

this body was a step towards a constitutional form of government. It continued in the original form, until, by an act of Parliament in 1828, it was increased to not less than ten or more than fifteen members, all of whom were appointed by the crown. At the same time an Executive Council was created, and in these two bodies the government of the colony is still vested.

During the administration of Sir Thomas Brisbane and Sir Ralph Darling, many improvements in policy took place. Among them were inducements to free settlers, and many officers of the army and navy, with other respectable persons, received grants of land. The acquisition of a population of a better character furnished the means of enforcing the laws, and removed the necessity of employing those who had been guilty of crime, to effect its suppression. A better state of things succeeded. Agriculture, and particularly the raising of herds and flocks, were promoted by the facilities afforded by the government under the assignment system; and the resources of the colony were developed, particularly in the growth of wool, which has now become its great staple. The success of these agricultural efforts, excited in England, particularly among its manufacturers, a more direct interest in the colony, and attracted much attention to it; in consequence of which the Australian Agricultural Company, in which many influential persons in England became interested, was incorporated under a royal charter. The avowed objects of this association were to further the improvement of the cultivation of land in New South Wales, and the rearing of cattle, horses, and fine-woolled sheep. The capital of the Company was a million of pounds sterling, and government agreed to grant in addition a million of acres of land, in any part of the territory that might be selected.

The agent of the Company, Mr. Dawson, commenced operations in 1826, at Port Stephens, to the north of Hunter's river, on a tract selected by him and the surveyor-general; he continued to manage their affairs until 1829, when, in consequence of a misunderstanding between Mr. Dawson and the Company, growing out of the unavoidable difficulties he had to contend with, and the many misrepresentations made by his enemies, he was removed, and Sir Edward Parry, the celebrated polar navigator, appointed in his stead.

Sir Edward Parry continued in the management until 1836, when he retired, and was succeeded by Captain P. P. King, the able surveyor, and who still conducts the affairs of the Company. I regretted much not having been able to accept of the pressing invitation to visit Captain King. It affords me great pleasure to bear testimony to the