
Community voices – transcript – D 4140 L

George Ingram

Extract of a letter from Adelaide dated 22 May 1842 to W Tomlin, Leicester, England in which he describes the fledgling colony and its inhabitants. Ingram refers to the inhabitants of Tasmania as Vendemonians.

... On first landing in the colony everything seemed very dull, and different to what we expect to meet with in a Provincial Town, straggling houses, empty shops, both of goods and customers, grassy streets, unpaved footpaths and parrots flying in numbers from tree to tree in every direction was a little different to what I had associated with the chief town of South Australia. I did not expect to see coaches and cabs, three and four stories houses and all the rest of an old County Town in England, which in a few years we shall see here, or at least those that remain that time longer in the Colony. But perhaps, considering the short time Adelaide has been fixed upon as the Capital, everything is as forward as can be expected.

Turn your back on the Town and walk a few miles out, towards the mountains, or towards Mount Barker or Mount Lofty and you will see one of the finest countries in the world, whether for agricultural, rural, or whatever purposes landed may be wanted for. I do not hesitate in saying, that some of the richest and most valuable and productive soil in the whole universe is to be found in Sth Australia. There is some bad land also, but there is more good land, than will be occupied for some years to come let emigration flow as fast as it can. Not only is the surface good, but vast quantities of minerals are to be found in the lower parts, which in time will yield considerable profit to mining gentlemen here.

The plains are covered with a rich and luxuriant vegetation tall gum trees and acacia gums spreading in different directions, thousands of birds making the air ring with their vocal music, the sky of one universal blue nearly the year round, the atmosphere clear, invigorating, and refreshing and the whole face of nature weaving an aspect of beauty and loveliness that is not seen, except in more genial climates of a lower Latitude than that of England. - The climate is very healthy – four-fifths of the medical gentleman have turned to agriculture for there is no living for them here if they were only to follow their profession.

... - the principal drawback we feel in this Colony is, “Society”. The population consists of all sorts, runaway convicts, *vandie-monians and some of the worst characters from the adjoining penal settlements having located here as well as natives from almost every warm climate under heaven, it is hardly safe to be out after dark, there are so many loose characters about. Many persons have been stopped and waylaid, but I have not given them a chance at present, neither do I intend.

...