

# LAND EXPLORATION

## A FASCINATING STORY.

"South Australian Land Exploration, 1836 to 1886." By Beattie Threadgill, Tinline Scholar. Adelaide: The Hassell Press.

The Tinline Scholarships in connection with the University of Adelaide were founded by the Chancellor, Sir George Murray, in memory of the family of his mother. The scholarships are each tenable for two years, and one of them is awarded every year on the examinations in history for the ordinary degree of Bachelor of Arts. Each scholar must prepare an original thesis on some subject of Imperial or colonial history. Miss Threadgill won her scholarship in 1918, and the excellent work she has done, as evidenced by the present volumes, shows that she richly deserved it. The publication is No. 3 of the historical compilations based upon the study of original documents issued by the Board of Governors of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia. It is in two parts, of which the first contains the text, and the second the excellent maps which illustrate the graphic and interesting narrative. These maps number thirteen, and they are of very great value. They set forth in a most lucid way the journeys of explorations of McDonnell Stuart, B. H. Babbage, P. E. Warburton, Leichhardt, A. C. Gregory, Stephen Hack, J. McKinlay, P. Litchfield, W. P. Auld, B. T. Finniss, G. G. McLachlan, Ernest Giles, J. W. Lewis, and C. Winnecke, and others. There is also a plan of the overland telegraph line from Darwin to Port Augusta.

Miss Threadgill, in her preface, states that this short study of a period of South Australian exploration is compiled from original material in this State and in Victoria and New South Wales. She expresses regret that there is not greater material available, and she explains that, owing to the scarcity of private papers bearing on her subject, she has had to confine her treatment to the work done rather than to the personalities of the workers. The results of her erudition and the care she has taken to ensure accuracy, combined with the clearness of her narrative, will make the story of the explorations of the very greatest value to those who write on similar subjects in the future. The author is very liberal in her acknowledgments to those who have helped her, all of whom will be gratified at the very excellent use she has made of their assistance, and of the authorities she has consulted. The bibliography (pages 170-9) pays eloquent if silent tribute to the wonderful scope of the information she has gained. She has had recourse to manuscripts in Government House, the Public Library, and the Police Commissioner's office, Adelaide, the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and libraries in Melbourne, as well as to numerous printed documents and newspapers, including "The Advertiser," and a long list of maps compiled by explorers and surveyors.

The work is divided into seven chapters, and the comprehensive character can be judged by the titles of these chapters—The Gateway of the Interior, the Western Boundary, Across the Continent, the Northern Territory to 1870, the Overland Telegraph, the Western Desert, and East of the Overland Telegraph. In the introduction Miss Threadgill refers to the impulses which urged and encouraged the early explorers to push out into the unknown parts of the continent. "The gold-digger in Victoria, the pastoralist of the Moreton Bay district and New South Wales, the outback squatter in South Australia, and the Swan River settlement, each depended for a sphere of future usefulness on a solution of the great problem of the interior—the greatest remaining geographical problem of the day, as Captain Stuart called it. Gregory, she remarks, who in 1837 knew more of the interior than any living man, declared, 'We have now sufficient data for assuming that the remainder of the unexplored interior is a desert, or at least unfit for the habitation of civilized man.' How wrong he was in that deduction has been proved in regard to many of the areas then unexplored, and there are other regions yet unexplored which will further refute his wide generalization.

Miss Threadgill gives chapter and verse for all her statements, and each page of her work is studied with dotted authorities. An immense amount of reading has been excellently condensed into a fascinating story in the opening chapter, which

tells of the fine work done by Babbage, Goyder, Freeling, Gregory, Warburton, and Governor Macdonnell, and others. With the fuller knowledge which their investigations gave, despite considerable lack of official encouragement, came confidence. "Henceforward throughout Australia men's minds, no longer cramped within limits half understood, leapt forward through the new-dung portals into the desert beyond. Nor did they stay till straining inward vision caught bright gleams of the Northern Ocean." The next chapter begins with Stephen Hack's expedition, organized by the South Australian Government, in April, 1837, to explore the north-western interior of the province. Other explorers of the western part of the State include F. Miller, James Geharty, Sir S. Davenport, and Major Warburton. Briefly but effectively their work is summarized. The chapter referring to the splendid feat of Stuart in crossing the continent from south to north, compresses into a comparatively small space a vast amount of authenticated information, which is always buttressed by a reference to documents. The originals of the names with which the map is covered are quoted in most instances, a fact which gives added value and interest to the relation. Full justice is done to the intrepid and resolute performances of Stuart, in all his explorations, which, in their earlier stages, called forth the encomium from the Secretary of State—"The courage, energy, and judgment of Mr. Stuart in accomplishing such an arduous undertaking with such inadequate means, seems to me unrivalled

in the history of exploration on this continent." The graphic manner in which Stuart's notable achievements are described by Miss Threadgill add to the admiration which will always be felt for his "endurance, valor, and virtue," and his wonderful leadership, which was in such marked contrast to that of the unfortunate Burke and Wills expedition. In this connection the share of McKinlay in "breaking through the fastnesses of Australia's land of mystery" also receives Miss Threadgill's commendation. "More valuable than anything in Australian traveling experience," she says, "was McKinlay's use of sheep in crossing the continent." All these men have statues raised to their memory—Stuart in Adelaide, McKinlay in Gawler, and Burke and Wills in Melbourne; but the story of their work is their best monument.

Miss Threadgill devotes her fourth chapter to the record of exploration in the Northern Territory to 1870. Before 1856 it had been crossed by the ill-fated Leichhardt. The exploits of Gregory and Sir Ferdinand von Mueller are also described, as well as the work of Patrick Auld, in connection with the first Northern Territory expedition, under Colonel Boyle Travers Finniss. Much space is also given to McKinlay's explorations, and those of Manton, Captain Cadell (of River Murray fame), and Goyder. A wealth of information is supplied, which is of special interest in these days, when the proper utilisation of the lands in the Territory is so much before the minds of the people of Australia. The magnificent accomplishment of South Australia in bridging the continent by the overland telegraph line, and thus linking not only Adelaide, but all the other Australian capitals, with the old world, is appropriately honored in a separate chapter. In August, 1872, the transcontinental line was completely available for communication with Europe, and Sir Charles Todd received the congratulations of the other States on the completion of "the very plucky undertaking." Miss Threadgill gives an adequate account of the colossal work, and brings into prominence the men principally concerned in the actual preparatory and constructional stages.

The closing chapters deal with exploratory work in the western district of Warburton, Gosse, Giles, Tietkens, Sir John Forrest, and others. In reference to the introduction of "The Ship of the Desert" Miss Threadgill remarks—"In 1870 camels for Australian exploration were exotic worth travelling many miles to see, and not always recognised when seen. In 1876 they were more indispensable than damper, bully beef, or blackfellow." She further states—"Until Sir Thomas Elder took the field camels were not generally popular as traveling companions." The last chapter is devoted to investigations east of the overland telegraph line, by Warburton, Lewis, Brailsford, Tolmer, Ernest Favenc, Barclay, Winnecke, and others.

In her final paragraph Miss Threadgill, who has carried out her duties as an historian with conscientious and painstaking enthusiasm, and in a manner which will

attract readers, says—"Australia had lost its mystery, but never its caprice. Trigonometrical stations might take the place of the explorers' solitary cairn of stones; the survey camps, his marked tree, cattle might pasture on the downs and grass-land he had so hardly rescued from a scrubby wilderness; telegraph and railroad track might span his creek bed or rotten alluvial plain, but Australia's whimsical changeableness remained. The history of its exploration is a record of misinterpretations, due to seasonal differences and temperature, and rainfall, and to each new-comer the interior will show a different face, scorching the lives of some in angry sacrifice to its implacability, beckoning others smiling through its most famous glens and pastures to an eternal Winglipin."

The value of the book and the accessibility to its storehouse of facts is increased by a full and efficient index.

Advertiser 9.10.22

## VETERINARY SCIENCE.

**BILL IN NEW SOUTH WALES.**  
Sydney, October 8.  
It is the intention of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Chaffey) during the session to introduce a Bill to regulate the practice of veterinary science and to ensure that those engaged in it have the required qualification. This will be a degree in veterinary science at the Sydney University or one of an equivalent standard.

Register 10.10.22

## ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

### FINE CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT.

There was a large audience at the Elder Hall on Monday evening, when a chamber music recital of special interest was given. These concerts have been increasingly popular, and the value of the really artistic interpretations of some of the best works of great composers would be difficult to overstate. Particularly fine was the rendering of "Trio for organ, violin, and violoncello," by Josef Rheinberger, a composer who, while he stands high in every form of modern music, is pre-eminent in organ music. His mastery of counterpoint, command of form, and knowledge of the great instrument, together have made his contribution to organ music literature a particularly rich one. There are a wonderful depth and dignity of feeling about the "Suite in C minor," which was brought out to the full by the manner in which it was rendered. Mr. Harold Wylde, F.R.C.O., gave just the right value to each movement. The earlier ones were of a flowing tranquility, with a strongly human appeal. Then a more forceful and emphatic mood demanded interpretation. Miss Nora Kyffin Thomas brought out, with finely artistic effect, each nuance of the violin part, and Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac., made the 'cello tell by rich tone and musicianly handling. Miss Muriel Day was the vocalist for the evening. Her fine voice was at its best, and seemed to have an added richness, while her vocalization was characterized by artistic finish

and restraint. "Fleur du valon," Op. 4, No. 5 (B. Godard) and "Les sepias" ((Toledra Castel) were both charmingly sung in French by Miss Day, and in "Sheep and lambs" (Homer) her clear enunciation and expression were delightful. The bracket concluded with "The coming of spring" (Rachmaninof). Applause followed each song, and the singer had to return and bow repeatedly. The second concerted number was a "Quartet in A major for pianoforte, violin, viola, and violoncello, Op. 30 (Ernest Chausson), played with artistic effect by Mr. George Pearce, Mr. Gerald Walenn, and Miss Sylvia Whittington, A.M.U.A. This quartet—the work of a master craftsman at music-making—has the qualities of the old and new styles, the first movement, finely impressive, holding much of the method of the past. The second is strongly characteristic of the composer. The third movement has a delightfully dainty and graceful rhythm, the theme introduced by the viola being taken up and elaborated by the other instruments. In the fourth movement the second theme of the third movement is restated, with added emphasis and elaboration. The music is vigorous and vital, and works up to a dramatic close.

## Register 10/10/22 THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

At a public meeting arranged for this evening by the Social Inefficiency Committee, Sir Joseph Verco, Prof. Brailsford Robertson, and Dr. F. S. Hone will bring before Adelaide "a scheme for the betterment of mental efficiency." It is the opening phase of a battle long overdue. The problem of the feeble-minded has never been thoroughly grappled with in South Australia. As the committee has pointed out, there are no accurate statistics of the number of mental defectives in the State, no means of estimating their number and grade, and no organized scheme of providing for their proper care. The kindly work of Minda has supplied a happy environment for unfortunate children, and incidentally made homes better for the normal ones; but it is not claimed that it can thoroughly cover the widely varying cases, with their differing need for education and their almost universal need for continued supervision, which year by year swell that unknown total of sacrifice to utter failure, vice and the "crime" of the irresponsible. It is a sum or arithmetic which is always mounting up—witness the notorious "Jukes" statistics—for the confusion of civilization. The mental deficient child is the tragedy of parentage; uneducated, neglected and unsupervised, he is the calamity of society. The problem grows more acute with the growth of cities, for it is notably—though not, of course, exclusively—an urban one. "The village idiot," according to the degree of his affliction and the kindness of his neighbours, is usually a not unhappy figure. If he causes mirth, he derives compensation by regarding himself as a humorist, and—most important of all—he acquires a degree of elementary education from tasks in the fields and the stables, and self respect from the consciousness of earning an intermittent living. What can adult life in a city offer which replaces innocently and harmlessly this simple existence? The feeble minded woman is even more disastrously unfit to cope with her environment, even more unlikely to prove anything but a curse to the society which makes no sane provision for her. And meanwhile the whole tragic costly problem grows!

Fortunately, the remarkable development of psychology during the last ten years has brought among its extremely valuable gifts the possibility of grading different cases, of improving, most by training suitable to them, and of indicating exactly the necessity for supervision. We have at last the knowledge, and the need is for practice and organization. The establishment of a Psychological Clinic at the University of Adelaide, as the preliminary for a sort of human survey of the unpromising land, is a step in line with the best scientific thought of to-day. Money given for this purpose will benefit not only the dull but the normal and brilliant child, as Professor Berry showed us not long ago. The Government, in spite of their sympathy, have felt compelled to refuse the desired co-operation of the Education Department, on the score of the expense that will afterwards be necessary to accommodate and train the backward and mentally deficient children who may be revealed by the clinic—which sounds like the economy in effort practised by the unauthentic and doubtless mythical ostrich. It is not necessary, however, to leave everything to Government aid. The public should stand behind the Committee—who are doing a great social work just as surely as if Government funds supported them—and see that a great scheme is not suffered to fall through the apathy of the individual citizen.