AN ACCOUNT
of the
COLONY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

FREDERICK SINNETT

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Dedication

This electronic version of “An Account of the Colony of South Australia” is dedicated to the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and the Peramangk people of the Adelaide Hills who had lived on and cherished their lands for some thousands of years before the arrival of Governor Hindmarsh and the first settlers on board the Buffalo.

The Kaurna and Peramangk people bore the brunt of the effects of European settlement in South Australia and subsequently sustained massive losses from small pox and other diseases introduced by Europeans. They were displaced from their lands and became refugees in their own country.

At the time of settlement there were some 30 different aboriginal language groups spread across what is now South Australia from the Far North to the South East and from the Head of the Great Australian Bight in the west to the Murraylands in the east. All these groups were ultimately affected by European settlement in various degrees, with many of them being displaced from their lands and losing their group structure and culture.

These are the sad truths that all South Australians must continue to remember and acknowledge as part of their history.

Editor.

Acknowledgements

A facsimile edition of 500 numbered copies of AN ACCOUNT OF THE COLONY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA 1862 was printed, bound and published by AUSTAPRINT, 11 Elm Street, South Australia, 5086. It was from one of these copies, held by the Mitcham library of South Australia, that I have created the first electronic edition suitable for reading on an e-reader in an epub or mobi format. While pdf versions have been available from the State Library of Victoria and elsewhere for some time they are only digital facsimiles so cannot be read conveniently on an e-reader with all the advantages inherent in that technology.

I am grateful to the developers and providers of the optical character recognition (OCR) software, tesseract-ocr, that provides relatively easy conversion of text from the printed page to a Word document; and to Daryl Stevenson for his helpful advice in relation to tesseract.

I am also grateful for the assistance provided by Paul Christopher with proof-reading and corrections and in particular for his assiduous attention to detail in reproducing the many tables, that unfortunately, cannot be readily converted with the current OCR software.

Editor.

Variations from the Original

In general I have tried to retain the design, layout and style of the original wherever possible so as to provide maximum authenticity, even though in some instances this may mean departures from our modern spelling and terminology etc. However some variations from the original were found necessary and these are listed below:

1. The Cover design is very close to the original design but omits the white “lace” border between the black margin and the grey of the cover.
2. The original book included a fold-out map of South Australia. This has been excluded from this electronic edition for obvious technical reasons.
3. The page numbers differ slightly from the original and as a consequence it was thought best to delete the page numbers referred to in the Contents of each chapter.
4. The table on page 34 (Rates of Wages) and on page 36 (Prices of Food) of the original were both too densely packed to reproduce for epub and mobi e-reader versions, but they are available in the pdf version and at our website www.strongandbold.com under the title of this book.

Editor.

About the Author

Frederick Sinnett 1830-66 [1] was only 32 years of age when he wrote this Account of the Colony of South Australia. He was a man of many talents having been a surveyor, engineer, journalist, publisher, philosopher and entrepreneur before being asked to write the Account. At the time of writing he was the founding publisher of the *Daily Telegraph*, Adelaide's first evening newspaper. Notwithstanding his other duties he completed the task in 6 weeks. Sadly only 4 years later he died in Melbourne in 1866 from tuberculosis, a disease from which he had suffered since before leaving England in 1849. However his refreshingly candid account of the first 26 years of the South Australian colony deserves to be remembered, not only for its clarity and honesty, but also as a record of the remarkable achievements of those who strived to build a new society of which all South Australians can be proud.

Editor.

1. Australian Dictionary of Biography. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sinnett-frederick-4588.

AN ACCOUNT

OF

THE COLONY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PREPARED FOR

DISTRIBUTION AT THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1862

BY FREDERICK SINNETT.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT.

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1862.

PREFACE

A SUGGESTION having been made to the Government of South Australia that a brief reliable account of this Colony would be a contribution that might be desirably and advantageously made to the Great Exhibition of 1862, the duty of preparing this small volume was confided to myself. While the Government reserved, and have exercised, a certain right of supervision (which it was only just that they should possess, as the work was to be published under authority), it was a matter of understanding, that the official editorship should not extend so far as to destroy the author's right to express individual opinions, and to deal with the subjects he had to write about, according to his own method and judgement. Hence, while some few passages I had written have been excised, it is not to be understood that the Government endorses every opinion herein expressed – but merely avouches the general truthfulness of my account; and, for my own part, matters likely to involve conflict of opinion have been as much as possible avoided. The semi-official nature of the publication has, however, been of this advantage to its fullness and accuracy, that the resources of the Government departments have been freely thrown open to me for information; and, indeed, I have gratefully to acknowledge that in the public offices, as well as among private societies and individuals, I have, with few exceptions, met with the most cordial readiness to afford me all the assistance I asked for.

I have to plead, in extenuation of such shortcomings as may be detected – but which I shall not be so impolite as to point out by anticipation – that I was desired to complete my work in time for transmission by the mail preceding the one that actually carries it home. Had I known that I should have had nine weeks instead of five in which to procure and arrange my materials, I

believe I should have been able to digest them better than I have done. But almost at the last moment it was found impossible to complete the valuable accompanying map in time for the February mail. The majority of these pages were then already in type, and as there seemed to be no opportunity for material improvement, except by complete reconstruction and rewriting, I let well, or ill, alone, and the book goes to England with most of its original faults of hurried arrangement upon its head.

Some discussion has been raised here since it was known that the present work was in preparation, as to whether it should be printed in Adelaide or London. Most of the opinions which have been expressed have been in favour of the course that has been adopted – that it should be printed here. The main argument of those who have held these opinions was, that it would not tell well for the Colony that we should seem to require external aid for the creditable issue of a little book like this. I can hardly think, however, that any one will suppose the decision arrived at to have been consequent upon our poverty as to typographical means. One edition has been struck off here for local use, and simple motives of convenience and economy have, I believe, determined that the large number intended to be issued in England should be printed there. Fortunately for myself, at all events, I have not been consulted upon this momentous question.

Finally, I have only to say that I have done my very best to avoid any kind of fictitious coloring, and I have written as impartially as I would have written to my own brother, if he had asked me for facts about the Colony, and the opportunities it offered for new-comers or for investment. No doubt, when what I have written has passed through the alembic of criticism, some residuum of error will be discovered; but I am quite sure that there has been no deliberate adulteration. The present account of

this Colony is the best I could give, at somewhat short notice and within limited space, after having had the advantage of twelve years' residence and extensive travel in Australia, and with the aid of cordial assistance – official and otherwise.

Adelaide, March 8th, 1862.

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CHAPTER I. – HISTORY OF THE COLONY.

EARLY EXPLORATIONS.

About five and thirty years since, the inhabitants of the only Australian Colony then in existence – New South Wales – began to push out exploring parties with considerable vigour. For a quarter of a century after that penal settlement, better known for many years as Botany Bay, had been established, an event which occurred in 1788, the inhabitants were confined within a very small area bounded by the Blue Mountains – a sharply-ridged chain of hills, running in a northerly and southerly direction, and commencing about fifty miles to the westward of Sydney. But it gradually came to be understood that Australia could be turned to larger uses than to afford, at its south-eastern corner, a little nook on which to establish a great English prison. The great pastoral resources of the country were in course of development, Mr. John McArthur's introduction of Merino sheep having proved a decided commercial success, and having induced a considerable number of settlers to embark in sheep farming, which has since proved, upon the whole, the most profitable pursuit that has been carried on in Australia. The increase of the flocks rendered an extension of territory occupied for pastoral purposes imperatively necessary. So early as 1813, indeed, Mr. Evans had crossed the Blue Mountains, and in 1816, and 1823, Mr. Oxley, the then Surveyor-General of New South Wales, conducted two expeditions, one in the direction of Bathurst Plains, and the other in the neighbourhood of Moreton Bay. Messrs. Hovell and Hume, in 1826, reached the sea-coast of what is now the Colony of Victoria; and in the following year, Mr. Allan Cunningham discovered Darling Downs, and subsequently associated his name with fresh discoveries in the direction of Moreton Bay. In 1828-9, Capt. Sturt conducted an expedition along the banks of the Macquarie, and made the important discovery of the River Darling. On his return from this

expedition, it was generally believed that the Darling as well as the Lachlan, the Murrumbidgee, and other streams having a westerly course, emptied themselves into an inland sea; and in 1831, Capt. Sturt was again dispatched into the interior, with the view of verifying this hypothesis. He descended the Murrumbidgee to its junction with a large river, which he named the Murray, and of which, it was soon afterwards ascertained the Lachlan and Darling and many other streams were tributaries.

FOUNDATION OF THE COLONY

Few modern explorers have had the privilege of conducting an expedition more interesting in its progress and more important in its results than Capt. Sturt's boat voyage down the Murrumbidgee and Murray in 1831. He did not, of course, escape hardship and suffering, but equally, of course, he was spared the most trying of all wants in most Australian exploring expeditions – the want of water – and anyone who has ever either experienced or imagined the excitement of travelling in unexplored regions, may conjecture the sense of pleasurable exultation with which Capt. Sturt and his companions streamed, day after day, and week after week, down the current of a noble river, utterly uncertain as to what each day would disclose: but each day also becoming more and more satisfied as to the magnitude of the discovery they had been fortunate enough to make.

They were, indeed, exposed to a severe disappointment at the close of their downward voyage. In south latitude 34 degrees and east longitude 139 degrees 30 minutes is situated the "Great Bend" of the Murray, which, after a long westerly course, turns there, almost at right-angles, to the south. As this course proved continuous, the hypothesis that the Murray would be found to lead to an inland sea was exchanged for the hope that it would empty itself into the Southern Ocean, through a sea-mouth available for commerce; instead of which, its waters were found to disperse themselves over a large lake, full of shoals. A sea-mouth, from the Lake, has since been discovered indeed, and steam-boats, of moderate draught of water, now trade regularly in and out of the Murray; but when Capt. Sturt first saw Lake Alexandrina, as he named it, he imagined that there was no available sea-entrance, and under that dispiriting belief, slowly and laboriously reascended the river and returned to Sydney.

The results of this journey, however, the accounts that Capt. Flinders had given of the Gulf St. Vincent and Spencer's gulf, and the examination of the country between the Murray and the former Gulf (in the course of which, Capt. Barker, lost his life in the year 1831), were sufficiently important to induce an influential English association to select this part of Australia as the place at which to found a settlement on certain principles of colonization, then comparatively new; but which have since been sanctioned by the ablest political economists, and the practical value of which has been confirmed by the success of the Colony so founded – the Colony of South Australia.

THE WAKEFIELD SYSTEM

This system is generally known as the "Wakefield System", the fundamental principle being that the land should be gradually disposed of in blocks of moderate size, and at what Mr. Wakefield called "A sufficient price", the proceeds to be employed in introducing fresh emigrants; thus, as the introduction of more people caused a demand for more land, the sale of that land enables an additional population to be introduced, and so on indefinitely. Owing to some disasters that overtook South Australia during the first years of its existence as a Colony, the Wakefield system fell into disrespect among some careless thinkers, but the system was in reality in no way responsible for the evils which occurred, and which were due to the mismanagement of the Colonization commissioners, to the want of experience of the large body of Colonists who arrived in the first instance, to a "mania" for land gambling which set in (amid which land orders of all kinds were sold on long credit at prices certain to ruin the last purchaser), and to various other causes. But the essential principles of Mr. Wakefield's scheme have not only been maintained here, with occasional intermissions, to the present time, but have been applied with marked success in Victoria, New Zealand, and other Colonies.

In the present condition of Western Australia we have a lamentable example of the old system, which found favour before Mr. Wakefield's theories were propounded. In that unfortunate Province immense tracts of land were given away to the early settlers, but as there was no self-supporting fund with which to introduce labour, the land remained barren

and worthless; the owners, though nominally gentlemen of great landed estates, could neither let, nor use, nor sell their broad acres, though naturally continuing to cling to them, in a hope, like that of Mr. Micawber, that something would eventually "turn up" to give them value. After a long course of ill success, Western Australia finally reached a depth, from the midst of which she implored to be converted into a penal settlement. This petition was granted in 1849, and while the other Colonies of Australia are rapidly rising in wealth and population, the Swan River Settlement is, in a great measure, dependent upon the expenditure of British public money upon the penal establishments. Had the fundamental principle of Wakefield's system been wisely applied in the foundation of Western Australia it is probable that her present position would have been a very different one.

Adopting Mr. Wakefield's principle as the fundamental one upon which this Colony was to be established, an attempt was made in 1831 to obtain a charter for a company, by which South Australia was to have been "planted", to quote the words of Colonel Torrens, "after the model of the British settlements planted in North America in the seventeenth century". But this scheme of a chartered company broke down, and little more was done in the matter till 1834, when an Act (IV. & V. W. IV. C. XCV.) was passed, appointing a commission to manage the proposed work of colonization, and settling the principles upon which it was to be carried out. Under this Act it was provided that the proceeds of the land fund should be devoted to emigration, that no convicts should ever be sent to South Australia, and that a Constitution should be granted to the new Colony as soon as its population reached 50,000. The functions of the Commissioners, and of other officers, were also fixed by this Act, and the subsequent disasters which overtook the Colony have been deemed by high authorities to have been largely consequent upon the uncertain and divided responsibilities of its early officers. Mr. Wakefield, in giving evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons, spoke of the Act as having "relieved everybody of responsibility to anybody". Under this Statute, however, the Colony was actually founded and settled, and South Australia soon after ceased to be a mere name upon prospect –an abstract idea to be worked upon at public meetings – a suggestion to be drummed by deputations into the reluctant heads of Ministers and Under-Secretaries –

and became a concrete reality, a living community upon the face of the earth.

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COMMISSIONERS

For some time, however, great difficulties beset the work of South Australian colonization. The knowledge of the country possessed in England at the time the first ships were dispatched was of the vaguest and most speculative character. Capt. Sturt had seen the Murray, and had surmised that there was good land between that river and St. Vincent's Gulf. Capt. Barker's party had, to a small extent, confirmed the rumour. There were the coast surveys of Flinders to go by, and there were the allegations of a few sealers on Kangaroo Island, who had visited the main land, that it was fit for habitation and agriculture. It also appears that some Capt. Jones, of whom I find no direct records, had reported a harbor, which turned out to have no existence. The first vessels which arrived (in 1836), were dispatched by the South Australian Company, a still existing and flourishing corporation, founded by Mr. Angas, who was very actively concerned in the foundation of the colony, in which he now resides, and who transferred to the Company a large amount of "Land Orders", or rights of selection of land in the colony, which the Commissioners had, in accordance with the provisions of their Act, disposed of for cash in London. So little did the Commissioners, or the Company, or indeed anybody, know about this part of Australia when its colonization began, that the Company's ships went to Nepean Bay, in Kangaroo Island, and the first rights of selection were exercised there.

KANGAROO ISLAND – COLONEL LIGHT

The fact that there was a tolerable harbor was probably what led to this strange selection; for the land, with the exception of a few acres, was covered with a dense scrub. The "town" of Kingscote – the oldest in South Australia – has, accordingly, not been startlingly progressive. I was there about a year ago, and was never more at a loss than to discover what induced the very few people I saw to live there. The place consists of about half-a-dozen houses, chiefly occupied by the descendants and connections of one old gentleman, who was among the first to land there in 1836, and who still lives there in patriarchal simplicity. The inhabitants live

principally on the produce of their gardens, on fish, and on wallaby flesh. These miniature kangaroos, about the size of hares, abound in the scrub, and are certainly excellent food. But it was difficult to guess what exportable articles Nepean Bay could produce in exchange even for the very limited supply of clothes, spirits, groceries, and tobacco, which sufficed for the modest wants of its score or so of inhabitants.

To have hit Kangaroo Island was, indeed, about the worst shot the first settlers could have made. The greater part of the island is covered with dense scrub, in which several persons have lost their lives—~as, when once entangled in it, it is not only difficult to find, but even to force, one's way through the thick-set branches. Fresh water is extremely scarce, and the patches of available country of insignificant extent. At the last census (1861), the population of the entire island, which is about eighty miles long and twenty broad, was found to be 175.

On the 20th of August, 1836, Colonel Light, the first Surveyor-General, arrived in Nepean Bay, in the *Rapid*, and speedily ascertained the total unfitness of that site for the future capital. Colonel Light continued, however, to survey and examine Nepean Bay and its neighborhood till the 7th of September, when he sailed, in the *Rapid*, for Gulf St. Vincent, and, the following day, landed at the mouth of "a fine stream of fresh water." He says, in his journal, "the soil was rich beyond description. My hopes were now raised to a pitch I cannot describe. I walked up one of the hills, and was delighted to find that, as far as I could see all around, there was an appearance of fertility, and a total absence of those wastes and barren spots which the accounts I had received in England had led me to expect."

He remained here for some days, surveying and examining the country as far as Yankalilla, and was delighted with the results of his investigation. He then sailed up the Gulf again, and discovered the entrance to what is with doubtful propriety called the "river," at Port Adelaide. In rainy weather, a considerable quantity of fresh water forces its way into the channel, some distance above the present port; but, in summer, the fresh water stream is almost lost, and the river becomes simply an inlet from the gulf. Colonel Light was, however, delighted with the fine anchorage, and the

beautiful appearance of the country, and very speedily came to the conclusion that in this neighborhood would be the proper place for the head-quarters of the settlement.

In obedience to his instructions, however, he soon afterwards sailed for Port Lincoln, leaving Mr. Kingston, Mr. Finniss, and other members of the survey party to carry on a more minute examination of the eastern shore of the gulf. Colonel Light's opinion of Port Lincoln, however, was very unfavorable, and he soon returned to Holdfast Bay—an anchorage a few miles to the south of the entrance to the port, and where our most popular watering-place, Glenelg, now stands.

EARLY QUARRELS AND EARLY GOVERNORS

On the 28th of December, 1836-- a quarter of a century and a few months ago—Captain Hindmarsh, the first Governor of South Australia, arrived with a staff of officers, and a few immigrants, in Holdfast Bay, and the Colony was then proclaimed. In the meantime, other vessels had come in, and the disappointment felt was very great at the fact that no land had been surveyed in blocks, no town laid out, nor even the site of the intended capital selected. The consequence was, that the new colonists began quarrelling among themselves with the utmost promptitude and acrimony.

Poor Colonel Light was by many of them held blameable in the highest degree, and he was equally abused for everything that he did, and for everything that he left undone. I have before me a pamphlet which he published in 1839, detailing the proceedings of this period, and it is somewhat amusing to remark now how many prosperous gentlemen, whom one now may see shaking hands in Adelaide streets, and having a word or two about old times, hated and reviled, and thwarted, and maligned one another at the outset. Perhaps they deemed it "safest to begin with a little aversion." Poor Colonel Light, however, did not live into the period of reconciliation, but died in October, 1839. At his death, the colonists endeavored to atone for their hostility to him when living by erecting to his memory a small monument, not quite so ugly as might have been expected, in one of the city squares which bears his name.

Finally, Adelaide was laid out where it now stands—~on the banks of the Torrens, about seven miles from the Port, at which place a number of allotments were also marked off for commercial purposes.

The Home authorities do not seem to have seen the necessity for all the initiatory wrangling I have alluded to, and, in 1838, Captain Hindmarsh was superseded by Colonel Gawler, and Mr. Fisher (now Sir James Fisher, President of the Legislative Council), removed from his post as Resident Commissioner. His duties were vested in the new Governor, who was thus placed in a somewhat anomalous position—owing responsibility, as Governor, to the King of England, and, as Lands Commissioner to the South Australian Commissioners in London, who themselves seem to have been responsible to nobody.

If it appeared necessary to recall Captain Hindmarsh in a hurry, it soon appeared still more necessary to recall Colonel Gawler in red-hot haste. On his arrival in Adelaide he found the affairs of the Colony in great confusion; the wealthier, or reputed wealthier members of the community had not improved their position by gambling in land orders and by inveterate quarrels, and the laboring classes were leaving the Province in considerable numbers. His position, and that of the Colony, were so critical at the time, that it might be unjust to Colonel Gawler to allege that he acted otherwise than rightly; but he adopted a course that nothing but extreme and exceptional circumstances could justify. He commenced a series of public works (roads, bridges, &c.), which have since indeed proved useful, and not a bad investment of public capital for the most part; but what was chiefly contemplated in undertaking them was, remunerative employment for the labouring class, and the administration of a sort of financial tonic to the depressed men of business.

COLONEL GAWLER'S OVER DRAFTS.

The circumstances of the case were, however, transitory and exceptional, and, so far, Governor Gawler might have been justified in pursuing an exceptional course; but the worst of it was, that the works he undertook he had neither adequate money nor credit to pay for. Prior to his arrival in 1838, indeed, the accounts of the Colony had got into great confusion—the

salaries of the public officers were unpaid—the surveys were at a standstill—the treasury was empty—and the full amount for which the Colony was entitled to draw upon the Commissioners in London during the year, had been drawn for during the first six months; hence it clearly became absolutely necessary that the new Governor should overdraw his account, and he seems to have thoroughly recognised the truth of the proverb—-" That what is worth doing is worth doing well."

According to the report of a Committee of the British House of Commons, appointed in February, 1841, to inquire into the affairs of this Colony, "the bills drawn in 1838 amounted to £18,121; during 1839, to more than £44,000; and during 1840 (Governor Gawler's year), to upwards of £123,000." This illustration of "progressive development" was one for which the Commissioners were unprepared. In August, 1840, it became evident to them that the whole amount of the original loan (£200,000) which they were empowered to raise was quite inadequate to meet the demands upon it, and they refused to accept any more bills——in short, " stopped payment." Since the preceding May they had accepted bills amounting to £71,597, which had been drawn by the authority of Colonel Gawler. Between the date of the stoppage and the following February, bills to the amount of £69,247 were presented and dishonored, and many more bills were known to be drawn though still unpresented. At this day it may seem almost absurd that the Colony should have been in difficulties for amounts which would make but a small appearance in the books of many a private Adelaide trader of 1861; but South Australia did only a very small business in the year 1840, and the dishonour of Colonel Gawler's drafts was ruinous to many, though the bills were subsequently all paid, and the credit of the Colony in so far redeemed.

GOVERNOR GREY – THE BURRA MINE

Colonel Gawler's successor in the Government of South Australia was Captain, now Sir George, Grey, the present Governor of New Zealand, and recently the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. He arrived in May, 1841, and found that the extent of the Colony's indebtedness was greater than he had anticipated. While the revenue was only £30,000 a year, the annual

expenditure had reached the amount of £150,000, and a public debt of £300,000 had been contracted. He used the pruning knife unsparingly, and succeeded in reducing the annual expenditure below £30,000, and he employed the surplus revenue in reducing the debt.

In the meantime, our good Mother Country, with not a little of that kind of admonition which prodigal sons must be content to put up with when being helped out of their scrapes, came to our assistance. The British Parliament voted £155,000 towards the payment of our liabilities, and the remainder was funded and secured on the resources of the Province. The whole has long, since been paid off.

During Captain Grey's administration the Colony made great advances. The colonists began to understand the Colony and their own relations to it. Living upon their capital, and selling land orders to one another, had for some time ceased to be considered the true method by which the members of a community become wealthy; although, in later years, a somewhat similar though less extravagant scene has been re-enacted here with mining scrip. The cultivation of farms and gardens, and the rearing of stock (of which great numbers were now constantly arriving overland), absorbed in a profitable manner the attention of a large section of the inhabitants;
although then, as always in all Australian Colonies, the urban distributing class continued to be injuriously large as compared with the rural and producing class.

Probably, however, South Australia would have advanced with much more slow and gradual steps, had it not been for the discovery of the Burra Mines. After the gold discoveries in California and in the Colonies adjacent to this, it would take a very great deal of copper to astonish the world; but public expectation in matters metallic was more moderate in the year 1845. In another part of this pamphlet I have given fuller particulars about the Burra Mine, and need here only say that it speedily became world-famous -- that it converted several colonists in humble circumstances into very wealthy men; that it afforded profitable employment to a great deal of capital and labor; that it attracted many new comers of all classes to our shores; and gave needed stimulant to the commercial prosperity of the place.

All this, however, was not without a drawback. The search for mineral wealth was naturally more keen after such a treasure had been found, and there was a proneness amongst people to buy mining shares when they saw £5 investments yielding £25 a-year. Many mineral discoveries were made, and Companies were formed, and prospectuses were issued; and pretty nearly every prospectus had another Burra to recommend. There was a natural collapse and reaction; a ruinous loss to too credulous speculators; and an abandonment of operations in mines of which many will, no doubt, yet prove of great value. Of all the mines started between that time and this, valuable as many of them will no doubt yet prove, I believe I am right in saying that until the last three or four years none has continued to be steadily and profitably worked except the Burra and the Kapunda. The latter, though far inferior to the Burra, has yielded handsome returns, has given extensive and profitable employment to capital and labor, and has gathered in its neighborhood a prosperous inland town, rendered of extra importance at the present moment as being the farthest point to the north as yet accessible by railway from Adelaide.

MINING SPECULATIONS.—COLONEL ROBE

From Captain Grey's time to the present day the most important history of South Australia has been that of its industrial progress. The successive changes in its constitution, will be found briefly detailed in a separate section. But before closing this rapid survey of our past, one or two circumstances will need to be referred to.

Colonel Robe who succeeded Capt. Grey as Governor in October, 1845, aroused a great deal of animosity by enacting measures which the large power then possessed by the Governor enabled him to do -- the one imposing a royalty on all minerals raised in the Province, and the other providing for state endowment for religious services. Both of these measures were strenuously resisted—the first on the ground that it was in direct violation of the terms on which purchasers of land had acquired the fee simple to their properties; and the second, on the ground that it was at variance with the fundamental principles on which the Colony was

understood to be founded, and which did not recognize it as part of the business of the State to interfere with the religion of the inhabitants by taxation or otherwise. Whether it was that an indiscriminate endowment of all the recognized forms of religious belief was not felt to be so severe an infringement of personal rights as the imposition of a royalty upon minerals, it is not for me to determine, but the resistance made to the proposed royalties was so strenuous, that that had to be abandoned at once. Indiscriminate aid to the various recognized forms of religious belief endured, however, until a representative legislature was established, when all State aid was abandoned.

Colonel Robe's successor was Sir Henry Young, during whose occupation of power, the Colony underwent many important changes. Personally, his name is more identified with the interest he took in promoting the navigation of the Murray, than with anything else; for during his presidency a partially representative legislature came into being, and the actual power of the Governor became greatly curtailed. Public acts of importance could no longer be spoken of as the acts of the Governor. His power became principally negative, or of that indirect kind which a man in such a position may bring to bear by influencing the opinions and conduct of his nominal advisers, and those with whom he is in the habit of associating.

SIR HENRY YOUNG.—THE GOLD DISCOVERIES.

It was during Sir Henry Young's tenure of office that the Australian Colonies were convulsed by the great discoveries of gold which followed so fast upon one another in New South Wales and Victoria. To these I need only refer here in so far as they affected South Australia; and, for a time, it appeared to many persons as if this Colony must be absolutely ruined. Shipload after shipload of male emigrants continued to leave the Port during many consecutive months, while thousands more walked or drove their teams overland. The little trodden overland route became the scene of active traffic—the principal camping places being every night lighted up by the numerous camp fires of parties of travellers. At the same time that the men went the money went with them; the banks were drained of coin, and trade practically ceased. Scores of shops were closed, because

the tradesmen had followed their customers to the diggings. The streets seemed to contain nothing but women; and strong fears were entertained that there would be no harvest sown, and that allured by the more glittering attractions of the gold Colony, the small landed proprietors, who formed so important a section of our society, would permanently remain away selling their land here for whatever trifle it would fetch. These fears proved groundless, and the great bulk of the South Australian diggers returned to their homesteads, bringing their gold with them, and becoming grain producers for the gold-diggers of the neighboring Colonies.

THE BULLION ACT—SIR R. G. MACDONNELL.

The passing of the Bullion Act, as it was called, helped greatly in bringing about this result, though the Act had many censurers then and since, who alleged that it was utterly at variance with those principles of good government which were deducible from the laws of political economy. The essential provisions of the Act (which was only to be in force for one year) were that the banks were permitted to pay their notes in assayed gold at the rate of £3 11s. per oz. of standard purity, and that notes issued against bullion valued at that rate were made legal tender except at the banks themselves. Now, as gold was at that time not selling for more than £2 15s. in Melbourne, it was alleged with some truth that our one pound notes were a depreciated currency, and that their nominal was beyond their real value. As a corollary it might be said that creditors were defrauded by law when they were compelled to receive payment in gold (or equivalent notes) at the rate of £3 11s., for which they could only obtain £2 15s. worth of sterling coin. On the other hand, it must be remembered that natural causes had suddenly enhanced the value of the coined sovereign. For £2 15s. in Melbourne you could buy gold worth nearly £4 in London (being above standard purity). In effect, the creditor got more gold for his debt than he would have done had he been paid in sovereigns; and it was only the large quantity of uncoined gold raised in Australia, and the distance it had to be sent to be converted into coin, that caused an immense transitory discrepancy in the exchangeable value of the two. But the best feature of this exceptional Act, called for by exceptional circumstances, was that apart from the legal limit to the period during which it was to operate, it

was absolutely certain that natural causes would bring about the old state of things. It was absolutely certain that in a very little time ingots which were worth £3 17s. 10d. per oz. in London would be worth more than £3 11s. here, and that the banks would no longer avail themselves of the Act but would pay their notes in specie by obvious preference. Again, one of the expectations of the originators of the Act, and it was an expectation which the event justified, was that it would lead to considerable purchases of Crown Lands, and thereby operate against the dreaded abandonment of the Colony; and the Government in receiving payment in what the opponents of the Act called a depreciated currency had perfect security that they were being paid in what in a few months would be worth its nominal amount. Finally, the Act had the immense merit of answering its purpose; miners flocked back with their gold, or sent it over and invested it here, and in an incredibly short time South Australia, instead of being abandoned, was partaking in fair measure of the general prosperity of the neighboring Colonies.

Sir Henry Young was succeeded—after a brief interregnum, during which Mr. B. T. Finniss, the Colonial Secretary, held the reins as Acting Governor—by Sir Richard MacDonnell, who arrived here in 1855, and is with us still (February, 1862), though about to give place to Sir Dominic Daly, whose advent is now daily expected.

On his arrival, Sir Richard MacDonnell found that a sudden and excessive influx of ill-selected immigrants, comprising 4,500 males and 7,400 females, was causing great embarassment. By providing supervision, food, and shelter, serious consequences to the immigrants themselves were avoided; whilst the aid of country authorities and the settlers was invoked to relieve the town and the labor market of this unexpected burden, and the Treasury of the expense of maintenance. Country depots were established, both north and south, to which immigrants were dispatched for engagement by neighboring residents: and by these and similar vigorous measures, the immigrants became gradually absorbed in the general population. It is not, however, by many such crises as the above, which marked the beginning of Sir Richard MacDonnell's career in the Colony, that the period of his government has been chiefly distinguished.

GENERAL PROGRESS OF THE COLONY.

The history of the last six years in South Australia has been the history of steady industrial and political progress. The introduction of the new Constitution has been the most remarkable event of this epoch; and the change thus produced, will elsewhere be found described in detail. It is over the whole face of the country that the history of this period has been written. Roads have been improved and bridges formed, so as quite to change the character of inland travelling for hundreds of miles from Adelaide; surveys for railways have been carried on to a large extent; the railway of 8 1/4 miles to the Port in one direction, and the Northern Line to Kapunda (52 miles) in another direction, have been opened; telegraph lines throughout the country have been established, as well as telegraphic communication with Sydney and Melbourne; the City of Adelaide has been supplied with water; a large extent of country has been surveyed for purchase in sections; the coast has been lighted where necessary; numerous buildings for public purposes have been constructed by the Executive, including a new Hospital, Parliament House, Government House, Government Offices, Mounted Police Barracks, and the Institute with its free library; the Murray has been navigated as far as Albury, and the first steamer taken a considerable distance up the Darling by Captain Cadell, with whom were Sir Richard MacDonnell and four others. Nearer home, the new mining district of Wallaroo, on Yorke's Peninsula, has been discovered and fairly tested, so that what was two years ago a sheep-run, now exhibits townships, mines, and all the customary adjuncts, including the commencement of a railway and a system of drainage. Further from Adelaide, the Far North has been explored by Mr. Stuart, Mr. Goyder, Major Freeling, Mr. Babbage, Sir Richard MacDonnell, Major Warburton, and others. During the period under consideration, indeed, the cause of inland exploration, which had for some time slumbered, received a remarkable impetus, and the first-named of the gentlemen just mentioned, Mr. Stuart, as is now well known, succeeded in pushing his discoveries almost to the northern coast of Australia.

He is now absent to finish his nearly completed work. It was during the administration of Sir Richard MacDonnell that the South Australian Volunteer Force attained its present efficiency and numbers (viz., 2,054 of

all arms—horse foot, and artillery), although during the term of office of Mr. Finniss, that gentleman had greatly exerted himself in this cause, and a force of about 800 men had been raised.

On the 3rd December last Sir Richard MacDonnell, in proroguing Parliament and in a valedictory speech to the Legislature, briefly enumerated the principal changes of the past seven years in the following words, with which this section of the present work may be fitly closed :—

"Had I time, it would be interesting to recall to your recollection the most salient points in the history of that epoch. This, however, is not a moment to attempt such a task, though I cannot but remind you that when I landed here, in June, 1855, there was not a mile of railway opened in the Colony, and yet there are now fifty-seven miles in use, over which annually rolls a traffic of more than 150,000 tons, and 320,000 passengers. Your coasts have been lit with three additional first-class lights; and three additional harbors have come into extensive use. Your population has grown from 86,000 to nearly 130,000; whilst the exports of Colonial produce have risen from less than £690,000 in 1855, to £1,808,000 for the year ending the 30th of last June.

When I landed there was scarcely sixty miles of made road in the Colony, whereas now, independent of those in the city, there are nearly, if not over, 200 miles; and, instead of 160,000 acres only in cultivation, there cannot be less now than 460,000—a number greater in proportion to the population than obtains in any other portion of Her Majesty's dominions, or indeed, in any other part of the world with which I am acquainted.

It is, moreover, since 1855, that the first telegraph post was erected in this Colony, and yet you already possess 600 miles of telegraphic communication, and nearly 1,000 miles of wire, together with twenty-six stations. It is also since 1855, that the explorations of Mr. Stuart and others have added so much to our geographical knowledge, filling up the large blank spaces which had so long defaced the map of South Australia, and usefully opened up the country to further settlement.

Above all, it is since my arrival here that the great experiment has been tried of entrusting the general mass of the people, through their immediate representatives, with power to control completely the taxation and expenditure of the country, and direct its general legislation. I am bound to say, that although such an experiment must be more or less hazardous anywhere, there is less risk accompanying it in South Australia owing to the character of the people and the division of property here, than would attend it in almost any other country. I may add, that if I were to select any one reason as the paramount cause of Responsible Government working hitherto with so great a measure of success, I would attribute it to the fair and equitable view which generally prevails as to the mutual and necessary dependence of the various great interests of the Colony one on another. The sentiments avowed on that subject at public meetings and in the debates of Parliament, form not merely a pleasing and healthy contrast with what takes place in other Colonies, but give the best and strongest guarantee that society here will continue united for the advancement of the common weal, and will thereby have the greatest chance of promoting the general prosperity."