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CHAPTER VI

AUSTRALIA—ITS IMMIGRANT POPULATION¹

By

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In its political development Australia was divided for many years into seven self-governing colonies and each colony made its records of migration in its own way, with the result that there was no uniformity of method among them. The records of the individual colonies included arrivals from and departures to other Australian colonies, as well as arrivals from and departures to extra-Australian countries. These two classes of migration, which are commonly spoken of as "inter-Colonial" (now "inter-State") and "Overseas", unfortunately were not always kept distinct, so that it is impossible to determine with exactitude the results for Australia as a whole. The consequent defects in the earlier records are probably greater in relation to the direction of migration and the nationality or race of the migrants than in regard to the mere numbers.²

The Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics established in 1906 immediately undertook the compilation of Commonwealth statistics of external migration and at the same time continued the records of inter-State migration.

The insular character of Australia simplifies the collection of the statistics of external migration because all such movements have been by sea, and all desired information is readily procured from shipmasters who furnish particulars on prescribed forms. The statistics of inter-State migration are gathered from two sources: (1) from shipmasters engaged in the coastal trade; and (2) from railway authorities who, with one exception, are government bodies.

The net movement overland other than by rail is considered to be relatively unimportant so that no attempt has been made to record it.³

¹[See *International Migrations*, Volume I, pages 942-998.—Ed.]

²The migration figures given in Volume I, pp. 947-998, must therefore be considered subject to serious limitations.

³[The figures for New South Wales and Victoria, given in Volume I, pp. 960 ff. and 990 ff., do not include the interstate migrations by land. These omissions cause certain divergences from figures derived otherwise, e. g. for New South Wales the decade 1915-24 shows a net immigration of 50,096 if land migration is included, but of 43,019 if only migration by sea is considered and the land movement disregarded (see *Statistical Register for New South Wales* for 1924-25 and previous years, Tables 17, 18, 19.)—Ed.]

For the purpose of population statistics every person leaving a ship in an Australian port is counted as an immigrant except such persons as are prohibited from entry into Australia. The latter are allowed to disembark from one ship in order to be transferred to another and thus proceed to their destination outside Australia, but during the interval between disembarkation and departure they are under government surveillance.

All non-prohibited persons, if they make repeated visits to Australia, are counted as immigrants and emigrants respectively each time they arrive in or depart from Australia. An accurate net result is aimed at.

The accuracy of the recent records of the migration to and from Australia is demonstrated by comparing the results of the latest census with those of the previous census augmented by the net immigration as recorded and the natural increase of the population by excess of births over deaths during the intercensal period. Such a comparison is presented in Table 58.

TABLE 58.

POPULATION OF AUSTRALIA IN 1921 AS ENUMERATED AND AS ESTIMATED FROM CENSUS OF 1911, AND BIRTHS, DEATHS, IMMIGRANTS AND EMIGRANTS, 1911-21.

Data	Persons	Males	Females
(1) Population Mar. 31, 1911, based on census of April 3, 1911.....	4,454,361	2,312,659	2,141,702
(2) Births, 1911-21.....	1,313,186	673,430	639,756
(3) Deaths, 1911-21.....	533,083	306,147	226,936
(4) Natural Increase, 1911-21....	780,103	367,283	412,820
(5) Overseas Arrivals, 1911-21....	1,165,347	855,134	310,213
(6) Overseas Departures, 1911-21..	952,323	768,218	184,105
(7) Net Immigration.....	213,024	86,916	126,108
(8) Estimated Population, Mar. 31, 1921 based on census of 1911= (1)+ (4)+ (7).....	5,447,488	2,766,858	2,680,630
(9) Estimated Population, Mar. 31, 1921, based on census April 4, 1921.....	5,434,933	2,762,506	2,672,427
(10) Numerical error.....	+12,555	+4,352	+8,203
(11) Error in per cent.....	0.23	0.16	0.31

When the net results of migration have been chronicled in the census records, the latter furnish a more convenient field for in-

AUSTRALIA

171

TABLE 59.

OVERSEAS ARRIVALS FROM PLACES BEYOND AUSTRALIA, ANNUALLY BY STATES AND SEX, 1901-26.

Year	New South Wales (b)	Victoria	Queensland	South Aust.	West Aust.	Tasmania	Northern Territory	The Commonwealth (a)
MALES								
1901	19,746	18,625	5,710	1,753	3,179	723	(c)	49,736
1902	23,224	16,029	3,583	1,998	3,880	1,235	(c)	49,949
1903	18,990	5,219	2,097	1,178	2,993	895	(c)	31,372
1904	21,087	5,760	1,448	1,024	2,988	1,208	(c)	33,515
1905	20,089	5,779	1,504	1,134	2,798	1,117	(c)	32,421
1906	20,514	6,339	1,569	1,029	3,207	1,160	(c)	33,818
1907	28,014	8,253	3,046	1,413	3,388	1,641	(c)	45,755
1908	30,637	8,033	3,075	1,889	3,658	1,385	(c)	48,677
1909	35,416	9,041	4,583	2,464	4,527	1,456	(c)	57,487
1910	37,380	9,557	6,940	3,311	7,177	1,380	(c)	65,745
1911	49,040	14,305	11,951	5,510	12,943	3,103	112	96,964
1912	60,607	21,157	7,605	6,528	11,202	3,064	224	110,387
1913	49,245	18,121	6,963	5,085	9,663	1,468	135	90,680
1914	46,039	13,230	5,607	3,225	4,718	1,325	133	74,277
1915	31,629	10,070	2,653	1,516	3,186	1,203	362	(d) 50,619
1916	29,564	12,032	1,990	871	3,311	902	238	(d) 48,911
1917	27,604	19,217	1,601	1,539	4,596	499	208	(d) 55,264
1918	31,475	29,821	1,261	2,109	4,716	...	148	(d) 69,530
1919	77,108	81,946	5,582	14,865	17,444	1,152	74	(d) 97,721
1920	45,840	11,887	2,594	2,598	4,287	13	75	(d) 67,294
1921	35,162	8,829	2,852	1,896	4,349	103	30	53,221
1922	31,596	13,390	4,249	2,465	6,341	2	14	58,057
1923	27,797	13,919	3,926	2,336	8,339	88	10	56,415
1924	31,973	14,518	4,240	3,269	8,389	3	8	62,400
1925	31,575	13,956	5,030	2,542	6,470	6	23	59,602
1926	35,094	13,299	4,610	3,230	6,489	3	18	62,743
FEMALES								
1901	9,411	7,635	784	652	1,001	370	(c)	19,853
1902	11,068	6,829	570	570	870	632	(c)	20,539
1903	9,051	2,860	249	507	874	458	(c)	13,999
1904	8,981	3,016	244	444	991	617	(c)	14,293
1905	9,766	3,363	288	484	1,011	571	(c)	15,483
1906	10,657	3,671	507	500	1,141	593	(c)	17,069
1907	14,377	5,105	701	685	1,251	764	(c)	22,883
1908	14,370	4,646	1,588	781	1,383	763	(c)	23,531
1909	15,609	4,895	2,316	901	1,729	672	(c)	26,122
1910	15,999	5,457	3,971	975	2,747	798	(c)	29,947
1911	21,365	8,348	6,177	1,912	5,759	1,374	10	44,945
1912	27,309	14,422	4,446	3,583	5,358	1,425	28	56,571
1913	26,014	11,373	3,621	3,252	6,070	890	6	51,226
1914	21,229	7,899	2,992	1,508	2,264	905	12	36,809
1915	12,733	3,602	1,484	552	1,126	784	61	(d) 20,342
1916	10,124	2,110	553	266	525	896	20	(d) 14,494
1917	7,459	1,014	308	97	235	655	57	(d) 9,825
1918	7,269	1,404	233	45	387	...	57	(d) 9,395
1919	16,168	5,109	557	1,504	1,884	8	5	(d) 25,235
1920	26,675	9,060	1,621	1,849	2,594	7	9	(d) 41,815
1921	22,028	7,149	1,602	1,409	2,471	49	9	34,717
1922	21,730	7,889	1,777	1,371	2,684	...	5	35,456
1923	20,287	9,004	1,751	1,489	3,791	115	7	36,444
1924	23,093	9,548	2,289	1,947	4,386	3	1	41,267
1925	23,626	9,167	2,090	2,068	3,507	7	8	40,473
1926	27,301	9,739	2,622	2,360	3,151	1	7	45,181

(a) Arrivals from places beyond Australia; (b) including Federal Capital Territory; (c) Northern Territory included with South Australia; (d) including Troops.

TABLE 59 (Concluded)

Year	New South Wales (b)	Victoria	Queensland	South Aust.	West Aust.	Tasmania	Northern Territory	The Commonwealth (a)
TOTAL PERSONS								
1901	29,157	26,260	6,494	2,405	4,180	1,093	(c)	69,589
1902	34,292	22,858	4,153	2,568	4,750	1,867	(c)	70,488
1903	28,041	8,079	2,346	1,685	3,867	1,353	(c)	45,371
1904	30,068	8,776	1,692	1,468	3,979	1,825	(c)	47,808
1905	29,855	9,142	1,792	1,618	3,809	1,688	(c)	47,904
1906	31,171	10,010	2,076	1,529	4,348	1,753	(c)	50,887
1907	42,391	13,358	3,747	2,098	4,639	2,405	(c)	68,638
1908	45,007	12,679	4,663	2,670	5,041	2,148	(c)	72,208
1909	51,025	13,936	6,899	3,365	6,256	2,128	(c)	83,609
1910	53,379	15,014	10,911	4,286	9,924	2,178	(c)	95,692
1911	70,405	22,653	18,128	7,422	18,702	4,477	122	141,909
1912	87,916	35,579	12,051	10,111	16,560	4,489	252	166,958
1913	75,259	29,494	10,584	8,337	15,733	2,358	141	141,906
1914	67,268	21,129	8,599	4,733	6,982	2,230	145	111,086
1915	44,362	13,672	4,137	2,068	4,312	1,987	423	(d) 70,961
1916	39,688	14,145	2,543	1,137	3,836	1,798	258	(d) 63,405
1917	35,063	20,231	1,909	1,636	4,831	1,154	265	(d) 65,809
1918	38,744	31,225	1,494	2,154	5,103	...	205	(d) 78,925
1919	93,276	86,605	6,139	16,369	19,328	1,160	79	(d) 222,956
1920	72,515	20,947	4,215	4,447	6,881	20	84	(d) 109,199
1921	57,190	15,978	4,454	3,305	6,820	152	39	87,938
1922	53,326	21,279	6,026	3,836	9,025	2	19	93,513
1923	48,084	22,923	5,677	3,825	12,130	203	17	92,859
1924	55,066	24,066	6,529	5,216	12,775	6	9	103,667
1925	55,201	23,123	7,120	4,610	9,977	13	31	100,075
1926	62,395	23,038	7,232	5,590	9,640	4	25	107,924

(a) Arrivals from places beyond Australia; (b) including Federal Capital Territory; (c) Northern Territory included with South Australia; (d) including Troops.

investigating the racial composition or geographical origin of the people than do the records of immigration and emigration. Consequently, except for the years subsequent to the latest census, it has been customary to discard the migration figures for such purposes. The Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics has revised the past records of migration in the light of the results of successive censuses so far as numbers of each sex are concerned, but it has not been considered necessary or desirable to attempt any revision of the numbers in regard to age or race or other attributes. Although these adjusted results are issued in appropriate publications it is, of course, impossible to withdraw the defective figures previously disseminated. All adjustments are made by amending the departure figures because it has been considered that the greatest source of error lies in the unrecorded departures. To rectify the error disclosed in Table 58, it was necessary to increase the emigrant males by 0.566 per cent and females by 4.45 per cent. For the adjustment of current records these factors are modified

to 1 per cent for males and 4.5 per cent for females. As an indication of the improvement which has been made in the records, the corresponding adjustments for the previous decade had been 14.5 per cent for males and 10 per cent for females.

The figures in Table 59 show the number of arrivals in Australia, according to the State or Territory in which they landed, from the inception of the Commonwealth to December 31, 1926.

From the experience of the two years 1925 and 1926 it would seem that nearly 69 per cent of the permanent arrivals (from non-Australian lands) came from Great Britain, 4.7 per cent from New Zealand and about 9 per cent from other British countries, so that about 83 per cent of the permanent new arrivals were from British countries. Italy sent 10 per cent and other foreign countries 7 per cent.

The birthplaces of residents of Australia, as ascertained by the census of April, 1921, showed 84.5 per cent to be natives (*i. e.* born in Australia). Of the immigrant population in Australia at that time the birthplaces were as given in Table 60.

TABLE 60.

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION NOT BORN IN AUSTRALIA, BY PLACE OF BIRTH, 1921.

Place of Birth	Per Cent	Place of Birth	Per Cent
British Isles.....	80.5	America.....	1.5
New Zealand.....	4.5	United States.....	0.7
Europe (continent).....	8.3	Canada.....	0.4
Germany.....	2.7	Polynesia.....	0.4
Asia.....	3.5	At sea.....	0.5
China.....	1.7	Total.....	100.0
Africa.....	0.8		
(South African Union mostly).			

The length of time these elements of the population have been in Australia may be determined from the residence records of the census. Thus at the date of the 1921 census (April 4), the number of surviving immigrants was 840,000 of whom 286,000 entered during the decade 1911-20; the next largest decennial contribution

was 174,000 for 1881-90. Of the German immigrants 22,000 were surviving and of these the largest number for any decade was 6,000 arriving during 1881-90. The Greek, Italian, and Russian elements of the Australian population entered the country much more recently. These few figures illustrate the superiority of the census data over the migration statistics.

The proportions according to birthplace, of the immigrants surviving in 1920 who entered Australia after 1870, have undergone no marked permanent change. From Table 61 it appears that only the figures relating to those who entered Australia during the decade 1891-1900 are slightly eccentric, but they indicate the effects of the unusual and world-wide financial depression of the period. Notwithstanding the development of gold fields in Western Australia, the immigration of these ten years added little to the population. The high percentage of Asiatics and the low percentage of persons from the British Isles suggest that conditions in Australia did not attract immigrants from countries with a relatively high standard of living, but continued to be attractive to Asiatics.

TABLE 61.

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION NOT BORN IN AUSTRALIA,
CLASSIFIED BY DECADE OF ARRIVAL AND COUNTRY OF
BIRTH, 1921.

Country of Birth	Decade of Arrival and Length of Residence in Years				
	0-9 yrs.	10-19 yrs.	20-29 yrs.	30-39 yrs.	40-49 yrs.
	1911-20	1901-10	1891-1900	1881-90	1871-80
New Zealand.....	4.0	6.5	8.1	4.6	3.4
British Isles.....	83.6	77.4	60.7	82.2	79.5
Other European...	6.9	9.9	11.1	7.7	10.8
Asia.....	2.7	2.2	16.7	3.4	3.0
All others.....	2.8	4.0	3.4	2.1	3.3
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

During the most recent decade the immigration from nearly all countries was greater than it had been before, but the rate of increase from the British Isles was so much greater than from other countries that the composition of the immigrant population be-

came very similar, in this respect, to the composition of the survivors from the immigrants of 30 years earlier.

There is no direct evidence of the rate of assimilation of the foreign born in Australia. Some evidence about the degree of assimilation by intermarriage is furnished by the birthplaces of the parents of native children. If the results for so recent a year as 1925 are of significance, the figures given in Table 62 will be interesting. That table shows, for a representative list of countries, the birthplaces of the foreign-born fathers of children born in Australia during the year. It shows, further, the number of

TABLE 62.

COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF PARENTS OF AUSTRALIAN-BORN CHILDREN HAVING FOREIGN-BORN FATHERS, 1925.

Country of Birth of Father	Number of fathers	Number of mothers born in:			Australian-born mothers as per cent of total
		Same country as father	Australia	Another country	
Austria.....	33	4	25	4	75.7
Belgium.....	11	2	7	2	63.6
Czechoslovakia....	9	1	6	2	66.6
Denmark.....	122	10	90	22	73.8
Finland.....	47	6	34	7	72.3
France.....	43	11	26	6	60.5
Germany.....	365	52	289	24	79.2
Greece.....	268	61	179	28	66.8
Italy.....	523	144	347	32	66.3
Yugoslavia.....	56	39	15	2	26.8
Netherlands.....	57	15	31	11	54.4
Norway.....	83	2	71	10	85.5
Poland.....	37	12	9	16	24.3
Russia.....	158	49	76	33	48.0
Spain.....	29	10	13	6	44.8
Sweden.....	84	4	71	9	84.5
Switzerland.....	45	8	27	10	60.0
China.....	111	12	94	5	84.6
Japan.....	24	10	13	1	54.2
Syria.....	105	52	37	16	35.2
Totals.....	2,210	604	1,460	246	66.0

mothers born in the same country as the fathers of their Australian-born children (compatriot parents), and the number of mothers born in Australia or in a country different from either.

Table 62 shows, for example, that in 1925 children were born in Australia to 33 fathers who had been born in Austria, while 25 of the 33 mothers were native Australians and 4 were neither Australians nor Austrians by birth. The assimilation by Australia of the different stocks here represented is best brought out by the last column giving the per cent of the fathers of each stock who find wives in Australia. The total of the figures given in Table 62 indicate that 66 per cent of the non-British fathers in Australia are married to Australian-born women.

The census of 1921 showed that about 258,000 of the Australian people were born of immigrant mothers by fathers born in Australia, and about 716,000 were born of Australian-born mothers by immigrant fathers; in all about 973,000 were the offspring of unions between natives and immigrants.

There are no data about what proportion of the immigrants enter as individuals and what proportion in families.

The volume of net immigration into Australia shows a close relation to the number of assisted immigrants. During the late '90's and the earlier years of the present century the net result in several years was an excess of departures. During the same periods the assisted immigrants were relatively few. Assisted immigrants since 1860 have been 56 per cent of the net immigration into Australia.

There is little direct and reliable statistical evidence of the occupations in which immigrants engage. In the case of those who are "assisted," it is possible to ascertain some indication of the nature of their occupations before entering, and a few figures for the years 1913 to 1924 have been compiled.¹ The figures apply to all immigrants without regard to their racial origin. It is known that many of the Italians are engaged in the sugar industry of Queensland and as wood-cutters for the mines in Western Australia.

The proportion of immigrants resident in rural, rather than urban, areas also has some significance. The census of 1921 showed that 39 per cent of the native population of Australia were residing in rural areas and 61 per cent in urban areas; the proportion of Australian-born males who resided in rural areas was 42 per cent, and of females 36 per cent. Of the immigrants, how-

¹[See Volume I, Australian Commonwealth, Tables IX, X, XI, pp. 957 ff.—Ed.]

ever, only 30 per cent were in rural districts—of males 34 per cent and of females 25 per cent. Some of these details are given by Table 63.

The Greeks and Russians in Australia show a decided preference for life in cities. Of the Greeks 58.5 per cent are in the metropolitan cities where they are engaged chiefly in the retail fruit trade, fish trade, and the restaurant business. Of the Russians, 63.5 per cent are found in metropolitan cities. These are largely Russian Jews engaged in the clothing trade or in finance.

TABLE 63.

PER CENT OF CERTAIN STOCKS IN AUSTRALIA, RESIDENT IN RURAL DISTRICTS BY BIRTH AND SEX.
(Census of April 4, 1921)

Country of Birth	Males	Females	All Persons
Australia.....	42.1	35.8	39.0
Europe:			
British Isles.....	32.1	21.0	27.2
Denmark.....	45.6	37.5	43.5
Germany.....	55.0	52.4	54.1
Greece.....	19.6	16.0	19.1
Italy.....	41.1	42.4	41.4
Malta.....	52.5	16.7	48.1
Russia.....	24.3	17.6	22.1
Sweden.....	40.1	30.9	39.1
<i>Total Europe.....</i>	<i>33.4</i>	<i>26.8</i>	<i>30.0</i>
Asia:.....	38.5	23.6	36.3
All extra-Australians.....	33.4	25.2	29.8

As to the prosperity of immigrants compared with that of persons remaining in the home countries, there is no tangible evidence. Neither have we any direct evidence about the relative economic prosperity of immigrants and natives. A slight clue to the Australian situation is furnished by the average occupational status of the two groups. The census of 1921 showed that of the native males who could be classified according to their grade of occupation, 7.3 per cent were employers of labor and 16.5 per cent were working for themselves, though not employing labor. Of the immigrants born in the British Isles, 7.5 per cent were employers of labor and 16.7 per cent were working for themselves. Among

the natives of other European countries 9.5 per cent were employers and nearly 25 per cent were working for themselves. The full-blooded non-European stocks show 6.2 per cent of employers and 30.5 per cent working for themselves. Since it may be assumed that employers of labor have at any rate considerable credit, and that those working for themselves have some capital, these figures indicate that the immigrant stocks have attained considerable success.