



BY ERNEST E. WILLIAMS.
 (Author of "Made in Germany.")

VICTORIA.

VICTORIA is entitled to second place in a list of the Australasian States. For though in area it is, save Tasmania, the smallest, occupying but one thirty-fourth part of the whole Continent, it ranks second to New South Wales in population. It contains fully 1,200,000 inhabitants, equal to thirty-eight per cent. of the Continent's total population; and though its lands are stinted, relatively to other Australian States, they are spacious when compared with the Mother Country's area; for they comprise 56,245,760 acres, which, within a few acres, is equivalent to the area of Great Britain. The Colony originally formed part of New South Wales, and was then known as the Port Phillip District; though when Sir Thomas Mitchell first surveyed it on his overland excursion from New South Wales, he named it Australia Felix—an apt compliment to a land of so great natural beauty and so magnificent a climate; and the subsequent output of gold and the still more recent development of agricultural wealth have made the term yet more appropriate. Owing to its rapid colonisation in the earlier half of the century, Victoria was separated from New South Wales on the 1st of July, 1851, and entered on the privileges and responsibilities of independence. Immediately afterwards, in the same year, gold was

discovered in the Colony, and discovered in such quantities that, of all the gold fields in the world, none had yet been found to equal Ballarat in richness.

Victoria began its career as an agricultural country. In the Fifties came the gold rush, and men sought quicker roads to fortune. Now Victorians have succumbed to the Australian love for town life. They have made of Melbourne a magnificent capital, worthy to rank with any of the principal cities of the old world; but in the process the tilling of the soil has been neglected. But the years of commercial depression which ushered in the Nineties have had a sobering effect on these dreams of urban glory, and a stimulating effect on the Colony's rural progress. Hard-pressed Melbourne shopkeepers and clerks are now beginning to turn with wistful and hopeful eyes to the rich lands of the interior, where healthful occupation and a certain competence await the husbandman. There is every inducement to Victorians to spread themselves over the land. In all directions the Government has thrown out lines of railway, even where settlement is but sparse, in order to attract farmers; and the Colony's situation precludes the establishment of any farms at a much greater distance than 300 miles from a sea port. Already the agricultural produce of



the Colony is worth fully eight millions sterling a year, and in certain directions it is growing rapidly. Still, for the most part, Victoria's agricultural wealth is as yet unexploited, and, in the language of a Victorian writer,* the Colony's "large and fruitful area is languishing for population." Everywhere throughout Victoria land is to be obtained from the Government for £1 an acre, repayable in annual instalments extending over twenty years, without interest. In the northern and eastern parts are whole counties practically unsettled. Some of these districts are covered with a species of stunted eucalyptus called mallee, and these were at one time thought impossible of cultivation; but the advent of the mallee roller and the stump-jumping plough have shown the way to profitable settlement on soils which, when cleared, are as productive of certain crops as farmers could wish. At one time, also, the dry climate in certain parts of the Colony was deemed an insuperable bar to cultivation, but the irrigation works undertaken by the Government, as well as by private capitalists—notably the Chaffey Brothers—have effectually broken down this barrier; and now Victoria affords, over well-nigh the entire territory, as profitable and pleasant a field for the agriculturist as he could well desire. Useless deserts are to be found; but they occupy a relatively insignificant space. And even in them—those, at any rate, by the sea shore—the wattle is now being profitably cultivated for its tanning bark.

Victoria's crops are varied. She won distinction with potatoes in the earlier days of the century, when settlement first began, and potato farms are still at the top of the rural property market. Victorian wheat, again, is the finest in the world. It is certainly good enough for profitable cultivation; for though the Colony's average production is low—4.49 bushels to the acre in 1896-7—well cultivated land will produce heavy crops in good years, even from thirty-five to forty bushels; and the cheap methods of harvesting and cultivation in vogue allow a profit on light crops. The dry climate is certainly no serious drawback to the wheat farming. It may have its disadvantages, but it has its compensations, one of them being that the land is nearly always ready for the plough. Maize also (though local experts say that the Victorian farmers have

not yet mastered the mystery of its cultivation) does well, and should have an expanded future. A hundred bushels to the acre are often obtained, and the yield is as heavy as in any parts of the great maize-growing lands of North America. Certain districts also are well suited to oats. Favoured, well cultivated farms on the moister soils will yield from forty up to seventy bushels to the acre. The average for one year, 1896-7, was 16.28 bushels. Peas, again, grow well; and this is important, for pea crops help to refertilise soils which have become temporarily impoverished by a continuous run of grain crops.

All the world knows that Victoria has achieved an important place among the



From a photo by]

[W. H. Bennett.

VICTORIAN MOUNTED RIFLEMAN.

stock-breeding countries, and when it is remembered how favourable are the natural conditions, the fact is not to be wondered at; nor are we justified in putting any period upon the Colony's future development of stock rearing. Practically Victoria has no winter. Stock, therefore, can be pastured all the year round, and feeding is not a necessity. Feeding, however, pays. Foods can be obtained easily and cheaply, and the farmer who makes additions to the pasture diet of his animals reaps the benefit in more profitable produce.

The most remarkable development of rural industry in Victoria—indeed, it holds the record the world over—is in the recent outburst of dairying. Up to a few years ago, dairy operations were thought little of

* "Victoria and its Resources." *Land Settlement in Victoria.* By E. Jerome Dyer.

by the Victorian farmer. Butter was made—of a kind; of such a kind that 70 per cent. of it was sold for grease and soap manufacture. The change dated from the Melbourne Exhibition of 1888-9. Then, and immediately afterwards, strenuous efforts were made by a few men, aided largely by Government assistance of divers kinds, to teach Victorian farmers how to make butter, and to make it profitably. They learned the lesson with marvellous celerity. They not only began to make better butter, but they began to make it in a better way; they went in for the factory system, and largely on co-operative lines. Between 1892 and 1895 the manufacture of butter on farms declined from 10,860,844 lbs. to 8,876,892 lbs., but in the same period the quantity of factory-made butter was increased from 5,842,942 lbs. to 26,703,309 lbs. Similarly with cheese. Of farm cheese, in '92, there were made 2,492,730 lbs.; in '95, the total was down to 1,953,262 lbs., while the make of factory cheese rose from 818,282 lbs. to 2,199,869 lbs. Of course this production is largely in excess of local requirements. Victoria is developing the export business; and to good purpose. In 1890 she sent to England 8,708 cwts. of butter; by 1895 the consignments had grown to a total of 212,797 cwts. There was a check last year, when the total export to England was only 154,862 cwts.; but the returns for '97 show that the business is again on the upward grade. The progress has been so great, and looks so healthy for the future, that the Danes, who were recently by way of getting a monopoly of the British market, have become seriously alarmed; and, truly, their alarm has grounds. It is not easy for northern countries to maintain a regular supply during the winter months; those are just the summer butter-producing months in the Antipodes. Nor should the export be

confined to the British market. India and other eastern markets nearer of access might be tapped. But the Victorian dairyman must not confine his progressive efforts to butter and cheese; he should extend them to that great by-product of the dairy, bacon. At present, though encouraging signs are not wanting, it must be confessed that Victoria is lagging behind with the Pig.

But in the minds of some enthusiastic Victorians their province's industrial future lies mainly in viticulture. The area suitable to vineyards is computed at 15,000,000 acres; that is to say, an area as large as that of the vine areas of France, Spain, and the larger half of Italy combined. Compared with those older countries, the Victorian wine industry is in its toddling infancy; but the infant is shooting up rapidly. In 1861 Victoria made 47,568 gallons of wine; in '94 the production was 1,909,972 gallons.

It is late in the day to call attention to Victoria's magnificent pastoral resources, nor, in respect of the outlook, is it necessary; future development is less likely to run in that direction than in others. Not that any signs of restricted output are yet apparent, despite Argentinean competition. Between the years 1881 and 1894

the weight of the Victorian wool clip grew from 58,832,500 lbs. to 68,274,895 lbs. And though prices are less than formerly, Victorian merino wool still commands a price (8½d. a pound) only just beaten by that of the New Zealand cross-bred wool. Gold has done much for Victoria, the total yield since the early diggings being about a quarter of a billion sterling. Lastly, Victoria is, under the stimulating influence of protective duties, making good progress with manufactures. After deducting the value of the raw materials, it is estimated that Victoria's manufactures are worth about ten millions a year.



From a photo by]

[W. H. Bunnell.

CORPORAL PATTERSON (OF THE VICTORIAN MOUNTED RIFLES) WITH "DAISY BELL," THE REGIMENTAL KANGAROO PRESENTED TO THE QUEEN; AND SERGEANT COLLINS (OF THE WEST INDIA REGIMENT).

QUEENSLAND.

But if Victoria be worthy of these encomiums, what shall be said of Queensland, that great, wonderful territory which stretches away northward from New South Wales, through the Tropic of Capricorn, to the Torres Straits and the sea borders of New Guinea? Victoria's spacious acres of virgin soil are too many for her people. Yet Victoria, with nearly three times Queensland's population, has little more than an eighth of its area, and the land is equally fruitful. Queensland has in Brisbane a capital city of which any young country might be proud; it has flourishing towns dotted along its 2,000 miles of seaboard; it has settlements inland, connected with each other by railways or coach roads; but for the most part the shriek of the locomotive, the hammer of the miner, the lowing of cattle, the hum of human voices have as yet made few inroads into the stillness of the vast, lone land over which intrepid explorers have trailed their tiny cavalcades, fixing the first white man's gaze on its lakes and

forests, its deserts and its mountains. There are few places on the earth's surface which appeal to the imagination with such fascinating charm as does this portion of the British Empire; not even the African jungle

has taken its toll of brave human life more inexorably than the land wherein lies the dust of Leichardt, and of Burke, and of Wills. Truly, to every son of the English Empire, to every man who values courageous deeds, the spots whereon these men died must ever be holy ground. To-day, though Queensland remains, over the great part of its area, the same wild country which lured the early explorers, it is thanks to their

exertions, and to those of the early pioneers of Queensland's industry, that the unknown wilderness is gradually but surely retreating mile by mile, and the homes and fields of civilised Britons are covering the erstwhile waste places.

Queensland's industrial progress, measured by its wealth production, has been marvellous. During the earlier half of the century an unhappy penal settlement for English felons, it has, since its birth as a self-governing



BRISBANE.

Colony in December, 1851, become in certain industries a prominent competitor with the world's wealth producers. Its three leading industries are wool, gold, and sugar. In 1895 its production of wool was valued at £2,986,989; of gold, at £2,265,354; of sugar, at £671,454.

It is not likely that the pre-eminence of wool will be permanently maintained. By this I do not mean that the pastoral industry has reached its zenith, but only that other industries have a future of expansion before them which wool is not likely to share. So far the pastoralist has had no reason to fear that his industry is overcrowded. In the ten years, 1886 to 1895, the export of wool from Queensland increased from 28,700,546 lbs. to 85,278,493 lbs. True, 1892 and 1893 were even fatter years, but the figures generally show that so far, and on the whole, Queensland's pastoral industry is in a condition of healthy growth. But the price of wool is not what it was, and the problem of finding profitable use for the surplus sheep is beginning to press somewhat heavily. The old, wasteful system of boiling down for tallow will no longer answer, and Queensland's flocks can only continue to grow, profitably to their owners, by the aid of a large export trade in frozen mutton. This



Photo by [Bunnett.]

QUEENSLAND MOUNTED RIFLEMAN.

trade is being built up. The exports to England increased from 23,055 tons in 1892 to 43,225 tons in 1896; but, remembering New Zealand's tremendous lead, he would be a rash man who prophesied very great things for the future. Similarly with cattle. The number in the Colony is still increasing, but hopes of further great increases are damped by the same problem of the disposal of the cast; though, in the case of beef, Queensland may have a big future if scientific invention prove equal to preserving the meat on some other than the present freezing process, and if also England

will take some measures to put her Colony at an advantage with the United States in the meat market.

Victoria had its Ballarat; but Queensland has its Mount Morgan. Of all the gold mines in the world this is the most wonderful in richness. A little hill covering but five acres, and in ten years it has yielded more than one and a half million ounces of gold, worth more than six millions sterling. And how many Mount Morgans are there yet to be discovered? Queensland is claimed as the possessor of a larger gold area than any country in the world, and every year confirms the statement that, so far, the very surface only of this area has been scratched. Many failures have been recorded, many more remain to be recorded, in this speculative industry. Canoona, the first gold field exploited in Queensland, was a failure; but to the gold which will be drawn from Queensland's rocks in the future no man can set bounds. Even the failures in the past have been in many cases owing not to the absence of gold, but to the bad methods employed or the lack of perseverance in searching deep for the treasure. The days of the alluvial deposits seem to be about over; but this is but the beginning of gold mining. In the future the metal will be won deep down in the quartz, and won, not by the primitive methods employed in earlier days, but by the aid of advanced chemical science and mechanical invention. The management of many of the Queensland gold fields in the past has been stigmatised by the official report of the Government as "criminal mismanagement." Ore has been wastefully treated, expensive plant has been erected before ever the existence of gold at the spot was proved; so capital has been wasted and frittered away. A happier era of capable management seems now, however, to have dawned, and the triumphs of the past are likely to be far excelled in the future. And the output in the past makes a huge record. Between the Canoona rush in the early Fifties and the end of '96, 11,196,817 ounces of gold have been extracted from Queensland's soil, and their value, at £3 10s. an ounce, equals a sum of £39,188,859.

But, great as is Queensland's wealth of gold, she by no means bases her claim to mineral riches on that metal only. Silver abounds, and the recent decline in its output is attributable, not to the exhaustion of the ore, but to the unprofitableness of working under present low prices. The Queensland silver mines, like certain English economists,

wait hungrily for bi-metallism. Lowness of price also accounts in no small measure for the lack of progress in copper and tin mining. The existence of extensive deposits of these ores has been proved, and some of them have been, and are being, worked. Both copper and tin are hampered also by lack of transport facilities. The Queensland Government has vigorously pushed forward with railway construction, but much more is wanted, and the lack is largely responsible for the restricted output of tin and copper. So it is with coal. It is impossible to measure the vastness of Queensland's coal fields, and the Colony's Year Book may well be excused for describing them as "inexhaustible." Yet the only collieries sunk are necessarily those in proximity to railways, for of inland waterways there is an unfortunate lack. One cannot help wondering if the Queensland Government, in the course of its successful efforts to bring water out of the ground by artesian bores and irrigation schemes, could not also find it feasible to civilise its interior districts, and nurse great industries into life, by constructing artificial waterways. They are slower methods of communication, but they are cheaper than railways, and better adapted to the transport of bulky produce.

Nor do the minerals above enumerated tell the tale of Queensland's subterraneous riches. Besides others, such as antimony, bismuth, lead, iron, and manganese ore, there are the precious gems, and an enumeration of the varieties which have been found in the Colony is the enumeration of the contents of a jeweller's shop. Hitherto the greatest success has attended the search for opals. It is only recently, however, that the search has been undertaken in a systematic and scientific manner. Previously the work was pursued in a perfunctory and primitive fashion, chiefly by shepherds in their odd moments; but, judging by the output from better methods, there seems every likelihood that opals will, in the future, form an important part of Queensland's mineral wealth.

Chief among Queensland's agricultural industries, as I have said, is sugar. It has had a chequered history, but the bad times which succeeded the early good times have taught Queenslanders a wholesome lesson, and the experience gained is now putting the industry on a firm footing for large future developments. The mistake made in earlier days was the endeavour to blend cane-growing, cane-crushing, and sugar-refining. Now the first of these operations can be best

conducted by a number of men in a district, each working on a small or moderate scale. The latter processes demand working on a large scale, and this is becoming constantly more imperative with the transition from the rude and wasteful methods of former days to the scientific and economical methods of to-day. These facts now seem to be well appreciated, and Queensland sugar should have a big future. Already the Colony makes nearly all her own sugar, and the export is increasing. In 1895, 1,344,120 cwts. were sent away. This figure shows pretty rapid progress for an infant industry, for the first pound of Queensland sugar was not made until 1862. Sugar cane growing in Queensland offers the farmer as good an opening as any industry he could embark on, the average money yield working out to about £16 an acre. Neighbourhood to a factory is, of course, a necessity; and the Queensland Government embarked on a statesmanlike course when, to encourage sugar factories, it passed the Sugar Works Guarantee Act of 1893, under which the Government may guarantee the interest and principal of debentures issued by sugar-making companies. Here is a great opportunity for co-operation. The farmers in cane-growing districts should unite to run their own factories.

The labour problem crops up in a special form in connection with Queensland sugar-growing. The employment of Kanaka labourers in the fields has been found to be practically inevitable, but objections have been taken, both on moral and economic grounds. The white labourers' objection has been satisfactorily disposed of; the moral objection may be very much mitigated if the Government will ordain that full facilities shall be provided for taking back to their native islands, at the end of their three years' contract, those Kanakas who desire to return.

Of the many other branches of field production which Queensland offers there is no room to speak. But space must be found for a few words on the subject of coffee. Practical experiments have demonstrated the suitability of Queensland's northern coast land to coffee plantations. While everything else has been falling, coffee has risen by over 30 per cent. since the early Eighties. Here, then, is a grand field for enterprise, unhampered by an overstocked market. At present, out of the total yearly output of 500,000 tons, Queensland contributes rather less than one ton.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

And when Queensland has become exhausted there will remain for settlement that great country to the west and south-west of it, named (somewhat inaptly) the Province of South Australia. This Colony, with the Northern Territory (which was added to it in '63) comprises a total area of 578,361,600 acres; a region, that is to say, more than ten times as large as Great Britain. Not all these acres are meet for the plough. In the interior of the country are mountains, salt lakes, and deserts—the Central Australian Desert—which would afford neither food for man nor pasturage for beasts. But when these unprofitable districts are subtracted, how much remains! In the coastal region of the south, agriculturists are tilling the soil; more sparsely, cultivators are to be found dotted about the tropical lands of the extreme north; pastoralists are tending



sheep in the interior of South Australia; but the husbandry of half a century has scarce touched the fringe of South Australia's resources. Combining

the populations of South Australia proper and of the Northern Territory, we only reach to a total of about 357,400 souls; and more than a third of this number have elected to pen themselves within the capital city of Adelaide. It has always been thus. Though South Australia was started as essentially an agricultural Colony, the immigrants could hardly be persuaded to go into the land and possess it, and, in the early days, Colonel Gawler had to take forcible measures to induce the newcomers to leave the city and take up their residence on their properties.

In 1851 (the year in which South Australia was born as, in part, a self-governing Colony) slow-growing agriculture received another check. Gold had been found in Victoria, and "Ballarat" was the cry, even in South Australia. Men, women and children rushed across the border to the diggings, tramping 500 miles, in some cases, where they could not afford an easier

method of travel, and the Colony seemed likely to be broken up ere it was fairly launched into life. Happily the fever soon subsided; a year afterwards the people began to return to their homes, and Victorian ex-diggers came with them. Those who had money wanted to settle down in rural homes; those who had not been successful were willing to try the slower process of wealth accumulation which agricultural industry afforded. From that date onwards the tilling of South Australia's soil has progressed steadily, if slowly. 'Tis a pity the progress has not been more rapid; for many profitable industries are in foreign hands which might otherwise be conducted under the Union Jack. South Australia's wheat, for example, takes high rank in respect to quality; yet only about one and a half million acres are under cultivation, and this despite the fact that wheat is the favourite crop with South Australian farmers. Perhaps, however, it is not wise to press the cultivation of wheat in South Australia. The yield per acre is not high, being lower than that of the other Australasian Colonies; and there are many other products to which the climate and soil are peculiarly fitted which might be grown to greater profit.

The vine is a conspicuous instance. The price of grapes averages from about £3 10s. to £4 5s. a ton, and the profit thus yielded is greater than the wheat farmer can realise. Viticulture, indeed, is especially an industry which South Australians should cultivate with assiduity. From their vines can be produced a specially good wine, and South Australian vineyards are free from the ravages of phylloxera and most of the other vine diseases. Yet, in spite of the deservedly high reputation South Australian wines bear, the yearly output is only about three-quarters of a million gallons. But the Government takes an active interest in the industry, and has appointed a viticultural expert to give vine growers sadly-needed advice and assistance, and has besides distributed vine cuttings gratis. With all these advantages, therefore, it may fairly be hoped that ere long South Australian wines will enter into serious competition with the products of Californian and European vineyards. Nor need the grape cultivator of South Australia confine himself to wine production or table grapes; he is equally capable of supplying the raisin and currant market. The Adelaide plains are particularly adapted to the sun drying of all fruits. At present the dried fruit industry is only just born.

But the fruit of the vine is but one of the many products which await the South Australian husbandman. Almonds can be easily grown; so easily, and with such fecundity, that on almost any soil the trees will thrive with little more labour on the grower's part than trenching the land around them; and the expense and trouble necessary for collecting the produce is correspondingly small. Yet there are only about 112,000 almond trees in the Colony. England receives very few almonds from South Australia—only 750 cwts. from all her Possessions, while from foreign countries she took last year 147,168 cwts. Surely here is an enticing industry for men in search of a profitable rural occupation. But possibilities in other directions are equally neglected. Oranges are grown, but less than 70,000 trees have been planted; figs thrive splendidly, but the industry is neglected. So with olives; there are only about 46,000 trees, and only about 2,300 gallons of oil made in the year; yet the cultivation and manufacture, so far as they are practised, are a marked success.

Leaving fruit, the same remarks as to potentialities and their neglect apply to such other products as hops, capers, opium, perfumes, and castor oil. Taking only the last, the castor oil plant will grow anywhere, on land where nothing else will grow; it is only men to manufacture it who are wanting. More attention has been paid in recent years to the cultivation of the wattle bark for tanning; and this is not remarkable, for the price in recent years has been good, and the cultivation is cheap and easy.

Concerning South Australia's mineral wealth, there is much for the prophet to say. Up to the present, however, South Australia, if we except her copper mines—and of copper the Colony contains vast wealth—has not achieved greatly; but enough has been done in the way of experiment and exploration to convince experts that the Colony, if properly worked, would produce stores of gold, and silver, and tin, and other minerals in a measure not unworthy of her sisters. To mention one of the humbler deposits, immense stores of blue lias limestone of excellent quality have been discovered. Now, England's cement industry is in its de-

cadence—Germany is killing it. Why should not South Australia retort in kind upon Germany?

Of the Northern Territory I have left myself little space to speak. Yet, on the score of extent, it should command a foremost place, for it is nearly half as big again as South Australia proper. At present, however, its settlement is so sparse as hardly to deserve the name. The population of this vast region is less than 5,000, and they are mostly Chinamen. Yet the grand future which is opening out before North Queensland should be shared by the Northern Territory of South Australia. Like North Queensland, the territory is admirably adapted for sugar, coffee, tobacco, rice, and cotton plantations, for the cultivation of indigo and maize. Jute or sun-hemp grows wild in the territory, and points the way to a very remunerative industry, if the necessary machinery were imported. On the coast there is a trade (conducted chiefly by Malays) in *bêche-de-mer*, and the industry could, doubtless, be extended. And lastly, here, as in the rest of Australia, indications of gold and other mineral wealth are apparent. The climate is tropical, but that is no absolute deterrent, especially as it is said to be more pleasant and healthful than that of Java, and India, and other equatorial lands in which Englishmen find life by no means insupportable.



Photo by]

[Bunnett.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MOUNTED RIFLEMAN.