

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION
STATISTICS, 1876 – Extract from:
SOUTH AUSTRALIA :**

ITS HISTORY, RESOURCES, AND PRODUCTIONS.

EDITED BY

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ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN IN THE COLONY.

WITH MAPS.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AND DEDICATED
(BY PERMISSION) TO HIS EXCELLENCY SIR ANTHONY MUSGRAVE, K.C.M.G., &c.,
GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE COLONY.

L O N D O N :

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON,
CROWN BUILDINGS, 188 FLEET STREET.

1876.

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AGRICULTURE.

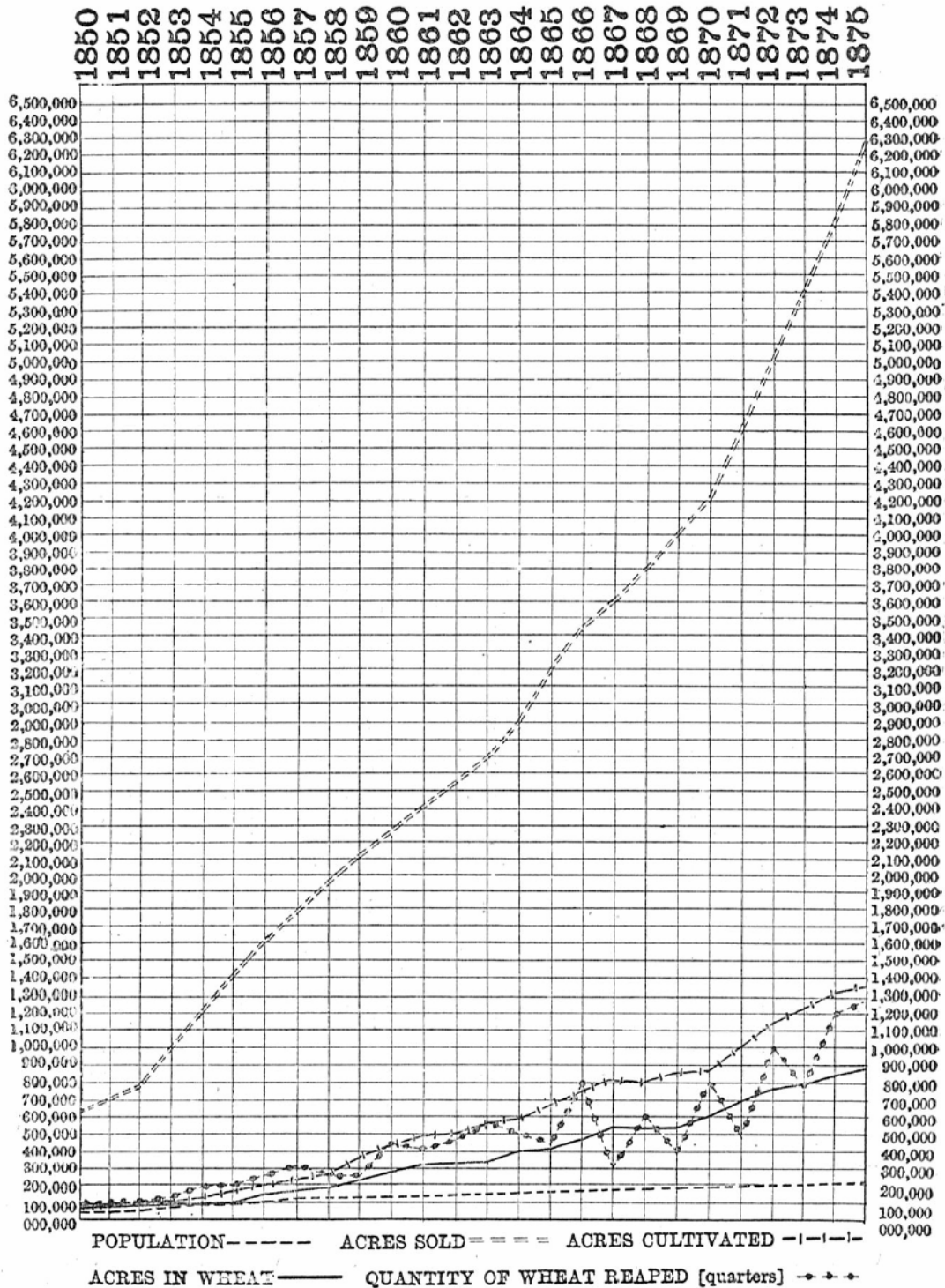
Where over four-tenths of the male population of a community are engaged in farming pursuits, the necessity for collecting authentic information regarding the progress of agriculture is sufficiently apparent. For many years past the annual statistics collected on this subject have afforded a mass of records the value of which every year becomes greater.

The Special Commissioner of the Crown Colonies at the Vienna Exhibition (Mr. William Robinson, now Governor of the Bahamas), in reporting to the Imperial Government, said :—"Of all the British Colonies, South Australia exhibits the most striking picture at present of farming industry, and on the whole seems to be the place where, good as the labourer's condition may be elsewhere, he has, by prudence and industry, the best chance of rising in the social scale, and becoming in his turn the employer of labour," and further, "the yeomanry who have found a home in South Australia, and who are at once tillers of the soil and employers of labour, are more than any one class the real bone and sinew of the Colony; and the industry which has so widely covered the land with farms, homesteads, tillage, and fencing of every description, has probably never been equalled in its result in any British Colony in the same number of years by the same amount of population. It is by the spread of agriculture that the greatest amount of industrial prosperity has been created,

A.

ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

DIAGRAM SHOWING THE POPULATION, ACRES SOLD, ACRES CULTIVATED, ACRES IN WHEAT,
AND WHEAT HARVESTED.

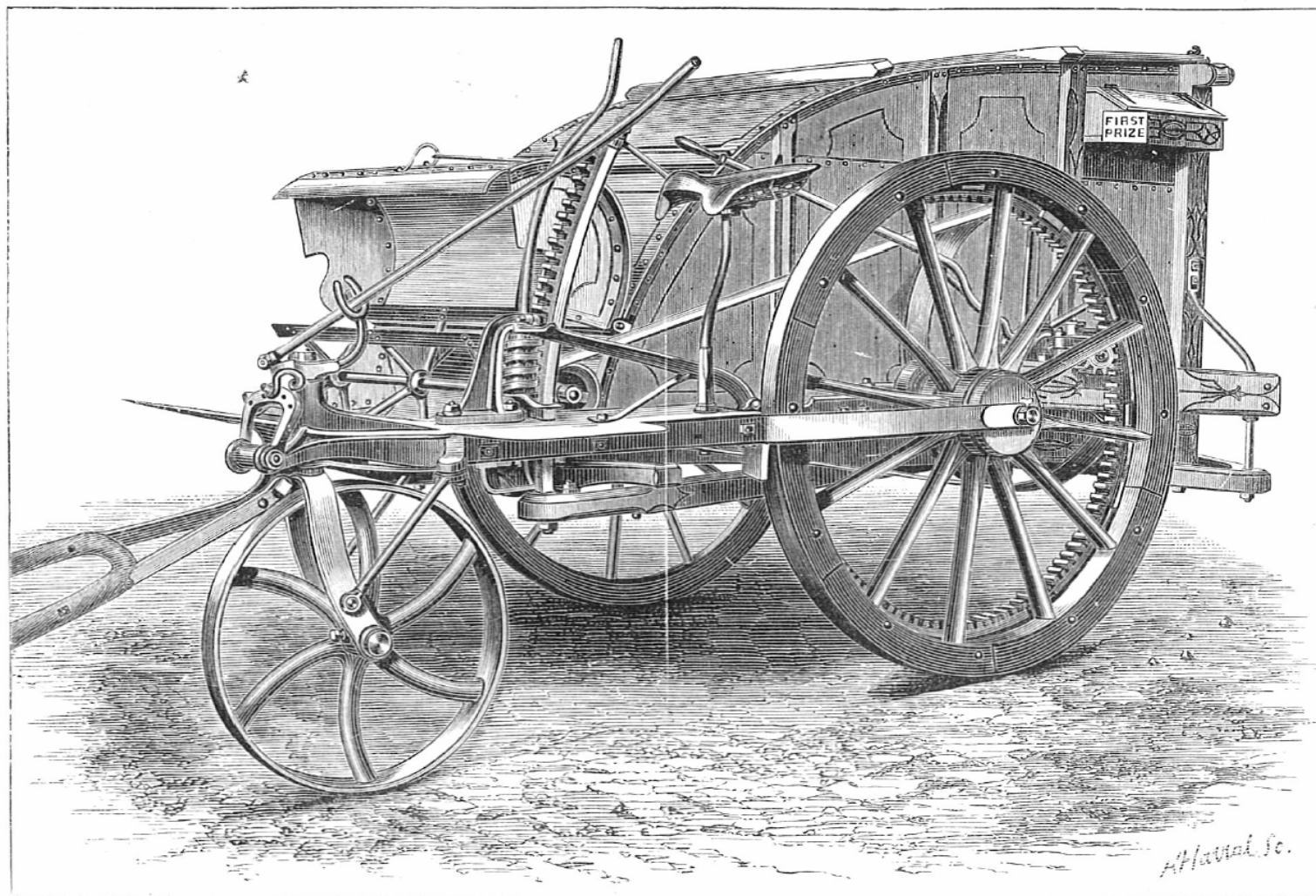


and the real settlement of the country most effectually accomplished." An analysis of the statistics of the last fifteen years abundantly proves the soundness of His Excellency's judgment.

The area of land alienated in South Australia is 6,283,881 acres, or 120 acres for each male adult. Of this area, 1,330,484 acres are under cultivation, showing a result of one in every 4·3 acres of purchased land to be under tillage. There are six acres and a half of cultivated land for each individual of the population, equal to twenty-eight acres for each adult male, or sixty acres for each person returned at the last census as engaged on farms. The following table exhibits very clearly the operation of the new land system, as regards settlement and cultivation, since its inauguration in 1871 :—

Counties.	Acres under Cultivation.				
	1870-71.	1871-2.	1872-3.	1873-4.	1874-5.
Adelaide ...	181,360	177,808	171,615	169,378	165,350
Gawler ...	159,755	179,192	197,193	193,002	199,158
Light ...	248,400	262,526	264,624	251,951	245,491
Stanley ...	125,421	155,580	167,502	162,160	167,715
Victoria ...	5,697	20,263	79,539	116,981	154,494
Kimberley ...	—	—	931	2,054	7,760
Dalhousie ...	—	—	1,894	8,569	29,497
Fergusson ...	1,412	6,796	10,731	25,789	38,744
Daly ...	15,335	24,869	43,231	43,156	68,246
Frome ...	764	542	507	6,247	16,268
Hindmarsh...	77,585	73,911	63,926	61,153	54,942
Sturt ...	40,107	34,221	37,782	43,679	35,767
Eyre ...	27,648	27,937	37,585	37,853	45,790
Burra ...	11,445	18,103	19,865	23,981	24,943
Hamley ...	2	6	5	16	14
Albert ...	—	1	—	—	—
Russell ...	7,946	9,234	11,503	12,686	13,591
Buckingham ...	99	94	463	1,682	2,763
Cardwell ...	262	229	150	131	290
MacDonnell ...	2,922	4,163	5,535	5,767	4,936
Robe ...	5,924	6,922	7,676	8,537	8,573
Grey ...	41,158	36,548	36,612	44,684	40,313
Flinders ...	4,240	4,427	4,612	4,637	4,903
Carnarvon ...	1,045	1,056	993	759	772
Pastoral Districts...	479	228	372	221	164
Total ...	959,006	1,044,656	1,164,846	1,225,073	1,330,484

About two-thirds of the total area cultivated is cropped with wheat, of which cereal 839,638 acres were reaped last



SIDE VIEW OF REAPING MACHINE, SHOWING HOW SPEED IS OBTAINED.

year, yielding an aggregate of 9,862,693 bushels, the largest quantity yet produced in the Colony. The crop was a fair average one, of excellent quality, and, considering the scarcity of farm labour, was safely and early secured. It is important to note that, whilst the area of wheat grown has increased more than one hundred per cent. during the last ten years, the population has only increased thirty per cent.

The harvest now being gathered is expected to produce twelve million bushels, which will permit of an export of over 230,000 tons of bread-stuffs, after providing for home requirements.

Annexed is a statement showing the total area of land under cultivation, the acreage under wheat, the gross produce of the harvest, and the average yield per acre at intervals of five years :—

Seasons.	Acres Cultivated.	Acres under Wheat.	Produce, Wheat.	Average per Acre.	
			Bushels.	Bush.	lbs.
1860-61	428,816	273,672	3,576,593	13	4
1865-6	660,569	410,608	3,587,800	8	44
1870-71	959,006	604,761	6,961,164	11	30
1874-5	1,330,484	839,638	9,862,693	11	45

With regard to the comparatively low average yield above shown, it must be borne in mind, in judging of the relative productiveness of the soil of South Australia as compared with that of other countries, that a great portion of the land has been sown with wheat continuously for many successive years without manure or rest, and, being in the hands of small proprietors, has received only the minimum of cultivation. This, of course, tends to reduce the general average; but there are many districts where farming is carried on on a large scale, and with proper appliances, where the yield of this cereal is from ten to fifteen bushels per acre beyond the average shown above.

As evidence of the high quality of the South Australian grain, it may be mentioned that the prize wheat exhibited at the Agricultural Shows during the past ten years has averaged 68 lbs. weight to the Imperial bushel.

In 1865-6 there were 423,881 acres under grain, viz. wheat,

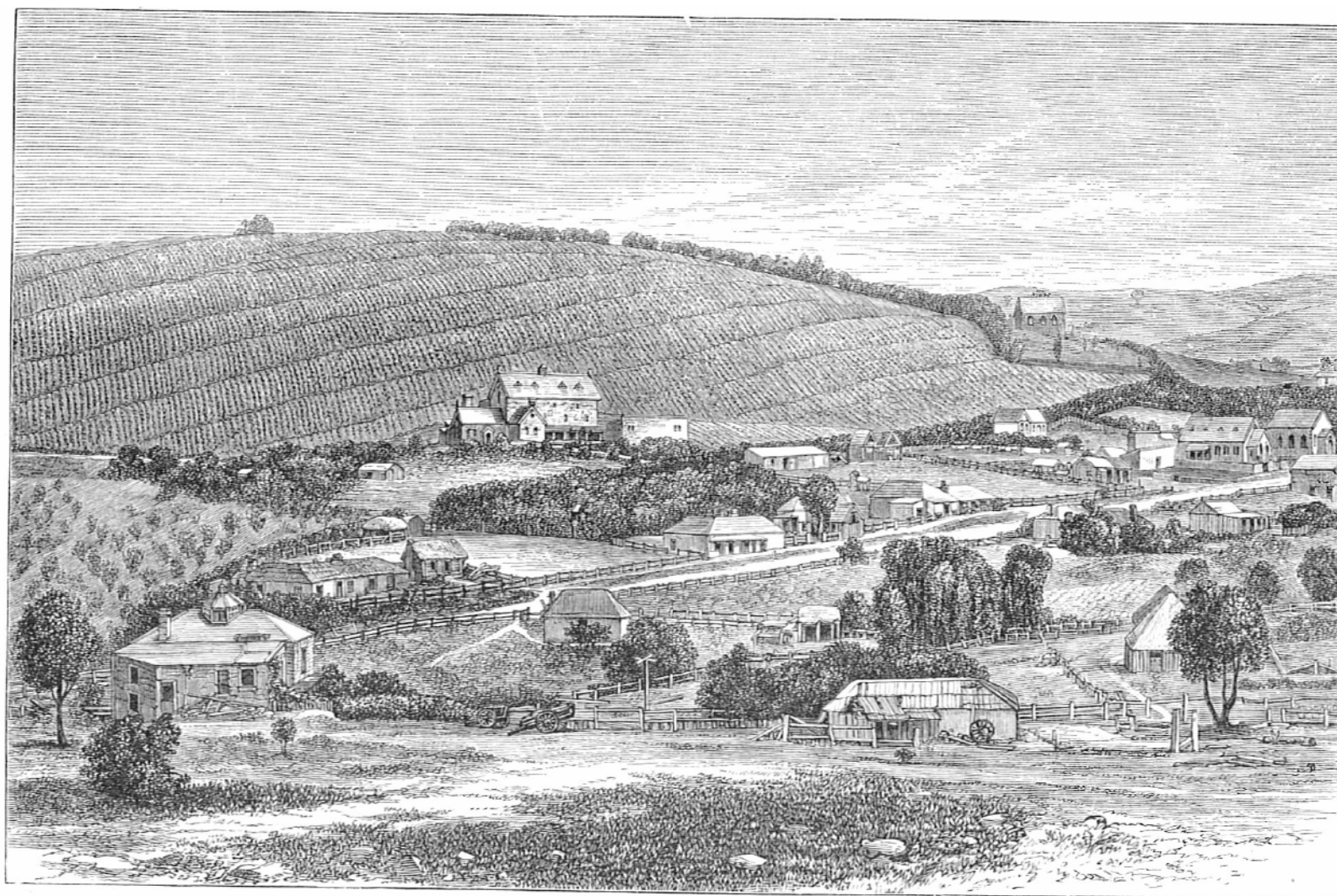
barley, oats, and peas, and in 1874-5 there were 860,475 acres ; so that within the period specified the acreage so occupied was more than doubled.

Under other crops, flax, hay, potatoes, orchard, garden, vineyard, and fallow land, there were 229,182 acres in 1865-6, and 442,933 in 1874-5, or nearly double. The total quantity under cultivation at the earlier date was 660,569, and at the later, 1,330,484, or more than double the acreage. The extent of land now under hay cultivation is 160,931, and of fallow-land, 264,327 acres. In 1858, only eighteen years after the Province was founded, there were 89,945 acres of land under wheat culture ; in 1865-6, there were 410,608 ; and in 1874-5, no less than 839,638 acres.

The following table shows the extent of land under cultivation, and each description of crop, at quinquennial intervals since 1860-61 :—

Crops.	Acres under Cultivation in Years			
	1860-61.	1865-6.	1870-71.	1874-5.
For Grain—				
Wheat	273,672	410,608	604,761	839,638
Barley	11,336	9,362	22,912	13,724
Oats	2,273	2,872	6,188	2,785
Peas	—	969	3,719	4,328
For Green Forage—				
Wheat, Barley, Oats, &c. ...	2,174	2,514	2,600	1,117
Sorghum	116	230	—	—
Lucerne	1,726	1,424	3,445	6,699
Permanent Artificial Grasses...	1,836	3,408	3,712	19,260
Flax	—	—	186	274
Other Crops	584	1,272	829	434
Hay	55,818	101,996	140,316	160,931
Potatoes	2,348	2,775	3,376	4,582
Orchard	2,147	2,554	2,763	3,077
Garden	3,910	3,919	4,345	4,257
Vineyard	3,180	6,629	6,131	5,051
Fallow Land	67,696	110,037	153,723	264,327
Totals	428,816	660,569	959,006	1,330,484

Vine culture is an important and progressive industry. There are 5050 acres of land devoted to this purpose, the total number of vines being 5,155,988, of which 4,874,507 are in



CLARENDON VINEYARD, NEAR ADELAIDE.

bearing. The produce of these vineyards for the year ended March 1875 was 648,186 gallons of wine, about one hundred and thirty gallons per acre.

The suitability of the soil and climate of South Australia to the growth of wine was soon discovered by the early settlers, some of whom had brought from Europe a variety of high class vine cuttings. The slopes of the hills produce wines of a full-bodied character similar to those of Spain and Portugal, whilst those made in the more elevated districts resemble the lighter wines of the Rhine. Whilst the local demand is fully supplied at very cheap rates, a considerable export trade in wines of a higher character is carried on, and which might be increased to a great extent but for obstructive fiscal laws. Whilst the lower class wines of the Continent are admitted to the ports of the Mother Country at a minimum rate of duty, the Customs dues charged upon superior wines from Australia are so high as to be almost prohibitory.

That the wines of South Australia are, as a rule, of a high character is proved by the fact that they have always been awarded prizes at the several Great International Exhibitions.

The introduction of flax-growing into the ordinary routine of farm operations, has been followed by considerable success. The prices realized for this commodity in the European markets have been very encouraging.

Considerable attention has also been paid to the manufacture of preserved fruits, and the drying of raisins and currants. This branch of industry is rapidly progressing, and, whilst it now goes far to supply local requirements, will probably soon develop into an export trade.

Almond trees are of rapid growth, and large quantities of a superior description of soft-shell almond are gathered yearly for home consumption and for shipment.

South Australia possesses all the conditions requisite for the successful and profitable culture of the olive. This tree, like the vine, was early introduced into the Colony, and its growth and productiveness have been so remarkable that large plantations have been established and stocked with the best Con-

tinental varieties. Olive oil of the most delicate character has been expressed, and gained awards at the various Exhibitions. Its purity and general superiority over the imported article of commerce has acquired for it a first position in the market. The produce of the plantations is eagerly purchased by persons who have entered upon the business of the manufacture of oil. It may be stated, as showing the importance which is attached to the cultivation of the olive, as of the mulberry (of which several plantations of the most suitable kinds exist for the development of sericulture), the almond, vine, orange, fig, and hop, that the land laws provide that the planting and cultivation of one acre of land with any of these trees shall be equivalent to the cultivation of six acres of cereals.

Orchards, gardens, and vineyards abound, and, in short, the variety and excellence of the fruits and vegetables produced in the Colony cannot be surpassed. The climate and soil enables the productions of temperate and tropical regions to be cultivated almost side by side, and throughout the year; and offers an unlimited field of profitable occupation in connection with ordinary farming pursuits.