

**AN EPITOME FOR THE
MILLION: FIFTY FACTS
ABOUT AUSTRALASIA**

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An Epitome for the Million: Fifty Facts About Australasia by James MacGregor

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JAMES MACGREGOR

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FIFTY FACTS
ABOUT
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By JAMES MACGREGOR

(Formerly of the Union Bank of Australia (Limited).)

"It is difficult to avoid the language of exaggeration in speaking of such a country as Australasia. We rejoice in its strength and prosperity, and we have a right to expect results such as the world has not often seen, where the energies and the experience of an ancient civilisation are applied to a boundless territory and an unexhausted soil."—THE TIMES.

WITH AN AUTHENTIC MAP.

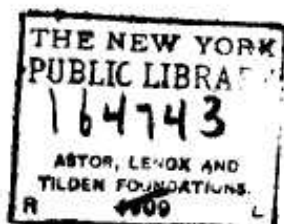
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THE Secretary of the Royal Colonial Institute, London, has written a very excellent letter to the Education Department, pointing out the desirability of cultivating in the Board schools throughout the United Kingdom such knowledge of the colonies as may be of practical service to British youth in after-life. With a view to give an impetus to this branch of learning, the Council of the Institute propose to offer prizes to schools for essays on colonial subjects. Mr. Mundella has responded to this sensible movement in the proper spirit. There is, unfortunately, much need, for an extension of knowledge respecting the geography, the history, and the resources of the British colonies throughout all classes of the community. The greater portion of British boys are better acquainted with the topography of ancient Sparta than of New Zealand. Even Under-Secretaries of State have the loosest notions about colonial geography. To this day the most absurd blunders continue to be made by official persons in these matters. Men who would be ashamed not to know what is the capital of Eastern Roumelia send letters addressed to "Melbourne, South Australia." Another Minister once spoke of Victoria as an island.

St. James's Gazette, March 7th, 1883.

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AN EPITOME FOR THE MILLION.

FIFTY FACTS ABOUT AUSTRALASIA, *TO BE PONDERED OVER.*

"An accurate acquaintance with the history, resources, and geographical position of the Colonies and dependencies of the Empire formed by no means a strong point in the education of the average Englishman; and, should his words reach those who were responsible for the training of the rising generation, he trusted they would devise some means for remedying a state of ignorance which was really a reproach to the greatest colonising nation in the world."—DUKE OF MANCHESTER.

"The growing importance of the great self-governing Colonies of England is recognised by every Englishman, without distinction of party or class."—EARL OF DERBY.

"It is difficult to avoid the language of exaggeration in speaking of such a country as Australasia. We rejoice in its strength and prosperity, and we have a right to expect results such as the world has not often seen, where the energies and the experience of an ancient civilisation are applied to a boundless territory and an unexhausted soil."—THE TIMES.

"In the whole world there is no such climate and soil for fruits."—SIR CHARLES DILKE.

I.—AUSTRALASIA AND POPULATION.

AUSTRALASIA is composed of the group of self-governing British colonies named respectively New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, besides a vast number of islands between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. The area of these rich possessions is nearly three million one hundred thousand square miles (3,100,000), or a territory as large as the United States omitting Alaska, more than twice the size of Hindoostan, and five-and-twenty

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times that of the United Kingdom. The population of Australasia numbers now about three millions (3,000,000), and is rapidly increasing. When Queen Victoria ascended the throne the white population of this part of her dominions did not exceed seventy-five thousand (75,000). The real progress and commencing development of Australasia has been accomplished within the last fifty years. As peoples advance in prosperity and social conditions, the natural rate, unless checked, at which population increases is accelerated. This, after all, is the best sign of the well-being of a new country. "It is as natural," says Burke, "for people to flock into a busy and wealthy country, that by any accident may be thin of people, as it is for the dense air to rush into those parts which are rarified." Population in Australasia has increased fifty per cent. during the last ten years. In the present ever-growing and vigorous development of the country, new centres of activity are being constantly established. They afford profitable occupation for zealous workers who loyally settle down to the steady acquisition of property. "Work and win" is the motto of the busy throng. On the memorable occasion of planting the British flag on the shores of Australia in 1788, Governor Phillip uttered these prophetic words:—"How grand is the prospect which lies before the youthful nation! Enough of honour would it be to occupy the first position both in regard to time and influence in a country so vast, so beautiful, so fertile, so blessed in climate, so rich in all those bounties which Nature can confer; enough of merit for any nation would it be to throw open so extensive and highly favoured a country for the occupation of mankind. This State, of which to-day we lay the foundation, will, ere many years have passed away, become the centre of the Southern Hemisphere."

II.—EXCHANGE AND TRADE.

THE interchange of commodities or external trade of Australasia is chiefly with Great Britain. It is now reckoned to amount to one hundred millions sterling yearly,

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and growing greatly. Fifty years ago the entire exchange or trade of the country with other nations was not more than one million a year. But, since then, mighty hearts and busy hands have been at work within her borders, have caused no end of stir, and made the sometime wilderness,—peopled then by savages,—to blossom as the rose. British population has been attracted, agriculture has been made to flourish, wool has been produced, mining has been developed, cattle have been bred, manufactures have been nursed, and direct trade with foreign countries has increased, and is increasing, as the records of transactions with the colonial banking institutions in London go to show. The internal or home trade of the country is marvellously prosperous. The people live well, they dress well, they build well, they work well, do a great business, and enjoy life amid a brilliancy of sunshine and prodigality of jollity not experienced in any other country. Chambers of commerce, composed of the leading business men, are now established in the several cities for the advancement and regulation of trade. Already the commercial growth of Australasia surpasses that of most countries. Since 1870, only the United States have shown a higher increase. The volume of Australasian commerce is now greater than that of the United Kingdom at the accession of Queen Victoria.

III.—BANKS AND BANKING.

THE banking assets of Australasia for 1882 tell a glowing story of the unremitting industry and prosperity of her three millions of people. These assets then amounted to nearly eighty millions sterling. Every year a measurable increase is recorded consequent on the annually-extending range of country brought within the influence of an active commerce. New men improve business in old fields, and energetically develop new ones. The banks support them, and vigorously encourage extension. The united capitals of the joint stock banks of issue, independently of their reserved funds, amount to five-and-twenty millions sterling. This sum is just double that of ten years ago. It shows

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