

## Non-British Settlement in Queensland.

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At the time of the last census nearly 12,000 inhabitants of Queensland returned themselves as born in Germany. The causes which brought them here and the part they have played in the development of our State well deserve investigation, since this was the largest number in any of the six divisions of the Commonwealth. I do not pretend to do more than to offer you a few notes on the matter, mainly with a hope that in drawing your attention to it. I may perhaps bring out further and more interesting information.

German missionaries were indeed the first Queensland settlers who were not brought here by the Government themselves. They were introduced by Dr. Lang\* the Presbyterian minister who had so much to do in shaping the course of affairs in the earlier years of the colony. They arrived in 1838. For six or seven years the doctor had been seeking among members of his own denomination men willing to try and christianise the aborigines, and he had been unsuccessful. At last he came across a Moravian community in Berlin, who were anxious to discover an outlet for their missionary zeal. He negotiated on their behalf with the Colonial Office in London and the authorities in New South Wales. Thanks to his efforts they were granted some pecuniary support and located close to the convict settlement of Brisbane, about where Nundah stands to-day.

The German Station, as their place was called, was at first under the direction of two ministers ordained in Germany, the Reverend Pastors Schmidt and Eypert. They were assisted by ten lay countrymen of theirs. Seven of these and one at least of the clergymen were married. With the blacks, all they could boast of was friendly intercourse, due chiefly to their kindness and forbearance. When the district was, four years later, open to free settlement, the aggressive rectitude of their ideals brought them the enmity of many among the whites.† When Governor Gipps visited Moreton Bay,

\* John Dunmore Lang, "Cooksland," p. 464 and following.

† Wm. Coote, History of Queensland, p. 40.

he suggested they would do well by removing farther into the unsettled wilderness. They took the hint docilely, but want of financial support paralysed their attempts. One of their ministers accepted an appointment elsewhere in Australia, and his colleague returned to Germany with his family.

The lay brethren, bereft of leaders, but reinforced by three more men from Prussia, and cheered up by a small subsidy from a missionary society in Berlin, kept struggling on. They gave up their greater ambitions, and were content to preach practical Christianity by their example after the usual manner of Moravian settlements.

The cultivation of the soil on a very limited scale and the pursuit of sundry humble trades were their chief means of support. I could not say whether they were at all instrumental in attracting Leichhardt to Australia, but when that German explorer passed through Brisbane, a stay among them reminded him of the home life of his childhood.

He, also, deserves to be mentioned among our earlier colonists, since, no doubt, his mortal remains are still blown about by the winds among the dust of the western plains.

He certainly contributed to make Australia, and particularly its North East corner, known in Germany. Like Heine and several prominent Germans of the time he does not appear to have found congenial the tyranny of the many Governments who then ruled his Fatherland. Discontent was fairly widespread. There resulted a ceaseless exodus of emigrants, most of whom embarked at Hamburg for the United States.† After the failure of the Liberal movement in 1848, it took an unheard of development till, in 1854, over 200,000 souls sailed away to freer lands.

Some who had strayed to South Australia had written of their success there as agriculturists. The gold discoveries in Victoria made Australia a rival to California, in the dreams of fortune-seekers. In 1852 some Hamburg shipowners ventured to start a regular service of emigrant ships to the Antipodes, and in the same year 64 Germans found their way up to Brisbane.

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† Votes and Proceedings (1877), vol. I., p. 883-87. (Report by the British Vice-Consul at Dantzic on German Emigration and the Australian Colonies).

The gold discoveries in the South were a sore trial for the youthful settlement, which had been deserted by most wage-earners. In the circumstances, any newcomers would have been welcome. The Germans made a favourable impression on the perplexed employers, who wondered how they might attract more of their stamp. Two years later, a resident of Toowoomba (Mr. Lord) was deputed to Germany to initiate a regular inflow of immigration.\*

He was forestalled by the Sydney agent of Godefroy & Sons, an enterprising Hamburg firm. Catering for would-be emigrants had become for the great German port a recognised branch of business; a profitable one, too, it would seem, for its promoters did not waste capital on ministering to the comforts of their customers.† No doubt their agents were kept under strict supervision in the territory, subject to Prussian administration, where most emigrants were found, but it was not the poor man's welfare Prussia chiefly cared for. The deposit emigration agents had to lodge with the authorities was meant to deter them from helping conscripts to place the sea between themselves and the barracks. Whilst these were bolted against their propaganda, rumours were abroad in Queensland that gaols, hospitals, and asylums were not too well guarded. As the shippers exacted from an Australian employer an advance of £18 before they sought a labourer for him,† their profit was secured, and it did not matter so much how far the latter succeeded in getting the immigrant to repay him out of his wages. Yet, on the whole, the criticisms directed against this early immigration do not seem supported on very widespread grievances.

In 1855 the Hamburg shipowners managed to send nearly a thousand Germans to Brisbane, that is, far more than a quarter of all the immigrants who reached Moreton Bay that year. It is true that the flow slackened immediately; America proved too attractive, the Victorian gold fields were showing signs of exhaustion, South Australians were not altogether pleased with the Germans in their midst; above all the internal circumstances of Germany now left its inhabitants greater hopes of a peaceful existence.

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\* Wm. Coote, pr. 158 and 176.

† Parliamentary debates, 1865, August 29.

Up to 1860, only one hundred Germans or so had come to Moreton Bay at their own cost. Yet the census of 1861 revealed the presence among the colonists of over 2,000 individuals born in Germany. Proportionately they formed 7 per cent of the total population. England and Wales had contributed 29 per cent.. Roughly there was, therefore, one German for every four Englishmen.

During the next twenty years, German immigration assumed a still greater importance. At the census of 1881, the proportion rose to one German to every three Englishmen. The reason of it is to be found both in Queensland itself and in Germany, which was now on the brink of manifold crises.

The desire for a freer hand in attracting population had been the prime prompter of our separation from Sydney. It was also the force which produced the main cleavage among local politicians. On the whole they agreed on the value of the Germans more than on that of any other colonists.† As indented labourers, they kept their bargain fairly well, and usually served the whole of their time; their ignorance of English made them proof for a while against attempts to stir up strife between them and their masters, and no strange skin distinguished them from their neighbours of British origin, no disconcerting manners made intercourse with them uncomfortable for the latter. They were Christians, Protestants, apparently a species of Low Churchmen and Non-Comformists, a strong recommendation to the regard of the influential section of whom Dr. Lang was the prophet. The doctor himself particularly insisted in 1860, when a select committee was appointed to inquire into immigration matters, that a number of Germans should be yearly introduced. Those who were already here were equally anxious to bring out more of their countrymen, rather perhaps as a business proposition for the more enterprising among them than for any other purpose. One of the local Germans, Mr. Heussler, was indeed sent back by the Government themselves as their immigration agent for the Continent of Europe. The success of his mission led, on his return, to his appointment to the Legislative Council.

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† Select Committee on Immigration, Votes and Proceedings, 1860.

He had been despatched at the right time.\* Political unrest was once more spreading uneasiness in the loose fabric of the German States. Bismarck's genius was soon to assert itself in Prussia, and to secure the final success of the Hohenzollerns over their Hapsburg rivals for the leadership of the smaller princes and peoples. Peace-loving Germans were inclined to think about far away shores where conscription could not reach, and the Hamburg shippers were actively reaping their harvest.

The war against Denmark sent us, apart from Germans, a temporary influx of Danes, of whom 554 were recorded at the Census of 1868. These were but birds of passage, and by 1871 their numbers had dwindled to 136. There are still Germans here, who remember how they quarrelled with them, but the Germans remained. In 1871, the latter were over 6,000, about 6 per cent of the total population.

At first, the unification of Germany under the leadership of Prussia, simply increased the exodus from the new Empire. War with France seemed ever on the eve of breaking out again, and German families did not contemplate without shudders further losses of fathers and sons. Business was disorganised, and, to make matters worse, Catholics and Protestants did not live on too friendly a footing. America was still, of course, the foremost land of promise for the emigrants. Yet, in 1872, 1,800 came to Queensland, which was more than went to all other British colonies put together.

The Prussian Government felt they must act.† They began with forbidding any recruiting for Queensland by the licensed agents; they soon gave up such extreme measures, but only to tighten gradually their hold on their people in other ways. For instance, the fees of emigration agents were raised; cheap emigrant trains were abolished; Catholics were no longer persecuted; above all, Germany tackled her economic problems in earnest and changed from an agricultural into an industrial nation.

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\* Votes and Proceedings (1877), vol. I., p. 883-87. (Report by the British Vice-Consul at Dantzic on German Emigration and the Australian Colonies).

† Mr. Schonfeld, at Toowoomba, for instance; he was then working about Ipswich.

‡ Votes and Proceedings, 1873. (Report of emigration agent for the Continent.)

This far-reaching revolution did not prevent the Prussians from resorting to meaner methods. In 1885\* a Queensland envoy was compelled to give up any hopes of getting indented labourers for the sugar plantations when he found the best Hamburg newspapers publishing by order notes which described our climate as fatal to the white man's health.

The local Germans ceased henceforth to receive enough reinforcements to fill up the gaps death made in their numbers. As early as 1901 both Scandinavians and Italians arrived in larger numbers than Germans. The Census of 1911 shows a decrease of one-fifth in the German population of Queensland in 20 years.

We all know that the German immigrants did not spread equally all over the State, but showed a distinct partiality for some particular districts. The Census of 1901 shows it quite clearly. If we pick out those districts in which the German element formed over 5 per cent of the population we find they are all comparatively close to the metropolis; they are the Logan, Moreton West, Fassifern, Stanley, the Northern Downs, Highfields, and Maryborough. In Moreton West the ratio reached 10 per cent; in Fassifern and Highfields it was still higher. Together, these seven districts account for one third of the total numbers, and most of the remainder were not settled far away.

In all the outer parts of the Colony the proportion decreased below 1 per cent, but it is more surprising to find it quite as low in Enoggera and Toowong, while in Brisbane itself it did not reach 2 per cent.

Those districts for which Germans evinced such a decided preference possess some common characters. They were the first to be open for agricultural settlement, and this goes far to explain the phenomenon since the period was that of the largest immigration from Germany. They are hilly, the soil is rich, but its clearing unusually arduous; hence they are better adapted for intensive than extensive cultivation. Settlers need not scatter far apart as in the more level but drier districts; nor are they squeezed together as on suburban allotments. It seems as if these were prospects appealing to the Germans more than to colonists of a different origin.

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\* Votes and Proceedings, 1886, vol. II., p. 910.

Yet, physically, the Germans did not strike the British as at all remarkably different from themselves. No doubt they praised their healthy appearance as shown in their rosy cheeks, and received from it a more favourable impression than from the swarthy appearance of the later Italians. Their one obvious characteristic was their national tongue, for, when they landed, they were as a rule quite unable to converse in English†. This was a serious hindrance, which they quickly realised, in their dealings with the authorities, particularly with the law courts—and they‡ exhibited from the first an inordinate bent towards litigation, especially against each other. The necessity to have recourse to interpreters gave them frequent occasions to complain of their ignorance, their partiality and their malice. Magistrates found themselves no less puzzled with their distorted English and the interpreters' difficulties in dealing with their rural dialects, especially when children were implicated, who, in any case, had to have explained to them the very nature of the proceedings.

In their aptitude for joint action under leadership, the Germans were quite equal to the English or Scotch colonists, but they joined with it an irresistible instinct to appeal to the State on every occasion. Even previous to Separation, they had banded themselves together to form a benefit society which certainly prevented their sick from becoming a charge on the public at large. State records teem, on the other hand, with petitions of theirs, often inspired, it seems, by the private ambition of some scheming agitator.

For the Colony as a whole, their great advantage was the spirit in which they came ready to carve for themselves permanent homes out of the scrub. The census of 1861 shows that the Germans alone had most of their womankind in the rural parts of the young Colony. The men arrived here as fathers at the head of a family group. Already at the German Station, Leichhardt noted the number of their children, the attention paid to their up-bringing, and their obedience to their parents, together with their cheerfulness. Up to comparatively recent years, the country people supplied the

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† "Brisbane Courier," 1871, April 4th, p. 4, col. 2.

‡ id, 1870, July 7th.

bulk of German immigration. In the ten years, from 1862 to 1871, the purely commercial classes contributed under 4 per cent of the total\*; landowners and trained farm managers were quite as many; farm hands made up 20 per cent, and general labourers more than 50 per cent. Mere professional classifications are, however, deceitful, and the ideals these German newcomers brought with them were far different from those of similar labourers from the United Kingdom. In their native country there was an unbridgeable abyss between commoners and the nobility, but an agricultural worker could far more easily than in England become a farmer. As the Economic Revolution was hardly beginning in Central Europe, no distinct line was drawn yet between master and servant, tradesman and agriculturist. Often in their little German towns, the master workman would own and cultivate patches of the countryside. So, their aim was less to rise socially than to get rid of the nightmare of political disturbances, to cease to be pawns in the war game of their kings.

These psychological differences were however too undefinable, too elusive, to strike their British neighbours. Far more plain to them was the fact than those Germans, mostly born in Silesia, or close to the Baltic Sea, in Lutheran districts, kept their Sunday after the Protestant fashion. Indeed, sectarianism was rife among them, and as in the British Isles, followed national lines. Just as there are in Queensland Churches more distinctly Welsh or Scotch, so are there Bavarian or Prussian ones.

German Churches deserve our notice. They have certainly played an important part both in attracting their supporters in Queensland, and in keeping them together. We have seen the very inception of the movement originate with the Moravians; but as spiritual representatives of the nation, they were soon superseded. English brethren and the Presbyterians are, I think, in charge of their present-day missions at Mapoon and Embley River.†

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\* Votes and Proceedings (1877), vol. I., p. 883-87. (Report by the British Vice-Consul at Dantzic on German Emigration and the Australian Colonies).

† Information on the German churches is chiefly drawn from Pugh's Almanack.



By 1861, I find, it is a Lutheran pastor who ministers to the religious needs of the German Station. He had in Toowoomba an assistant. They soon quarrelled and the senior clergyman appealed to the State† to withdraw from his junior the right to celebrate marriages. The outcome was the temporary formation of an independent church on the Darling Downs. It remained a local schism, while its rival spread, having in 1871 nine, in 1881 fourteen ministers. At that date the dissidents had re-entered the fold.

Another split appears to have taken place in 1885. It was due, may be, to the growing numbers of Scandinavian immigrants of Lutheran upbringing. A joint synod was arranged for with Scandinavian and German branches, both entirely independent of the earlier Lutheran Churches. Although the Scandinavian branch has apparently vanished, this denomination still keeps the name of Joint German Scandinavian Synod, and a separate existence.

A third body was created about 1898 under the title of Emanuel Convention. From the name of some members I am inclined to believe Scandinavian elements had here again influenced its birth.

Lutherans do not even include all the peculiarly German Churches among us. About 1895, Hatton Vale, near Gatton, became the centre of a so-called Apostolic Church, the foundation of which is first mentioned when its head sought to acquire the right to perform the marriage ceremony.

Such a number of Germans belong also to the Baptist Denomination that they have formed a Baptist Association of their own, while maintaining with their British co-religionists very close relations. The first German Baptist congregations date back to 1868. They are now six in number, and seem in closer union with the American Germans of their persuasion than with those of their country of origin. These relations between German colonists abroad appear indeed deserving of special study‡.

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† Votes and Proceedings, 1863.

‡ Queensland Baptist Jubilee Record Volume.

In 1909 a Charters Towers clergyman described himself as representing the State Church of Prussia. As for the larger denominations, they supported, the Baptists 4 ministers, the Emanuel Convention 8, the original Lutherans 10, and the German-Scandinavians 15. I am under the impression that some of these German ministers draw their chief resources from a trade at which they work, blacksmithing for instance.

I am not yet in a position to say much of the influence of the German immigration on the progress of Queensland. The introduction of the German waggon is an instance of distinctive farming methods they brought with them. A German-born member of the Legislative Council advocated the boring of Artesian wells long before they appeared to his colleagues a paying proposition. On the whole, unlike men of other non-British nationalities, the Germans have been represented in all trades and professions, apart, perhaps, from pastoral pursuits on a large scale.

Socially and politically they gave the support of a numerous and well disciplined group to those elements which represent more particularly the Anglo-Saxon part of the complex British civilisation. In politics they often took an active interest, but never as a separate party. Now and then candidates for Parliament have taken the trouble to appeal to them with manifestoes in German\*. Some entered Parliament themselves. In 1886, there were four at least in the Legislative Assembly.† They contributed to the failure, probably unavoidable in any case, of those who sought to shape the Australian social fabric on the ideals of the English squires, and they do not seem exceedingly enamoured of those of the trade unions.

How far they have been assimilated themselves is another difficult question to answer. At first assimilation was undoubtedly the very purpose they aimed at, in those things at least which did not affect religious beliefs and their moral corollaries, their language for instance. Dr. Lang failed when he tried persuading his friends at the German Station to continue to speak their native language among themselves. They would rather teach bad English to their children than good German. Yet, very soon, the Lutheran Churches were led to preserve the use of German for their services. Since 1876 a

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\* "Courier," 1871, Aug. 4.

† Votes and Proceedings, 1886, vol. II., p. 911.

German newspaper of a very creditable standard, has been published weekly in Brisbane, and we can read every day in the "Courier" a short German abstract of the transactions of the produce market. My own experience points to the male children giving up to a large extent their parents' tongue for that of their school-mates and business acquaintances. Girls are more inclined than boys to persist in using German in their homes.

Likewise an evolution has taken place in the attitude of German immigrants towards their forsaken Fatherland and the Motherland of their adoptive country. Even from the first they preserved some of their instinctive sympathy for the home of their childhood. With very human inconsistency, Germans who had left Hamburg just in time to avoid being drawn into the Franco-German war landed at Rockhampton singing the "Wacht am Rhein"†. The Queenslanders, of British origin, were not unsympathetic. Memories of the Napoleonic wars were dying hard. To many, France was the champion of loose morals and Popery, and the Germans the righteous standard-bearers of Protestantism. Britishers were unknown. They described themselves as Irish, English, Scotch and Welsh, and continued in a wordy warfare the century-old feuds of their respective countries. A large party and a fairly mixed one deprecated taking any part in European quarrels. So, when a German wrote to the papers that the Franco-German war was but part of a movement which would bear fruits little dreamed of by either the French or English nations, writer and readers looked at the statement no doubt as an academic pronouncement of purely theoretical import.

Years passed by, without any noticeable change. A German who shirked military service and left home was looked upon unfavourably indeed by his own countrymen in Europe. If not liable to criminal prosecution under military law, he lost his nationality after five years' absence. Gradually, however, things altered. Instead of men Germany began to export goods. Between 1895 and 1900 the balance was in favour of immigration over emigration\*. It became necessary to open and enlarge foreign markets. She started, very late, to acquire colonial possessions, and in so doing, came into close contact, even into direct conflict, with Queensland.

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† "Courier," 1871, March 20.

\* Stenographische Berichte des Deutschen Reichstags, 1905-6, p. 1618-20

I have no information, so far, on the attitude of German Queenslanders when Bismarck persuaded Great Britain to deprive their adoptive country of half her claims on New Guinea. German colonies, however, did not prove exceedingly attractive to the Germans. Against over 10,000 who are in Queensland, the whole of their South Sea Possessions in 1905 had only 604 to set off. When, on looking abroad, the rulers of Germany saw 3 millions of their late subjects settling under other flags they felt much like renewing and strengthening the connection. "To-day," a German Minister of State said in the Reichstag in 1913†, "That connection between Germany and the German oversea presents quite another interest, for their reasons for emigrating are quite different, also. A German, as he leaves, does not think any longer of breaking away, politically and economically, from his mother country, but rather of serving her in both respects."

It is not part of history either to forecast the future or to outline policies; but to collect the requisite materials for working out those problems, and as for this essay it is but an outline of the information we should gather before presuming to solve those connected with its objects.

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† Temps (Paris), Jan. 3, 1915.