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SECTION XXXII.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.

§ 1. Area and Population.

1. **Introductory.**—Upon the extension of New South Wales westward to the 129th meridian in 1827, the Northern Territory was comprised within that colony (see Year Book No. 4, page 16), and in 1863 was annexed by Royal Letters Patent to the province of South Australia. With the adjacent islands, it was transferred to the Commonwealth on 1st January, 1911.

2. **Area and Boundaries.**—The total area of this Territory is 523,620 square miles, or 335,116,800 acres. Its length from north to south is about 900 miles, while its breadth from east to west is 560 miles. Its eastern boundary, dividing it from Queensland, is the 138th meridian of east longitude; and its western boundary, separating it from Western Australia, the 129th meridian. Its southern boundary is the 26th parallel of south latitude, dividing it from South Australia. The northern boundary is the coast line of those parts of the Indian Ocean known as the Timor and Arafura Seas. Near the mouth of the Wentworth River, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, the coast line is met by the eastern boundary; at Cape Domett, near Cambridge Gulf, the western boundary cuts the northern coast line. The length of coast line is about 1040 miles, or 503 square miles of area to one mile of coast line; an exact survey has, however, not yet been made.

3. **Population.**—(i.) *Character.* In 1881 there were 670 Europeans in the Territory, and at the end of 1912 the number was estimated at 1931. The Chinese population, at its maximum during the years of railway construction, 1887 and 1888, has gradually dwindled, the estimate for 1912 being 1246. Japanese, first recorded in 1884, increased up to the year 1898, falling again after five years. The highest recorded population, excluding aborigines, was 7533 in 1888; the estimate for 1912 was 3475. The year 1911 was the first in which the population was dominated by the European race. A thirty years table of population, distinguishing races, will be found on page 1154 of the Commonwealth Official Year Book, No. 4. Subsequent to the Census of 1911, a revision of the estimates, back to 1901, was made. The results are shewn in the following table:—

**POPULATION OF NORTHERN TERRITORY (EXCLUSIVE OF ABORIGINES),
1901 to 1912.**

Year ended 31st December.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Year ended 31st December:	Male.	Female.	Total.
1901 ...	3,999	674	4,673	1907 ...	3,095	642	3,737
1902 ...	3,847	627	4,474	1908 ...	2,963	609	3,572
1903 ...	3,582	652	4,234	1909 ...	2,927	576	3,503
1904 ...	3,514	692	4,206	1910 ...	2,738	563	3,301
1905 ...	3,368	678	4,046	1911 ...	2,662	586	3,248
1906 ...	3,248	656	3,904	1912 ...	2,854	621	3,475.

The census population (3rd April, 1911) was 2734 males, 576 females; total, 3310. The estimate for 31st December, 1912, was 2854 males, 621 females; total, 3475.

(ii.) *Movement of Population.* The following is a summary of movement of population in 1912 (excluding overland migration, which is inconsiderable):—

MOVEMENT OF POPULATION, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1912.

Europeans—		Europeans—		Excess—	
Inwards, oversea	599	Outwards, oversea	385	Immigration over	
Births ...	17	Deaths ...	29	emigration ...	215
Others—		Others—		Deaths over births	27
Inwards, oversea	241	Outwards, oversea	240		
Births ...	20	Deaths ...	35		
Increase ...	877	Decrease ...	689	Net gain ...	188

The immigration and emigration of the Territory in five-year periods from 1881 to 1910, and for 1911 and 1912, is shown in the following table:—

MIGRATION, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1881 to 1912.

Year.	Immigra- tion.	Emigra- tion.	Year.	Immigra- tion.	Emigra- tion.	Year.	Immigra- tion.	Emigra- tion.
1881-5	3,683	3,787	1896-			1906-10	2,559	3,125
1886-90	9,208	7,250	1900	2,538	2,259	1911	412	440
1891-5	1,958	2,353	1901-5	2,211	2,932	1912	840	625

(iii.) *The Aborigines.* An account of the Australian aborigines, by Dr. W. Ramsay-Smith, was given in Year Book No. 3 (pp. 153-176). The interior of the continent is the most thickly populated by the natives, but it is believed that they are rapidly dying out. In these regions, remote from contact with other races, the native has maintained his primitive simplicity, and furnishes an interesting subject of study to the anthropologist and ethnologist. At the census of 1911, full-blooded aborigines in the employ of whites, and those who were living in a civilised or semi-civilised condition in the vicinity of European settlements, were enumerated—the males being 743, females 480; total, 1223. It has been estimated that the total black population of the Territory is upwards of 20,000.

§ 2. Legislation and Administration.

1. *Transfer to Commonwealth.*—(i.) *The Northern Territory Acceptance Act.* A short historical sketch is given in Year Book No. 6, pp. 1113-4. On 1st January, 1911, the Territory was transferred by South Australia to the Commonwealth, upon terms previously agreed upon by the respective cabinets, and ratified by the Commonwealth *Northern Territory Acceptance Act* (No. 20 of 1910). It is enacted that laws and courts of justice remain in operation, powers and functions of magistrates and officials remain vested; estates and interests continue upon the same terms; trade with Australian States is declared free. The Commonwealth assumes responsibility for the State loans in respect of the Territory, paying the interest yearly to the State, providing a sinking fund to pay off the loans at maturity, and paying off the deficit in respect of the Territory. It also purchases the Port Augusta to Oodnadatta railway, and agrees to complete the construction of the transcontinental railway from Port Darwin to Port Augusta.

(ii.) *The South Australian Surrender Act.* The State Act approves and ratifies the agreement surrendering the Territory.

(iii.) *The Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1910.* The Act provides for Government authorising the appointment of an administrator and officials. South Australian laws are declared to continue in force as laws of the Territory and certain Commonwealth Acts to apply. Power is given to the Governor-General to make Ordinances having the force of law.

(iv.) *Administration.* A Resident Administrator, vested with supreme authority in internal affairs, was appointed in the Department of the Minister for External Affairs in February, 1912. Many other important administrative offices have also been filled.

(v.) *Legislation.* The main provisions of the Ordinances passed are as follows:—The powers and duties of the Administrator vested in the appointee, include custody of the public seal, appointment and suspension of officials, and execution of leases of Crown lands. He is assisted by a council of advice, not exceeding six, and meeting monthly. A Supreme Court with original and appellate jurisdiction is instituted, the method of appointment of the Judge is prescribed, and provision is made for trial by jury, and for the registration and summoning of jurors. A Sheriff, a Registrar-General, and a Health Officer are provided for, also the registration of births, marriages and deaths, and of deeds and documents. District Councils are authorised to assess land values and levy rates on unimproved value. Custody and control of aborigines with extensive powers of supervision are vested in the Chief Protector. Birds protected during the year, and during part of the year, are scheduled. Crown lands are classified, and their mode of acquisition, entry and holding defined. Shop assistants are to have a weekly half-holiday, and the establishments must be closed at a certain time. Mining is encouraged by the provision of rewards for the invention of new processes, and the discovery of valuable deposits and of new mineral fields; subsidization of the industry and the issue of prospecting licenses are also provided for. Licences to search for mineral oil, and leases of land for the working of the industry are available. A Board is constituted for the purpose of making advances to settlers who intend to improve and stock their holdings, to purchase farm implements, plant, etc., or to pay off mortgages, the rate of interest and terms of repayment being set out.

§ 3. Physiography.

1. **Tropical Nature of the Country.**—The Territory is within the torrid zone, with the exception of a strip $2\frac{1}{2}$ degrees wide, which lies south of the Tropic of Capricorn.

2. **Contour and Physical Characteristics.**—The low flat coast line seldom reaches a height of 100 feet. Sandy beaches and mud flats, thickly fringed with mangroves, prevail. Sandstone, marl, and ironstone form the occasional cliffy headlands. The sea frontage of more than 1000 miles is indented by bays and inlets and intersected by numerous rivers, many of which are navigable for considerable distances from their estuaries.

The principal features of the coast line are enumerated in Year Book No. 1, p. 66; the rivers in Year Book No. 2, p. 76; the mountains in Year Book No. 3, p. 67; the lakes in Year Book No. 4, p. 77; the islands in Year Book No. 5, pp. 71, 72, and the mineral springs in Year Book No. 6, p. 65.

Inland, the country is generally destitute of conspicuous landmarks. From the coast there is a general rise southwards to the vicinity of the 17th or 18th parallel of south latitude, where the higher lands form the watershed between the rivers that flow northwards to the sea, and those that form the scanty supply of the interior systems. Towards the centre of the continent the land over a wide area is of considerable elevation, and there are several mountain ranges, generally with an east and west trend.

§ 4. Climate, Flora and Fauna.

1. **The Seasons.**—There are two main climatic divisions—the wet season, November to April; and the dry season, May to October; with uniform and regular changes of season. Nearly the whole of the rainfall occurs in the summer months. Fuller particulars will be found in Year Book No. 6, p. 1116.

2. **Fauna.**—The ordinary types of native Australian fauna inhabit the territory. As elsewhere on the continent, the higher *Theria* are rare, but marsupials, birds, crocodiles, fresh-water tortoises, snakes (mostly non-venomous), and frogs abound. There are many varieties of freshwater fish and littoral mollusca. Butterflies and beetles are strongly represented. The white ant is a pest, anthills in the Territory sometimes attaining great dimensions. Mosquitoes and sandflies are very troublesome, particularly in the wet season. Native fauna are in some cases protected. The domesticated animals have been introduced, and buffalo also exist in large herds.

3. **Flora.**—The vegetation is tropical, many of the forms belonging to the Malayan and Oceanic regions. The timber trees are not of great commercial value, but in the coastal regions tropical vegetation grows luxuriantly to the water's edge. On the wide expanses of plain country of the interior, there is little vegetation. The principal orders represented in the Territory are:—*Euphorbiaceæ*, *Compositæ*, *Convolvulacæ*, *Rubiaceæ*, *Goodeniaceæ*, *Leguminosæ*, *Urticææ*.

Fuller particulars regarding fauna and flora are given in Year Book No. 6, pp. 1116-7.

§ 5. Production.

There is no great home consumption of the articles produced in the Territory, the greater part being exported overseas and to the States of the Commonwealth.

1. **Stock.**—The spacious, well-grassed "runs" of the Territory are suitable for horse and cattle breeding. It is anticipated that the cattle trade with the East will develop. Large numbers are overlanded to neighbouring States, which also take considerable quantities of horse hides. The number of stock on 31st December, 1912, was:—

LIVE STOCK, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 31st DECEMBER, 1912.

Horses.	...	Cattle.	...	Sheep.	...	Higs.
18,392		405,552		75,808		1,500

Dairying as an industry is not developed. The abundant indigenous herbage is, however, well suited for stock, and the making of hay and ensilage would ensure a progressive industry. A dairy factory is proposed at Daly Farm.

2. **Mining.**—Considerable quantities of the precious and commercial metals are mined. The discovery of gold and tin in various localities, and the measure of success that has attended their working, indicate scope for development.

(i.) *Mineral Production.* Both alluvial and reef gold are found, and there are several batteries and cyanide plants. Other minerals are also raised. The following table shews the total mineral production for the last five years:—

VALUE OF MINERAL PRODUCTION, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1908 to 1912.

Year.	Gold.	Tin Ore.	Wolfram.	Silver Lead Ore.	Copper Ore.	Smelter Product (C'pp'rBase)	Total Value.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1908 ...	23,943	35,876	1,925	30	5,413	2,555	70,042*
1909 ...	24,148	32,741	4,105	...	1,400	2,342	64,736
1910 ...	21,711	31,113	6,686	...	1,196	...	60,706
1911 ...	30,910	22,900	4,048	...	1,470	...	59,353†
1912 ...	20,150	27,001	3,330	820	3,998	...	55,299

* Includes bismuth valued at £300. † Includes bismuth valued at £25.

(ii.) *Employment of Miners, 1908 to 1912.* The following table shews employment in mining for five years, distinguishing Chinese:—

MINERS, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1908 to 1912.

Year.	Europeans.	Chinese.	Total.
1908	150	674	824
1909	190	630	820
1910	140	602	742
1911	101	575	676
1912	84	542	626

(iii.) *Mining Accidents, 1900 to 1912.* In 1911 five mining accidents were recorded, four resulting in death. There were no serious accidents in 1910 and 1912. During the nine years preceding (1901-1909), nine fatal accidents and seven cases of serious injury were recorded. The majority of the victims were Chinese.

3. *Pearl Shell.*—In 1884 mother-of-pearl shell was discovered in the harbour of Port Darwin. Difficulty in working, principally through heavy tides and muddy water, retarded the development of the industry for many years. Latterly, however, the opening up of new patches has led to a revival. In 1912, thirty boats were engaged, valued, with their equipment, at about £10,000; 180 men were employed. Sixty-four tons of pearl shell were obtained, valued at £16,113. Béche-de-mer valued at £1757 was also raised.

§ 6. Commerce and Shipping.

1. *Trade.*—The following table shews the total trade of the Territory for 10 years from 1901 to 1910:—

VALUE OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1901 to 1910.

—	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.
Imports	£ 108,886	£ 107,217	£ 125,244	£ 113,461	£ 86,878	£ 74,659	£ 78,996	£ 68,905	£ 57,994	£ 52,398
Exports	302,931	191,558	178,266	235,650	216,279	254,222	345,721	241,028	278,555	269,063
Total Trade	411,817	298,775	303,510	349,111	303,157	328,881	424,717	309,933	336,549	321,461

No record is now kept of the direction of trade between the Commonwealth States and Territories. It is, therefore, impossible to give the total imports and exports of the Northern Territory for years later than 1910. In 1911 the imports from places outside Australia were valued at £16,920, an increase of £3966 on the previous year. The exports to oversea countries were valued at £48,468, a decrease of £12,983 as compared with 1910. In 1912 imports were valued at £18,130; exports at £59,106.

From 1881 to 1910, the annual average trade in five-year periods was:—

VALUE OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1881 to 1910.

Period.	Average Annual Imports.	Average Annual Exports.	Period.	Average Annual Imports.	Average Annual Exports.
	£	£		£	£
1881-1885	125,600	92,727	1896-1900	127,489	158,978
1886-1890	236,099	113,156	1901-1905	108,337	224,937
1891-1895	109,704	177,463	1906-1910	66,590	277,718

2. *Shipping.*—The Territory's oversea commerce is carried in British and Japanese bottoms. One of the British lines maintains a monthly service, other lines are irregular. Coastal shipping is chiefly in Australian vessels. The following table shews the shipping of the Territory:—

SHIPPING, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1881 to 1912.

Period.	Arrivals.		Departures.	
	No. of Vessels.	Tonnage.	No. of Vessels.	Tonnage.
1881—1885 (Annual Average)	72	71,814	72	71,692
1886—1890	95	94,452	103	94,724
1891—1895	75	81,128	73	81,090
1896—1900	71	88,284	70	88,244
1901—1905	63	93,751	63	91,556
1906—1910	87	128,502	88	128,408
1911	71	130,178	71	130,178
1912	74	138,052	74	138,052

§ 7. Internal Communication.

1. **Railways.**—Under the agreement ratified by the Act the Commonwealth is to construct the Northern Territory portion of the transcontinental railway line (connecting Adelaide and Darwin, *via* Port Augusta).

The Northern line from Adelaide terminates at Oodnadatta, about 100 miles south of the southern boundary of the Territory. The only line at present in the Territory is one from Darwin to Pine Creek, a length of 145½ miles, of 3 ft. 6 in. gauge; and Pine Creek is distant about 1140 miles from Oodnadatta. The extension of this line southwards from Pine Creek to Katherine River is being proceeded with. It is stated that this trans-continental railway would bring London within seventeen days of Adelaide. The Commonwealth also acquired on 1st January, 1911, the property in the line from Port Augusta to Oodnadatta; but the line is at present being worked under the control of the South Australian Railway Commissioner, by agreement between the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments.

2. **Posts.**—The principal mail services are as follows:—

(i.) *Marine.* Postal communication is maintained between Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, *via* North Queensland ports. The service extends to China and Japan. There are three lines of service—two of the shipping companies being British, and one Japanese. The two former are subsidised at poundage rates, the latter at Postal Union rates. One of the British services is monthly, the others are irregular. There is also a quarterly contract service between Darwin and Boroloola, calling half-yearly at Roper River; and a service every two months between Darwin and Wyndham, on the estuary of Ord River, in the north-east of Western Australia. These are subsidised according to agreement for three years, the amount for the first service being £350; and for the second, £125 per voyage.

(ii.) *Inland.* Posts are also despatched into the interior of the Continent. One route is from the Katherine Telegraph Station southwards as far as Renner Springs, and then eastwards to Anthony Lagoon, where the Queensland mailman is met. The service is maintained with difficulty, on account of the many hardships caused by the alternations of extreme drought and flood.

Other inland routes are served, and there is a frequent service in Darwin.

3. **Telegraphs.**—The transcontinental telegraph line, covering a length of 2230 miles, was completed on 2nd August, 1872, at a cost of nearly half-a-million sterling. The line runs in a northerly direction from Adelaide to Darwin, whence telegraphic communication is provided with Asia and Europe, *via* Banjoewangie (Java), Singapore, and Madras.

Between Darwin and Banjoewangie the submarine cable is duplicated.

§ 8. Finance.

1. Revenue and Expenditure, 1912-13.—In the Commonwealth finance statement for 1912-13, separate accounts are given for Northern Territory administration. The following shews the receipts and expenditure for the financial year named:—

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 1912-13.

REVENUE.	£	EXPENDITURE.—cont.	£
Customs and Excise...	12,337	Stock and Brands—	
Postal, Telegraph & Telephone	4,075	Salaries and contingencies...	1,677
Railways	13,747	Botanic Gardens—	
Territorial	10,407	Salaries and contingencies...	1,385
Land and Income Tax ...	5,793	Survey—	
Miscellaneous	10,136	Salaries and contingencies...	16,276
Credit balance N.T. Funds at 31/12/10, paid by Sth. Aust.	24,456	Goldfields and Mining—	
Deficiency on year's transactions	388,658	Salaries and contingencies...	14,964
		Education—	
		Salaries and contingencies...	1,130
	469,609	Railways—	
		Salaries and contingencies...	17,963
		Public Works Staff—	
		Salaries and contingencies ...	3,027
		Works and Buildings	7,113
		Miscellaneous	17,534
		Administrative Office—	
		Salaries and contingencies...	4,095
		Interest and sinking fund on C'wealth Inscribed Stock for Redemption of N.T. loans	10,720
		Interest and sinking fund on C'wealth Inscribed Stock for Redemption of Port Augusta Railway loans	3,666
		Interest and Redemption (ex- cluding Port Augusta rail- way)—	
		Interest on loans	129,906
		Contribution to sinking fund	8,445
		Interest and Redemption, Port Augusta railway—	
		Interest on loans	69,410
		Contribution to Sinking Fund	5,413
		Extraordinary maintenance ...	11,034
		Advertising and other expenses in connection with Rolling Stock	108
		Buildings, artesian bores, roads, bridges, farms, etc.	63,564
		Port Augusta railway	1,613
		Launch	225
		Audit	453
			469,609
EXPENDITURE.			
Trade and Customs—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	2,174		
Rent, repairs, etc.	65		
Quarantine Contingencies ...	171		
Postmaster-General—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	12,660		
Mails	3,896		
Rent, repairs, etc.	205		
Administrator's Office—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	3,054		
Govt. Secretary's Office—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	2,284		
Aboriginal Affairs—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	9,986		
Agriculture—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	21,186		
Police—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	10,607		
Gaol—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	2,309		
Charitable Institutions—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	4,930		
Board of Health—			
Salaries	169		
Law Officers—			
Salaries and contingencies ...	2,513		
Marine Office—			
Salaries and contingencies...	3,679		

In addition, the following expenditure was made from the Loan Fund during the year:—

Redemption of N. T. Loans	£71,945
Redemption of Port Augusta Loans	£168,954
Total	£240,899

The Commonwealth received £151,513 from South Australia, being the credit balance of Northern Territory funds, but assumed responsibility for interest on loans and redemptions.

2. **Loans.**—The first loan on Northern Territory account was floated in London in 1876; the nominal amount was £75,000, at 4 per cent., due date 1st January, 1916. The public debt on 30th June, 1913, was £3,359,891. The following is a summary:—

PUBLIC DEBT, NORTHERN TERRITORY, 30th JUNE, 1913.

Principal.		Rate.		Annual Interest.
£		%		£
27,216	...	3	...	817
154,992	...	3½	...	5,425
1,798,383	...	3½	...	67,439
1,379,300	...	4	...	55,172
<u>Total ...</u>	<u>3,359,891</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>...</u>	<u>128,853</u>

§ 9. Land Tenure.

1. **Present Policy.**—The system of land settlement in the Territory will be found fully described in the chapter "Land Tenure and Settlement," see pages 241, 242 *supra*. Prior to the transfer of the Territory to the Commonwealth on 1st January, 1911, the sale and occupation of lands were regulated by the South Australian Legislature in Statutes applying particularly to the Territory. Under the Commonwealth Government a complete reorganization is being effected. Two Lands Ordinances of 1912 declare the present land policy and define the conditions. A leasehold system only is provided for and no further alienation of Crown lands is permitted, except in pursuance of existing agreements. A Board, consisting of the Director of Lands, the Director of Agriculture, and the Chief Surveyor, classifies the land and fixes the rents. The land thus classified and appraised is leased in blocks, the maximum areas ranging from 300 square miles of first class pastoral, to 1280 acres of first class agricultural land. The term of pastoral and miscellaneous leases is 21 or 42 years, all other leases are to be in perpetuity, making them almost equivalent to freeholds, but with re-appraisal of rent values every 14 years in the case of town lands, and every 21 years in the case of agricultural and pastoral lands. The conditions are of a very favourable nature, with low rents and elastic conditions of tenure.

2. **Number of Holdings.**—The table on page 242 *supra* shews the total area under lease, licence, and permit in 1901 and in each year from 1908 to 1912. At the latter date 93,838,080 acres were held under pastoral leases and permits; 667 acres under right-to-purchase leases; 378,240 under annual pastoral leases; and 1,924,871 acres under other leases. The other leases include coal and oil permits, 1,664,060 acres; agricultural leases, 8317 acres; mineral leases, 1290 acres; mixed farming permits, 1280 acres; gold leases, 762 acres; tin-dredging permit, 400 acres; and approved applications under the Tropical Products Act 1904 (of South Australia) 20,000 acres.