

COMMERCE.

IT is reasonable to expect that the trade of these colonies would increase as quickly as the population ; but as a matter of fact its growth for many years was much more rapid, and at the present time the total commerce of Australasia per head of population is exceeded by that of no country except Belgium, half of whose trade consists of goods in course of transit to and from the north-western and central parts of the continent of Europe. Below will be found a statement of the trade of Australasia for various periods since the year 1825, prior to which date no information is available :—

Year.	Trade of Australasia.	
	Total Value.	Value per head.
	£	£ s. d.
1825	511,998	10 13 11
1841	5,573,000	22 4 0
1851	8,957,610	18 10 7
1861	52,228,207	41 19 10
1871	69,474,084	35 18 4
1881	101,710,967	36 12 7
1891	144,766,285	37 13 7
1892	122,761,263	31 2 10
1893	117,172,258	29 2 0
1894	109,691,901	26 13 8
1895	112,810,793	26 17 8
1896	129,139,621	30 3 4

It will be seen that the average value of trade per inhabitant increased by £1 15s. 3d. during the twenty years extending from 1871 to 1891, of which the period from 1881 to 1891 accounted for no less than £1 1s. This, however, does not show the full extent of the growth in trade, for the prices of produce—especially of wool, which has been the staple product of these colonies since very early years—have fallen heavily. To this cause must the great decline in the value of the trade since 1891, which has placed the average amount per head of population from 1892 to 1896 below that of any other period since the gold discovery, be partly attributed, and partly to the wave of depression which swept over Australasia, and from the effects of which the country has not yet recovered.

The following series of tables shows the distribution of the total trade of Australasia between the seven colonies for the years 1881, 1891, and 1896, with the average value per head of population. The first table represents the imports :—

Colony.	Total Value of Imports.			Value per Inhabitant.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	17,587,012	25,393,397	20,561,510	23 2 7	22 3 11	15 19 4
Victoria	16,718,521	21,711,608	14,554,837	19 4 3	18 19 1	12 7 0
Queensland	4,063,025	5,079,004	5,433,271	13 5 8	12 12 11	11 13 0
South Australia	5,320,549	10,051,123	7,221,342	19 4 3	31 2 4	20 2 6
Western Australia	404,831	1,290,003	6,493,557	13 14 3	25 2 5	54 6 0
Tasmania	1,431,144	2,051,904	1,192,410	12 5 0	13 15 6	7 5 11
New Zealand	7,457,945	6,503,849	7,137,320	15 2 7	10 6 6	10 2 1
Australasia	52,982,727	72,061,038	62,594,247	19 1 7	18 15 1	14 12 5

The values of the total exports of the colonies for the same years were as given below :—

Colony.	Total Value of Exports.			Value per Inhabitant.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	16,807,905	25,944,020	23,010,349	21 9 0	22 13 9	17 17 5
Victoria	16,252,103	16,006,743	14,198,518	18 13 6	13 19 6	12 1 0
Queensland	3,540,366	8,305,387	9,163,726	15 18 6	20 13 6	19 13 0
South Australia	4,508,754	10,642,410	7,704,874	16 5 7	32 10 0	21 9 6
Western Australia	502,770	799,466	1,650,226	17 0 8	15 13 9	13 16 0
Tasmania	1,555,576	1,440,818	1,496,576	13 6 3	9 13 5	9 3 1
New Zealand	6,060,866	9,566,397	9,321,105	12 5 11	15 3 10	13 3 11
Australasia	48,728,240	72,705,247	66,545,374	17 11 0	18 18 6	15 10 11

The total trade of each province was as follows :—

Colony.	Value of Total Trade.			Value per Inhabitant.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	33,894,817	51,327,417	43,571,859	44 11 7	44 17 8	33 16 9
Victoria	32,970,624	37,718,351	28,753,355	37 17 9	32 18 7	24 8 0
Queensland	7,603,991	13,384,391	14,596,997	34 4 2	33 6 5	31 6 0
South Australia	9,829,303	20,693,539	14,926,216	35 9 10	64 1 4	41 12 0
Western Australia	907,601	2,079,559	8,143,783	30 14 11	40 16 2	68 2 0
Tasmania	2,986,720	3,492,782	2,688,986	25 11 3	23 8 11	16 9 0
New Zealand	13,517,911	16,070,246	16,458,425	27 8 6	25 10 4	23 6 0
Australasia	101,710,967	144,766,285	129,139,621	36 12 7	37 13 7	30 3 4

The point most notable in this series of tables is the very marked impetus which the trade of South Australia received during the period 1881-91—a trade of £64 ls. 4d. per inhabitant, the value transacted by that colony during 1891, being almost without parallel in any important country. This huge trade was, however, not drawn altogether from its own territory, for in 1891 more than £5,731,000, or about £17 15s. per inhabitant, and in 1896, £2,900,000, or £8 ls. 8d. per inhabitant, was due to the Barrier District of New South Wales, of which South Australia is the natural outlet; and it must also be remembered that considerable quantities of goods on their way to Broken Hill are entered as imports in South Australia when they arrive in that colony, and as exports to New South Wales when they cross the border. Of the total shrinkage of £22 9s. 4d. per head from 1891 to 1896, £9 13s. 4d. must be attributed to the falling-off in the Barrier trade.

The trade of New South Wales in 1891 stood at £51,327,417, which was the highest amount ever recorded; but in 1896 it had fallen to £43,571,859, an amount exceeded only during the years 1889, 1890, and 1891; while the value per inhabitant in 1896, although higher than in the two preceding years, was lower than had been recorded for many years prior to 1894. All the colonies advanced their total trade from 1881 to 1891, and all, except Victoria and Tasmania, their exports. In 1896 only New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia showed larger imports than in 1881; while both exports and total trade had increased in every colony except Victoria and Tasmania. As compared with 1891, Queensland, Western Australia, and New Zealand are the only colonies that show an increase in imports; Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania, in exports; and the two first-named colonies and New Zealand in total trade.

INTERCOLONIAL TRADE.

The trade shown in the above series of tables represents, not only the business transacted with countries outside Australasia, but the trade maintained by the colonies with one another. This intercolonial trade, which forms a considerable proportion of the total which has just been dealt with, increased in a slightly higher ratio than the population up to 1891, but since the year named it has decreased in a nearly equal ratio with the trade with outside countries. The following figures represent the total value of this important branch of the general trade, as well as the value per inhabitant. It is obvious that the total intercolonial trade which is shown by the table represents in reality twice the actual value of goods passing from one colony to another, the same merchandise figuring in one place as exports, and in another as imports. The value of goods passing through a colony on their way to foreign countries, as well as of

goods imported from abroad and re-exported, is, of course, also included in the figures. The actual movement is therefore less than half of the values given below :—

Year.	Total.	Value per Inhabitant.
	£	£ s. d.
1861	17,166,925	13 16 0
1871	29,745,068	15 7 6
1881	37,156,289	13 8 4
1891	60,114,797	15 12 11
1896	54,490,030	12 14 7

The figures given in the following table represent the total inter-colonial trade of each colony in 1881, 1891, and 1896, and although they are affected by the circumstances just mentioned, they afford interesting evidence of the way in which the prosperity of one province is bound up with that of the others :—

Colony.	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	percent	percent	percent
New South Wales..	13,211,372	22,730,348	17,934,686	35·6	37·8	32·9
Victoria	10,686,172	13,575,205	11,570,797	28·8	22·6	21·2
Queensland	4,810,286	6,822,366	7,841,073	12·9	11·3	14·4
South Australia ...	3,089,466	11,034,215	7,586,405	8·3	18·4	13·9
Western Australia.	341,156	822,125	5,068,101	0·9	1·4	9·3
Tasmania	2,027,781	2,411,428	2,111,593	5·5	4·0	3·9
New Zealand.....	2,990,056	2,719,110	2,377,375	8·0	4·5	4·4
Australasian } Exports & Imports }	37,156,289	60,114,797	54,490,030	100·0	100·0	100·0

EXTRA-AUSTRALASIAN TRADE.

If Australasia be regarded as a whole, and an elimination made of the legitimate trade which the provinces carry on with each other, as well as the value of the goods which pass through one colony on their way to another, as shown under the heading of Inter-colonial trade, the total and average amounts will, of course, be greatly reduced. Such an elimination has been made in the following table,

which shows the growth since 1861 of what may be called the external trade—that is, trade transacted with all countries outside of Australasia :—

Year.	External Trade.	
	Total Value.	Value per head.
	£	£ s. d.
1861	35,061,282	28 3 10
1871	39,729,016	20 10 10
1881	64,554,678	23 6 3
1891	84,651,488	22 0 8
1896	74,649,591	17 8 9

By far the greater part of the external trade of Australasia is carried on with the United Kingdom ; and of the remainder the larger proportion is transacted with foreign countries, principally France, Germany, Belgium, and the United States, while the trade with British possessions has of late years considerably declined. The subjoined table shows the distribution of the external trade between the three divisions named :—

Trade with—		1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1896.
		£	£	£	£	£
The United Kingdom	Imports ..	13,467,370	12,006,419	25,662,185	30,823,474	21,967,037
	Exports ..	12,207,228	18,486,703	24,342,422	32,638,841	20,172,801
	Total ...	25,674,598	30,493,122	50,004,607	63,462,315	54,139,838
British Possessions...	Imports ..	1,767,391	2,382,148	3,078,195	3,094,417	2,525,829
	Exports ..	3,656,065	764,652	4,257,061	2,231,608	2,065,103
	Total ...	5,423,456	8,146,800	7,336,156	5,326,025	4,590,932
Foreign Countries ...	Imports ..	3,216,738	2,245,124	4,603,326	7,490,424	7,015,200
	Exports ..	746,490	3,843,970	2,610,589	8,372,724	8,903,531
	Total ...	3,963,228	6,089,094	7,213,915	15,863,148	15,918,731
Total	Imports ..	18,451,499	16,633,691	33,343,706	41,408,315	34,503,156
	Exports ..	16,609,783	23,095,325	31,210,972	43,243,173	40,141,435
	Total ...	35,061,282	39,729,016	64,554,678	84,651,488	74,649,591

Prior to the year 1883 the European trade of Australasia was almost exclusively carried on with the United Kingdom, but since that time direct commercial relations have been established with the leading Continental countries. The British trade increased during the ten years ended 1891 by £13,457,708, equal to nearly 27 per cent.; while the trade with foreign countries increased during the same period by £8,649,233, or nearly 120 per cent. From 1891 to 1896, chiefly due to causes which have already been explained, and to the cultivation of direct business relations with the Continent of Europe, trade with the United Kingdom decreased by £9,322,477; while, despite the depression, the foreign trade increased during the same period by a small sum, viz., £55,673. The trade with British possessions has never been of much value, and is now less than formerly, having fallen from £7,336,156 in 1881 to £5,326,025 in 1891 and £4,590,932 in 1896. As compared with 1891, the year 1896 shows a decrease in trade with the United Kingdom of 14·69 per cent., and with British possessions of 13·80 per cent.; while with foreign countries there has been an increase of 0·35 per cent.

The following table shows the value of the goods imported direct from each of the principal countries during the years 1881, 1891, and 1896:—

Imports direct from—	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£
British Empire—			
United Kingdom.....	25,662,185	30,823,474	24,967,037
India and Ceylon.....	842,943	1,258,072	1,100,727
Canadian Dominion.....	100,478	151,727	133,477
Cape Colony.....	1,303	382	1,944
Fiji.....	63,190	332,774	317,172
Mauritius.....	1,364,421	459,179	307,941
Hongkong.....	642,308	648,785	354,142
Straits Settlements.....	50,043	188,571	246,231
Other Possessions.....	4,509	54,927	55,105
Total	28,740,380	33,917,891	27,492,806
Foreign Countries—			
France and New Caledonia.....	340,750	369,035	410,316
Germany.....	225,672	1,773,277	1,680,912
Italy.....	7,874	58,484	98,036
Belgium.....	20,713	321,025	310,905
Sweden and Norway.....	259,156	459,414	194,937
United States.....	1,593,088	2,920,115	3,846,460
Netherlands and Java.....	466,444	654,660	277,771
South Sea Islands.....	124,447	78,235	161,909
China.....	1,430,903	699,143	293,813
Japan.....	23,245	61,236	123,828
Other Countries.....	104,944	95,700	111,403
Total	4,603,326	7,490,424	7,015,290
Total, British and foreign	33,343,706	41,408,315	34,508,156

The external exports for the same periods were as follow :—

Exports direct to—	1881.	1891.	1896.
British Empire—	£	£	£
United Kingdom	24,342,422	32,638,841	29,172,801
India and Ceylon	3,153,535	1,000,871	1,214,683
Canadian Dominion .....	.....	40	11,633
Cape Colony	314,460	171,412	83,351
Fiji	157,913	166,326	148,264
Mauritius	95,475	107,151	38,713
Hongkong	359,934	491,771	331,862
Straits Settlements	38,767	151,243	92,932
Other Possessions	137,577	142,794	143,615
Total	28,600,383	34,870,449	31,237,904
Foreign Countries—			
France and New Caledonia	336,498	1,835,734	2,559,840
Germany	70,422	863,815	1,541,572
Italy	152,914	27,999	43,737
Belgium	100,437	1,485,731	1,322,370
Sweden and Norway .....	.....	.....	1,214
United States	1,298,905	3,269,261	2,636,656
Netherlands and Java	52,192	92,645	83,333
South Sea Islands	140,299	149,370	305,114
China	78,599	30,749	30,892
Japan	6,872	16,578	110,123
Other Countries	373,451	600,792	218,675
Total	2,610,589	8,372,724	8,903,531
Total, British and foreign	31,210,972	43,243,173	40,141,435

The values of the combined imports and exports were as given below :—

Total direct trade with—	1881.	1891.	1896.
British Empire—	£	£	£
United Kingdom	50,004,607	68,462,315	54,139,833
India and Ceylon	3,996,778	2,258,943	2,324,410
Canadian Dominion	100,473	151,767	145,160
Cape Colony	315,763	171,794	85,295
Fiji	221,103	499,100	465,436
Mauritius	1,459,896	566,330	346,654
Hongkong	1,002,242	1,140,556	686,004
Straits Settlements	97,810	339,814	339,163
Other Possessions	142,086	197,721	198,810
Total British	57,340,763	68,788,340	58,730,770
Foreign Countries—			
France and New Caledonia	677,248	2,204,819	2,970,156
Germany	296,094	2,637,092	3,222,484
Italy	160,788	86,483	141,773
Belgium	127,150	1,806,756	1,633,275
Sweden and Norway	259,156	459,414	196,151
United States	2,891,993	6,189,376	6,033,116
Netherlands and Java	518,636	747,305	361,104
South Sea Islands	264,746	227,655	467,023
China	1,509,592	729,892	329,705
Japan	30,117	77,864	233,956
Other Countries	478,395	696,492	330,078
Total Foreign	7,213,915	15,863,148	15,918,821
Total British and Foreign	64,554,678	84,651,488	74,649,591

TRADE WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM.

In order to make a useful comparison of the value of the Australasian trade to the United Kingdom, it is necessary to use the British Board of Trade returns, and these returns have been used in the ensuing comparisons. The figures relating to Australasia, especially for late years, approximate very closely to the local Customs statistics. From the table it will be observed that while in 1881 the produce of these colonies formed 29·5 per cent. of the imports of the United Kingdom from her possessions, in 1891 the proportion was 31·4 per cent., and in 1896 rather more, viz., 31·5 per cent :—

Year.	As returned by British Customs.		Proportion of Imports from Australasia to total from British Possessions.
	Total Imports from British Possessions.	Imports from Australasia.	
	£	£	per cent.
1881	91,539,660	26,975,381	29·5
1891	99,464,718	31,261,566	31·4
1896	93,208,029	29,402,430	31·5

Although it is very little more than a century since the commencement of Australasian settlement, an examination of the trade statistics of the mother country with her numerous dependencies shows that the trade of these colonies with the United Kingdom is now only exceeded by that of India, while it is considerably more than double that of Canada, and in a larger degree exceeds the trade of any other British possession. The following table, which is also compiled from the returns of the Board of Trade, shows the total trade of the United Kingdom, exclusive of specie, for the three years 1881, 1891, and 1896, with the most important of Great Britain's colonies and possessions :—

Country.	1881.	1891.	1896.	Proportion of Trade of United Kingdom with British possessions.		
				1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	per cent	per cent	per cent
India	63,683,398	64,783,605	56,127,018	35·7	33·6	30·5
British North America.....	20,608,159	20,906,357	23,140,079	11·6	10·8	12·6
Cape Colony and Natal	13,105,284	14,892,985	20,139,595	7·4	7·7	11·0
Straits Settlements	6,527,075	7,946,127	6,382,848	3·7	4·1	3·5
Hongkong	4,815,905	3,833,859	2,756,367	2·7	2·0	1·5
Australasia	50,957,785	59,493,319	53,728,781	23·6	30·9	29·2

If, again, a comparison be made of the total trade transacted by the United Kingdom with all countries during the year 1896, it will be found that the trade with Australasia, amounting to £53,728,781 as shown above, was only exceeded by that carried on with four countries, namely, the United States, with a total of £138,383,133; France, with £70,762,499; Germany, with £61,570,141; and British India, with £56,127,018. The amounts taken by other countries will be found below, and it must be noted that the values given do not include specie:—

Country.	1881.	1891.	1896.	Proportion to Total Trade of United Kingdom.		
				1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	per cent	per cent	per cent
France	70,069,848	69,114,136	70,762,499	10·1	9·3	9·0
Germany	52,927,199	56,976,104	61,570,141	7·6	7·7	8·3
Belgium	25,047,333	30,525,737	31,548,042	3·6	4·1	4·3
Holland	33,295,414	42,290,587	41,691,147	5·5	5·7	5·6
Spain	14,421,326	16,050,936	15,896,289	2·1	2·2	2·2
Italy	10,792,615	10,272,329	9,089,955	1·6	1·2	1·2
United States	139,990,876	145,475,197	138,383,133	20·2	19·5	18·7
Argentine Republic	4,000,090	7,817,256	15,829,909	0·6	1·0	2·1
Chili	5,417,363	5,916,225	6,325,533	0·8	0·8	0·9
Brazil	13,254,733	12,855,202	11,030,709	1·9	1·7	1·6
Uruguay	1,881,522	1,568,891	1,791,601	0·3	0·2	0·2
Australasia	50,957,785	59,493,319	53,728,781	7·3	8·0	7·3

TRADE WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Every year steamers of greater tonnage and higher speed are visiting the colonies from Europe, and a considerable expansion of commerce must of necessity take place, owing to the new outlets for trade which have been opened up thereby. The value of Australasian imports from the principal foreign countries may be traced below from the year 1861:—

Country.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£	£
Belgium .....	.....	.....	26,713	321,025	310,905
France and New Caledonia	136,124	158,992	340,750	369,035	410,316
Germany	109,172	3,399	225,672	1,773,277	1,680,912
Netherlands and Java	114,304	194,519	466,444	654,660	277,771
Italy .....	.....	.....	7,874	58,484	98,036
Sweden and Norway	22,666	106,720	259,156	459,414	194,937
China	827,347	874,925	1,430,993	699,143	298,813
Japan .....	.....	.....	23,245	61,286	128,828
South Sea Islands	40,200	135,060	124,447	78,255	161,909
United States	1,080,673	616,625	1,593,088	2,920,115	3,346,406
Other Countries	880,252	154,384	104,944	95,700	111,403
Total	3,210,738	2,245,124	4,603,326	7,400,424	7,015,290

The exports from Australasia to the countries mentioned in the preceding table are appended :—

Country.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£	£
Belgium			100,437	1,485,731	1,322,370
France and New Caledonia	26,793	101,758	336,498	1,835,784	2,559,840
Germany			70,422	863,815	1,541,572
Netherlands and Java	3,907	39,517	52,192	92,645	83,333
Italy			152,914	27,999	43,737
Sweden and Norway					1,214
China	114,149	29,137	73,599	30,749	30,892
Japan	1,805	9,470	6,872	16,578	110,128
South Sea Islands	36,130	153,568	140,299	149,370	305,114
United States	76,154	367,361	1,298,905	3,269,261	2,686,656
Other Countries	487,552	3,143,159	373,451	600,792	218,675
Total	746,490	3,843,970	2,610,589	8,372,724	8,903,531

The commerce with foreign countries from the commencement of the period under review exhibits very satisfactory progress; the imports have increased 118·09 per cent., while the exports have grown to nearly twelve times their original value, the increase in the total trade being 301·66 per cent. This expansion is chiefly due to the development of the European continental trade, consequent on the diversion of part of the wool business from London, which was largely brought about by the display of local resources at the Sydney and Melbourne International Exhibitions of 1879 and 1880. The annual increase per cent. of the trade of the Australasian colonies with the four principal foreign countries with which they have commercial relations is shown below, the period covered being the fifteen years extending from 1881 to 1896 :—

Country.	Imports.	Exports.	Total Trade.
	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.
Belgium	17·78	18·75	18·55
France and New Caledonia	1·25	14·49	10·36
Germany	14·32	22·84	17·25
United States	5·07	4·96	5·02

The trade with Belgium exhibits the greatest progress, but Antwerp, the port from which a great portion of German and French manufactures is shipped, is also the distributing centre for a considerable part of the wool destined for the Continent, and large quantities of this product landed there ultimately find their way to Germany, France, and other countries. The French, early in 1883, were the first to establish direct commercial relations with these colonies, the steamers of the Messageries Maritimes, a subsidised line, making their appearance for the first time in Australian waters in the year named. In 1887 the vessels of the Norddeutscher Lloyd Company, of Bremen, commenced trading with Australasia; and

in the latter part of 1888 a line of German cargo-boats opened up further communication between the great wool-exporting cities of Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide and the ports of Antwerp, Hamburg, and Dunkirk. Belgium has also established a line of steamships; and the latest foreign testimony to the growing importance of Australasia is the regular running of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha's steamers between Japanese ports and Sydney. In addition to the companies mentioned, some British lines run their vessels direct to Continental ports.

The result of these efforts to establish commercial relations is evident from the increase of trade which the foregoing table discloses, and from the diversion, now rapidly being effected, in the channel by which the wool required for Europe reaches the market. The example of the South American Republics, the bulk of whose produce now finds a market at the ports of Antwerp, Hamburg, Havre, and Dunkirk without passing through London, was not lost on Continental buyers. It was manifest that direct shipments of wool to Europe could as readily be made from Sydney or Melbourne as from Buenos Ayres or Monte Video; hence the presence in the local markets, in increasing numbers, of buyers representing Continental firms.

Australasia has for many years maintained important commercial relations with the United States of America, and in 1896 America's share of the trade of Australasia with foreign countries was about 38 per cent. The greater part of this trade was carried on with the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and New Zealand. The main exports to the United States are specie, wool, coal, kauri gum, and New Zealand flax—chiefly the two first mentioned; so that, though large in its nominal amount, the trade is less valuable than would at first sight appear. The export of wool, which had formerly been unimportant, amounted in 1891 to £514,551, an increase of £325,314 over the total of the previous year; but this high value has not been maintained, and owing to tariff changes in the United States there was a fall to £228,040 in 1894, followed by a rise to £441,049 in 1896.

Under present conditions no extension of commercial relations with the United States can be looked forward to; but trade with the East gives good promise for the future, especially with India, China, Japan, and the East Indian Archipelago, where markets for Australasian wool will possibly in time be found—little in that direction having been accomplished up to the present time. As mentioned above, Japan has established a national line of steamers to foster the trade between that country and Australasia; and with the abolition of the duty on wool, and the benefits to be derived from wearing woollen clothing impressed upon the people, there ought to be a good opening in that country for the staple product of these colonies. The foundation of such a trade has already been laid down, the exports of wool from New South Wales ports to Japan in 1896 being valued at about £45,000. A large amount of business is already transacted with India and Ceylon, and this trade bids fair to increase, particularly in the tea of those places, which now

strongly competes with the Chinese leaf in public estimation. The value of the direct import of Indian teas increased from £280,780 in 1890 to £506,980 in 1896; while the imports of this article from China decreased from £788,943 in 1890 to £201,781 in 1896.

The Australasian exports to China are but small compared with the imports, and evince a considerable falling-off since 1861. The Customs returns, however, do not represent the whole amount of the trade with China, as a considerable portion of the commerce with Hongkong is in reality transacted with the Chinese Empire, Hongkong being to a large extent a distributing centre for the Empire. In view of this fact, the following table, showing the trade with the Chinese Empire and Hongkong, has been compiled:—

Country.	Imports.			Exports.		
	1890.	1891.	1896.	1890.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Chinese Empire	706,131	699,143	298,813	56,269	30,749	30,892
Hongkong	753,853	648,785	354,142	451,456	491,771	331,862
Total	1,459,984	1,347,928	652,955	507,725	522,520	362,754

Trade with the South Pacific Islands, which on the whole may be said to be increasing, consists mostly of the importation of raw articles in exchange for Australasian produce. The bulk of the trade is done with Fiji and New Caledonia, the French colony dealing principally with New South Wales, as Sydney is the terminal port for the mail-steamers of the Messageries line. But owing to the enforcement of the new French Customs tariff, which is highly protective in its character in the colonies of that country as well as in France itself, the New Caledonian trade bids fair to be lost to Sydney; for while the exports from New South Wales to New Caledonia in 1892 amounted to £184,128, they had fallen in 1896 to £110,335, or by more than 40 per cent. The trade with New Guinea is at present but small, though when the resources of that prolific island come to be developed a large increase may be expected. Besides the countries mentioned, Australasia maintains a not inconsiderable trade with Java and Scandinavia, but it consists mainly of imports.

The figures relating to the trade of each colony with countries outside Australasia would be extremely interesting if they could be given with exactness. Unfortunately this is impossible, as the destination of goods exported overland cannot be traced beyond the colony to which they are in the first instance despatched—all that can be given is the trade by

sea, which the following series of tables shows. The imports from countries outside Australasia were as follow :—

Colony.	Total Value.			Value per Inhabitant.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	11,357,096	14,256,219	11,001,650	14 18 9	12 9 4	8 10 10
Victoria	10,768,791	13,045,493	8,334,222	12 7 6	11 7 9	7 1 6
Queensland	1,492,305	3,183,209	3,078,488	6 14 3	7 18 6	6 12 0
South Australia	3,566,917	4,038,763	3,258,927	12 17 7	12 10 1	9 1 8
Western Australia	208,743	695,358	2,388,415	7 1 5	13 12 11	19 10 5
Tasmania	445,576	698,073	399,508	3 16 3	4 13 10	2 8 11
New Zealand	5,504,278	5,490,300	6,046,046	11 3 4	8 14 4	8 11 2
Australasia	33,343,706	41,408,315	34,508,156	12 0 10	10 15 7	8 1 3

The exports to countries outside Australasia were as follow :—

Colony.	Total Value.			Value per Inhabitant.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	9,826,349	14,340,850	14,635,523	12 5 4	12 10 10	11 7 4
Victoria	11,515,661	11,097,653	8,848,336	13 4 8	9 13 9	7 10 2
Queensland	1,301,400	3,378,816	3,677,436	5 17 1	8 8 3	7 17 9
South Australia	3,172,920	5,620,561	4,080,884	11 9 2	17 8 0	11 7 2
Western Australia	357,702	562,076	637,267	12 2 4	11 0 7	5 14 11
Tasmania	513,363	382,381	177,885	4 7 10	2 11 4	1 1 9
New Zealand	5,023,577	7,890,836	8,034,104	10 3 10	12 0 7	11 7 6
Australasia	31,210,972	43,243,173	40,141,435	11 5 5	11 5 1	9 7 6

The total extra-Australasian trade was therefore as follows :—

Colony.	Total Value.			Value per Inhabitant.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	20,683,445	28,597,069	25,637,173	27 4 1	25 0 2	19 18 2
Victoria	22,284,452	24,143,140	17,182,558	25 12 2	21 1 6	14 11 8
Queensland	2,793,705	6,562,025	6,765,924	12 11 4	16 6 9	14 9 9
South Australia	6,739,837	9,659,324	7,339,811	24 6 9	29 18 1	20 9 2
Western Australia	566,445	1,257,434	3,075,682	10 3 9	24 13 6	25 14 4
Tasmania	958,939	1,081,354	577,393	8 4 1	7 5 2	3 10 8
New Zealand	10,527,855	13,351,136	14,081,050	21 7 2	21 3 11	19 18 8
Australasia	64,554,678	84,651,488	74,649,591	23 6 3	22 0 8	17 8 9

It will be seen that the growth of the import and export trade of the various colonies has not been uniform. The imports of New South Wales in 1891 exceeded those in 1881 by nearly 3 millions sterling, while in 1896 they were over £350,000 less than they were in 1881. The exports of 1891 exceeded those of 1881 by over 5 millions, but from 1891 to 1896 they increased by less than £300,000. The Victorian imports increased from 1881 to 1891 in about the same ratio, but in 1896 they were nearly 2½ millions less than in 1881; while the exports,

both in 1891 and 1896, were less than in 1881. The Tasmanian import trade in 1896 was only eight-ninths that of 1881, while the exports in 1896 exhibit a falling-off of over 65 per cent. as compared with those of 1881. The South Australian imports were £300,000 less in 1896 than they were in 1881; while the exports, which in 1891 nearly doubled those of 1881, shrunk by about £1,540,000 during the next five years. The value of the New Zealand imports in 1896 was only about half-a-million more than in 1881, but the exports increased during the period by nearly 60 per cent. The Queensland imports more than doubled from 1881 to 1891, but from the latter year they had shrunk by about £100,000 in 1896; the exports, however, increased steadily, and in 1896 were over 180 per cent. larger than in 1881. The imports of Western Australia increased from 1881 to 1891 and from 1891 to 1896 more than threefold during each period, while the exports increased by rather more than 20 per cent. from 1891 to 1896, nearly all the Western Australian gold being exported by way of the other colonies. No rigid deductions, however, can be drawn from the facts just given; for, as is well known, some of the provinces—notably Queensland and Tasmania—are not yet in a position to maintain a direct foreign trade, and in a forced comparison with the rest of Australasia are apt to suffer.

If the total trade of 1896 be considered, New South Wales heads the list with a commerce valued at £25,637,173; Victoria, with £17,182,558, being second; while New Zealand ranks third, with a trade of £14,081,050. Taking all the colonies together, the external imports and exports combined equal a trade of £17 8s. 9d. per inhabitant—a falling-off of £4 11s. 11d. as compared with 1891, and of £5 17s. 6d. as compared with 1881. It is interesting to compare the volume of the external trade of Australasia with the latest returns of other countries. This is afforded by the following table, in which the figures refer to the year 1896 :—

Country.	Total Trade.			Per Inhabitant.
	Merchandise.	Specie and Bullion.	Total.	
	£	£	£	£ s. d.
United Kingdom	738,188,118	83,969,755	822,157,873	20 16 8
France	380,896,000	42,238,000	423,134,000	10 19 8
Germany	427,555,000	25,005,000	452,560,000	8 13 3
Italy	97,026,000	1,208,000	98,234,000	3 2 9
Belgium	230,307,000	16,441,000	246,748,000	40 13 1
Spain	67,643,000	9,670,000	77,313,000	4 4 11
Cape Colony	35,741,539	9,166,597	44,908,136	25 8 9
Canada	47,075,286	2,039,514	49,114,800	9 13 3
Chili	30,589,000	1,228,000	31,817,000	12 11 9
United States ...	346,319,000	49,012,000	395,331,000	6 6 3
Australasia	67,976,478	6,673,113	74,649,591	17 8 9

The trade of Australasia per head of population exceeds that of any country appearing in the list, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and the Cape Colony excepted. In the case of Belgium it is but proper to remark that about one-half of the trade credited to it comprises goods in transit, while the United Kingdom itself is also a great distributing centre, and the trade returns of the Cape Colony are swollen by the gold from the Transvaal passing through the country on its way to Europe.

An excess in the value of imports over exports was for many years a prominent feature of the trade of Australasia taken as a whole, although in some colonies the reverse was the case. The surplus of imports was due to two causes: (1) the importation, by the Governments and local bodies of the various colonies, of money to cover the cost of construction of public works; and (2) the private capital sent to Australasia for investment. Taking the colonies as a whole, these two items combined exceeded the payments made for interest on past loans, both public and private, and the sums drawn from the country by absentees; but as nearly all the colonies have ceased to borrow, or the amount of their borrowing has fallen below their yearly payments for interest, the whole of Australasia now shows an excess of exports, the only colonies having an excess of imports in 1896 being Victoria and Western Australia. The present excess of exports and its cause come more properly within the parts of this work dealing with Public and Private Finance, and are dealt with at some length there.

EXPORTS OF DOMESTIC PRODUCE.

The values of the exports of Australasia and of its various provinces have been given in the previous pages without respect to the countries where the articles were produced. It is important to find to what extent the exports have been the produce of each of the colonies whence they were shipped. The following table shows the value of the exports of domestic produce of each colony as returned by the Customs for the years 1881, 1891, and 1896, and the value thereof per inhabitant:—

Colony.	Total Value.			Value per Inhabitant.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales ..	10,784,327	21,085,712	16,742,601	14 1 11	18 8 9	13 0 0
Victoria	12,480,567	13,026,426	11,054,824	14 6 10	11 7 6	9 7 8
Queensland	3,478,376	7,979,080	8,924,186	15 12 11	19 17 4	19 2 9
South Australia	3,755,781	4,310,512	3,383,138	13 11 3	14 17 10	9 8 7
Western Australia ..	498,634	788,873	1,603,748	16 17 10	15 9 7	13 8 2
Tasmania	1,548,116	1,367,927	1,473,429	13 5 0	9 3 8	9 0 3
New Zealand	5,762,250	9,400,094	9,177,336	11 13 9	14 18 6	12 19 10
Australasia	38,308,051	58,458,624	52,359,352	13 15 11	15 4 4	12 5 6

These figures, however, must be regarded as merely approximate, for it is difficult to ascertain with exactitude the domestic exports of some of the colonies. This is especially the case with Victoria, and in a lesser degree with New South Wales and South Australia. In the first-mentioned colony large quantities of wool, the produce of the other provinces, chiefly of New South Wales, are exported as domestic produce, the value of the staple dealt with in this way in 1896 being no less than £1,323,055. There is also an export by South Australia, as local produce, of wool grown in New South Wales, but the value thereof is by no means large. Wool, chiefly from Queensland, has in some years been exported as domestic produce by New South Wales, but in 1896 no such overstatement took place. Also, as regards New South Wales, tin and copper ore, the former chiefly from Queensland and Tasmania and the latter from South Australia, which are imported for the purpose of being refined, are exported as domestic produce. Likewise, Queensland cattle, after being fattened on New South Wales pastures, are exported as local produce; but in all these cases a material change is wrought in the imports, which is not the case with wool. An attempt has been made to remove these elements of error from the returns as they are presented by the Customs, and the amounts shown in the following table may be accepted as the true values of domestic produce exported by each colony during 1896:—

Colony.	Domestic Exports.		
	Total Value.	Proportion to Total.	Value per Head.
	£	per cent.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	16,740,469	32·8	13 0 0
Victoria	9,731,769	19·1	8 5 2
Queensland	8,924,186	17·5	19 2 9
South Australia	3,347,079	6·6	9 6 7
Western Australia.....	1,603,748	3·1	13 8 2
Tasmania.....	1,473,283	2·9	9 0 3
New Zealand	9,177,063	18·0	12 19 10
Australasia	50,997,597	100·0	11 18 3

Placing the values of the external exports of domestic production of Australasia side by side with those of some of the more important countries of the world, a useful comparison is afforded, and from whatever standpoint the matter be viewed these colonies appear in a very favourable light. The following table shows the value of the domestic exports, exclusive of coin and bullion, of some of the principal countries of the world, the figures referring to the year 1896. The figures for Australasia only represent the external exports of domestic produce;

in the preceding table the values include the domestic produce of each colony consumed in the other provinces :—

Country.	Exports of Domestic Produce (exclusive of Coin and Bullion).	Per Inhabitant.
	£	£ s. d.
United Kingdom	240,145,551	6 1 8
France	136,036,000	3 10 8
Germany	176,255,000	3 7 6
Austria-Hungary	64,500,000	1 11 2
Italy	42,084,000	1 6 11
Belgium	58,718,000	9 13 6
Canada	21,858,950	4 6 0
Argentine Republic	23,360,000	5 17 10
United States	179,833,000	2 17 5
Australasia	26,106,484	6 2 0

The extent to which the geographical position of a colony enables it to benefit by the production of its neighbours is illustrated by the proportion which the non-domestic bear to the total exports. The following table shows the value of the re-export trade and the proportion which it bears to the total export trade of each colony in 1896; and it would appear that South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales, in the order named, benefit largely by their position, the re-export trade of the other colonies being insignificant :—

Colony.	Re-exports.	Proportion to Total Exports.
	£	per cent.
New South Wales	6,269,880	27·2
Victoria	4,466,749	31·5
Queensland	239,510	2·6
South Australia	4,357,795	56·6
Western Australia	46,478	2·8
Tasmania	23,293	1·6
New Zealand	144,042	1·5
Anstralasia	15,547,777	23·4

Three-fifths of this re-export trade is external, the amount being £9,189,117, as compared with £6,358,660 of intercolonial trade.

THE WOOL TRADE.

The rapid growth of the Continental wool trade during the periods from 1881 to 1891, and from 1891 to 1896, is illustrated by the following table, which shows the value of the staple exported direct to the

principal countries, and the proportion of the total amount taken by each :—

Country.	Value.			Proportion.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	per cent	per cent	per cent
United Kingdom ...	15,777,327	19,891,218	15,650,777	97·8	82·7	76·6
Belgium	96,557	1,453,755	1,066,563	0·6	6·0	5·2
Germany	53,809	782,676	1,134,824	0·3	3·3	5·6
France	26,965	1,386,768	2,073,254	0·2	5·8	10·1
United States	132,699	514,551	441,049	0·8	2·1	2·2
Other Countries ...	48,725	34,259	67,388	0·3	0·1	0·3
Total.....	16,136,082	24,063,227	20,433,855	100·0	100·0	100·0

The value of the wool shipped from Australasia has thus increased by over four and a quarter millions sterling, or almost 27 per cent., during the last fifteen years. It will be observed that the wool exported to the United Kingdom has decreased in value to the extent of £127,000, or from 97·8 to 76·6 per cent., while the export to foreign countries has increased both absolutely and relatively.

It is necessary to point out here that all the figures in the present chapter dealing with the export of wool are based on the Customs returns of the different colonies, and represent the values placed on the wool by the exporters. The figures relating to the value of the wool clip which are given in the chapter on the pastoral industry are less than those just given, the difference being made up of the cost of carriage and other charges from the sheep-runs to the ship's side.

The following table shows the total and proportionate value of the wool shipped direct to countries outside Australasia by each colony :—

Colony.	Value.			Proportion.		
	1881.	1891.	1896.	1881.	1891.	1896.
	£	£	£	per cent	per cent	per cent
New South Wales..	4,485,295	7,917,587	7,434,374	27·8	32·9	36·4
Victoria.....	5,327,934	7,070,661	4,929,171	33·0	29·4	24·1
Queensland	996,047	2,438,321	1,776,184	6·2	10·1	8·7
South Australia ...	1,747,696	1,888,107	1,519,181	10·8	7·8	7·4
Western Australia.	256,689	311,925	264,235	1·6	1·3	1·3
Tasmania ..	416,572	313,422	135,885	2·6	1·3	0·7
New Zealand	2,905,849	4,123,204	4,374,825	18·0	17·2	21·4
Australasia ...	16,136,082	24,063,227	20,433,855	100·0	100·0	100·0

It will be seen from the table just given that Victoria was credited in 1881 with exporting wool to a considerable value in excess of that of New South Wales. In 1891 and 1896, however, the positions were reversed, notwithstanding the fact that large quantities of wool from New South Wales are still sent to Melbourne for shipment. In 1881 the wool produced in other colonies, chiefly New South Wales, but credited to Victoria, was valued at £2,780,600; in 1891, £2,767,000; and in 1896, £1,323,000; while the wool imported from other colonies and credited to New South Wales for the year 1891 was £109,000, while for 1896 there was no such over-statement. South Australia also receives a large quantity of New South Wales wool for shipment, though not nearly to so great an extent as Victoria.

In connection with this subject, a statement of the value of wool of its own production which each colony exports direct and by way of the other colonies may not be without interest. The figures, which are given below, relate to the year 1896:—

Colony.	Domestic Wool Exported.			Proportion of Export of Australasia.
	Direct.	By way of the other colonies.	Total.	
	£	£	£	per cent.
New South Wales	6,480,888	2,329,487	8,810,375	42·7
Victoria.....	2,658,675	30,233	2,688,908	13·1
Queensland	1,768,958	1,208,026	2,976,984	14·4
South Australia	1,024,516	176,478	1,200,994	5·8
Western Australia	264,235	3,271	267,506	1·3
Tasmania	135,739	155,086	290,825	1·4
New Zealand	4,374,552	17,023	4,391,575	21·3
Australasia	16,707,563	3,919,604	20,627,167	100·0

In the table given on the preceding page the value of the direct export of wool is quoted at £20,433,855. The apparent discrepancy, however, is of no moment when it is remembered that about one-fifth of the clip of Australasia is subject to valuation first at the border of the colony in which it is produced, and again at the port from which it is finally shipped to Europe or America. In the amount of £20,627,167 shown above is, besides, included the value of such wool as was exported during 1896 to one of the adjacent colonies, and there held over for the sales in January of the following year.

The following figures serve to illustrate the development of the local wool sales in those colonies where such sales are held, viz., in New South

Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and New Zealand, for the ten seasons from 1887-8 to 1896-7. The seasons are taken as extending from the 1st July to the 30th June. The number of bales sold during each period shown was as follows:—

Season.	New South Wales.	Victoria.	South Australia.	New Zealand.	Total.
	bales.	bales.	bales.	bales.	bales.
1887-88	162,511	188,050	34,481	36,458	421,500
1888-89	198,517	214,876	43,568	50,303	507,264
1889-90	227,599	279,360	47,298	57,519	611,776
1890-91	232,856	247,508	43,799	57,166	581,329
1891-92	284,708	292,694	58,011	62,456	697,869
1892-93	362,688	310,828	54,285	85,505	813,306
1893-94	401,185	305,700	65,000	82,547	854,432
1894-95	425,135	328,142	64,056	82,547	899,880
1895-96	415,538	315,543	80,234	82,965	894,280
1896-97	401,048	310,835	63,804	82,515	858,202

The importance of the pastoral industry to Australasia will be made clear in another part of this volume. Its value to each colony varies considerably, as the statement hereunder shows. In no colony, however, Western Australia excepted, does the proportion of exports of this class fall below 25 per cent. of the total value of domestic produce exported. In the case of New South Wales it reaches about 66 per cent., while in New Zealand it is 68 per cent., and in Queensland 62 per cent. :—

Colony.	Wool.	Other Pastoral Produce.	Total.	Proportion of Exports of Pastoral Produce to Total Exports of Domestic Products.
	£	£	£	per cent..
New South Wales.....	8,810,375	2,195,372	11,005,747	65·7
Victoria	2,688,908	1,216,902	3,905,810	40·1
Queensland.....	2,976,984	2,570,265	5,547,249	62·2
South Australia.....	1,200,994	423,505	1,624,499	48·5
Western Australia.....	267,506	19,337	286,843	17·9
Tasmania	290,825	81,774	372,599	25·3
New Zealand.....	4,391,575	1,886,356	6,277,931	68·4
Australasia—				
All Domestic	20,627,167	8,393,511	29,020,678	56·9
External Domestic.....	16,707,563	5,618,544	22,326,107	72·1

It will be observed that the figures given in this table are not those furnished by the various Customs' Departments; they have been corrected in the manner already explained in order to allow for the incorrect information furnished by shippers in regard to the colony of origin.

MOVEMENTS OF GOLD.

Since the discovery of gold in the year 1851 large quantities of the metal—in the form of coin as well as of bullion—have been exported from the Australasian colonies every year. In the figures given below, showing the excess of exports of gold of each colony, no attempt has been made to exclude the intercolonial trade. The largest exporters, it will be found, are also the largest producers, namely, Victoria, New Zealand, and Queensland. The other colonies, except Western Australia, now produce very little more than what suffices to meet their requirements. The returns of the gold imports and exports for New South Wales are swollen by large quantities of Queensland gold sent to Sydney to be minted and then exported in the shape of coin, but only the excess of exports appears in the following table :—

Colony.	1851-60.	1861-70.	1871-80.	1881-90.	1891-96.	1851-96.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
New South Wales	8,337,067	13,650,650	5,248,994	277,509	1,840,597	29,360,817
Victoria	80,342,134	62,609,042	37,222,632	23,106,371	10,008,007	219,288,186
Queensland .....	.....	1,768,575	9,430,137	11,540,245	11,625,224	34,364,181
South Australia	1,900,955	*395,633	*1,100,309	*673,548	*32,339	*300,874
Western Australia .....	.....	19,586	*38,000	*44,320	1,177,385	1,114,651
Tasmania	843,029	*34,255	165,040	872,754	814,535	2,661,103.
New Zealand.....	48,981	20,294,822	14,215,143	7,637,331	4,563,404	46,759,731
Total Excess of Exports ..	97,472,166	97,918,787	65,143,637	42,716,392	29,990,813	333,247,795.
Average per annum	9,747,217	9,791,879	6,514,364	4,271,639	4,999,469	7,244,517

* Excess of Imports.

CUSTOMS REVENUE.

The net revenue derived from the taxation of goods imported into Australasia during 1896 amounted to £8,090,549, which is equal to £1 17s. 10d. per inhabitant. It will be found, from a consideration of a subsequent table, that the rate per inhabitant varies very greatly, not only in a comparison of the various colonies, but for the same colony in different years. This variation arises from diverse causes. First, the

influence of good or bad times on the purchasing power of the people naturally reacts on the Customs collections, although the rise or fall of the rate per inhabitant is not always a safe indication of such influence. Certain colonies, notably Queensland, still grow insufficient agricultural produce for their own requirements, and a good season, since it enables these colonies to depend to a greater extent on their own resources, has meant a decrease in the revenue derived from the importation of agricultural produce. Similar effects have also been felt in regard to the revenue derived from live stock and other forms of produce. Then it must also be remembered that for many years the colonies have been systematic borrowers in the London market, and they have also been the recipients of much money sent for investment by private persons. As loans of all descriptions reach the borrowing country in the form of goods, and a considerable proportion of the importations is the subject of taxation, years of lavish borrowing are naturally years of large revenue collections, and coincident with the cessation of the flow of foreign capital there is a decrease in Customs revenue. Furthermore, there have been extensive alterations in the tariffs affecting the revenue during the years which the following tables cover. In New South Wales in 1891 and 1895, and in Western Australia in 1893 and 1896, radical tariff changes were made, and in other years minor alterations took place in nearly all the other colonies. To these changes is chiefly attributable any sharp rise or fall in the rate of revenue per inhabitant. At the same time, it must be allowed that tariff changes have been made which have affected the collections to a very slight extent.

Speaking generally, it may be said that the Customs revenue is declining, and is likely to decline. Apart from the specific causes mentioned above, other effective if less obtrusive influences are at work. Year by year the industries of the colonies are being developed, and the local producer is acquiring a firm hold upon the domestic markets. In several of the provinces little if any revenue is now received from duties on agricultural produce, as such produce is not imported; and many descriptions of manufactured goods have likewise ceased to be introduced, the locally-made article being produced in sufficient quantities to meet the demand. There can be no reasonable doubt that this tendency will be still more marked in the future, and it is, therefore, not surprising that Australasian Treasurers have of late years found it necessary to look to other sources than the Customs for the revenue necessary to carry on the business of the country.

So far as the duties payable may be taken as a basis of classification, the imports may be divided into two classes—one comprising intoxicants and narcotics, upon which duties equal to an average of about 136 per cent. *ad valorem* are levied, and the other consisting of imports selected for taxation at specific or *ad valorem* rates. The value of intoxicants and narcotics imported by the colonies during 1896 for home consumption was £2,651,563, while the duties collected thereon

were not less than £3,610,689, the amounts credited to each colony being as follow :—

Colony.	Imports of Intoxicants and Narcotics for home consumption.	Amount of Import Duties collected.
	£	£
New South Wales	838,248	1,017,715
Victoria	477,980	689,824
Queensland	392,028	477,957
South Australia	135,540	181,035
Western Australia	370,885	424,744
Tasmania	58,257	104,251
New Zealand	378,625	715,163
Australasia	2,651,563	3,610,689

These collections represent about 44·6 per cent. of the total Customs revenue raised, the remaining portion being distributed among the various colonies as shown below. The total value of imports for home consumption—exclusive, of course, of the value of intoxicants, narcotics, coin, and bullion—is also given. A column has been added representing the collections as an average *ad valorem* duty on the total imports for home consumption :—

Colony.	Imports for home consumption (exclusive of Coin and Bullion, and Intoxicants and Narcotics).	Amount of Import Duties collected (less duty paid on Intoxicants and Narcotics).	Average <i>ad valorem</i> Duty.
	£	£	per cent.
New South Wales...	13,174,383	349,716	2·65
Victoria	9,445,060	1,098,294	11·63
Queensland	4,722,085	789,331	16·72
South Australia	2,550,631	393,777	15·44
Western Australia...	5,095,197	574,165	11·27
Tasmania	1,108,471	224,667	20·27
New Zealand	6,534,203	1,049,910	16·07
Australasia	42,630,030	4,479,860	10·51

The comparison afforded by the last column, however, has no special value, seeing that a large proportion of the importations other than intoxicants and narcotics, about 52 per cent. for the colonies as a whole, is admitted free of duty, all the colonies except Tasmania having an extensive free list. Reckoning only goods subject to duty, the average rate of duties levied in Australasia is equal to rather more than 22 per cent. *ad valorem*. The actual *ad valorem* duty payable on dutiable goods

other than intoxicants and narcotics imported into each colony during 1896, and the proportion of such goods to the total imports, exclusive of intoxicants and narcotics, will be found in the following table :—

Colony.	Proportion of dutiable imports other than intoxicants and narcotics.	<i>Ad Valorem</i> Duty on dutiable goods, other than intoxicants and narcotics.
	per cent.	per cent.
New South Wales	11·77	22·55
Victoria.....	46·56	24·97
Queensland	78·70	21·24
South Australia	64·31	24·01
Western Australia	72·18	15·61
Tasmania	90·91	22·29
New Zealand	65·91	24·38
Australasia	47·61	22·07

The import duties collected in the various colonies during each of the last six years are set forth in the following table, drawbacks and refunds being deducted from the gross collections of those colonies for which such information can be obtained :—

Colony.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
New South Wales.....	2,133,799	2,576,207	2,064,378	2,008,803	1,974,827	1,367,431
Victoria	2,334,418	2,142,376	1,730,947	1,781,086	1,780,082	1,788,118
Queensland	1,202,840	1,120,054	1,063,562	1,107,149	1,237,848	1,267,288
South Australia	696,780	611,723	572,528	525,297	516,195	574,812
Western Australia.....	233,777	271,376	259,267	409,886	614,457	998,909
Tasmania	378,951	318,306	288,546	281,864	303,762	328,018
New Zealand.....	1,555,323	1,654,064	1,665,683	1,572,467	1,619,970	1,765,073
Australasia.....	8,585,888	8,694,106	7,644,911	7,686,552	8,047,141	8,090,549

The revenue from import duties per head of population offers probably more food for reflection than the figures in the table just given. New South Wales raised the smallest revenue compared with population of any of the colonies of the group until 1891, a circumstance due to the comparatively low rate of the tariff; in 1892 its collections were about the average for Australasia, but at the beginning of 1896 a new tariff came into force which was designed to make the ports of the colony free to all imports except narcotics and stimulants, and the revenue per head of population is now very considerably less than in any of the other colonies. The variations in the rates from year to year are interesting

as illustrating the force of the remarks made a few pages back in introducing the subject of Customs duties :—

Colony.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales.....	1 17 3	2 3 7	1 14 1	1 12 6	1 11 3	1 1 3
Victoria	2 1 7	1 16 10	1 9 7	1 10 3	1 10 2	1 10 4
Queensland	2 19 11	2 13 10	2 9 10	2 10 6	2 14 8	2 14 4
South Australia	2 3 11	1 16 11	1 13 6	1 10 1	1 9 1	1 12 0
Western Australia.....	4 10 7	4 16 11	4 3 10	5 11 5	6 14 1	8 7 1
Tasmania	2 10 11	2 1 8	1 17 6	1 16 2	1 18 2	2 0 3
New Zealand.....	2 9 4	2 11 6	2 10 4	2 6 4	2 6 10	2 10 0
Australasia.....	2 4 8	2 4 1	1 18 0	1 17 5	1 18 4	1 17 10

A general statement of the Customs duties levied in each colony would be of value, but there is so little agreement in the tariffs of the colonies that it is not possible to arrange the duties under general heads so as to convey a distinct impression of the scope of each. Indeed, it is more than probable that the keenest analysis would fail to detect any scientific principle underlying the rates of duty charged. Specific duties on large items of general consumption were the first sources of revenue; these have been increased from time to time, but have rarely been diminished when once imposed. The necessities of the Treasury or other causes subsequently led to the imposition of *ad valorem* duties. The only canon of taxation which seems to have weighed with the framers of the tariffs was that raw material required for local manufactures should remain untaxed, and even this obvious rule has not infrequently been departed from. There seems, however, to be a general tendency to reduce import duties. The latest Victorian Customs Tariff has made important alterations in this direction; and the present tariff of New South Wales, as mentioned above, is the freest ever introduced into Australasia.

TRADE IN 1897.

Below will be found a statement showing the trade of each of the seven colonies during the year 1897 :—

Colony.	Total Trade.	Imports.	Exports.	Domestic Exports.
	£	£	£	£
New South Wales.....	45,495,422	21,744,350	23,751,072	17,057,543
Victoria	32,194,152	15,454,482	16,739,670	12,829,394
Queensland	14,520,748	5,429,191	9,091,557	8,831,450
South Australia.....	14,347,836	7,277,086	7,070,750	2,625,172
Western Australia.....	10,358,663	6,418,565	3,940,098	3,218,569
Tasmania.....	3,112,069	1,367,608	1,744,461	1,721,959
New Zealand	18,072,216	8,055,223	10,016,993	9,596,267
Australasia	138,101,106	65,746,505	72,354,601	55,880,354

The value per head of population was as follows :—

Colonv.	Total Trade.	Imports.	Exports.	Domestic Exports.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	34 14 4	16 11 10	18 2 6	13 0 4
Victoria	27 7 9	13 2 11	14 4 10	11 1 8
Queensland	30 7 3	11 7 0	19 0 3	18 9 2
South Australia	39 13 6	20 2 5	19 11 1	7 5 2
Western Australia	69 1 9	42 16 2	26 5 7	21 9 4
Tasmania	18 8 6	8 1 11	10 6 7	10 3 11
New Zealand	25 0 11	11 3 3	13 17 8	13 6 0
Australasia	31 12 7	15 1 2	16 11 5	12 15 11

The detailed returns for the year 1897 are not yet available for all the colonies, and an analysis of the figures for that year cannot, therefore, be made.