, and the mere threat of banishment is nearly always enough to restore them to order in cases when they display a disposition to be refractory. Besides these married couples there are a number of orphans and foundlings at the mission, the sexes being housed separately and taught useful trades and handicrafts, as well as the usual rudiments of secular and religious education. There are about 120 natives at the mission of all ages, and the tillage of the young minds and of the far-spreading lands of the community is carried on by about half-a-dozen fathers and seventy lay brethren, nearly all drawn from sunny Spain. One wonders what can have been the influence which made them give up country and home and every hope of domestic joys to settle in a strange land, under stringent rules, and with nothing in the way of remuneration for a life of unremitting toil beyond a bare subsistence, the least possible amount of sleep, and only the absolutely necessary modicum of bodily raiment. If one could be convinced that this life of sacrifice had been of practical avail, one would feel less grudging of its cost in narrowed lives and depleted human sympathies. But though I have spoken of the New Norcia Mission as being the most successful ever established in Australia, the expression really means very little, especially when one regards Bishop Salvado's attempt as the high-water mark of what has been done to civilise and regenerate the remnant of the dispossessed race. He has certainly been the means of a few families who might otherwise have gone to the

bad living in comparative decency and happiness according to European ideas. But upon the mass of the genuine aborigines throughout the country the Benedictine Mission has produced no more effect than if it had never existed. The little leaven has not leavened the whole lump. The New Norcia aborigines are mostly half-castes already, and will become more so as time goes on, and either be absorbed into the mass of the population or die out altogether. Upon the genuine aboriginal of the bush the Church has gained no hold through any efforts of Bishop Salvado. The Christianisation of the natives as natives has proved a complete failure, and it might seem that the Bishop had been merely beating the air all through his forty years of travail in the West Australian wilds. But it is at least something to have lifted the banner of the higher life, and to have lived it, too, all through these long years and amidst these rough surroundings, as rough almost for the pioneering whites as for the expatriated blacks. Hardly a West Australian exists who does not know Bishop Salvado, and the stranger who comes into the country must be a stranger indeed if he does not hear of him within the first week of his arrival. In his regard sectarian intolerance has absolutely no existence, and the most puritan Protestant unites with the most pious Catholic in extolling his virtues, and belauding his hospitality, which is extended without question to every visitor of whatever rank, race, or religion. Taking him all in all he may be regarded as the most striking individuality who has ever held episcopal rank in the Roman Catholic Church in Australia. Men of greater ability there have been, but none have impressed themselves in the same manner on the popular imagination. His powers of organisation must be very great, as, though at one time large subsidies came from Spain, the community, with its couple of hundred or so of regular inmates and its hundreds of yearly guests, is now virtually self-supporting; and this despite the fact that the Bishop has learned farming, as he did the English language, as he went along, and without any previous training or experience.

Rosendo Salvado, to give him his secular name, comes of a family of high position, and was formerly organist at the Court

of Spain, one of his brothers filling the much more delicate position of confessor to Queen Isabella. I fancied that there must have been some life-tragedy or love trouble at the bottom of Bishop Salvado's self-abnegation. But he assured me that it was no single sorrow or disappointment that had driven him to assume the cowl, but simply a general impression of the world's hollowness, derived from the contemplation of the social hypocrisies pervading the class amongst which he moved and to which he belonged. Once having taken the leap, the desire for self-immolation grew upon him, and all he asked his superiors was to send him amongst the heathen, a desire which was gratified by his being despatched to Western Australia in 1845, his sojourn in the wilds having lasted for forty years. He was at one time nominally Bishop of Port Victoria; but finding his lot cast at a distance from his proper official location, he asked leave to resign, and is now only Bishop of Adrana *in partibus*. He has, however, been "Abbot nullius" since 1867. The next day (Sunday) was the anniversary of the consecration of the church, Saturday being a fast-day; but, contrary to our experience at Marah, we were not called on to fast with the brethren, and greatly enjoyed some wild ducks with which the good Bishop plied our plates, though only eating bread himself. In the evening vespers were celebrated at the church, and I stood outside with Bishop Salvado listening to the singing; the deep voices of the brethren and the nasal quavering tones of the natives diffusing themselves through the darkness with a weird but softening effect. Far away in the wilds of this new land we were listening to the symphonies of Christian antiquity—the old wine put into new bottles—with a result strangely combining pathos and inharmony. There was a resigned pessimism about the Bishop's talk which made me think that he was not wholly unconscious of the comparative futility of his work, and he could not think much of his converts when he repudiated so strongly the idea of their ministering at the altars of a Church whose chief charm lies in the extraordinary universality of its functionaries. We left first thing on Sunday morning, but, early as it was, breakfast was provided, and the good Bishop was at the gate to wish us a safe journey. I shall

never forget this mild-mannered man, with his collected demeanour and restrained smile, without sentiment and without fanaticism, resignedly doing his duty without doubts or remorse, but with no particularly high-pitched enthusiasms of any sort to illumine the path of his life-sacrifice.

By midday we were amongst the navvies again, the line being in a forward state, a good many miles north of Gingin. The tents have a picturesque look, but the life is a rough one. The navvy is a nomadic animal, with very little turn towards settlement and domesticity, and the amateurs imported from home soon fall into the wandering ways of the old colonial hands. The wages seem good—1s. an hour for an eight hours day, with occasionally a good deal more for overtime. Most of the men live in tents, and get their meals at the boarding-houses which spring up like mushrooms along the line. For these meals, which are plentiful if rough, they pay £1 a week, so that they have 28s. a week left for clothes and drink, on which the balance too often goes. There is, however, a fair sprinkling of saving men, many of whom “batch” for themselves, as they call it. The difficulty is in getting supplies at reasonable rates, the contractor’s underlings having a virtual monopoly of the importations, and a species of truck system thus comes into vogue. This had become so much of a grievance that soon after my visit the men struck, on the plea that their wages were not high enough with the exorbitant prices ruling for provisions.

With just a few more general observations I will have done with the Midland Railway Company, which I take as my text simply because its career is yet virgin before it, not a single acre of its vast concession having yet been alienated. It has, therefore, the proud opportunity of proving that the much-abused land-grant railway system may minister to national development in superior proportion to individual profit. It is very much to the interest of the Government to keep this and other companies of the kind in the right way, as they are likely to become an intolerable evil, and to form a sort of *imperium in imperio*, which would overshadow even the Executive, unless they are encouraged, nay, compelled, to retail their lands with all possible

promptitude to a yeoman proprietary. With regard to the Company's territory (and, of course, this applies to the adjacent Government land), the poison-plant has got very slight hold of it, and with the exception of the sheep-worrying native dog, whose existence necessitates a little extra expense in wire-fencing, there are no natural pests of any importance to interfere with the farmer's prosperity. The rainfall is sufficient, even with the carelessness with regard to its conservation which now prevails. Water can also be got at a shallow depth by digging, and there are numerous natural springs which the Government, with culpable negligence, has in many cases allowed private owners to monopolise by the purchase of small strips of land around them. This may some day prove a serious obstacle to popular settlement on the public lands, as the run-holders no doubt designed that it should be, and at a future date the resumption of springs may have to be enforced in the national interest. The rabbit has not yet got any foothold in Western Australia, though he is said to be slowly burrowing his way across the South Australian border. In any case, he has a vast desert to luxuriate in before he touches the settled districts of Western Australia. Here I may add that settlers taking up farms in the Irwin, Strawberry, and Victoria plains districts, which I traversed, have plenty of room for expansion eastward, where there is a vast area of good sheep country, with the drawback, of course, of an uncertain rainfall. The existing settlers in the districts named manage to do well with flocks "eastward," so that with improved methods of water conservation, the future settler may expect to do still better if he has capital enough to adopt a policy of pastoral extension in addition to the less ambitious pursuits of agriculture. English and artificial grasses are almost unknown in Western Australia, and the majority of the settlers say that "they won't do" there, but this is a superstition which time and "new blood" will dissipate, with the result of revolutionising the grazing and dairying industries in the colony.

I daresay the very mention of the "sand plain," to which I have often had occasion to refer, will damp the pioneering ardour of some of my readers; so I will just quote from the

evidence given before the Royal Commission a single expression of opinion on the subject, and also on the matter of "mixed farming." Mr. Oliver, a farmer of twelve years' standing on the Lookyer River, was asked, "Do you think that the sand plain country here could be utilised for corn-growing?" and his reply was, "I have broken up some poor sand-plain country, and got twelve bushels to the acre off it; I believe I am the only one who has tried it in the district. It was in a dry season; I rather fancy it would be too cold in a wet season. It was simply fallowed out of the bush, and the yield was as I say." "Then you think," the chairman asked him, "that there is some good even in the sand plains?" "I think a great deal of them," was his reply, "especially for fruit-growing. It is this yellow sand which seems to suit fruit-growing. There is plenty of this kind of land alongside all the flats." I need hardly say that with 15,000,000 of acres to choose from, the Company will take as much of the good agricultural land and leave the Government as much of the sand as possible. Still, despite all their efforts, they will have to take a certain proportion of sand plain, and I only quote Mr. Oliver to show that even then the case is not so utterly desperate.

With regard to "mixed farming," a witness named Maley was amusingly emphatic. "They say," was his response to a question on the subject, "that the farmer is the backbone of the colony; but I say that if he does nothing else than grow wheat there will soon be nothing left of him but his backbone. Unless he goes in for mixed farming, unless he goes in for stock, he may as well give up the ghost. That's my opinion." I may add that the Midland Railway Company have got 154 miles of their railway open for traffic, or more than half of the whole length, and they expect to get the balance in working trim by the end of June next. The selection of the vast area accruing to the Company, about 3,540,000 acres, has been completed, and embraces an area of country such as probably forms the finest agricultural territory, possessed by one interest, in the whole of Australia. The surveys have been rapidly pushed forward, and the end of last year saw the plans of

nearly a million acres in the hands of the Western Australia Land Department, the preliminary to the issue of certificates of title.

In the evening of the same day on which we quitted the Benedictine monastery we reached Gingin, which is an agricultural township forty-eight miles from New Norcia and fifty-four miles from Perth. We had to wait here till the following morning, when a special train was to run us to Guildford, where the Midland and the Government lines join, some nine miles from the capital, which, with its select little society and quiet ways, reminds one of some English cathedral town rather than of one of the pushing metropolises of the eastern colonies. I have, however, said nothing of Gingin, of which the future settler will hear a good deal. Dr. Robertson speaks of Gingin as "one of the prettiest and best settled districts in the colony." Proceeding, he says, "A considerable area of land, probably 2,500 acres, is under cultivation. Gingin Brook is a clear, copious, perennial stream. The rainfall averages twenty-five inches. Principally wheat is cultivated, and the yield averages about twenty bushels per acre in an ordinary season; but oats and barley grow well; for the latter a good market does not yet exist. No fertilisers are used. The land is fallowed. No attention has apparently been generally paid to the land that yields the best crops of wheat or of barley. Potatoes and root crops, such as beet and mangold, grow luxuriantly, but are not cultivated as crops. Vegetables of all kinds and of great size are raised without trouble. The finest and largest oranges I have ever seen are grown here. Citrons, lemons, and vines grow luxuriantly, and, if cultivated on intelligent principles, would materially augment the returns from the land. A few cattle are fed, but if root crops, peas, cabbages, beet, mangolds, &c., were raised, with the advantage of ensilage and the railway, a profitable dairying trade could be conducted."

I was not much impressed with the country between Gingin and Guildford as seen from the railway. Dr. Robertson says: "The railway from Guildford to Gingin passes over a level and uninteresting sand plain, covered with worthless vegetation and surcharged with water. A few miles to the east, however, and

running parallel to the railway, is the Chittering Brook (a tributary of the Swan River), and along the course of this brook a large number of small farms have been selected. Surrounding these farms a proportion of the open land is of good quality, and is fitted for cultivation. The soil here is reddish clay or light sandy loam, and in this magnificent crops are raised. The district, likewise, is suited for growing vegetables, oranges, grapes, lemons, fruits of all kinds, and root crops. The largest lemons and the most prolific vegetables I have ever seen grew in this district. The traffic from the lower part of Chittering would naturally gravitate along the main north road to the railway."

XVII.

Return to Perth—The Weld Club—A Queen's Birthday Levée—Gay-plumaged Birds—Rottnest—A West Australian General Gordon—"What for me sorry?"

WHEN I returned to Perth, on May 24th, after my cross-country trip through the region discovered by Sir George Grey, I expanded with the pride of a full-blown explorer, and almost expected to hear a re-echo of the glad strain which greeted Sir George more than half a century ago when, utterly exhausted by famine and fatigue, he was cheered on to cover the few remaining miles between what is now Geraldton and the capital by the familiar sound of the bugle-call of his old regiment issuing from the Perth barracks. If he wept tears at Adelaide at the recollection of his experiences as administrator of the infantile destinies of South Australia fifty years before, he might well do so over the knowledge that the wilderness through which he penetrated with so much of anguish and privation even earlier still is now in all likelihood to "blossom as the rose"—the rose of prosperous settlement and peaceable development.

The Queen's birthday festivities were in full swing when I once more re-entered the hospitable portals of the Weld Club, whose name commemorates the popular Governor who passed away in his English retirement a few months after my visit to the colony, much to the regret, I am sure, of all West Australians, by whom his modest personality and progressive policy were duly appreciated. The colony has not yet found its feet after the plunge from Downing-street domination into self-governing blessedness. Old habits will assert themselves under the altered *régime*, and the result is that "Government House" invitations are received with awe and

obeyed as "commands," after a fashion which does not obtain in the other colonies, and which serves to remind one how short a time has elapsed since the nod of the Governor and the smiles of the Governor's lady were the "be-all and end-all" of official and social ambition in Western Australia. The "old order" has changed, but the tradition lingers, and like boys just let out from school the West Australians require a moment's breathing-space before they burst into the full cry of unconstrained liberty. All this is meant to indicate that Sir William Robinson's Birthday Levée was exceedingly well attended, and that the leading members of the Civil Service and of the local *haut ton* sent formal excuses in cases where they could not come to do homage personally. Even "at home" a levée agitates a certain limited section of West-end London, and it may be imagined what was the excitement in the little more than village of Perth when a procession of swallow-tails and white ties, which are a pestilence even at night-time, walked through the principal streets at noonday. Proud and happy he above his fellows whose official position, or the accident of presentation "at home," permitted to strut forth in the peacock-like paraphernalia of his privileged caste, his braided or velvet coat, silken hose, and cocked hat reducing to "felt" insignificance the plain cloth apparel, common "stovepipe" or rare opera hat of his less fortunate fellow-citizens. However, the latter enjoyed some slight compensation in the jeers which greeted the gayer-plumaged birds from a gang of unmannerly "larrikins," not educated up to the mysteries of Court attire.

Later on there was the inevitable "Birthday Ball"—the great piece of crush and colour in the colonial year. At these functions the invitations are widened so as to admit into the charmed circle a bevy of aspirants not normally numbered within the "Society pale." Amongst the latter there was great jubilation and an air in which suitable modesty struggled visibly with suppressed pride; whilst on the part of the *élite*, who have the *entrée* on more select occasions, there was a tendency to speak of the Birthday Ball as "crowded" and "mixed," and to feel a little that it prefigured the "wild rush of democracy" under the new *régime*.

It is easy for the globe-trotter to amuse himself with the harmless vanities of colonial existence, which are at the worst but a watery reflection of the intricate snobberies which exuberate at home. He has the conceit taken out of him, however, when those whom he thinks it his right to criticise from an English standpoint take up the parable in their turn and give him the outside view of things as they are in the old country. I was never more impressed with this than when the witty Nestor of Western Australia, Mr. George Leake, formerly Acting Chief Justice, expatiated to me on the awful situation of the "submerged tenth" at the East End of London. He seemed to think that our statesmen were sitting on a suppressed but not long suppressible volcano whilst such an "open sore" was permitted to fester unhealed. Smug critics at home, ignoring the multitudinous good things which the colonies have achieved and the many evil emanations of the Old World which they have ameliorated or checked, expatiate on shortcomings trivial in comparison with the foul excrescences on the face of older civilisations. What, after all, are the temporary miseries of an ill-considered strike, a possibly too lavish policy of borrowing (never, be it remembered, in excess of assets), and the occasional waste of a million or two on unremunerative public works or railways in these democratic communities, in comparison with the record of crime and suffering which cries to Heaven as the outcome of centuries of class waste, domination, and selfishness in the Old World?

Before I finally left Perth on my way south to Albany to catch the P. and O. steamer *Shannon*, which was to take me back to the eastern colonies, I had a peep at Rottnest, an island seven and a half miles long by two and a half broad, lying out to sea about eleven miles from Fremantle. It boasts "its palace and its prison on each hand," being the site both of the summer resort of the Governors of Western Australia and of the prison for native offenders, who, whatever the dark rumours of their past ill-treatment at the hands of white gaolers, are now benevolently cared for under the paternal *régime* of Colonel Angelo, an old Imperial officer, who, after holding high military position in India, became commandant of the Tasmanian local

forces, and is now Government Resident and Convict Superintendent in this paradisiacal little island, which the Perth people would like to purge of its criminal associations and convert into a summer watering-place for their wives and olive-branches. The difficulty is to know what to do with the native offenders, who would quickly die in the close confinement of an inland gaol, whilst at Rottneest they can be afforded reasonable liberty of movement without any fear of their escaping. Even at Rottneest, the colonel told me, he regarded five years of the mitigated restraint in vogue there as tantamount to a death-sentence on these nomadic children of the "bush." It may be imagined what would be the effect, therefore, of working them in chain-gangs, or keeping them locked up in mainland prisons.

The colonel, loyal to his office, tried to persuade me that as far as their feelings went they were happy enough, and preferred Rottneest to their old wilderness haunts. But like perverse children called upon to "show off" before their parents' guests, they entirely repudiated the soft impeachment, and in reply to questions, put in the most insinuating tone of voice, unanimously expressed a desire to return as speedily as possible to their old hunting-grounds, "Me like um bush, possum, kangaroo," the answer of one of them, being the gist of the answers of them all. Most of them presented frightfully animal, repulsive-looking physiognomies, but I could not help pitying their sad fate, dying by inches for the breach of enactments in direct contravention of their tribal laws. Many of them, too, were "in" for sheep-stealing, which they regard as only a just toll on the men who have driven them back from their old fishing and hunting grounds, and who have thus deprived them of their normal means of livelihood. When some great Roman Catholic dignitary—Cardinal Moran, I think it was—inquired of one of the Rottneest prisoners whether he was not sorry for having killed an unfaithful wife, his attitude was expressed in the indignant, "What for me sorry?" which was the only answer the shocked prelate could get from him in response to a homily on the heinousness of his crime, which in no way abated the savage's belief in the conjugal code of his ancestors. I should have liked to have lingered in this charming

spot, where the prisoners are employed in farming avocations, and in preparing for market the salt which is found deposited in several small lagoons. It was with an effort that I tore myself away from the hospitable colonel, who is a veritable Gordon in his Bible and bayonet ideas, his hatred of white wrongdoing towards the native races, his intolerance of officialism, and the eccentric literalism of his interpretations of Scripture prophecy.

Though the trail of criminalism is "over it all," Rottnest is a veritable "isle of beauty," sky and sea in the sunny autumn weather vying with each other in the depth and purity of their azure glory. The misanthrope might find at Rottnest a solitude where "none intruded," and where the loveliness of nature might perchance lure him back to the love of his kind. Even the most jaded author might here wield a flowing pen, the bard imbibe inspiration for a monumental poem, or some budding Darwin might develop a new Cosmic theory without the remotest jar of mundane interruption. As a matter of fact I regretted I had not sought Sir William Robinson's permission to occupy a chamber in Government Cottage for a few days' space, in order to recruit myself after my long spell of wearisome locomotion; but the Government boat was waiting, and I had to get on board, a favourable breeze soon wafting us back to Fremantle and the material world.

XVIII.

A Land Boom in Perth—An Aristocratic Viticulturist—Typical
“ Younger Sons.”

THERE was something in the way of a land “ boom ” in town allotments when I left Perth, especially in the main residential and professional street, St. George’s Terrace, as well as in Hay Street, the main thoroughfare for retail business. In the former the late Earl of Carnarvon, with a prescient eye to the future, invested some £20,000 a few years ago, and his representatives still hold the property, which was purchased by the present Premier of Western Australia on Lord Carnarvon’s behalf. Probably no very great advance could be got on the original purchase-money just now, but it may be regarded as what auctioneers call “ an improving investment.” Talking of English “ big-wigs,” it is curious how one runs across their traces in the most out-of-the-way locations. The “ Upper Ten ” are not likely to become wholly effete whilst one sees so many evidences of their enterprise in the “ waste places of the earth ”—a term which I use of Western Australia in an entirely Pickwickian sense. The President of the Legislative Council, Sir Thomas Cockburn Campbell, for example, represents a baronetcy won in the Napoleonic wars; whilst the Speaker of the Lower House is a scion of one of the oldest and most respected of Surrey families. A promising settler whom I met in Perth is a younger son of the late Right. Hon. W. P. Adam, who is still remembered in the House of Commons and elsewhere as the Government Whip of the later Palmerstonian and early Gladstonian period. His father died Governor of Madras, and the son is now feeling his way to fortune as a runholder in the Western Australian jungle, if I may so style

the thickly timbered Blackwood district. He comes of a stock of statesmen, though he is now fulfilling the family destiny more in the Cumberland sense of the word than in its usual acceptation.

One of my pleasantest reminiscences is of a visit I paid to the Hon. Josceline Amherst (to give him both his Imperial and local title), a younger brother of the earl of that name, who, after being attached to the Governor's staff in Fiji, has taken up his permanent abode in the absurdly depreciated "Cinderella" of the Australian group. The splendid climate makes it the natural refuge of the weak-chested, but Mr. Amherst, to his credit be it said, regards it as much in the light of a workshop as of a sanatorium. He has gone in for viticulture on a large scale in conjunction with Dr. Waylen, one of the most esteemed of old colonists and pioneers of the wine-producing industry, in which he embarked at Guildford as far back as 1859. The "Darlington" vineyard, as the partners call it, is situated close to the Eastern Railway, a few miles beyond Guildford, as one travels from Perth to Albany. Mr. Amherst lives in a stone villa, "mounted high" on a valley side above the railway line, and the whole estate shows evidences of the personal care expended on it. It is altogether a very pleasant retreat, divorced from the busy world to a certain extent, but still in easy proximity to it whenever a trip to the capital appears desirable. The house inside is made pleasant with hunting trophies, nicknacks, and family portraits, the latter of personages of English as well as Kentish renown, whilst outside gardens and avenues, only too rare in Western Australia, are being laid out on Mr. Amherst's designs. Moderately endowed younger sons of the English nobility might do worse than follow Mr. Amherst's example, and seek this kind of busy seclusion, where, in what is really a model English shooting-box, Mr. Amherst realises all the solid comforts without the superficial accompaniments and worries of a society which presents very little novelty after a few seasons' experience for those "born in the purple." On the principle that it is better to be acclaimed in a village than to be "one of the crowd" in

a city, Mr. Amherst has chosen well, and he has at least got an elder son's privilege in Western Australia, where he is a member of the local House of Lords, and follows out the ancestral bent in his happy combination of country pursuits and pastimes with such political and social activities as opportunity may admit of and he may choose to enter on. Generally popular, and the *beau idéal* of that often decried but never surpassed type, the English gentlemen, Mr. Amherst has perhaps better fulfilled his life mission as an unconscious apostle of light and sweetness in Western Australia than he would have done had he adhered to English fleshpots, and lived the purposeless butterfly existence of the typical "younger son."

Mr. Amherst's single black domestic cooked and served an excellent and withal refined "collation," and after a lunch with the resident partner and Dr. Waylen I left with a considerable degree of Ahab-like envy of these modern Naboths. Probably none of the Amherst tenantry in grand old Kent live a more simple, laborious life than this cadet of the old landlord stock, but no one could be more loyal to *noblesse oblige* notions than this English country gentleman, who by some strange freak of chance has been converted into a Colonial M.L.C.

To give an idea of the rate of wages ruling in rural West Australia, I may state that Mr. Amherst pays his labourers 5s. a day and finds them house accommodation, or £1 per week with food and everything found.

XIX.

Cinderella again—A Melbourne Banker's Account of the Capital—His View of the Colony generally—Describes the Railway System—The Yilgarn Goldfields—A Mining Population migratory—The Sort of Emigrant the Colony Wants—Bright Prospects for the Surplus Britisher—The cry is not, "Come over and help us!" but, "Come over and help yourselves!"

I SHALL devote the present chapter to a paper recently written on Western Australia by Mr. Henry Gyles Turner, the widely esteemed general manager of the Commercial Bank of Australia. It has been kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. A. Patchett Martin. In some respects it involves a repetition of facts which I myself have already stated in another form, but in a work like the present, confirmatory testimony is more desirable than continuous narrative or single authorship.

In other directions besides those referred to, I have avoided touching, in the body of the work, on topics which Mr. Turner is vastly more capable of treating than I can pretend to be. Mr. Turner writes:—

"The present Governor of Western Australia, Sir William Robinson, is fond of calling the colony over whose destinies he is the first constitutional ruler, the Cinderella of the Australias.

"That she is poor, that she has long been neglected, and that she is now about to assert her claims to consideration, are facts generally recognised in the eastern colonies; but it is only within the last few years that any appreciable interest has been taken in her or her belongings. To thousands of people in England, Australia means New South Wales, and anything outside Sydney or Melbourne is hardly deemed worthy of consideration. But how few persons in the British Isles realise the fact that, eliminating the Russian Empire, and lopping off

the Scandinavian, Italian, and Spanish Peninsulas, the whole of the rest of the continent of Europe could be put down in Western Australia, with plenty of room left to walk round it. A coastline of over 3,000 miles, the greater part of which is forbidding in its appearance of sandy desolation, bounds it on three sides, and as its 1,500 miles of length extends from the temperate latitude of 35° south to within 13° of the equator, it embraces within its area almost every variety of climate which the gigantic continent of Australia has to show. For some 300 miles north of King George's Sound the climatic conditions are all that can be desired for at least ten months in the year, February and March alone being those in which the heat is felt oppressive. Even for a considerable distance further north a pleasantly cool sea breeze prevails almost daily, and tempers the fierceness of the sun's rays for some 50 or 60 miles inland; but from the North-west Cape round to Cambridge Gulf the sweltering atmosphere is very trying to Europeans for the greater part of the year.

“Looking down upon the picturesquely situated capital of the colony from the heights of Mount Eliza, where a noble park of nearly a thousand acres has been reserved for the recreation of the people, it seems almost incredible that such a prize should have been allowed to fall from the hands of the exploring Dutchmen who visited the country in the seventeenth century. Approaching the city from Fremantle by the river, the view on entering Perth Water, as the broad expansion of the Swan River is called, is almost equal to that of Hobart from the Derwent, and far more beautiful than any aspect in which Melbourne, Adelaide, or Brisbane can be seen. Of course it would be rank heresy to compare it to Sydney harbour, with its majestic proportions and crowded shipping; nor has Perth any of those stately mansions that adorn the heights of Port Jackson. But its comfortable and substantial, if somewhat old-fashioned, houses are embowered in luxuriant foliage, and the public buildings, rising on gentle slopes from the water's edge, give it the aspect of a long-established and well-to-do place. On the highest point of vantage, as is so often the case in Australian cities, the Roman Catholic cathedral, an ill-designed

but huge edifice, rears its white bulk against the sky-line. On a slightly lower level, a handsome Anglican cathedral, just completed, is one of the ornaments of the city, and close by, the town hall, with a tower of most decidedly ecclesiastical character, indicates the wealth and importance of the civic government. Adjoining the town hall, and covering fully an acre of land, is a handsome block of buildings, devoted to the various Government departments, including the Treasury, Railways, Lands and Survey, Public Works, and Post Office. The latter has a handsome rectangular hall for the transaction of business, which is of really magnificent proportions, wherein daily bulletins are displayed relating to shipping, telegraphic weather reports, mail movements, and kindred subjects, after the manner adopted in Adelaide.

“The city is laid out on those rigidly straight lines which seem to find so much favour with Australian surveyors. Taking St. George’s Terrace, which extends for about a mile parallel with the river, and about twenty to thirty feet above its level, as the base line, the usual chessboard arrangement is followed. The central block of St. George’s Terrace contains all the banks, the Weld Club, and the offices of the principal public companies. East and west of this block it is planted with handsome avenues of Cape lilac, and occupied by private houses, chiefly those of the older residents and prominent citizens. Government House, a pleasant and picturesque building, erected about twenty years ago, in the Tudor style, with gardens running down to the water’s edge, is on this terrace. Adjoining it, on the city side, the old Government offices are now temporarily doing duty as the Chamber of the Legislative Council, pending the erection of a Parliament House. The Legislative Assembly meets in a hall adjoining the new Government buildings, formerly used by the old Council in the days preceding representative government. So far as legislative work is concerned the present accommodation is all that is required, but the signs of rapid development in the colony, and its expanding revenue indicate that a House of Parliament, on the palatial scale which even the most democratic colony in Australia seems to consider necessary, is a project of the near future.

The main business avenue of Perth is Hay Street, wherein nearly all the retail shops are to be found. Some recent additions are lavish in plate-glass and attractive 'window-dressing,' but for the most part this class of building is far behind the requirements of the city and the value of the land which they occupy.

"The total population of the metropolis is under 9,000, barely one-sixth of the population of the colony; certainly a more healthy state of things than prevails in Melbourne and Sydney, where those capitals embrace fully one-third of the inhabitants of their respective colonies. And this little handful of people have done good work for the land of their adoption. After a period of stagnation extending over half a century, the last decade has seen not only a stirring of the dry bones, but a continuous infusion of new life that has raised the population from 30,000 in 1881 to fully 54,000 to-day, and the weekly influx from the eastern colonies bids fair to show much larger figures by the end of this year. The period of the awakening has been marked by a successful gas company in the metropolis, though the coal has to be brought from Newcastle, a voyage of fully 3,000 miles; a telephone service that seems to be availed of in almost every house; and the complete reticulation of the city for a water supply brought from a huge reservoir in the Darling Ranges. A good deal of money has been spent, in rather a haphazard way, in endeavouring to make Fremantle a convenient port for the over-sea trade, but it is so much of an open roadstead that it is satirically described as bounded on the west by the coast of Madagascar. There are jetties sufficient for the requirements of the small intercolonial steamers, but ships have to lie a considerable distance off, and to submit to the delay and cost of lighterage. Like all Australian rivers, the Swan has a sandy bar at the mouth over which only small cutters can pass, but once inside the river is deep enough for good-sized vessels right up to Perth Water. But the opening of this inland navigation is not favoured by the Fremantle folk, who have great faith in the future of the port, and rather regard Perth as a hostile territory with pretensions which it is their duty to keep in check. The port is certainly a bright

and bustling little place, more given over to commerce and its accompaniments than the placid metropolis—where nobody ever seems in a hurry—and is bound to grow in wealth and importance with the certain progress of the colony.

“Facility of communication both with and within the colony has made great strides during the last five years. The Government railways actually in operation have not, so far, yielded a profit on their construction; but they are limited in extent, and worked on conservative principles that no public company would entertain. The principal line, called the Eastern Railway, starts from the port of Fremantle, and passes through Perth and Guildford easterly to York; there it takes a southernly bend to Beverley, where it junctions with the private line from Albany. With two short cockspurs into the rich agricultural districts of Newcastle and Northam, the entire mileage is about 130. On the line between the capital and the port, a distance of twelve miles, there are eight trains per day in each direction, at fares more than double those charged for similar distances in Victoria, and calculated to give pause to any enthusiast who contemplated building his suburban residence on the sandhills on the mouth of the Swan.”

Mr. Turner then proceeds to treat of the railways constructed and in contemplation. Talking of the line from Perth to Bunbury, he speaks of it as connecting “the metropolis with the fine agricultural areas around Pinjarrah and Bunbury, where a temperate climate and an abundant rainfall offer the certainty of success to tens of thousands of settlers who have energy enough to wrestle with untamed nature. The other line,” he continues, “starting eastward from York, will project itself towards the great unknown interior, and will pass through 180 miles of by no means promising country, mostly undulating sand plains, and hungry flats covered with granite boulders, to the recently discovered Yilgarn goldfield, where, over a vast extent of auriferous country, gold is being won from more than a dozen successful claims. Something like £50,000 worth of the precious metal has already found its way into Perth, and with improved facilities for transporting machinery to the field a great future is anticipated.

“The value of a goldfield in attracting population to a colony is well understood in Australia, but the miner is a very migratory creature, and, unless he happens to strike something really good, he is always ready to move on towards some rumoured fresh discovery. And when he has ‘made his pile’ the hardships and the bareness of his surroundings do not invite him to settle down and spend it on the spot. For the immigrant that Western Australia wants, the man whose mission is to make the wilderness blossom as the rose, the two private railways, built on the land-grant system, have been the necessary precursor. Take the Great Southern line as an example of how these companies have paved the way for settlement. The railway, admirably built, carefully maintained, and well furnished with first-class rolling stock, traverses a country that ten years ago was practically unknown. From two or three centres settlement is changing the face of the country, and the interminable eucalypt is giving place to green pastures, and waving fields of grain. The townships are, as a rule, rudimentary and prosaic, but it is quite startling to find that one of these embryo towns, Katanning, possesses an hotel lighted throughout by electricity. The company has sold many thousands of acres, sometimes in large blocks, to English investors, who are building up estates of great future value, sometimes in small holdings to sturdy yeomen, who mean to wrest out of the willing soil the means to meet their deferred payments. The price realised ranges from 10s. to £2 per acre, and the terms upon which purchases can be made are so easy as to be within the reach of all but the absolutely destitute.

“In New South Wales and Victoria there is no disguising the fact that the so-called ‘working classes’ regard any material addition to the population with undisguised hostility; but, away from the presence of concentrated city population, in the sparsely settled, and almost illimitable territories of the ‘far west’ a more generous feeling prevails towards the ‘new chum’ immigrant. If he knows anything about agriculture, understands the value of thrift, and possesses industry and health, he will be sure of a welcome; and even without appreciable capital will have no difficulty in getting started on the

road that leads to independence, and in many cases to affluence.

“ In the production of grain and fruit, in dairying, chicken-farming, and market-gardening, two or three thousand families might readily find work without overtaking the local demand for their products. It is a severe reflection on the enterprise of the colonists that during last year £42,000 was expended in importing grain and flour, £21,000 in butter and cheese, and such items as bacon, potatoes, hay, and hops, figure for many thousands of pounds in the list of imports; and this in a country where from fourteen to twenty bushels of wheat to the acre from virgin soil is a common record, and where there is abundance of land that will yield from three to five tons of potatoes to the acre, with very little preparation. Surely the West Australians may cry aloud to the redundant population of Great Britain not, ‘ Come over and help us,’ but, ‘ Come over and help yourselves.’ The growth of a community that rests upon an agricultural basis is comparatively slow, but it is sure, and steadily progressive; and, in growing, it builds up a population with staying qualities, with attachment to the soil, and animated by sentiments of respect for honest labour. The coming democracy of the West will have their theories of universal equality, but their practice will be tempered by the sense of responsibility which belongs to prosperity. The swarm of *chevaliers d’industrie* who prey upon the community in the eastern colonies, who poison the springs of confidence by their nefarious and wily speculations, will find small scope for their entangling devices amongst men who work hard for what they get and prize it accordingly. Nor need it be supposed that the enterprising immigrant who throws in his lot with the coming colony necessarily bids farewell to the comforts of civilisation. In Perth, Fremantle, York, Bunbury, and Albany there are all the necessary organisations for social enjoyment. There are clubs, literary societies and institutions, musical societies, horticultural societies, and a very pronounced leaning towards the turf and athletic sports. But most interesting of all to the artisan class, that great bugbear of the other Australian colonies, ‘ the unemployed,’ is as yet an unknown quantity.

There is work for all able to do it, and there is much work that ought to be done that is perforce left undone, for want of the willing and capable hands, that would be well paid for doing it.

“To the tourist in search of the picturesque, Western Australia has few attractions. There is no scenery in the easily accessible parts of the colony comparable with what may be found in a hundred places on the east coast of the continent. There are places that may be called ‘pretty,’ but nothing grand or majestic. But to the botanist the whole of the southern portion of the colony is a paradise of wild flowers, No other part of Australia produces them in such profusion or in such varieties. In the spring months, from September to November, millions of acres of wild bushland are carpeted with the most brilliant colours, which seem to light up the landscape in all directions. A very admirable description of the country under this aspect will be found in a little book by Lady Broome, entitled ‘Letters to Guy.’

“Enough has been said, it is hoped, to rouse some interest in Great Britain in the progress and the welfare of this vast and sparsely populated colony. If the right sort of people are attracted to assist in its development, it needs no further prophet to say that within twenty years it will take its place on a footing of equality with the other members of the great Australian commonwealth.”

XX.

Proper Area of a West Australian Farmhold—Emigrants with Money make room for Emigrants without.

HAVING fortified my conclusions by Mr. Turner's, I propose to close what pretends to be nothing more than a slight *brochure* on a large subject with some general observations on Western Australia from the standpoint of Britain and the British emigrant.

It will be a stretch of international courtesy indeed if we are to make room for an increasing influx of foreign sweaters into the East End of London by the exportation to the colonies or elsewhere of the British bone and sinew, which has the prior right to what is going in the local labour market. It is not, however, so easy to stem the tide of that rural emigration which is constantly sweeping into the metropolis and rendering work scarcer and food scantier for those with whom life is already sadly too much of a hand-to-mouth struggle. All authorities tell us and all the appearances go to show that there is a real surplus of stout, honest bone and sinew, skilled and unskilled, in the British labour market. Colonies such as Western Australia are strongly set against the incorrigible paupers and incurable loafers who have too often been assisted out, either by charitable organisations at home or through the misdirected efforts of the local government at the national expense. They do not demand that England shall send them the cream of our labouring population, but they do ask for a reasonable average of men who mean work and who have a fair capacity for doing it. For men such as these my experience leads me to believe that Western Australia may to some limited extent represent

that "new world" which just now it seems more than ever necessary should be called into existence to redress the balance of the old. It is "white unto harvest," and if the sickle is put in in the right way there can be no doubt but that enormous benefits will accrue to the new colony, with at least something like corresponding advantage to the old country, which has watched, on the whole, so well and worthily over its infant destinies. The Government with the £50,000 which is included in the loan schedule can do something in the way of judicious encouragement to immigration; the various colonisation associations and colonists' aid societies in England can do a considerable amount in the same direction; but the great land-owning corporations in the colony, such as the Midland Railway Company and West Australian Land Company, can do still more.

The power and resources of the Government are, of course, almost boundless for any purpose of which the common sense of the people approves, but there is a well-grounded objection to the Government undertaking obligations of which private enterprise would be willing to assume the burden, and which it has probably a much better capacity for carrying out. The various English organisations of a semi-philanthropic character are all handicapped by a want of local knowledge and the absence of what is called "colonial experience." The land-grant concessionaires were originally pledged to the introduction of a certain number of emigrants, but in the then state of the country the conditions were wisely waived. The moral obligation still, however, remains, and it is fortunately backed up by material obligations of the most pressing kind; for by the introduction of population and the prosperous settlement of their huge estates alone can the shareholders expect to realise anything in the shape of a reasonable return for the risks they have run and for the capital they have sunk, with very little prospect of an immediate result in the way of dividend. In the fructification of their property these corporations, and others which time will call into existence, will be able to avail themselves of the assistance of the Government and of the English philanthropic associations, after a fashion which will be none the less advantageous because it will be rendered, mostly at least, in an in-

direct way. Government may cheapen passages, and the philanthropists may aid in the choice of suitable emigrants, whilst it will be for the Land Companies to allocate the arrivals and afford them facilities for starting in the best way on a career which is to put rents and purchase-moneys into the shareholders' pockets.

Western Australia, as Sir Charles Dilke has argued, is an excellent field for colonisation experiments, and the Land Companies are the people to start them. When they have tried their hands, it will be time enough for the English organisations to put in their oar and profit by their example and experience. It is not for an amateur to set out the details of a suitable scheme. But the outlines are obvious enough. From what I gathered personally, and from the evidence taken before the Royal Commission, the consensus of expert opinion appears to be that mixed farming is essential—*i.e.*, that sheep-rearing must be combined with grain-growing, with perhaps a little viticulture, and certainly some fruit-growing thrown in. To make this sort of mixed farming profitable the weight of expert opinion is equally on the side of a man having an area of from 500 to 1,000 acres at his disposal, and though, of course, there is some difference of view on this point, the general idea is that he should have a minimum of £500 as working capital. What disillusionises the better class of emigrant, and what makes him feel sorely that he has gone from the frying-pan into the fire, is when, on his arrival from the old country, he is confronted with the fact in all its nakedness that the farmhold to which he has looked forward so hopefully is, after all, only a slice out of an interminable forest, and that it will be two whole seasons before he can get even a small portion of it into cropping order, and that in the meantime money must be found for house-building, clearing, fencing, and the keep of himself and his wife and family. What this means may easily be computed, but may not be so easily met. It is here that the Companies must step in, and in addition to supplying the raw (very raw) material of the land on a time payment system equally liberal with that of the Government, must to a certain extent prepare the farms for would-be occupiers, instead of giving them slices

of unredeemed wilderness. They should not, of course, overdo it, and leave a man no scope for industry and initiative. They might, however, lay out the land, fence it, clear a sufficient amount for the first year's sowing, and where the tenant's capital was limited, though his skill might be good, they might supply him with horses and plant, and even a certain amount of stock and seed, the total outlay to be repaid, with reasonable interest, on a basis easily calculable by deferred payments, coincident with the instalments of purchase-money. Of course, where the tenant had the needful capital, so much the better for himself, and he might then find it more to his benefit to take up the intervening Government land than to buy of the Company. But as regards this it must always be borne in mind that the Companies are the absolute owners of the soil, and can sell out and out without any conditions whatever, whereas if the Government is dealt with the statutory conditions must be observed.

In regard to the colonisation scheme which I have outlined, it might be necessary for the Land Companies to form subsidiary companies after the Chaffey method in order to get the needful capital and powers; but this is, of course, a question for themselves. In any scheme of this kind great skill would be required in the laying out of the farms, as it should be the aim to give each tenant a due admixture of grain and fruit growing and grazing land. It certainly would not suit the Company to give the tenant a full holding of the best land, and it certainly would not suit the tenant to get nothing but the worst. In the calculation I have given as to the capital needed for working from 500 to 1,000 acres of land, I am, of course, taking the case of a man who means to go to work gradually, clearing and planting a little fresh land each year, and doing even his fencing by degrees. Of course, if he went in for putting the whole of his 1,000 acres under crop right off he would want probably a capital of £5,000 instead of £500, which is only compatible with very modest doings. Under a scheme of semi-prepared farms the advantage to the settler would be that instead of having to wait two seasons for a return he would get it in one. If he were wise he would arrive in February or March, plough

and sow by the end of May, to be able to harvest his first crop by the end of the year.

It is idle to dogmatise as to the amount of land or capital which a man may do well with. Everything depends upon the man. In many cases in Western Australia men commencing with 100 acres, and no money at all have gradually grown to affluence. All that one can lay down, therefore, is a sort of average rule, which is then only approximate. Agricultural wages within the coastal rainbelt are about £1 a week and rations, and about £1 10s. a week with a cottage thrown in in the case of married men, who "find" themselves. With regard to the better parts of meat, I may here interpolate for the benefit of householders that it costs on the average from 5d. to 6d. per pound. I met a gentleman on my travels who had spent £3,000 in improving land for viticulture, and the result of a bitter experience was that he advised all new-comers with money to wait two years before they expended it; by that time, he thought, they might know what they were about and be able to cope with the old hands, of whom he gave no very flattering description.

No doubt if young men going to Western Australia with money were to make up their minds to work for others for a year or two they would be in a vastly better position to expend their capital wisely after a probation of this sort than if they bought land at once, without any local knowledge to guide them. In the case of young working fellows without capital, they might be able to take up land out of their savings, and bestow quite sufficient attention on it in their leisure to develop it satisfactorily; as the labours of agriculture are by no means so exacting in Western Australia, where very little manuring is done and the land is scratched rather than ploughed as in the old country, where much higher farming obtains. As I said before, the more emigrants who go to the colony with money the better they will make it for men with no capital beyond their labour. In any case there are openings for a small number of young men with a few pounds in their pockets who are not afraid of work and willing to take the first job that turns up. Even now the various railway and timber undertakings have so drained the agricultural labour market that

only aged and indifferent men can be got to undertake farm work, considerably better wages being obtainable by good, able-bodied men than those I have mentioned.

In the early start of the colony (and the same thing applies more or less to all the other colonies) the pioneers had quite enough to do to tackle the forest primeval so as to win the necessaries of life without going in for any of its adornments or luxuries. What was at first a matter of necessity with them grew, as all such things do grow, into a matter of habit, so that at the present moment men possessed perhaps of thousands of pounds' worth of property are living in huts to which Lord Salisbury's much-abused Hatfield cottages are haunts of luxury. Not only is the earth their floor, but the surroundings are equally desolate in the lack of gardens and sanitary appliances of the most rudimentary kind. So do these slipshod habits grow upon a man that, with any number of cattle grazing in his paddocks, the West Australian farmer has often not the energy to get in a single cow so that his children may be provided with milk or his own bread with butter. Then as to overcrowded sleeping accommodation, nothing in the East End of London could excel it, and nothing but the pure air prevents it having the most pernicious effects.

It is to be hoped that the English emigrants, who will undoubtedly exploit Western Australia, in large or small numbers, will bring their old-fashioned notions of village beauty and rural trimness with them, and thus avoid degenerating into the slipshod ways which make much of Australia so unlovely. To keep up the moral *esprit de corps* necessary it would be well if emigrants could be got to come in detachments from the same villages, and to settle alongside of their old neighbours. In this way, as I remember Mr. Dawes, the eminent London shipowner, pointing out to me, the tendency to a decadence into slovenliness, moral and material, might be to a great extent neutralised, and the new life be rendered vastly more homelike and happy.

XXI.

Means of Access to Western Australia—Steamship Companies—Passenger Fares—Free Passages.

HAVING gone at some length into the attractions which Western Australia presents to various classes of emigrants, it is desirable to point out the methods by which the latter can obtain access to the scene of so many virgin possibilities for the steady and venturesome.

The run to Albany by the Red Sea route in the large ocean liners of the P. and O. and Orient Companies occupies an average of about thirty-nine days from London; the fares ranging from £55 to £70 saloon; £30 to £37 second class, and from £17 17s. to £22 steerage, in the case of the Orient Company, the P. and O. Company not carrying third-class passengers. It may also be mentioned in this connection that children between ten and three years of age go at half fares, whilst one infant under three is carried free, though there are doubtless many of their adult fellow-passengers who would wish to charge them double. For additional infants under three a quarter fare in each case is charged after the first. It may be added that the Orient Company book passengers to Perth and Fremantle at the same rates as to Albany, and pay their railway fares from Albany to either the capital or its port. When passengers to Perth have to proceed from Albany at their own charges, they can do so either by railway or by one of the local steamship companies' boats. There are only two classes on the Western Australian railways, and the single fare from Albany to Perth is £2 15s. 3d. first, and £2 1s. 0d. second class; the returns being £4 2s. 11d. and £3 1s. 0d. By the special mail train the rates are 25 per cent.

higher. It may be added, for the convenience of passengers with drafts, which they may desire to cash promptly on landing, that there are branches of the Commercial Bank of Australia, the National Bank of Australasia, and the Union Bank of Australia, all three of which have offices in London where drafts can be obtained without charge, the exchange being in favour of the remitter. The steamers of the P. and O. and Orient Companies leave London fortnightly and alternately, so that by these means a regular weekly service is maintained to Albany, to which, as the first port of call in Australia, the fares from England are, of course, lower than to any other Australian port. For the comfort of the so-called gentleman-emigrant, who pays his own passage-money and takes out surplus money in his pocket, it may be stated that the Government, by arrangement with the steamship companies, secure him a percentage off the normal fare by any class of berth, on proof being afforded that he is taking out capital, which to command these advantages must be not less than £100.

The steamers of the French line known as the Messageries Maritimes call monthly at Albany on their way out from Marseilles, the fares from the latter port varying from £20 to £65 according to the class chosen.

There are two other lines of steamers which devote themselves solely to the West Australian trade, as far as Australia is concerned, and which take out passengers at a great reduction on the fares already particularised. The London agents for these lines are Messrs. Trinder, Anderson & Co., of St. Mary Axe, and Messrs. C. Bethell & Co., of 110, Fenchurch Street. They start at rather irregular intervals, so that application to the agents as to probable sailings is a matter of necessity. In addition to the cheaper passages there is this great advantage about the latter boats that any young emigrant going by them would be sure to go out with a number of people bent on the same errand as himself, and with whom association might prove a matter of advantage; whereas, on the great Australian liners, with their mixed company of wealthy pleasure-seekers, he would be exposed to temptations which might not only denude

his finances but afford him altogether a less desirable preparation for the hardships and activities which must accompany pioneering life under the most advantageous conditions. The Trinder, Anderson, and Bethell boats have excellent saloons with side cabins and good bath-rooms. They are fitted with the electric light, and carry surgeon and stewardess, passengers being landed at Fremantle for a cost of 35 guineas from London, this charge including all cabin requirements, &c. The third-class passage money is from 14 guineas. These steamers call at Las Palmas and go round the Cape of Good Hope, so that the passenger escapes the heat of the Red Sea route. The voyage occupies about forty-two days.

A second line of steamers leaves Liverpool monthly, calling at Algiers and going, *viâ* Suez Canal, to Penang and Singapore, where the traveller changes to one of the steamers of the local mail and passenger line for Western Australia. These steamers pass along the beautiful shores of Sumatra and Java, and, in two days after losing sight of the coast of Java, Western Australia is reached, the steamers calling at Derby, King's Sound, and at Broome, Roebuck Bay; they then visit the pearling fleet, the next port being Cossack, then Onslow (Ashburton), Carnarvon (Gascoyne), Shark's Bay, Pearling Camps, Geraldton, and finally Fremantle. By this most interesting route the West Australian coast is reached in about forty-five days from London, and Fremantle in about fifty-five days. The fares to Fremantle from Liverpool are, 40 guineas saloon, 24 guineas intermediate, and 16 guineas steerage. By means of the connection at Singapore passengers and goods are taken monthly at through rates to all West Australian ports from Glasgow, Antwerp, Hamburg, New York, Indian and Chinese ports, and from Vancouver and other ports. Port Darwin is also reached by this service, the traveller for the Northern Territory changing steamers at Broome.

Sailing-ships also leave London monthly for Western Australia, those despatched between March and August being regular traders, and vessels which sail regularly to and from Western Australia. These are commanded by captains of long experience in the trade, and are favourites with many travellers,

cabin passengers being carried at 30 guineas, and steerage at 14 guineas. The London agents of these services are, as already stated, Messrs. Trinder, Anderson & Co., and Messrs. C. Bethell & Co. The route, viâ Singapore, presents considerable advantages, as it gives the emigrant who may have decided to make his home in the South-west District, a chance of forming at least an idea of the tropical and semi-tropical areas to the north-west before settling down. He will thus be able to judge of the vast field of enterprise which these areas afford for future developments, when he has acquired local experience and perhaps amassed wealth in the lower districts, or when haply he may wish to plant out his young olive-branches in a more expansive field.

There are a number of steamship lines engaged in the local coasting and intercolonial trade; the chief being the Adelaide Steamship Company, Limited, the West Australian Steam Navigation Company, Limited, and Messrs. Huddart Parker & Co., Limited. Probably the enterprise of this Company is less known in Western Australia than in any other portion of the Australasian colonies. More than three years ago the business was registered under the Limited Liability Act of Victoria, with a paid-up capital of £300,000, and a nominal capital of £1,000,000. And in view of the expansion of Western Australia, the directors have been induced to establish regular steam communication between the east and the west of the Australian continent. The steamship *Nemesis* has now been running for about two years and has been supported by the *Lindus* and *Wendouree* at various times, and as the company has built two new steamships for the Australian trade it is probable that they will offer increased facilities for the transport of goods and passengers between Western Australia and all the colonies to the eastward, and also Tasmania and New Zealand. Messrs. Huddart Parker & Co., Limited, are represented at Fremantle and Albany by Messrs. Dalgety & Co., Limited; while in South Australia their interests are pushed by Messrs. D. and J. Fowler. As the board of directors have firm confidence in the gradual expansion of Western Australia it is their intention to build the most suitable steamships for the regular trade between Sydney,

Melbourne, Adelaide, Albany, and the ports as far as Fremantle, and probably round to the north-west.

For the benefit of those members of the industrial classes who may come under the Government category in regard to subsidised passengers, I append the regulations as to free and assisted passengers, just premising that any additional information and all the necessary forms may be obtained on application at the office of the Agent-General for Western Australia, at 15, Victoria Street, London, S.W., a great advantage in the way of getting sound information being that both the Agent-General, Sir Malcolm Fraser, and the Secretary, Mr. Hare, possess a thoroughly recent and comprehensive knowledge of the colony they represent in Great Britain.

XXII.

Why Western Australia has not Progressed—Her Bad Start—The Convict Stigma—Her Unwieldy Territory—Excellent Future Prospects—Opinion of the Other Colonies the Best Test.

THE question is often put to one, Why, if Western Australia be all that its champions (and they have been but few in the past) would have the public believe, has it not long ago gone ahead in something like the same proportion as the Eastern Colonies? The question, it must be admitted, is something of a “pcser.” The worst thing in my opinion which Western Australia has had to contend with has been the “bad name” which she unfortunately got at the start, through the mistakes and follies which characterised her early colonisation. This is only just now ceasing to stick to her. Then she had to struggle against the convict stigma, quite a sufficient explanation in itself. The unwieldiness of her territory, as compared with the means of exploitation and administration at her command in those crucial early days, was also a huge drawback. Then, too, she had an unprogressive next-door neighbour, and even from that neighbour her settled areas were cut off by eight hundred miles of practically impassable desert. Had she had the good fortune to be set down between Victoria and New South Wales we should not have heard much of her inferiority to the other colonies in soil and products. So far did the evil influence of her bad name extend that she was pronounced, *ex cathedrâ*, to have no mineral wealth, and it is the disproof of this assertion in the slow course of time which, more than anything else, has given a new turn to her fortunes and attracted towards her the not wholly disinterested regards of the adjacent colonies.

It is often charged against Australia as a whole, that in the case of mining and other ventures she sends only her leavings to London. It cannot be said, however, that in the case of Western Australia the British public are being asked to go to a country which those on the spot do not think good enough for

themselves. The contrary is the case altogether—all the coasting steamers of late months having been crowded with emigrants from the other colonies, anxious to invest their capital or turn their labour to profitable account in what their conduct shows they regard as essentially the “Coming Colony” of the Australian group. I mention this because I believe that the Australian people are much better judges of the attractions of their own continent than people at a distance can possibly be. If, therefore, the former are looking towards Western Australia as a likely arena for bettering their own fortunes (and I found a good many of this opinion even in New Zealand last year), I think the obvious conclusion is that the Englishman who may decide to throw in his lot with Western Australia is in no way flying in the face of the best kind of evidence in regard to its future possibilities.

In order to avoid all misapprehension it is as well to point out that, though in the course of the preceding pages I have dealt mainly with the territories of the two great land grant railway companies of Western Australia, I have done so quite apart from, and in total ignorance of, the position of either of them from a stock-broking and speculator’s point of view. It seems to me useless for agricultural emigrants to settle at a distance from railway communication, and I have thus mainly confined myself to a description of the land available alongside of the recently and partially constructed lines. In doing so, I have given as far as I could a faithful account of the attractions of the country with just as little regard to shareholders’ and debenture-holders’ interests as the future settlers need indulge in, so long as they have got a good climate, good land and cheap and easy access to a good market for the products of their labour.

It is now necessary to conclude what pretends to be nothing more than a very sketchy account of a very limited area of this land of large possibilities for “small men.” Paraphrasing the words of the pious motto of the old Merchant Adventurers, I say, as regards all the new settlers who may venture their fortunes on her shores: *Dieu lui donne bonne aventure.*

APPENDIX A.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTED IMMIGRANTS.

FREE PASSAGES.

Free Passages are granted by the Government of Western Australia, until further notice, upon the following Conditions and Regulations:—

I. The classes eligible are Single Women or Widows (without children), such as Cooks, Housemaids, Nurses, General Servants, Dairymaids, &c., who are not under 18 nor over 40 years of age. In all cases they must be sober, industrious, of good moral character, of sound mind, free from bodily defect or deformity, in good health, able to perform the duties of the occupation to which they belong, and must be going to the Colony to reside and settle there, and to work in their respective occupations, and have been vaccinated or had the small pox. The charge for ship's outfit must be paid in advance. See Clause XI.

II. The Government will give assisted passages to the families of eligible applicants. Persons who have resided in Western Australia are not in any case eligible, nor persons in the habitual receipt of parish relief; children under 12 years of age without their parents, husbands without their wives, or wives without their husbands (unless in the last three instances the parents, wife, or husband be in Western Australia), or single women who have illegitimate children.

III. In filling up the Form of Application the Applicant must be careful to give full particulars as to the nature of his occupation, to furnish all other necessary information, and to obtain *proper Signatures* to the Certificates attached to the Application Form. The Applicant's proposal will not be considered until the application is correctly and completely filled in.

IV. No person will be allowed a passage unless he shall have been approved of by the Agent-General or his deputy. No Emigrant above the age of forty years will be allowed any assistance. But any person so ineligible on account of age, and related to a family eligible for assistance, may, if he is approved by the Agent-General, receive a passage on payment of the entire expense incurred in providing it.

V. As soon as the intending Emigrant shall receive notice that he has been approved of, he must pay the sum required of him. He will then, as soon as his passage is arranged for, receive an "Embarkation Order," naming the ship in which he is to sail, and the time and place at which he is to embark. The sums paid will be absolutely forfeited if the Applicants should fail to embark at the time and place appointed. The Contract Ticket will be issued to the Emigrant before he embarks, or on board the ship.

VI. The filling up the official "FORM OF APPLICATION" does not, nor does even the signature of the "Certificates," entitle the applicant to a passage; and he is warned against leaving his employment or making any preparation for emigrating before he has received his "Embarkation Order." THE AGENT-GENERAL AND HIS DEPUTIES DO NOT UNDERTAKE TO SEND REPLIES WHEN APPLICANTS ARE INELIGIBLE.

VII. The Emigrants will either receive a free pass to the Port of Embarkation or be refunded, previous to the sailing of the vessel, a reasonable amount on account of Railway or Steamboat fares.

VIII. If any false statement or false signature shall be found in the Form of Application or the Certificates, or if the Applicant shall fail to embark at the time and place required; or if, upon appearing at the place of embarkation, any Applicant or any Member of his family shall be found to have any infectious disorder, or any bodily or mental defect, contrary to any statement in the application and certificates, such persons will not be allowed to embark, and will forfeit all claim to a passage, as well as any deposit which may have been made on account of their outfit, and in case any Emigrant shall be found to have resided in Western Australia before, such Emigrant shall pay full passage money for himself and his family to the Government of Western Australia.

SHIP'S REGULATIONS.

IX. PROVISIONS, &c.—Provisions, Medical Attendance, Cooking, and Cooking Utensils, are supplied on board without charge to Emigrants.

X. No one will be allowed to embark with a less quantity of Clothing for each person than—

| | |
|---|---|
| FOR MALES OVER 12. | |
| 4 Towels | 2 warm and strong Flannel Petticoats |
| 2 lbs. of best Yellow Soap | 6 pairs of Stockings |
| 6 Shirts | 2 pairs strong Shoes or Boots |
| 6 Pairs Stockings | 2 strong Gowns, one of which must be warm |
| 2 warm Flannel (or Guernsey) Shirts | Warm Shawl or Cloak |
| 2 pairs good Shoes or Boots | |
| 2 complete Suits strong exterior Clothing | |
| Warm Great Coat | |
| FOR FEMALES OVER 12. | |
| 4 Towels | 9 Shirts or Chemises |
| 2 lbs. best Yellow Soap | 4 warm Flannel Waistcoats |
| 6 Chemises | 1 warm Cloak or outside Coat |
| | 6 pairs Stockings |
| | 2 pairs strong Shoes |
| | 2 complete Suits of exterior Clothing |

The Clothing need not be new, but it must be serviceable. It will be examined at the Dépôt, before embarkation, to see if the quantity is sufficient.

XI. **SHIP'S OUTFIT, &c.**—The requisite Mattresses, Bedclothes, Utensils, and a supply of Marine Soap for Washing Clothes during the voyage, will be provided by the Government at the following rates, which sums must be paid by the Emigrants before they can receive their Embarkation Orders, viz. :—

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| For Women | Twenty Shillings each. |
| „ Each Married Couple | Thirty-five Shillings. |
| „ Children over 12 years of age | Twenty Shillings each. |
| „ Children between 12 years and 1 year | Fifteen Shillings each. |
| Infants under 12 months at date of embarkation | Free. |

XII. The Emigrants will be divided into classes, and berthed in separate compartments in the ship; 1st, Married Couples, with Children under 12 years; 2nd, Single Women, that is, all unmarried females above 12 years.

The Single Women will be placed under the superintendence of a Matron.

XIII. **LUGGAGE, &c.**—All Luggage should be distinctly marked in paint with the name of the Passenger and the Ship; and boxes containing articles which will be required on the voyage, should have the word “WANTED,” written conspicuously upon them. The whole quantity of Luggage for each adult, allowed free of charge, is *twenty cubic feet measurement*, or half a ton in weight; Luggage in excess of this quantity will only be taken if there is room for it in the ship, and will be chargeable with freight at a rate not exceeding 6d. per cubic foot. Emigrants will not be allowed to take on board any bedding, furniture, spirits, gunpowder, lucifer or other matches, or any dangerous articles; all the Luggage will be examined at the Depôt, and any prohibited articles will be forfeited. It is desirable, however, that Emigrants should take with them the tools of their trades, but bulky agricultural implements cannot be admitted, on account of their size and weight. Emigrants must present themselves at the Emigration Depôt on the day named on the Embarkation Order. As all boxes are put into the hold of the ship, and those marked “Wanted” can only be got at about once a month during the voyage, the Emigrant should keep a supply of linen for immediate use in a canvas bag, which he can keep in his berth.

XIV. Male Emigrants are required, as a condition of their receiving an assisted passage for themselves or their families (if any), to perform the duties of Fire and Boat Drill during the voyage, whensoever called upon by the Captain or Surgeon Superintendent to do so.

XV. The following notes are added for the information of intending Emigrants :—

1. All Females will be temporarily received, on landing, into an Emigrants' Home, and maintained there until they have found suitable employment, to obtain which every assistance and information will be furnished to them. The right, however, is reserved by the Board of Immigration to refuse or withdraw such accommodation should it be discovered that a reasonable offer of service has been declined.

2. Steerage passages by steamer or free passes by railway will be provided for Emigrants, when engaged, to enable them to proceed to the district of their employers.
3. Full information as to the current rate of wages can be obtained at the Depôts in the Colony, and lists of persons requiring servants, &c., are kept there.

ASSISTED PASSAGES.

The Government grant assisted passages to Western Australia upon the following terms, clauses VIII. to XIV. of the regulations relating to free passages also applying to this class of passages, with the exception that medical attendance is not given free.

Assisted passages will be granted by the Government of Western Australia, until further notice, upon the following conditions and regulations :—

I. The classes eligible are Married and Single Farm Labourers and Artisans under 45 years of age, also Single Women or Widows (without children), such as Cooks, Housemaids, Nurses, General Servants, Dairymaids, &c., who are not under 15 nor over 35 years of age—who are nominated by their friends in Western Australia, provided such nominations have been approved by the Government in the Colony. In all cases they must be sober, industrious, of good moral character, of sound mind, free from bodily defect or deformity, in good health, able to perform the duties of the occupation to which they belong, and must be going to the Colony to reside and settle there, and to work in their respective occupations, and have been vaccinated or had the small pox. For each Emigrant over 12 years of age, £6 10s. for passage, in addition to the ship's outfit money referred to in Clause XI., and for children between the ages of 12 and 1 half this amount will have to be paid by the person nominating the Emigrants, or by the Emigrants themselves.

II. Persons who have resided in Western Australia are not in any case eligible for assisted passages, nor persons in the habitual receipt of parish relief; children under 12 years of age without their parents, husbands without their wives or wives without their husbands (unless in the last three instances the parents, wife or husband be in Western Australia), or single women who have illegitimate children.

III. In filling up the Form of Application the Applicant must be careful to give full particulars as to the nature of his occupation, to furnish all other necessary information, and to obtain *proper Signatures* to the Certificates attached to the Application Form. The Applicant's proposal will not be considered until the application is correctly and completely filled in.

IV. No person will be granted an assisted passage unless he shall have been approved by the Agent-General. No single or married man above the age of 45

years will be allowed any assistance. But any person so ineligible on account of age, and related to a family eligible for assistance, may, if he is approved by the Agent-General, receive a passage on payment of the entire expense incurred in providing it.

V. When the intending Emigrant has been approved of, and the sum required under Clause I. paid, he will, as soon as his passage is arranged for, receive an "Embarkation Order," naming the ship in which he is to sail, and the time and place at which he is to embark. The sums paid will be absolutely forfeited if the Applicants should fail to embark at the time and place appointed. The Contract Ticket will be issued to the Emigrant before he embarks, or on board the ship.

VI. The filling up the official "Form of Application" does not, nor does even the signature of the "Certificates," entitle the applicant to an assisted passage; and he is warned against leaving his employment or making any preparation for emigrating before he has received his "Embarkation Order."

VII. The Emigrants are expected to pay their own expenses to the port, and up to the period of embarkation.

In the case of assisted emigrants, who may not be met on arrival, the Government very properly provide that the Emigrants' Home at Fremantle shall be available for their reception on certain terms.

APPENDIX B.

COST OF LIVING.

As elsewhere in the Australian colonies, whilst board and lodging of a more or less rough order are cheap, 10s. to 20s. per week for single men, house rent is proportionately dear; the average rent of a three-roomed house in Perth and other towns being 7s. to 10s. per week, or in the country 5s. per week; and of a five-roomed one 12s. in towns and 9s. in the country.

The retail price of provisions in Perth at per lb. is roughly as follows:—

APPENDICES.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bacon, 1s. to 1s. 4d. | Mutton, 4d. to 5d. |
| Beef, 6d. to 7d. | Pork, 8d. to 10d. |
| Bread, 2-lb. loaf, 3d. to 3½d. | Potatoes, per stone, 1s. |
| Butter, 1s. to 2s. | Sugar, 3d. to 4½d. |
| Cheese, 9d. to 1s. | Tobacco, 5s. to 5s. 6d. |
| Coffee, 1s. 6d. | Tea, 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. |
| Milk, per quart, 5d. to 6d. | |

These rates, except for meat, are greatly enhanced on the goldfields and remote country locations. As regards clothing, it is estimated as being 10 to 20 per cent. dearer than in England.

APPENDIX C.

RATE OF WAGES.

The following is taken from the excellent handbook issued by the Emigrants' Information Office.

The rate of wages in the towns is roughly as follows, in the country districts slightly lower:—

1. Without board and lodging—per day :

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Bakers | 8s. to 10s. | Saddlers | 7s. to 10s. |
| Blacksmiths | 8s. ,, 10s. | Sawyers and Lumber- | |
| Boatbuilders | 8s. ,, 10s. | men | 6s. ,, 10s. |
| Brewers | 6s. ,, 8s. | Shipwrights | 10s. |
| Carpenters | 8s. ,, 10s. | Shoemakers | } By piece work, average |
| Coachbuilders | 7s. ,, 10s. | Tailors | |
| Gardeners | 5s. 6d. to 6s. | | a day. |
| General Labourers | 5s. to 7s. | Tanners and Curriers | 6s. |
| Masons and Bricklayers | 8s. ,, 11s. | Tinsmiths | 8s. |
| Miners | 10s. ,, 12s. | Tobacco Factory Ope- | } Piece work, average £3 a week. |
| Navyies | 6s. ,, 8s. | ratives | |
| Painters | 6s. ,, 8s. | Wharf Labourers | 6s. to 7s. |
| Plasterers | 8s. ,, 10s. | Wheelwrights | 9s. ,, 10s. |
| Plumbers | 7s. ,, 9s. | | |
| Printers | 6s. ,, 10s. | | |

2. With board and lodging :

a. Per month :

Housemaids and General Female Servants, 30s. to 40s.; Cooks, 30s. to 50s.

Farm Labourers, Ploughmen, and Station Hands, 40s. to 80s.

b. Per year :

Shepherds, Stockriders, generally useful men on stations, £30 to £45. Married couples, servants on farms and stations, £50 to £70.

3. At the goldfields in the Kimberley Division Gardeners get £2 a week ; Saddlers and Gold-miners, £4 ; Wheelwrights and Butchers, £5 ; Blacksmiths, Farriers, Joiners, and Carpenters, £5 to £6 ; Engineers, £8 ; and General Labourers, £4. Female Servants get £6 to £10 a month, and found (no demand, Chinamen being used).

NOTE.—Farm labourers are usually boarded and lodged ; and single men preferred to married men with families. A high rate of wages does not necessarily imply a demand for labour. Navvies work eight hours a day, most other trades nine hours ; a few, 10 ; farm hands, sunrise to sunset in the season. There is a good demand generally for female servants, milliners, and dressmakers. There is a good opening for market gardeners, fruit growers, and farmers, with £150 and upwards, but they should get experience of colonial farming before taking up land. In a few agricultural parts there is a fair demand for farm hands at £2 to £4 a month and board, but employment is not always permanent, and in the Kimberley Division there is no demand. In any case they should be prepared to turn their hands to all kinds of farm and station work, or to cut down timber, or to use a pick and shovel, and to rough it in the bush and country districts. There is a moderate demand only for mechanics, chiefly for those in the building trades. Gold-miners may do well in mining districts, but the journeys are generally expensive, and the life is rough.

APPENDIX D.

ESTABLISHED MANUFACTORIES.

The following list gives the names and numbers of the principal Factories in the Colony:—Aerated Water, 10; Boot, 3; Breweries, 6; Brick, 7; Coach, 8; Fish Preserving, 3; Flour Mills (Steam), 26; Flour Mills (Water), 5; Foundries, 5; Furniture, 3; Gas Works, 2; Salt Factory, 1; Soap Factories, 2; Saw Mills (Steam), 30; Saw Mills (Water), 2; Tanneries, 3; Tobacco, 1; Saddlery, 1; Biscuit, 1; Confectionery, 3; Sandalwood and Eucalyptus Oil, 1. There are also 13 Printing Offices in the Colony.

APPENDIX E.

THE GOVERNMENT LAND REGULATIONS.

The present Land Regulations, which were passed by the Legislative Council in 1886, came into force on the 2nd of March, 1887.

For the purposes of the Regulations, the Colony is divided into six Divisions:

The South-west Division.

| | | |
|---|------------|---|
| „ | Gascoyne | „ |
| „ | North-west | „ |
| „ | Kimberley | „ |
| „ | Eucla | „ |
| „ | Eastern | „ |

All town and suburban lands in these divisions must be sold by public auction, at an upset price to be determined by the Governor in Council. Any person may apply to the Commissioner to put up

for sale by auction any town or suburban lands already surveyed, on depositing 10 per cent. of the upset price, which is returned if he does not become the purchaser; should the purchaser not be the applicant, he must pay 10 per cent. on the fall of the hammer, and complete his purchase within thirty days.

There are four modes of obtaining land by conditional purchase in the South-west Division.

1. By deferred payment with residence, within agricultural areas.
2. By deferred payment with residence, outside agricultural areas.
3. By deferred payment, without residence, either within or outside of agricultural areas.
4. By direct payment, without residence, either within or outside of agricultural areas.

Agricultural areas of not less than 2,000 acres may be set apart by the Governor in Council—the maximum area to be held by any one person is 1,000 acres, and the maximum 100 acres; the price is fixed by the Governor in Council, at not less than 10s. an acre, which is the present price, payable in twenty yearly instalments of 6d. an acre, or sooner if the occupier choose. Upon the approval of any application, a licence is granted for five years. Within six months the licensee must reside on some portion of the land, and fence in the same with a good substantial fence during the term of his licence. If these conditions are fulfilled, a lease is granted to him for fifteen years. After the lease has expired, or at any time during the currency of the lease, provided the fence is in good order and that improvements have been made equal to the full purchase money, and further provided the full purchase money has been paid, a Crown grant will be given.

Outside agricultural areas land may be purchased on deferred payment with residence, by free selection, otherwise subject to all the conditions required within agricultural areas, as stated in the preceding paragraph.

Under the third mode of purchase, the applicant is subject to all the conditions imposed under No. 1, except residence, but he has to pay double the price, or £1 per acre, in twenty yearly instalments of 1s. per acre.

By the fourth mode, land to the extent of 1,000 acres and not less than 100, within an agricultural area, and not exceeding 5,000

acres outside an agricultural area, may be applied for at a price (at present 10s. an acre) to be fixed by the Governor in Council. Within three years the land must be fenced, and within five years 5s. per acre must be spent on improvements.

For garden purposes small areas of not less than five acres nor more than 20 acres (except in special cases), at 20s. per acre, may be purchased on the condition that within three years the land shall be fenced, and one-tenth planted with vines or fruit trees, or vegetables.

In the Kimberley, North-west, Gascoyne, Eastern, and Eucla Divisions, special areas for purchase may be set apart of not less than 5,000 acres. The total quantity to be held by any one person in a division shall not exceed 5,000 acres, or less than 100 acres. The price is at present 10s. an acre, payable in ten years or sooner.

Upon approval a lease shall issue for ten years. Within two years the land must be fenced. At the expiration of the lease, or at any time during its currency, the fence being in good order, improvements in addition to the fencing equal to the purchase money having been made, and the purchase money having been paid, a grant from the Crown will be issued.

Pastoral lands are granted on lease, which gives no right to the soil or to the timber, and the lands may be reserved, sold, or otherwise disposed of by the Crown during the lease.

The following are the terms of pastoral leases in the several divisions; all leases expire on the 31st December, 1907. The rental named is for every 1,000 acres.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|----------|
| <i>South-west.</i> —In blocks of not less than 3,000 acres, at 20s. | | | |
| <i>Gascoyne & Eucla.</i> —In blocks of not less than 20,000 acres— | | | |
| For each of the 1st seven years | . | . | 10s. |
| „ 2nd „ | . | . | 12s. 6d. |
| „ 3rd „ | . | . | 15s. |
| <i>North-west.</i> —In blocks of not less than 20,000 acres— | | | |
| For the 1st seven years | . | . | 10s. |
| „ 2nd „ | . | . | 15s. |
| „ 3rd „ | . | . | 20s. |
| <i>Eastern.</i> —In blocks of not less than 20,000 acres— | | | |
| For the 1st seven years | . | . | 2s. 6d. |
| „ 2nd „ | . | . | 5s. |
| „ 3rd „ | . | . | 7s. 6d. |

Kimberley.—In blocks of not less than 50,000 acres with frontage, and 20,000 without frontage—

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| For the 1st seven years | 10s. |
| „ 2nd „ | 15s. |
| „ 3rd „ | 20s. |

REDUCTION OF RENT FOR STOCKING.—Any lessee in the Kimberley and Eucla Divisions may have a reduction of one-half the rental due under the Regulations, computed from the 1st day of January, 1887, for the first fourteen years of his lease if, in the Kimberley Division, he have, within five years of the date of these Regulations, in his possession within the division ten head of sheep or one head of large stock for every 1,000 acres leased, or in lieu of stock, in the Eucla Division to the eastward of a north line from Point Culver, if he have expended £8 per 1,000 acres in tanks, wells, dams, or boring for water.

A penalty of double rental for the remaining portion of the lease is imposed, except in the South-west Division, if the lessee has not within seven years complied with the stocking or improvement clause.

POISONED LAND.—Any person desirous of obtaining a lease of poisoned land shall apply to the Commissioner, defining the boundaries and paying one year's rent at the rate of £1 per 1,000 acres. Within twelve months a proper survey of the land must be furnished, at the expense of the applicant, to the Commissioner, and sufficient proof given that the said land is poisoned land. If the application is approved, a lease is granted for twenty-one years at £1 per 1,000 acres, on the condition that the land is fenced in within three years; and if the poison plant is completely eradicated before the lease expires, the lessee will be entitled to a Crown grant.

MINERAL LANDS.—Mining leases (not auriferous), not exceeding 200 acres, nor less than 20 acres, are granted for seven years, at a rental of 5s. per acre per annum, but must be worked within one year. If the holder has erected, or gives security for the erection of suitable machinery to work the mine, he may obtain a Crown grant of not less than 20 acres, at the rate of £3 per acre. It is probable that fresh legislation will before long be proposed as to mining.

APPENDIX F.

The following extracts from the final report of the Agricultural Commission, given in March, 1891, will be of interest to intending settlers as giving a thoroughly expert account of the various sub-districts included under the general heading of the South-west Division. The data with regard to rainfall, depth at which water may be obtained by sinking, and cost of clearing per acre are of the utmost practical value. The views of skilled experts, such as Messrs. Venn, Richardson, Padbury, J. H. Monger and E. R. Brockman, on the cultures suited to the various areas in the South-west Division cannot be too carefully studied.

SOUTH-WEST DIVISION.

DISTRICTS.

EASTERN DISTRICTS.—The localities known as the Eastern Districts, embracing Beverley, York, Northam, and Newcastle, may be described as all undulating country covered alternately with timber known as raspberry jam, York gum, a little wattle, and mimosa shrubs, having belts of ironstone and granite, with considerable tracts of more or less rich chocolate and clay soils—friable and easy of general farm treatment. As in most countries, the character of the soil changes somewhat on the banks of the watercourses. These districts are watered generally by the Avon, brooks, and by wells at varying depths of 20 feet to 70 feet. The average rainfall at Beverley is 14·06 inches; York, 17·43 inches; Northam, 15·21 inches; Newcastle, 18·79 inches; and the cost of clearing in these districts is very similar, as their character is somewhat the same, and ranges from 25s. per acre up to £3 and £4.

CENTRAL DISTRICTS.—The Districts of Guildford, the Swan, and Gingin embrace a belt of country differing materially from the above; the agricultural lands of Guildford and the Swan, including the Canning, consist principally of rich river deposits extending

along flats on either side of the River Swan, from below Guildford, until it becomes lost in the Darling Range. The extreme fertility of the flats is apparent to the most casual observer. Back from the river on the banks there is a formation of reddish friable loam, gradually merging, as it extends into the plains, into a yellow clay and sandy grit; the timber on the rivers and lowlands being flooded gum and wattle, on the uplands red gum, jarrah, and wando; in many parts the wando prevails. At Gingin the character alters slightly, having ridges mixed with rich soil, sandy loams, and limestone formations with ti-tree swampy flats, as the country extends towards the Moore River. These districts are watered by the Swan, the Helena, Ellen Brook, Gingin Brook, &c., and water is obtained by sinking at from 25 feet to 60 feet. The rainfall at Guildford and Swan is 32·37 and 28·20 inches respectively; at Gingin, 30·53 inches; the average cost of clearing varies from £2 per acre to £6 and £7.

The Districts of Wandering, Murradong, the Williams and the Arthur Rivers contain country in many respects similar to that around and near Northam; more open in its character, and more undulating; at periods of the year heavily grassed with silver grass. The soil is of a reddish chocolate colour and very friable on the ridges, alternating into clayey flats and grit. The timber generally is raspberry jam, wattles, York gum, white gum, and bastard oak; the country round and about Wandering and Murradong being perhaps more thickly wooded than on the Williams and Arthur Rivers, and much richer in character and general fertility. These districts are watered by the Arthur, Williams, Beaufort, and Bannister; and by sinkings at depths varying from 30 to 50 feet. The rainfall of the Williams is 22·81 inches; of Wandering, 23·56 inches; and the average cost of clearing is from £3 to £5 per acre.

THE SOUTH-WESTERN DISTRICTS.—The Upper Blackwood, Jayes, Bridgetown, and Preston River differ in character in every respect from any of the above enumerated areas. The character of the country and soil are subject to different climatic conditions altogether. The districts named are more or less similar in character, having many features in common, and therefore a general description will embrace features common to each. They consist generally of very hilly country covered with heavy timber; the agricultural land growing principally the red gum and flooded gum, and more or less covered with a heavy growth of black-boy. The soil varies very materially: at times belts or ridges of reddish chocolate soil are to be

met with, and at others strong dark soil deepening into rich black loam as it extends into the valleys below ; all yielding, under fencing, clearing and ring-barking, heavy crops of grass. These districts are well watered by brooklets, springs, and shallow sinking. The agricultural country on the banks or the flats of the Preston River differs only in character from the fact of having rather a larger stretch of level country along the banks of the river, and being perhaps more uniform in the general character of its soil. The average rainfall is—Jayes, 26·95 inches, Bridgetown, 35·78 ; and the average cost of clearing from £3 to £15 per acre.

The Districts of Bunbury and Vasse are alike in some respects, but differing materially in others ; both are seaport towns, and both the seat of considerable dairying operations. The Vasse may be described as a belt of rich swamp deposit placed behind the sea hills, and running in a narrow belt along the coast, from 10 to 15 miles on either side of the port, with ridges of limestone formation skirted by clay flats, and with low-lying sand and clay plains, covered generally by shrubs, wattle, and tuart, on the poorer land ; and on the rich land growing flooded gum, tuart, and ti-tree.

Bunbury and its surroundings differ from that description materially, having rich alluvial swamp land to the right and left of the port, running north for many miles along the coast with ridges of limestone and clay plains, and backed up heavy deposits of black loamy soil at Dardanup, the Ferguson, the Collie, and Brunswick Rivers. All these districts are well watered by numerous rivers and watercourses, to wit :—the Rivers Vasse, Ludlow, Capel, Preston, Ferguson, Collie, Brunswick, and others of smaller note, while water is procured anywhere by sinking at depths varying from 6 feet to 20 feet. The rainfall at Dardanup is 40 inches ; Bunbury, 34·64 inches ; the Vasse, 36·67 inches. The cost of clearing at the Vasse averages about £3 to £8 per acre ; at Bunbury from £3 to £14 ; Dardanup, Ferguson, and Brunswick from £3 to £8 per acre.

The District of Harvey may well be classed with that of the Brunswick, Collie, and Dardanup, as the same character of land prevails, and the situation, as regards the Darling Range, identical. Pinjarrah and its surroundings, on the other hand, differs from other localities in the Southern Districts, being all more or less flat and open country, having along the banks of the Murray River stretches of reddish loam backed up by clayey and sandy plains. The timber is generally red gum, with wattle on the flats ; ti-tree, banksia, and flooded gum on the plains. It is watered by the Murray River, and

by sinking at about 12 feet; and the average rainfall is about 31 inches; and the average cost of clearing is from £2 to £8 per acre.

NORTHERN DISTRICTS.—The agricultural land of our Northern Districts is all the belt of country comprised in the Districts of Northampton, Sandsprings, Greenough, Dongara, and the Upper Irwin up to Strawberry. Beyond Strawberry comes that other belt of untested country, previously alluded to. Confining, for the purposes of this Commission, a description to those portions known as Greenough, Dongara, and Upper Irwin, Greenough embraces two distinct belts of rich and almost level formation, called the Front and Back Flats: the Front Flats, commencing a few miles from Geraldton, and extending along the coast just behind the sea-coast in the direction of Dongara for about 25 miles, vary in width, say, from three-quarters of a mile wide to two miles; the Back Flats run parallel with the Front Flats, divided only by a low range of limestone formation, and contain rather a larger area as a whole. The existence of these two belts of country, which may be classed among the richest agricultural land in all Australia, is a startling and novel feature in our geography. The nature of the soil in these two belts of flat country is similar in many respects. The whole is generally impregnated with lime, is of a rich loamy character, of great depth, and varies in quality only by portions being lighter and more friable than the other, and the whole more or less at long intervals subject to inundation, and was probably, a century ago, a series of lakes or estuaries. Water is obtained after cutting through the lower strata of limestone at depths of from 40 feet to 70 feet; and cost of clearing, from £2 to £4 per acre. The rainfall at Northampton is 21·09 inches; Newmerracarra, 19·77 inches; Geraldton, 18·53 inches.

The district of Dongara and Upper Irwin is entirely different in its character from the Greenough Flats, consisting of a belt of country on the banks of the Irwin River, hemmed in by sand plains on either side, varying in width, along the tortuous course of the stream, from a quarter of a mile to scarcely two miles wide. The quality of the soil is a rich, stiff, loam, getting lighter in quality as it reaches the edge of the sand plains, watered by the river; and water is obtained by sinking at depths varying from 25 feet to 70 feet. Rainfall.—Dongara, 17·12 inches. Cost of clearing, from £2 to £5 per acre.

This closes the general description of the agricultural districts, embracing, as it does, the whole of that portion of the colony under

the present consideration of the Commission. Having given in as brief a manner as possible an outline description of the districts, and conveying, as we hope, to the minds of intending settlers and the public a fairly accurate description of the main features of those districts, the Commission enter upon what they consider the real result of their labours, from the evidence adduced, and from their own observation in traversing the colony.

AREAS.

A feature in the agricultural capacity of the colony will be a division into areas of those portions suitable for special production.

WHEAT.—The Commission, from evidence, ventures to say that so long as the production of wheat in the world does not bring foreign competition to our shores at a less cost than, say, 3s. to 4s. per bushel, the area over which wheat can be grown as a food supply, to compete with that competition and leave a fair profit to the grower, will be found in the Districts of Greenough, Dongara, and Upper Urwin in the north; and the Victoria Plains, Newcastle, Northam, York, and Beverley, and south along the Great Southern Railway as far as Ettacup. This last-named belt of country, in the opinion of the Commission, has a great future before it; its large extent of level country—the comparative low cost of clearing—its general climatic conditions, combined with a quick transit to either the port of Fremantle or Albany, point conclusively to a very rapid and extensive settlement; and when this is an accomplished fact, commanding as it does so many natural advantages, it will become a most important factor in the wheat supply of the colony, both for home consumption and export.

Taking the question of clearing and total cost of cultivation of lands in these areas, from evidence it will be found over the whole area that growing wheat at the figures named leaves a fair margin of profit, and would provide a food supply, not only for all future local requirements, but leave a large surplus to export. The average cost of production in these areas is now about 2s. per bushel. With the use of the double-furrowed plough, and with the use of the three and four furrowed plough in the very near future, and a corresponding saving in the use of large-sized harrows, and improved harvesting, the cost can and will be reduced by 6d. to 10d. or more per bushel, and with these figures the Commission ventures to say,

taking the ruling rate of wages here as that prevailing in the other colonies, Western Australia can, over these areas, produce wheat in competition with any of the sister colonies; and, having regard to the fact that the average yield of wheat per acre over these areas exceeds that of South Australia by six bushels per acre, we can at no distant future enter into the open and foreign markets in profitable competition with the sister colonies.

The figures taken in evidence show a more prosperous state of things for the West Australian wheat growers than for the same class of people in South Australia. There is no large margin for error in this statement, as the average rainfall over these areas is about eighteen inches, and although the average cost of bringing them into a state for cultivation may exceed that of the wheat-growing areas of South Australia, that cost is more than counter-balanced by the increased average yield per acre.

The cost of producing wheat having in the other colonies reached that stage when it will cease to be produced at a lower figure—climatic conditions in the way of rainfall being in our favour, labour at the same rate, and the use of the same appliances at our command, this colony will have nothing to fear from competition. The present protective policy of the colony being also a fostering element in this production, but which, however, will cease to have effect the moment local demands are supplied, and we have a surplus for export. These seem bold statements to make; but the Commission are supported by the evidence before them.

GENERAL FARMING.—The Commission desire to express in no uncertain voice their opinion that, although facts and figures are as they have stated in regard to wheat-growing in these areas, they by no means recommend or suggest that wheat-growing alone should be relied on in these areas by the farmer. On the other hand, we strongly oppose a system of wheat or corn growing as an only product. It is a system that is too precarious in Australia, but in every instance in this colony, and in the areas mentioned, we urge a system of general mixed farming as being the safest—the most legitimate and prosperous occupation for the farmer. Wheat may, or should be, a primary factor in their business, but the production of oats, barley, and hay should always form a large portion of their income, and, speaking in regard to the northern areas, dairying can be profitably carried on for at least three or four months in the year, yielding in those months a return far in excess of the general

average yield of the colony. These remarks do not apply to the south, under a colder climate, where dairying can be profitably carried on throughout the whole year, by a small observance of the seasons and the growth of nourishing and succulent food for the cows at those times when the natural pasture would not so well serve them.

During the winter months a large and profitable addition to the income should be made by curing bacon and hams. No farm should be without a few sheep; they not only furnish the family with a cheap food supply, but manure the soil and assist to clear the land from weeds. Attention to garden produce should not be lost sight of, as throughout these areas general garden produce can be raised in large quantities, and, where there is no market for it, it cheapens the food supply of the farms, and is valuable as pig fodder.

Except in favoured localities, general fruit-growing in the northern areas cannot be relied on, and to be successful it requires certain favourable situations. Nevertheless, there is a very considerable area, in every respect suitable for the profitable growth and production of certain fruits, more especially those of a semi-tropical character, such as vines, oranges, lemons, peaches, pears, almonds, while for the growth of the fig and olive the area could be extended to a much larger degree.

In the districts south of the Irwin, say, Victoria Plains, Newcastle, Northam, York, and Beverley, a wider field of operations is opened up, outside the question of wheat-growing. With a mean temperature between 60° to 70° and a rainfall of 18 inches, a more extended system of general farming can be followed. In addition to wheat, oats, and barley, English barley can be profitably grown to compete with importations and serve all local demands, if carefully harvested. The climatic conditions are eminently adapted for peaches, apricots, oranges, lemons, grapes, and figs, under proper cultivation; and a special source of income could be derived from a system of fruit drying, such as raisins and figs, while special attention should be directed to ham and bacon curing, as throughout these districts a larger range of season favours the industry; and, taking the whole of this area, it is in every way suitable for horse-breeding. Farmers should pay particular and unceasing attention to having a few heavy mares, and so supply the colony with draught stock. Throughout this belt the climate and soil is entirely in favour of the horse, as is also the whole of our northern areas, extending up as far as the De Grey, and, with care and attention to

young stock, animals can be produced equal to those bred in any part of the world. With good draught stock the farmer reduces the cost of his production: it is the power he requires; without it he cannot succeed with his own cultivation, and, having a surplus, the ruling prices at all times leaves him a large margin of profit.

AREA FOR FRUITS.—All the belt of country known as the Darling Range, say from Bindoon, and Chittering, down past Narrogin, Pinjarrah, as far as Bunbury, and from thence to the Blackwood, might be described as one huge area for fruit growing.

Speaking more particularly in regard to the Darling Range, and without coming into the lower levels between the Range and the sea, we find that nearly every description of fruit grows in luxurious abundance; its hill slopes and its valleys, its alternations of soil, its diverse aspects, single out the area as specially adapted for wine making, for fruit growing, fruit preserving, and fruit drying.

Where the grape thrives, as it does in this area, the Commission can give no distinct preference to any particular variety of grape, as the character of soil and aspect of the land will at all times guide the grower in producing the exact variety suited to the conditions of his holding. Among the varieties already growing will be found the Shiraz, the Verdeilho, Fontainbleau, Crystal, Sweet Water, Muscatel, the Wortley Hall, and Black Hamburg.

The variety of fruits, including those grown on the Blackwood, is oranges of all descriptions (except the green orange), lemons, peaches, plums (of all varieties), apricots, pears, quinces, figs, apples, medlars, cherries, English and Cape gooseberries, citrons, currants, guavas, mulberries, nectarines, loquats, limes, nuts, filberts, almonds, raspberries, shaddocks, bananas. With such a range and variety of fruit, and growing each variety in localities suitable for their production, the Commission can point hopefully to the time when Western Australia will compete against the world in these productions.

As an industry, wine making, both for local consumption and for export, should occupy the attention of a large section of those settling this area of the colony; while fruit drying, jam making, and preserving could be successfully and profitably pursued by others. The methods of cultivation can only be laid down on knowing the nature of the soil and locality; but as a general thing it is thought wiser to have plenty of room for all plant and tree life. In the case of vines, from 8 to 9 feet, under the bush system of planting; trellis system for large vineyards is not recommended; while fruit trees

should never be planted less than 20 or 30 feet apart. The Commission ventures no opinion as to the process of treating the land, whether by trenching or by deep ploughing; this question is one regulated entirely by the locality and nature of the formation; but strict attention to manuring, mulching, digging, and weeding is imperative to success.

DAIRY AREA.—The area over which dairying, as an industry, can be followed out with profit, is all the coast line from the Moore River down south as far as Cape Leeuwin, extending as far back as the Darling Range. Taking the belt more particularly from Wanneroo to the Vasse, the profitable production of butter is simply a matter of attention and intelligence; the area is eminently adapted for it all the year round, combined with the production of such commodities as bacon, hams, eggs, poultry, potatoes, onions, &c.

The coast system of dairying and farming would differ in some essential respects from that to be followed out on the stiffer lands below the Range. All along the coast, from its general immunity from frost, potatoes should be a staple commodity. This applies more particularly to the large belt of estuary land, and rich formation of vegetable deposit, running more or less all down the line mentioned. The cost of clearing is heavy, ranging from £5 to £20 per acre for heavy ti-tree clearing, but the yield being heavy and fairly certain, the potato crop should at all times be able to compete with importations: there is a very extensive area in every way adapted for this produce, and population on such a rich deposit will cheapen production and increase the supply as well as the demand. The Commission strongly recommend this branch of farming, together with the production of vegetables and dairy produce for the Perth and Fremantle markets, to the attention of intending settlers.

Bunbury, the Vasse, and their surroundings seem the natural locality for dairy farming, and as the colony progresses it will, doubtless, form the staple product of these districts. At the present moment individuals are doing as much as individuals can with the means and labour at their command. Something like 1,000 to 1,200 cows are being dairied; but at present the cost of production, including the heavy cost of transit, cripples the industry. It is a hopeful and cheerful tribute to the intelligence of the dairymen of the south to find how quickly devices in labour-saving machinery are introduced. The De Laval Separator, butter-workers, and improved churns are now generally used.

The mean temperature of the whole area is about 62°. The rainfall is from 28 inches in the districts of Wanneroo, Perth, Guildford, and Canning; while Bunbury and Vasse have an average rainfall of 33 to 40 inches. The establishment of dairies is only a matter of population, and the Commission can see the germs of a future high-class system for this industry in the intelligence displayed by some of those already engaged in the profitable working of their holdings, in Guildford and in the south. A system of dairying should always be combined with the production of hams, bacon, and eggs; while general farming for the growth of the necessary fodder is absolutely essential to good butter-making.

Root crops, such as mangold-wurzel, and the cultivation of pig-melon, maize, and farmer's friend, must also be grown on a dairy farm, as they are the elements of success, combined with a studious and careful attention to cleanliness in the dairy.

The production of cheese is a branch of industry that has not occupied the attention of many in the colony. At every agricultural show excellent cheeses are exhibited—equal in every respect to the imported colonial article. The industry is, however, not yet established, and may only succeed on a large scale under a factory system. Nevertheless, the Commission can recommend its production at once as an adjunct to the dairy farming in the colony, where the dairy farmer has the advantage of a family and cheap labour to give that attention so indispensable to good cheese-making.

APPENDIX G.

WEST AUSTRALIAN LAND COMPANY'S TERRITORY. TERMS OF SALE.

"RURAL LANDS.

"The price for the Company's selected rural lands varies from 10s. to 40s. per acre, according to the quality of the land and the distance from a railway station or town-site. If desired the payment can be made by twenty annual instalments *free of interest*, but for the present, and in order to encourage cash purchases, a discount of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. will be allowed for cash where the purchase money amounts to £50 and is less than £100, and of 15 per cent. where it exceeds £100.

APPENDICES.

" TOWN LANDS.

"The deposit on each lot shall be £2, and balance of the purchase money shall be paid to the Company within thirty days after notice to the purchaser that the Company is ready to complete the sale, or within such extended time as the company may, by writing, allow. No survey fees will be charged in respect of town lands.

"The suburban lots near the town-sites will be sold subject to the special conditions:—That no building shall be erected thereon between the street and building frontage lines, as shown in such plans, without the consent, in writing, of the Company; and that, except with the like consent, no building shall be erected on any such lot of less annual value than £30, and that the land shall not, nor shall any building erected thereon, be used for the sale of spirituous or fermented liquors, or for carrying on any noisy or offensive trade or business.

" RURAL LANDS.

"Rural lands are offered for sale by free selection by immediate or outright purchase, or by conditional purchase on deferred annual payments.

"Within one month after completion of the survey of the land applied for the applicant shall pay the Company one-half the cost of such survey, at the ruling Government rate.

" RURAL LANDS—IMMEDIATE PURCHASE.

"The deposit on each application shall be 20 per centum of the purchase money, and the balance of such purchase money shall be paid to the Company within thirty days after notice to the purchaser that the Company is ready to complete the sale, or within such extended time as the Company may, by writing, allow.

"The following discounts will be allowed, namely:—Where the purchase amounts to £50 and less than £100, 7½ per cent.; where it amounts to £100 or more, 15 per cent.

"If the purchase money do not exceed £50 the same shall be paid by not more than ten, and if it exceed that amount, by not more than twenty annual instalments (as may be agreed). The said instalments shall be of equal amounts, and the first instalment shall be paid as a deposit with the application.

"If the application shall be made between the 1st of March and the 1st of September, the term of the licence to occupy hereinafter mentioned shall commence on the 1st of March preceding; if made between the 1st of September and the 1st of March, on the 1st of September preceding, and the subsequent instalments shall be payable in advance on the 1st of March or 1st of September (as the case may require) in every year.

"Upon approval of his application, the Company will grant the applicant a licence to occupy for such term of years as the case may require, commencing as aforesaid, and subject to survey and to the conditions in these regulations applicable thereto.

"If any purchaser shall in any year fail at the time prescribed to pay the instalment due by him as aforesaid, he shall absolutely forfeit all right to the land in respect of which the said instalment is due, unless within 30 days after such instalment is due it shall be paid, together with an additional sum equal to £5 per cent. on the said instalment; or within 60 days with £10 per centum; or within 120 days with £20 per centum added thereto.

“ Within five years after the commencement of the term mentioned in the licence to occupy, if the land has then been surveyed, or if not then surveyed within five years after the Company shall give the purchaser notice that the land has been surveyed, the purchaser shall fence the whole of the outer boundaries of the land comprised in such licence with a substantial fence, of a type to be approved by the Company ; and before the expiration of the said term the purchaser shall also clear from all trees and scrub, and cultivate at least one-fifth of the area comprised in such licence, and shall further, on or before the expiration of the several periods during which such improvements are to be performed, lodge with the Company statutory declarations by some competent person, to the effect that the said improvements have been fully performed. The Company or its agents may from time to time, until transfer of the land to the purchaser, enter upon the land comprised in any licence, and inspect and value the improvements effected thereon.

The purchaser may, subject to the approval in writing of the Company, and on payment of a fee of 10s., transfer to any person all his estate and interest in the land, the subject of his licence. The transfer shall be in the form or to the effect of the form endorsed on the licence, and shall be signed by both transferor and transferee. When such transfer is duly approved by the Company, the transferee shall hold the said land subject to the same conditions and liabilities as the first purchaser held the same, and shall for all purposes be deemed to be the purchaser named in the licence.”

APPENDIX H.

NATIVE ANIMALS, BIRDS, ETC.

The principal native animals are of the kangaroo species, of which, in addition to the ordinary kangaroo of the plains, several varieties are common—the brush rock and red kangaroo, the wallaby, the tammar and the kangaroo rat, the last a small marsupial, not so large as an ordinary rat, being found in the Gascoyne District. Kangaroo skins have been very largely exported of late years ; consequently they are getting very scarce in the Southern Districts.

Opossums are very numerous, and their skins make exceedingly handsome and durable rugs.

The native dog, or “dingo,” is still common ; though on account of its sheep-stealing proclivities, every effort is being made to exter-

minate it. A small species of porcupine, and the flying fox, are found in the Northern Districts.

The principal birds of the colony are the emu, the wild turkey (a species of bustard), the gnou or leipoa (a species of pheasant), which has a peculiar method of nesting—a number of females using one common nest, which consists of a hole scooped out of the ground to a depth of several feet and filled with dead leaves, &c. ; then, as the eggs are laid, they are piled up in a conical heap, covered with leaves and rubbish, and left to be hatched by the heat of the sun ; cockatoos (black with white tail, and black with red tail, and two kinds of white), leadbeater's cockatoo, cockateels or cockatoo paroquets, roseate cockatoos, parrots, and paroquets of various kinds, bronze-wing pigeons of several varieties, different kinds of doves, quails, magpies, squeakers, wattle-birds, laughing jackasses, crows, eagles, ospreys, and various hawks, shrikes, owls, &c. ; also numerous small species of birds of the finch family, those in the east Kimberley District being especially distinguished by the brilliancy of their plumage.

There are no native song-birds, although in some varieties—such as the wattle-bird, the wagtail, and the magpie—the note is very sweet and melodious.

The chief water-birds are black swans, from which the colony took its original name of “Swan River Settlement,” and which are still to be found in large numbers on the numerous estuaries in the southwest ; ducks of several kinds, such as grey, whitewing, black, wood, mountain, whistling, spoonbill, and the musk duck, or “steamer,” also teal and grebe. Wild geese are found on the islands along the south coast east of Albany. Pelicans, cormorants or shags, and numerous varieties of cranes, gallinules, coots, and waders are common on all the rivers. Sea-birds of various kinds are very numerous along the coast, especially on the islands to the northward, where large deposits of guano have been discovered.

Amongst the representatives of the reptile world are found turtle on the islands off the north-west coast ; alligators in the rivers in the Kimberley District ; snakes, both land and water (poisonous and constrictors) ; iguanas and lizards, and frogs of all kinds.

As regards insects, flies, ants, mosquitoes, and “silver fish” are the principal pests at certain seasons.

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*(Incorporated by Acts of the Legislature of Victoria, South Australia
and Western Australia).*

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| Paid-up | £1,000,000 |
| Reserve Funds | £670,000 |
| Reserve Liability of Shareholders | £1,500,000 |

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IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Perth, Fremantle, Geraldton, Albany, Northam, Newcastle.

IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

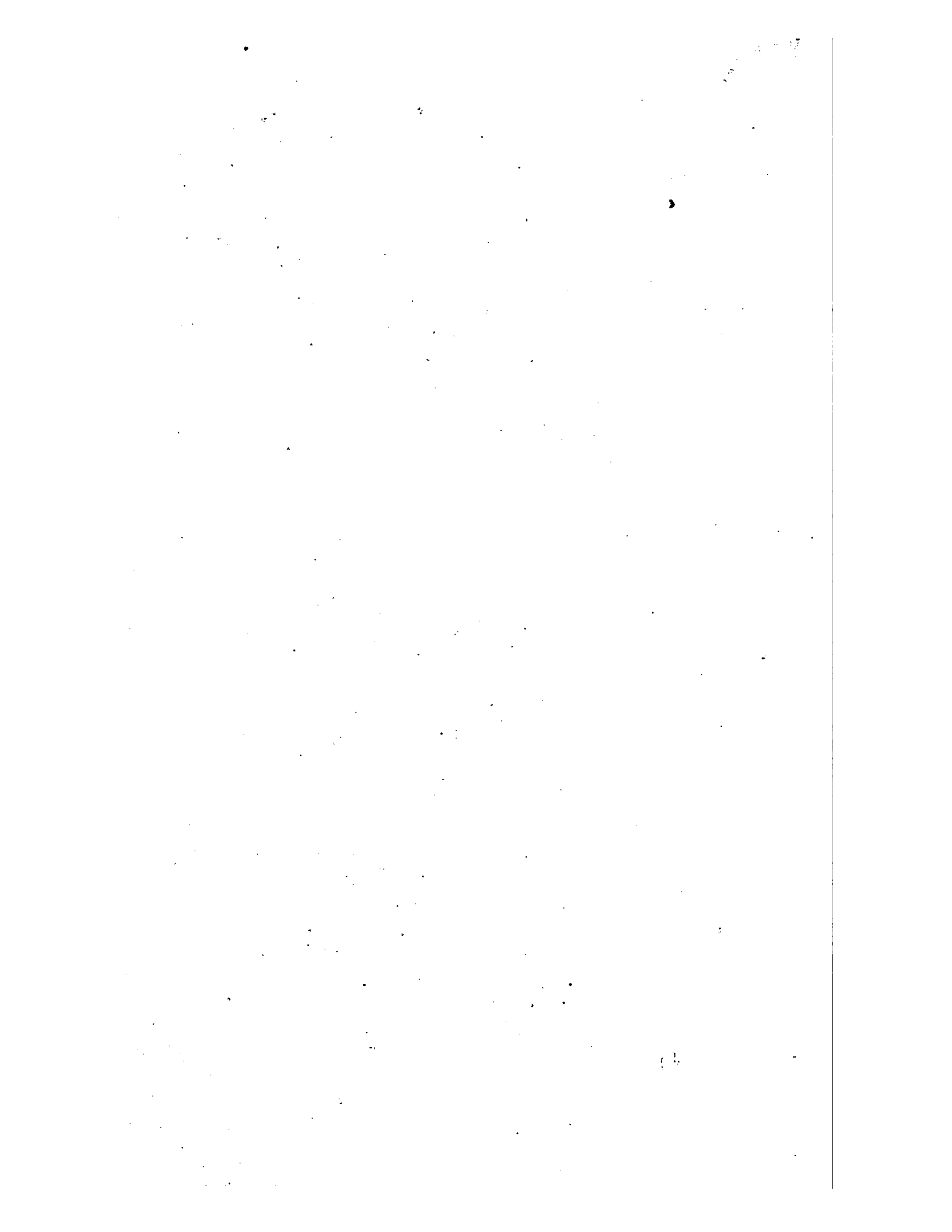
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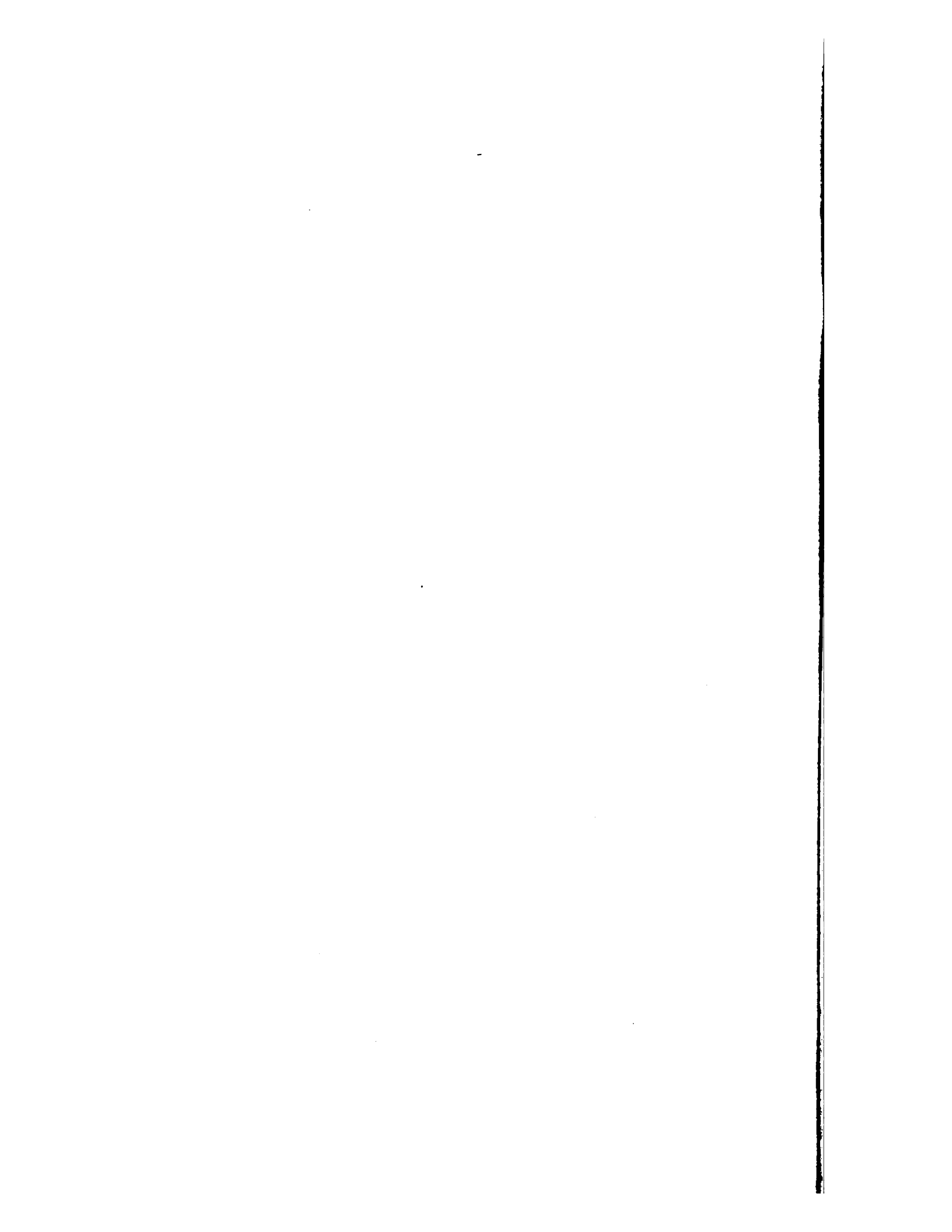
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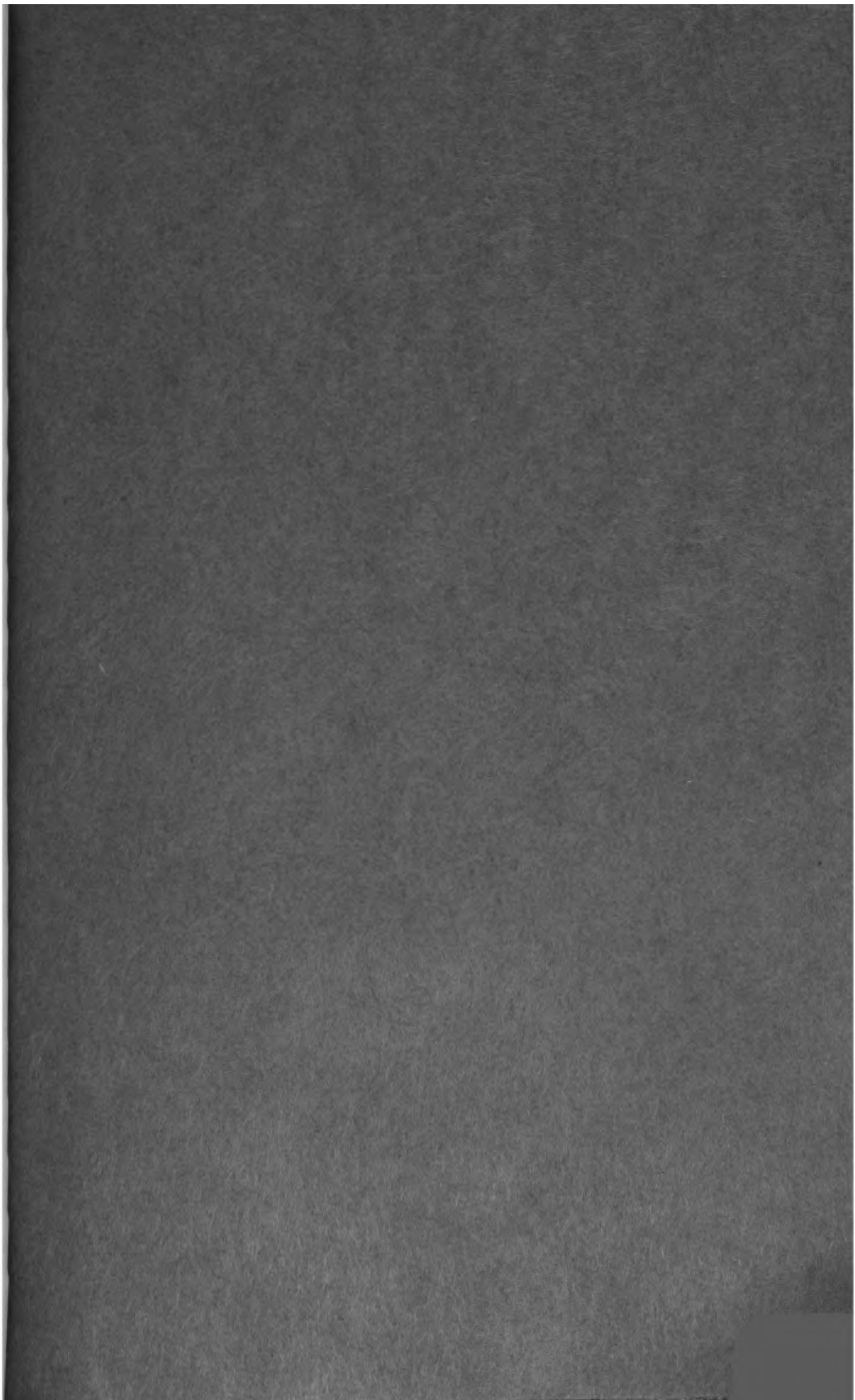
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