

Tropics of Australia Have Many Resources

BRISBANE, Queensland, June 11.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.) Queensland is the coming country of the New Australia. The good lands of Victoria have long since been taken up. New South Wales is fairly well developed and South Australia and West Aust. offer as largely deserts that they can never support a great population. It is different with Queensland. The state has vast tracts of arid land which it expects to irrigate through artesian wells. It has already reclaimed a country twice as great as the state of New York, and I am told that the most of the vast area beyond the coastal range is underlain with subterranean lakes and streams, which will furnish water for stock. The cultivated lands are increasing every year. The government is slowly but surely pushing the railroads on into the interior, and enough pastures for thousands of sheep are now in use. Queens-

people. Both town and country demand all sorts of things of it. Not long ago a deputation called upon the officials here at Brisbane and demanded that they should experiment as to raising certain kinds of trees. The demand in this case was preposterous and the official angrily said:

"We can't spend the state money in that way. You ask the government to do everything. I am surprised that you do not demand that we suckle your babies."

I called at the agricultural department in Brisbane the other day to ask as to the experimental farms. I was told that these had been established in all parts of the state and the best of experts and specialists were imported to supervise them. A number of the experts are Americans and some of them receive very high salaries. Dr. Maxwell, the sugar expert, came here from the Hawaiian islands under a contract which gives him \$15,000 a

year. He told them he thought there was copper on his farm and that he had noticed green and blue stains in the rocks. The next day Mr. Gordon took the prospectors to the mountain and when they left they carried away a few samples. A few days later they came back and offered him \$5 per acre for the property. He was glad to sell and for this price they bought one of the richest mining properties ever known. To get money to work the mine they sold a half interest to three men in Rockhampton for \$10,000. With this they experimented and finally discovered that the ore could be worked by the chlorination process. The result was that the Morgans and their associates soon became millionaires. They have added to the works until now they have great mills, lit by electricity, which are kept going night and day. The top of the mountain has been cut off and there are still vast fortunes in sight. A hundred thousand dollars is now paid out in wages every month and for a long time dividends of \$500,000 a month were paid. A town has grown up at the foot of the mountain and more than 4,000 men are now constantly employed in getting out the gold.

Another large gold field is that of Charters Towers, a few miles back of the seaport of Townsville. From it millions of dollars' worth of gold have been taken, its output being only surpassed by Ballarat and Bendigo. The gold at the "Towers" was discovered in 1872 by three prospectors, who took out millions of dollars' worth of gold in a very short time. The principal mining is quartz mining, some of the mines being very deep. Up to 1885 \$50,000,000 worth of gold had been mined, and at present about \$55,000 is paid out every week in wages. A large town has grown up about the mines.

Gold in the Streets

Another mining field is that of Gympie, where, it is said, the boys pick up gold in the streets after a rain, sometimes getting as much as half an ounce a day. It was in that town that a man picked up a nugget worth \$1,100 not long ago. He was walking in the outskirts when he saw a little lump of yellow sticking out of the clay bank at the side of the road. He dug it out, and lo! it was gold. At that time Gympie was already thirty years old. So far Queensland has produced about \$200,000,000 worth of gold, and mines are being worked throughout a large area. There were 2,000 mines in operation ten years ago and there are more today.

The tin mines exist near the southern border and also in the north. There is one district in the latter section along the Wild river which is very rich. There are also copper mines and lead mines as well as mines of iron, bismuth and silver. Iron deposits are found in all sections, and in one district there are little mountains of iron ore. Mount Leviathan is a quarter of a mile in diameter at the base. It is 200 feet high and is said to be composed of pure magnetic iron.

Some of the best opals of Australia come from western Queensland. They are brought into Brisbane by the hand and sold at low prices. More than \$100,000 worth are annually mined and there are hundreds of men engaged in the business. Many of the opal miners are sheep-shearers, who hunt for opals in the off season. The opals are found in quartz and in sandstone, some of the best lying within six inches of the surface. The mining goes down as far as thirty feet and more, but always stops when the clay is reached.

I write this letter at the capital of Queensland, where I have spent some time, going from here out to different parts of the state. Brisbane has now more than 100,000 people. It is situated on the Brisbane river, in the southeastern part of the state, and owes its growth to a fairly good harbor and to the Darling Downs near by, which are, as I have said, one of the richest agricultural regions of the world.



AMERICAN TOBACCO EXPERT IN QUEENSLAND AND HIS WIFE—MRS. NEVILL WEARS THE HOT WEATHER HAT OF NORTH AUSTRALIA.

I came into Brisbane from the sea, traveling for several hours up the wide Brisbane river. The water is very clear, and as our steamer made its way through it we could look over the railing and see thousands of jellyfish, little mushrooms of opalescent hue, floating about, tossed this way and that by the steamer.

The lands on both sides are low and covered with bushes. There are frozen meat factories as you near the city, each surrounded by little houses roofed with galvanized iron, the homes of the workmen. Further up there are hills, and when you come to Brisbane itself you find that it has as many gulleys as Kansas City. The most of the town lies on the right bank of the river. There are many pretty villas, and rising high above them are the houses of the colonial parliament, a great yellow-stone building with a mansard-like roof of galvanized iron.

After an examination by the customs officer, which was very lenient, I took a carriage and drove to the hotel. The streets were not unlike those of an American town. The stores looked the same and the big buildings alone surprised me.

Every one of the Australian states has magnificent public buildings, and in all of the larger cities there are big business blocks. The treasury department of Queensland would do credit to Washington city. Its parliament buildings cost half a million dollars, the law courts cost about \$100,000, and it has many buildings large for a town of this size.

The stores have awnings over them which cover the street, so that you can walk the

full length of the principal thoroughfares and keep out of the sun. Most of the streets are wide and well paved and an electric trolley line goes through them.

Holidays in Queensland.

I find that there are more holidays here than in New Zealand. Every town has its half holiday every week, different trades choosing different days. They had races the other day at Charters Towers, and the municipal government declared that no one should work while the races were going on, and that the racing days should be public holidays. In Townsville the dry goods stores close at 12 o'clock Thursdays and on Saturdays the factories and meat freezing establishments shut down at noon. In Brisbane you can buy nothing in a grocery or butcher shop after 12 o'clock Wednesday and on Saturday you must buy your dry goods before midday if you want them.

I got up early the other morning expecting to buy some things before taking a train. I found none of the grocery stores open, although it was already 8 o'clock, and I learn that the dry goods stores do not expect to do any business before 9. At my hotel the elevator does not start running until 8, and if the guests wish to go down before that time they have to walk. The telegraph offices are closed all day Sunday. Not long ago there was a murder near Brisbane one Saturday night. The people could not wire the police and they did not get word to the police station before Monday.

These easy hours and many holidays have made the Queenslanders a great sporting people. Every town has its cricket grounds and every little city its racetrack. The people go wild over cricket, so much so that I am told a funeral procession recently stopped on passing a bulletin board to read the score of a big cricket match. I doubt this.

Whisky and Soda.

I find drinking here even more common than in southern Australia. Every block has its hotel or public house, or, as we would call it, saloon, and every saloon has its barmaids. The barmaids are not as pretty as those of Melbourne and Sydney, but they do on the whole quite as much business. Nearly every one drinks, both in the public houses and at home. In many respectable families it is common to serve whisky and soda at afternoon teas, the men taking the whisky and the women the tea.

The Queenslanders are very sociable. They will not drink alone, and the custom of treating is universal. The most common drink is whisky and soda and the most common way of drinking it is to sip it. In our country a glass of whisky goes down at one gulp. Here the same amount mixed with water lasts for an hour.

I am surprised at the amount of slang used among these English people south of the equator. The Australians have more slang phrases than the Americans. Their most common ejaculation is "My word!" You hear this everywhere. It takes the place of "Mon Dieu!" in French, "Ach Gott!" in German and "Oh Lord!" in the United States, the Australian evidently thinking his word a better thing to swear by than the name of the Almighty.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.



ON A PINEAPPLE PLANTATION.

land has already more cattle than all the rest of Australia combined, and in its northern parts all sorts of tropical fruits and crops are being raised with labor from the South Sea Islands.

In the Newest England.

But let me tell you something of this frontier colony of Australia, which may be called "The Newest England" of these English south lands. Queensland is a principality in itself. It comprises the north-eastern quarter of the Australian continent, having a coast as long as from New York City to the Great Salt Lake. In a direct line from north to south it is as long as from Washington to Omaha and from east to west about as long as from Washington to Chicago. It is half again as large as all our Atlantic states from Maine to Florida. It is four times as big as England and twelve times the size of Ireland and Wales. The York peninsula at the north of it is larger than Ireland, and the state all told would make seventeen states as large as Ohio or more than thirteen the size of New York. Queensland contains 668,000 square miles, or 427,000,000 acres, of which less than 12,000,000 are cultivated.

The entire upper half of it is tropical. It is not far from the equator and the coast lands will raise all sorts of tropical fruits and crops. There are more than 100,000 acres in sugar and eighty sugar mills. The sugar business is in the hands of a trust, which is increasing the product every year and which is now making something like 100,000 tons of sugar annually. In the same region coffee plantations are being started, there are extensive rice fields and pineapples and all sorts of tropical fruits are raised for shipment to the cities further south. Last year the exports amounted to 4,000,000 dozen bananas, 500,000 dozen pineapples and 1,500,000 dozen oranges.

The lower half of Queensland is much like northern Florida. There are large tracts, such as the Darling Downs, which have a soil as rich as the Red River valley. Here you find all sorts of crops, including wheat, corn and alfalfa. Some of the land, I am told, is too rich to raise wheat until it has been farmed for a few years. Some produces 110 bushels of corn to the acre and on some farms two crops are raised every year. A great deal of money is made in alfalfa. It grows very rank and in some places as many as nine crops are cut in one year, each cutting producing from one to two tons per acre. It is not uncommon for a man to get \$100 per acre annually out of alfalfa. This is of course on the very best farms. As a general thing the farming is carelessly done. The seeds are merely sown and the crop reaped. There is little artificial fertilization, but nevertheless the farmers make money.

At present most of the land is held in large tracts. There are single farms which comprise 2,000 square miles and there are fields that are ten miles square. The government still owns 97 per cent of all the lands in the state, and it leases out a large portion of them to the squatters and small farmers.

The government of Queensland is a sort of a patriarchal institution for nursing the

year, and the tobacco expert, Mr. R. S. Nevill of Kentucky, is also well paid. Mr. Nevill is now serving his second term of three years. I have met Mr. Nevill during my stay in Brisbane. He is a thorough American, but is fond of the Australians and is full of practical information about them. He has traveled throughout the greater part of Queensland and he says it has great possibilities along many different lines, and especially along that of tobacco raising. He is introducing American methods of culture and doing much to make the plantations here successful. He is a practical tobacco raiser, having been engaged for years in handling tobacco in Kentucky and Missouri.

Work of Mining Bureau.

I spent some time at the mining bureau here not long ago. Queensland has its government mining inspectors and its geological survey is as good as any in Australia. The state is rich in gold, and is especially noted for Mount Morgan, which is said to be the richest gold mine in the world. This mountain is near Rockhampton, on the coast above Queensland. It has already produced more than \$30,000,000 worth of gold and has paid out about \$25,000,000 in dividends. The mountain belongs to a low range of hills not far from the coast. It was a part of a farm owned by a man named Gordon, who had fenced it in and was using it for pasturage. One night Gordon was visited by two brothers named Morgan, who were prospecting. The Morgans stayed over night and Gor-



BRISBANE, THE CAPITAL OF QUEENSLAND.