

# VICTORIAN YEAR-BOOK, 1902.

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Victoria is situated at the south-east extremity of the Australian continent, of which it occupies about a thirty-fourth part, and contains about 87,884 square miles, or 56,245,760 acres. It is bounded on the north and north-east by New South Wales, from which it is separated by the River Murray, and by a right line running in a south-easterly direction from a place near the head-waters of that stream, called The Springs, on Forest Hill, to Cape Howe. On the west it is bounded by South Australia, the dividing line being about 242 geographical miles in length, approximating to the position of the 141st meridian of east longitude, and extending from the River Murray to the sea. On the south and south-east its shores are washed by the Southern Ocean, Bass's Straits, and the Pacific Ocean. It lies between the 34th and 39th parallels of south latitude, and the 141st and 150th meridians of east longitude. Its extreme length from east to west is about 420, its greatest breadth about 250, and its extent of coast-line nearly 600 geographical miles. Great Britain, exclusive of the islands in the British seas, contain 88,309 square miles, and is therefore slightly larger than Victoria.

Area of  
Victoria.

The southernmost point in Victoria, and, consequently, in the whole of Australia, is Wilson's Promontory, which lies in latitude  $39^{\circ} 8' S.$ , longitude  $145^{\circ} 26' E.$ ; the northernmost point is the place where the western boundary of the State meets the Murray, latitude  $34^{\circ} 2' S.$ , longitude  $140^{\circ} 58' E.$ , the point further east is Cape Howe, situated in latitude  $37^{\circ} 31' S.$ , longitude  $149^{\circ} 59' E.$ ; the most westerly point is the line of the whole western frontier, which, according to the latest correction, lies upon the meridian  $140^{\circ} 58' E.$ , and extends from latitude  $34^{\circ} 2' S.$  to latitude  $38^{\circ} 4' S.$ , or 242 geographical miles.

The area of the Australian Commonwealth is estimated to be somewhat under three million square miles; but that area, added to the area of New Zealand, amounts to nearly

Areas of  
Australian  
States  
and New  
Zealand.

three million one hundred thousand square miles. The following are the areas of the different States, as officially computed:—

	Sq. Miles.
Victoria ... ..	87,884
New South Wales ... ..	310,700
Queensland ... ..	668,497
South Australia ... ..	903,690
Western Australia ... ..	975,920
Tasmania... ..	26,215
<b>Total Australia ... ..</b>	<b>2,972,906</b>
New Zealand ... ..	104,471
<b>Total Australasia ... ..</b>	<b>3,077,377</b>

It will be noticed that, with the exception of Tasmania, Victoria is by far the smallest State of the Australian Commonwealth, and about a sixth smaller than the colony of New Zealand. If the whole Commonwealth were to be divided into 100 equal parts, the area of Tasmania would embrace nearly 1 of such parts, that of Victoria 3, that of New South Wales 10, that of Queensland 23, that of South Australia 30, and that of Western Australia 33. Victoria is thus more than three times the size of Tasmania, but less than a third of the size of New South Wales, little more than an eighth of that of Queensland, about a tenth of that of South Australia, and less than an eleventh of that of Western Australia.

A comparison of the areas of the different Australasian States with those of the principal European countries will be of interest. These are accordingly given:—

	Sq. Miles.
Great Britain (England, Wales, and Scotland) ... ..	88,309
Germany ... ..	208,694
Spain ... ..	190,050
France ... ..	204,092
Italy ... ..	110,659
Sweden and Norway ... ..	297,284
Denmark ... ..	14,799
Holland ... ..	12,648
Austria-Hungary ... ..	263,476
Belgium ... ..	11,373
Portugal ... ..	34,038
Switzerland ... ..	15,976
Greece ... ..	24,970
Russia ... ..	2,080,396
Turkey in Europe (including Bulgaria) ... ..	100,604

The area of the Commonwealth of Australia is about equal to that of Russia in Europe, Sweden and Norway, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey in Europe, Bulgaria, and Greece.

The following are the latitudes and longitudes of the capital cities of the different Australian States and New Zealand, the positions being the observatories at Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, and Adelaide, the Barracks Observatory at Hobart, the Survey Office Observatory at Wellington, and the Government House at Perth:—

Positions of  
Austral-  
asian  
capitals.

Colony.	Capital City.		
	Name.	Latitude S.	Longitude E.
Victoria ...	Melbourne ...	37 49 53	144 58 32
New South Wales ...	Sydney ...	33 51 41	151 12 23
Queensland ...	Brisbane ...	27 28 0	153 1 36
South Australia ...	Adelaide ...	34 55 34	138 35 4
Western Australia ...	Perth ...	31 57 24	115 52 42
Tasmania ...	Hobart ...	42 53 25	147 19 57
New Zealand ...	Wellington ...	41 16 25	174 46 38

From its geographical position, Victoria enjoys a climate more suitable to the European constitution than any other State upon the Continent of Australia. In the forty-four years ended with 1902, the maximum temperature in the shade recorded at the Melbourne Observatory was 111·2° Fahr., viz., on the 14th January, 1862; the minimum was 27°, viz., on the 21st July, 1869; and the mean was 57·4°. Upon the average, on four days during the year, the thermometer rises above 100° in the shade; and, generally, on about three nights during the year, it falls below freezing point. The maximum temperature in the sun ever recorded (i.e., since 1857) was 178·5°, viz., on the 4th January, 1862. The mean atmospheric pressure, noted at an Observatory 91 feet above the sea-level, was, in the thirty-nine years ended with 1902, 29·94 inches; the average number of days on which rain fell was 129, and the average yearly rainfall was 25·15 inches.

Climate.

The following are the dates of some of the principal events connected with the history of Victoria since 1894. For principal events prior to that year the reader is referred to the preceding issue of this work. A detailed statement of the discovery and early history of the State will be found in the issue for 1884-5, page 10, et seq.

Principal  
events.

1895. January ... Conference at Hobart of the Premiers of Australia and Tasmania, at the instance of the Premier of New South Wales, to further consider the subject of Federation; at which it was agreed to commit the duty of framing a Federal Constitution to a convention strictly chosen by the electors, to whom it was afterwards to be referred for acceptance or rejection, and a draft *Enabling Bill* was adopted to give effect to this object.

1895. January 29th—First Income Tax Act passed, taxing all income received, with £200 exemption, except in case of an absentee; income from property charged double the rates of that derived from personal exertion.
1896. March 7th—Federal Enabling Act, on the lines just described, passed in Victoria. Similar measures were likewise passed about the same time by New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania.
- „ July 28th—Factory legislation passed providing for the appointment of Wages Boards, consisting of an equal number of members representative of the employers and employes respectively, to determine minimum rates of wages, &c.; and limiting the working hours in furniture factories where Chinese are employed—to from 7.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on week days, and to not later than 2 p.m. on Saturdays, and lessening unfair competition in all factories.
1897. March 4th—Election by the people of delegates—ten for each colony—to the Australasian Federal Convention, held in Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania; and in South Australia on the 6th. The delegates for Western Australia were elected by members of Parliament.
- „ March 22nd—Australasian Federal Convention opened in Adelaide, at which the following colonies were represented: Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. The first session closed on 23rd April. The second session opened in Sydney on the 2nd and closed on 24th September. The third session opened in Melbourne on the 20th January, and closed on the 16th March, 1898. At this Convention a Draft Bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia was framed and adopted for submission to a popular referendum of the various States represented.
1898. June 3rd—Referendum to the electors in Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania, and in South Australia on the following day, for the acceptance or rejection of the Draft Bill drawn up by the Convention. The Bill was accepted by large majorities in three of the colonies, and by a majority of 5,000 in New South Wales; but as the statutory number of 80,000 affirmative votes required in New South Wales was not reached (71,600 being recorded) the Bill was considered as rejected by that colony.
1899. January 28th—Conference of the Premiers of all the Australian colonies and Tasmania held in Melbourne, to consider the amendments suggested in the Draft Commonwealth Bill by the Parliament of New South Wales, at which a provisional compromise was arrived at.
- „ July 27th—Enabling Acts having been passed by Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania, the amended Draft Commonwealth Bill was submitted to the electors, who approved of same by large majorities, the voting in Victoria being 152,653 for, and 9,805 against.
- „ August 30th—Abolition of Plural Voting. Principle of “one man one vote,” introduced for the future elections to the Legislative Assembly.

1899. October 28th—Departure of the First Victorian Contingent (257 Mounted Rifles and Infantry) on the outbreak of war in South Africa between Great Britain and the Boers. Contingents also despatched by the other Australasian colonies and Canada.
1900. January 13th—Departure of Second Contingent of 264 mounted men for South Africa.
- „ February 22nd—Conference of Statisticians of the six Federating States in Sydney to estimate on a uniform basis the populations of the different States so as to decide the number of members of the House of Representatives to be allotted to each State in the first Federal Parliament.
- „ February 26th—Another statistical Conference, at which the New Zealand Statistician was also present, to arrange for the collection and compilation of the Census of 1901 upon a uniform principle. Conference closed on 3rd March.
- „ March 10th—Despatch of the Victorian Bushmen's Contingent and Cameron's Scouts (276 officers and men) for service in South Africa.
- „ May 1st—Departure of the Fourth (Imperial Bushmen's) Contingent of 629 officers and men for service in South Africa.
- „ July 9th—*The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act* passed, with several amendments, by the Imperial Parliament.
- „ July 31st—Departure of Naval Contingent for service in China—197 officers and men.
- „ „ „ Western Australia joins the Federation. Bill referred to and accepted by that State. Voting—for the Bill, 44,800; against the Bill, 19,691.
- „ October 29th—Appointment of Earl of Hopetoun as the first Governor-General of the Commonwealth.
- „ December 27th—First *Old Age Pensions Act* passed, making temporary provision out of the general revenue for the helpless poor, aged 65 or over, at a rate not exceeding 10s. per week for each unmarried, or 7s. 6d. for each married person. A more comprehensive permanent measure was subsequently passed on 11th December, 1901.
1901. January 1st—Proclamation and inauguration of the Commonwealth at Sydney, and swearing in of the Rt. Hon. E. Barton, first Prime Minister, and other members of the Ministry. Representatives from different parts of British Empire present, including representatives of Imperial and Indian regiments. State departments of Customs and Excise transferred, whilst those of the Post and Telegraph and Defence followed on 1st March.
- „ January 22nd—Death of Queen Victoria. Accession of King Edward VII. His Majesty's coronation took place on 9th August, 1902.
- „ February 15th—Despatch of Fifth (Imperial) Contingent—1,014 officers and men—for South Africa.
- „ March 31st—Eleventh census of Victoria, and third simultaneous census of Australia and New Zealand. Population enumerated:—  
In Victoria, 1,201,341, viz., 603,883 males and 597,458 females; in all the Australian States, 3,782,318, viz., 1,983,377 males and 1,799,541 females; and in New Zealand, 772,719, viz., 405,992 males, and 366,727 females (exclusive of 43,101 Maoris).

1901. May 9th—Opening of the first Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, in Melbourne, by His Royal Highness the Duke of Cornwall and York, Heir-Apparent to the Throne, under commission from His Majesty King Edward VII.
1901. October 8th—Interstate free trade established by the introduction of a provisional tariff by resolution of the Commonwealth House of Representatives.
1902. January 20th—Conference of statisticians of all the Australian States and New Zealand, convened for the purpose of securing uniformity in the preparation of statistical returns, met in Hobart. Conference closed 12th February. This was the first Conference of the kind since 1875.
- „ September 16th—The Commonwealth Tariff finally passed.
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