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POPULATION AND DWELLINGS.—TERRITORIES, 4th APRIL, 1921.

(EXCLUSIVE OF FULL-BLOOD ABORIGINALS IN THE NORTHERN AND FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORIES AND OF THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA).

Territory.	Population.			Dwellings.			Total.
	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Occu- pied.	Unoccu- pied.	Being Built.	
Northern Territory ..	2,821	1,046	3,867	1,074	138	1	1,213
Federal Capital Territory ..	1,567	1,005	2,572	526	29	..	555
Norfolk Island ..	339	378	717	168	22	3	193
Papua	1,408	670	2,078	(a) 672	43	4	719
Territory of New Guinea ..	2,502	671	3,173	1,056	18	..	1,074

(a) In addition, there were 15 cases in which Census night was passed in camps without ordinary dwellings.

§ 13. The Aboriginal Population.

1. *Origin.*—On account of their primitive state the Australian aborigines have for a long time been the subject of much interest and curiosity, and a considerable amount of literature has been written concerning them. Their customs in minute detail have been placed on record by students such as Brough Smith, A. W. Howitt, Baldwin Spencer, and others. Sufficient attention has been devoted to their languages to ascertain that they all belong to one group, although they show such extraordinary variety that the members of one tribe frequently experience difficulty in understanding their nearest neighbours. The different theories from time to time advanced regarding the origin of the aborigines have ceased to arouse controversy, it being now generally accepted that a negro race entered Australia in the late Pliocene or the early Pleistocene age, when Australia was apparently connected with Asia by a land-bridge, of which the Malay Archipelago and New Guinea formed part, and that gradually this race spread over the whole continent which then included Tasmania. Later, a dark-skinned race, akin to the Dravidians of India and the Veddahs of Ceylon, invaded the continent by the same land-bridge, and, by fusion with the earlier inhabitants, produced the present-day aborigines of Australia. The fact that the now extinct Tasmanian tribes were unadulterated negroes was due to Tasmania having been separated from the continent by Bass Strait before the second invasion took place.

2. *Estimates of Number.*—From time to time attempts have been made to ascertain the number of aborigines in the various divisions of Australia, but the results have not been satisfactory, and the efforts in this direction of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, at the taking of the Census in 1911 and again in 1921, proved disappointing. On each occasion, considerable numbers of aborigines were enumerated, but in the case of those living in a wild or semi-wild state estimates only could be obtained. Nevertheless, all these attempts, of which detailed accounts are given hereinafter, are valuable—both from the point of view of ethnology and social economy, as well as from that of general history. They have made it possible to determine with a reasonable measure of certainty (a) the number of aborigines in Australia, at the advent of the Europeans in 1788, viz., about 150,000; (b) the rate of decline; and (c) their present number.

3. *Aborigines in New South Wales.*—(i) *Phillip's Estimate.* The earliest records in regard to the numbers of Australian aborigines date back to the time of Captain Phillip at the end of the eighteenth century. In a report to Lord Sydney four months after his arrival, Phillip wrote that it was impossible, with any accuracy, to give the number of the natives, but he was of the opinion that around Botany Bay and Port Jackson and on the intermediate coast, they could not be less than 1,500.

(ii) *Numbers in 1826.* In 1826, a return of the native population in the then settled districts of New South Wales gave the number as 3,019. Apparently the aboriginals in the vicinity of the young settlement had greatly diminished, for in the Parramatta district there were only 49 left. The opinion was held that many had migrated into country less accessible to the white man.

(iii) *Estimates by Sadleir in 1826-7.* In 1826, and the following year, Lieutenant Sadleir, of the Royal Navy, made an estimate of the numbers of the aboriginal tribes. Of 27 tribes mentioned in this list, he visited 24, and he gives the total number of natives in these tribes as 2,710. The Metigan tribe, he states, had been reduced to 10, and the Bathurst tribe to 30.

(iv) *Census of 1871.* Thenceforward no attempt was made to enumerate the natives until the Census of 1871. On that occasion, 983 aboriginals were included in the total population of the colony. These represented civilized aboriginals and those residing in districts settled by Europeans. The number of those belonging to wild and wandering tribes was estimated at 12,000.

(v) *Census of 1881.* At the Census of 1881, the civilized aboriginals, or aboriginals living in communication with Europeans, numbered 1,643, while the number of wild and wandering aboriginals was estimated at 10,000.

(vi) *Census of 1891.* In 1891 the first complete enumeration was made of aboriginals residing within the present boundaries of New South Wales. The total number of full-blood aboriginals was 5,097—2,896 being males and 2,201 females.

(vii) *Census of 1901.* In 1901 the number of full-blood aboriginals was 3,778—2,192 males and 1,586 females.

(viii) *Census of 1911.* In 1911 the full-bloods in New South Wales numbered 2,012—1,152 males and 860 females.

(ix) *Census of 1921.* In 1921 the number was 1,597—923 males, 674 females.

(x) *Summary 1871 to 1921.* A summary of the preceding figures—estimated and enumerated—is given hereunder:—

ABORIGINALS IN NEW SOUTH WALES, 1871 TO 1921.

Year	1871.	1881.	1891.	1901.	1911.	1921.
No.	12,983	11,643	5,097	3,778	2,012	1,597

These figures suggest that the numbers of those designated "wild and wandering tribes" were overestimated in 1871 and 1881, and also that the natives of New South Wales did not at any time exceed 20,000. Further in the decade 1891-1901 they decreased by 25.88 per cent., in the decade 1901-1911 there was a decline of 46.74 per cent., and in the decade 1911-1921 of 20.6 per cent.

4. *Aboriginals in Victoria.*—(i) *Early Estimates of Number.* There are at least five different estimates of the number of aboriginals in Victoria when the first white settlers crossed Bass Strait and settled at Port Phillip. Sir Thomas Mitchell, judging by the small number he encountered on his exploration trips, put the figure as low as a thousand; Mr. Robinson, the first Protector, gave it as about 5,000; Brough-Smith author of "The Aboriginals of Victoria," made an estimate of 3,000; E. S. Parker, of 7,500; and W. Thomson, of 6,000. The mean of these estimates is about 5,400.

As the number of white settlers increased, the number of natives declined. Thus, the tribe around Geelong numbered 173 when the first settler built his hut on the Barwon River, twenty years later there were only 34. Of 292 aboriginals around Melbourne in 1838, only 20 had survived at the beginning of the seventies. Brough-Smith says that in Gippsland there were originally more than 1,000, but 40 years later only 200 remained.

(ii) *Census of 1861.* The first official report compiled by the "Board for the Protection of Aborigines" in 1861 gives the total number as 2,341. Of these 1,694 were enumerated at the Census of the same year.

(iii) *Census of 1871.* At the Census of 1871, 1,330 were counted—784 males and 546 females.

(iv.) *Census of 1881.* In 1881 the number is given as 780—460 males and 320 females.

(v) *Census of 1891.* Prior to the Census of 1891 no distinction was made between full-bloods and half-castes. In that year there were in Victoria 317 full-blood aboriginals, 192 being males and 125 females.

(vi) *Census of 1901.* At the Census of 1901, full-bloods and half-castes were again grouped together, the number being 652, of whom 367 were males and 285 females.

(vii) *Census of 1911.* In 1911 the number of full-blood aboriginals was 196, of whom 103 were males and 93 females.

(viii) *Census of 1921.* In 1921 there were 144—80 males and 64 females.

(ix) *Summary 1861 to 1921.* The following figures summarize the results at the respective Censuses :—

ABORIGINALS IN VICTORIA, 1861 TO 1921.

Year	Full-blood and Half-castes.			Full-blood.			
	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1901.	1911.	1921.
No.	2,384	1,330	780	317	250 (about)	196	144

5. *Aboriginals in Queensland.*—(i) *Estimate in 1881.* In 1881 the number of aboriginals in Queensland was estimated by officers of the Police Department at 20,585.

(ii) *Census of 1901.* The following statement has been extracted from the Queensland Census Report of 1901 :—

“ In 1901 it was considered desirable to record the number of those aboriginals and half-castes who were living in conformity with the usages of civilization, and who had abandoned their nomadic habit of life ; in other words, those who had become integral parts of the industrial population, or who, by attending school at some mission station, had actually entered upon civilized life. In this way, 5,137 full-blood aboriginals and 1,533 half-castes were included with the general population of Queensland. All those, whether full-blooded or half-caste, living in camps and leading the lives usual to aboriginals were excluded. It was estimated that about 20,000 persons were thus omitted.”

(iii) *Census of 1911.* At the Census of 1911, 8,687 full-blood aboriginals were enumerated, of whom 5,145 were males and 3,542 females. No estimate was, on that occasion, given for those not enumerated.

(iv) *Census of 1921.* At the Census of 1921 the number of full-bloods in Queensland was estimated at 12,614. This total would probably exclude about 1,400 wild and wandering natives in the northern and western fringes of the State. Census slips were furnished for 7,527 natives, of whom 4,501 were males and 3,026 were females.

6. *Aboriginals in South Australia.*—(i) *Early Estimates of Numbers.* The first attempt to estimate the aboriginal population in parts of South Australia was made in 1843, when Moorhouse concluded that there were about 1,600 distributed in the Adelaide district, Encounter Bay, Moorundi, Port Lincoln, and Hutt River in regular and irregular contact with Europeans. He estimated that there were about 3,000 scattered over a tract extending 160 miles north and 200 miles east of Adelaide. Eyre thought there must be about twice as many. J. D. Woods, on the basis of Eyre's estimate, gave 12,000 as the probable number throughout South Australia.

(ii) *Decrease up to 1877.* As in the other southern States, the aboriginals in South Australia soon commenced to decrease. In the districts where Moorhouse in 1843 estimated 1,600, there were only 24 at the beginning of the present century. The Port Lincoln tribe had been reduced to half a dozen. The Narrinyeri tribe, which in 1840 is

believed to have numbered about 3,000, had by 1877 dwindled to 613, and it is doubtful if there is now a single survivor. Several of the other southern tribes have entirely disappeared.

(iii) *Census of 1881.* Those living in the northern parts of the State naturally came less in contact with the whites, and at the Census of 1881 there were still 6,346 aboriginals in South Australia, 3,478 being males and 2,868 females.

(iv) *Number in 1908.* In 1908, 3,386 were recorded, which was 316 less than in 1901.

(v) *Census of 1921.* The estimated number in 1921 was 1,609, of which 958 were enumerated, comprising 539 males and 419 females.

(vi) *Summary, 1881 to 1921.* A summary of the above particulars gives the following totals :—

ABORIGINALS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 1881 TO 1921.

Year	..	..	..	1881.	1908.	1921.
No.	..	..	..	6,346	3,386	1,609

7. *Aboriginals in Western Australia.*—(i) *Early Estimates of Numbers.* Attempts made from time to time to estimate the native population in Western Australia have, until recently, proved unsatisfactory, and, as late as 1881, the figures were not even published. Prior to the Census of 1891 no distinction was made between full-blood and half-caste aboriginals—"the latter were mostly brought up by and lived with the full-blooded."

(ii) *Census of 1891.* The number of full-blood aboriginals enumerated in 1891 totalled 5,670—3,223 males and 2,447 females. These figures included only those living in contact with Europeans.

(iii) *Census of 1901.* At the Census of 1901 the number enumerated was 5,261, 2,933 being males and 2,328 females. On both occasions the half-castes were included with the white population. The Census report of 1901 contains the following remarks :—

"Taking into account the fact that at the Census of 1901 the area of settled country was very much greater than at that of 1891, it would appear that, if the two enumerations are equally reliable, the full-blood aboriginal population is gradually dying out before advancing civilization, while the half-caste population is increasing, consequent on and in proportion to that advance."

(iv) *Census of 1911.* In 1911, 6,369 full-blood aboriginals were enumerated, of whom 3,433 were males and 2,936 were females.

(v) *Census of 1921.* At the Census of 1921 the number of full-blood aboriginals more or less in touch with Europeans was estimated at 15,587.

8. *Aboriginals in Tasmania.*—It is estimated that on the arrival of the Europeans the blacks in Tasmania numbered approximately 2,000. In the year 1835, when the natives were transferred to Flinders Island, their number had dwindled to 203. In 1847, the survivors, to the number of 44, were moved to Oyster Cove, on the mainland. There the last man of the race died in 1869, and the last woman in 1876.

9. *Aboriginals in the Northern Territory.*—(i) *Conflicting Estimates of Numbers.*—The number of aboriginals in the Northern Territory was, for a long time, estimated at 20,000 to 22,000. Professor Baldwin Spencer, who believed that these figures were too low, said :—"Judging by what I have seen and heard, I think it probable that a Census would show more nearly 50,000 than 20,000." Staniforth-Smith, who in 1920 acted as Administrator of the Territory, took a middle course, and placed the number at 35,000.

(ii) *Census of 1921.* The result of the last Census has shown that the old estimate was very close to the mark. The sum total of the estimates furnished by officers of the Police Department, who at the Census of 1921 acted as Census Collectors, and are in

close contact with the aborigines, gives the number as 17,349. Of these, 2,007 were enumerated—1,181 males and 826 females—and represented those in close contact with Europeans. There are, however, areas in the north-west, where, owing to the savage state of the natives, it is difficult to make a satisfactory estimate, and it is quite possible that with fuller knowledge the estimate of 1921 will need adjustment.

10. *Movement of the Decline in Numbers.*—The foregoing extracts from statistical records show that the decline in the number of the Australian aborigines, which commenced on the south-eastern fringe of the continent some 130 years ago, has been moving steadily towards the Indian Ocean ever since, and that the number of full-blood aborigines to-day is more likely to be under than over 60,000.

11. *Protection of the Aborigines.*—(i) *Early Difficulties.* The meeting of the white man with the blacks when Captain Phillip and his party arrived at Botany Bay on the 18th January, 1788, was of a friendly character, and quite in harmony with the instructions which the Commander had received from His Majesty the King. These instructions read:—

“You are to endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them; and if any of our subjects should wantonly destroy them or give them any unnecessary interruption in the exercise of their several occupations, it is our will and pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment according to the degree of offence.”

The instructions involved equal right of protection, and, considering the harsh spirit of the age, were singularly humane. They could not, however, be carried out in their entirety if Australia, or any part of it, was to be settled by the white race. The Australian aborigines were nomadic hunters, and got nothing from the land, except such animals as they were able to hunt down and a few roots and herbs. They required the whole of the habitable country for their sustenance, as the continent could not sustain more than one inhabitant to every 20 square miles under their primitive mode of living.

(ii) *Conflicts with the Natives.* The friendly relations between the whites and the blacks came to an end when the former commenced to move inland with their flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. The first white man was killed in 1788, and a punitive expedition was arranged, in the course of which a number of natives were slain. As years went by, provocations and retaliations were not wanting on either side. The chief complaint of the settlers was that the natives killed their sheep and cattle, and that of the natives that the settlers encroached on their hunting grounds and interfered with their womenfolk. In 1797 there was a conflict between the soldiery and a strong party of natives, five of the latter being killed. This feud between the two races went on for years, the zone of friction moving inland with the advance of the settlers. The Government occasionally took sides with the latter, but in most cases left it to the settlers and the aborigines to fight matters out between themselves.

(iii) *Awakening of the Public Conscience.* The utter destruction of the Tasmanian blacks stirred the conscience of those in responsible positions in England, as well as in Australia, and steps were taken to ameliorate the lot of the aborigines. Simultaneously a feeling that the natives had been wronged took possession of the public mind, and philanthropists assisted in transforming the new spirit into practical measures for protection. The Australian aborigines are very responsive to kind treatment, and although occasional conflicts have occurred down to the present day, the relations between the two peoples have greatly improved. Young natives serve on sheep and cattle stations as stockmen, boundary riders, and general station hands, and young girls as domestic servants. Protectors were appointed to watch native interests, reserves were in the course of time set apart for those who preferred their old life, and different religious bodies instituted missionary and educational work amongst the tribes.

(iv) *State Protection of Aborigines.* (a) *General.* After the Federation of the various colonies, the different States remained in control of their respective aboriginal affairs, and, although some of the Governments were slow in realizing that the protection of the original possessors of the land was a duty resting on the community as a whole, they have