

DEATH OF MR. J. H. ANGAS.

A LONG CAREER OF USEFULNESS. A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

The death of Mr. John Howard Angas, which occurred at 10 o'clock on Tuesday night at his estate of Collingrove, Angaston, has deprived South Australia of one of her most successful and honoured pioneer colonists. For many years the deceased gentleman, who had been practically confined by illness to his home near Angaston since July last—has rendered signal service to the land of his adoption in many ways, and his demise will be felt as a personal loss by all sections of the community. Not only was he an estimable citizen, but during his long and strenuous career he proved himself to be a man of high ideals. He was a man with "an infinite capacity for taking pains." His years were full of business, rich in Christian zeal, and fruitful in benevolence. Throughout his long career he closely observed the precepts and followed in the path of his honoured father, who left the impress of his personality upon South Australian history. Mr. J. H. Angas was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne on October 5, 1823. He was the second son of the late Mr. George Fife Angas, whose colonizing enterprise gained for him the title of "Father and Founder of South Australia." In the early days Mr. G. F. Angas acquired large tracts of land in the Barossa district, but was not satisfied with the manner in which his agents were carrying out his instructions. He therefore decided to send his son to South Australia to safeguard his interests and develop his property.

—Preparations for Colonial Life.—
Mr. Edwin Hodder, in his "Life" of Mr. George Fife Angas, gives an interesting account of the way in which that gentleman informed his son—who was then only about 18 years of age—of his decision to send him to Australia. They were conversing together one day, when the father remarked, somewhat abruptly—"I desire you to go to South Australia." The young man replied with characteristic promptness—"I am quite willing; when do you want me to start?" Mr. Angas retorted—"As soon as you are ready." In reply to a further enquiry as to the nature of the mission which he was to undertake he was told—"You must do whatever you see requires to be done." With these vague directions filling his mind the youth set about making preparations to leave his native land, and take upon himself responsibilities which might well have damped the ardour of an older and more experienced man. Speaking of his father's brief directions many years afterwards Mr. J. H. Angas remarked that if he had written a book of instructions he could not have given fuller or more detailed information than the single sentence which comprised the whole. Subsequently Mr. Angas arranged that his son should learn the German language before he left the old country, in order that he might be better qualified to deal with the large number of German colonists whose passage from Europe to Australia had been arranged by him, and who were waiting to settle on the land. He also took a course of lessons in land surveying. These preliminary matters having been satisfactorily disposed of, Mr. Angas left England in the barque Madras on Good Friday (April 15), 1843. He was accompanied by his sister, Mrs. Henry Evans, her husband and child. Mr. G. F. Angas's estimate of the ability of his son to successfully undertake the difficult task allotted him is well evidenced in the following extract from Hodder's biography:—"Though his faith had been shaken in many men in whom he had reposed confidence in relation to his Australian affairs, he had the most unbounded belief, not only in the capability of his son, but in his absolute impeccability. Everything in the colony as regarded the affairs of Mr. Angas was in hopeless confusion, difficulties had been created which required the greatest tact and the clearest understanding to adjust, but he had no doubt that his son would overcome them all." The same author places on record the statement that "It is probable that among the keenest sorrows of Mr. Angas's life was the parting with his son John Howard Angas, who had been the man of his right hand." So it was that, having received the paternal blessing and much wise counsel, young Angas, at the early age of 20 years, quitted the pious atmosphere of his old home and turned his face towards the new land beyond the sea.

—Beginning a Remarkable Career.—
From the moment Mr. Angas set foot upon the soil of his adopted country every faculty was exercised to secure the development of his father's estates upon wise and progressive lines. His father's estate consisted of seven special surveys of 4,000 acres each in the Barossa Range, comprising some of the most fertile land in the state. His position gave him great opportunities, but it also imposed grave responsibilities upon one so young. In those days the means of communication between England and Australia were slow and irregular, and the young pastoralist often had to decide questions of great difficulty and importance without advice or counsel from any one more experienced than himself. He entered upon his mission with courage and determination, however, and succeeded in blending caution and good judgment with boldness and enterprise. It was not long before he had taken a prominent place in the ranks of South Australian pastoralists and landed proprietors, and under his management his father's interests speedily improved. The town of Angaston was laid out under his supervision, and several other prosperous settlements were formed in other

places. In 1844 a copper mine was discovered on the estate of Mr. H. Evans, but Mr. G. F. Angas did not take at all enthusiastically to the idea of opening it up. Indeed, he wrote to his son as follows:—"I charge you solemnly not to expend money in working mines, but if worth anything let them remain untouched until others see their way to work them beneficially and with judgment, and pay us a fair and reasonable rent out of the produce for the privilege of working them." This policy was consistently followed out, and Mr. Angas devoted his attention mainly to the work of developing his father's pastoral estates. He made special efforts to procure the best cattle, horses, and sheep—no easy task in those days when nearly all high-class stock had to be imported from Great Britain. The South Australian Company (of which his father was the founder and Chairman in England) was the first to import stud stock from the mother country, this step being prompted more by a desire to assist the settlers than to establish permanent breeding stations.

—A Far-seeing Stock Breeder.—
The opportunity thus presented was eagerly seized by Mr. Angas, who purchased from the manager of the company some of the best Shorthorn cattle and merino sheep. The same policy of securing superior stock from any other sources offering was afterwards consistently prosecuted. As the flocks and herds increased it became necessary to remove surplus stock to more extensive pasture lands, and after inspecting the country in the neighbourhood of Mount Remarkable, he formed a cattle station there over 50 years ago, and the Shorthorn herd under his management became one of the best in South Australia. Mr. C. B. Fisher, who is well known throughout Australia as one of the most enterprising settlers, stud stock breeders, and dealers, was a regular customer, and purchased from Mr. Angas many thousands of fat stock for the Adelaide market. Still further development of the business necessitated taking up new country further north. The Arrowie and Wirralpa stations were then formed and stocked with the progeny of the fine herd established at Mount Remarkable. As time passed and the better lands were surveyed and sold by the Crown, a considerable area was purchased by Mr. Angas in the neighbourhood of Mount Remarkable. Most of the cattle, except a selected stud herd, were removed to more distant runs, and the property nearer the market was stocked with high-class merino sheep. As the cattle increased several thousand square miles of pastoral country was leased from the Crown at Stuart's Creek and Mount Hamilton, in the far north. In January, 1851, Mr. G. F. Angas arrived in South Australia, and took over the management of his estates. For three years afterwards, however, his son remained in the province, and assisted his father until he became acquainted with the details of his various properties. He then decided to enjoy a well-earned holiday in his native land.

—Home, Sweet Home, and Marriage.—
"In 1854," says Hodder, "Mr. John Howard Angas, who for over 10 years had been resident in South Australia, devoting himself exclusively to his father's interests, had the satisfaction of finding his labour crowned with exceptional success. Conspicuous prosperity had set in, and everything the hand of his father touched seem to turn to gold. Mr. Angas found himself free, therefore, to take a rest, and sailed in the P. & O. steamer Madras for a visit to the old country, where he arrived on Good Friday, April 15, having been absent 11 years to a day. It was a curious coincidence that he left England on Good Friday, April 15, 1843, in a ship named the Madras, and arrived again in London on Good Friday, April 15, 1854, having left Adelaide in a steamer named the Madras." While in England he married Miss Susane Collins, of Bowden, Cheshire, and in 1855 returned to South Australia, and settled at Collingrove, the name by which his beautiful estate, near Angaston, is known. He applied himself to his work with even greater zest after his return, and his subsequent career is an almost unbroken record of success. Having been released from the responsibility of managing his father's affairs, he became a breeder of stud cattle, sheep, and horses, and his prize stock have for many years been renowned throughout Australasia.

—Co-operative Dairies and Fat Stock.—
In connection with his cattle breeding operations in the early days, Mr. Angas established large dairies on the co-operative system, having at one time as many as 500 milking cows, the progeny of which, by imported and pure pedigree shorthorn aires, were carefully reared and transferred to the northern runs, thus not only improving their breeding but making the cattle remarkably quiet and docile. The G.F.A. and half-circle over A brands were well and favourably known all over the colonies, and few, if any, herds have realized continuously such excellent prices in the Adelaide market. During the first six months of 1878 no fewer than 1,100 fat cattle were sold from the north—all being travelled by road to Adelaide—which, after paying sale expenses, averaged over £11 per head. When Mr. C. B. Fisher determined to leave South Australia he sold the well-known Hill River estate to Mr. Angas, upon which the latter for many years carried a large number of highly-bred pure merino sheep, including a stud flock of 5,000 head and a stud herd of shorthorn cattle. The imported stud shorthorns were kept at Start Point, near the Murray mouth, while the Hereford stud was located at Kingsford. It will thus be seen that Mr. Angas's efforts for developing the industry which he came to South Australia to establish were eminently successful. Up to the time of his death he was considered one of the foremost breeders of stud stock in Australia.

—A Phenomenal Prizetaker.—
The number and varieties of importations of high-class stud animals from the old country are too numerous to mention; suffice it to say that he spared neither labour, trouble, nor expense to possess himself of animals of the highest merit wherewith to improve his herds and flocks in South Australia, and sometimes paid as much as £1,000 for a single sheep for stud purposes. Not only Shorthorn and Hereford cattle, but Clydesdale, thoroughbred, and carriage horses, merino and Lincoln sheep, and Berkshire pigs were successfully introduced and bred with excellent results. For more than a quarter of a century he had been a very large exhibitor of live stock at the Royal shows in all the Australian States, and thereby established a reputation of which he was justly proud. A list of his prizes would fill a volume, and have a world-wide celebrity. Only a few days before his death he was among the principal prize takers at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show in Sydney. He had also gone in largely for farming, and had taken the leading champion prizes for wheat at the Royal shows. He was the first to carry off the 50 guinea challenge cup for the best 100 bushels of wheat, grown by the exhibitor, and the prize had to be won for three years by exhibits of 100 bushels from three different crops; it was open for competition to farmers in all parts of Australia. Some years ago the late Mr. Angas sold the Mount Remarkable estate with all his northern runs and stock to the Willowie Land and Pastoral Association, but after a time he again became connected with those properties, and occupied the position of Chairman of the board of management. The Hill River merino stud was formed with selections from the Hill River and Mount Remarkable flocks, and the latter were descended from Saxon sheep imported by the South Australian Company about 1835.

—Public Life.—
In 1871 Mr. Angas was elected a member for Barossa in the House of Assembly, which position he retained till 1875 when owing to ill-health, he was obliged to resign. In 1887, however, he re-entered public life, being elected with Mr. A. M. Simpson as one of the representatives of the Central District in the Legislative Council. He remained in active politics as one of the members for that district till 1894, since which time he devoted himself entirely to his own business affairs. His great experience in local affairs, his mature judgment and commercial ability, enabled him to render good service to the electors, and many of his admirers regretted that he declined to again contest the Central District after his last term of service expired.

—A Large-hearted Philanthropist.—
Few men have done more than the late Mr. Angas to relieve the suffering and burdens of their fellows. By unflagging industry and keen foresight, as well as by family advantages, he succeeded in amassing a large fortune, but he was actuated by high ideals regarding the duties and responsibilities of rich men. Though, like that gentleman, he was very keen in his business transactions, he inherited from his father a kindly and generous disposition, and from his earliest youth this trait of his character was fostered and cultivated. In December, 1847, the late Mr. G. F. Angas wrote to his son as follows respecting the management of the Angas estates:—"Discourage by every means spirit shops and public houses—encourage the growth of vineyards, and the use of wine made therefrom. A good style of buildings in our villages and farmsteads, with gardens and so on, is worthy of our attention, as well as proper regard to roads, places of relaxation, &c. It also strikes me that if houses in South Australia were built more upon the Italian plan, to keep out heat as well as cold, it would be good. Take care, above all things, to have school houses and libraries everywhere; give ground to any good people for schools, more especially Sunday schools, and invest it in trustees." This advice formed the basis of Mr. Angas's conduct in later life. The full details of his philanthropic bequests will probably never be known by any one except the members of his own family. Even his gifts to public institutions were so numerous that it would be impossible to enumerate them all. For many years he took an active part in practically all movements of a charitable description, and no deserving institution appealed to him in vain for personal or monetary assistance. He was one of the prime movers in securing the establishment of what was

for many years a popular and useful institution, the Bushman's Club, and also in founding the Retreat for Inebriates at Bear. When convinced that that retreat had failed in its main object he, in the last weeks of his life, presented to the Government for the purpose of a Consumptive Home the buildings and the land surrounding them. In connection also with many other organizations he was a most diligent worker and large contributor of funds. The Adelaide University was indebted to him for very substantial aid. In addition to giving £5,000 towards the general funds of the institution he was the founder of the Angas Engineering Scholarship. In 1884 he gave £6,000 as an endowment for the purpose of establishing a chair of Chemistry at the University, and subsequently provided an Angas Engineering Exhibition. The Angas Wing of the Children's Hospital is an enduring monument of the interest which the deceased gentleman took in matters pertaining to the treatment of sick children; while the folk at the Home for incurables have reason to be thankful for the kindly thoughtfulness which induced him to provide the money for the erection of a much-needed wing, and sitting-room for female inmates. He also provided funds for the extension of the Convalescent Hospital at the Semaphore, and his name was to be found on the subscription lists of almost every philanthropic institution in the state. A few years ago he placed the large and valuable building at North Adelaide, known as

Angus College, at the disposal of the Rev. W. L. Morton for the furtherance of his scheme for training missionaries. He was associated with the Congregational Church for a number of years, and contributed liberally to the funds of that denomination. He did not by any means limit his bequests to that religious body, however, and representatives of all creeds found him a sympathetic and practical friend when they sought his help for deserving objects.

—A Multiplicity of Interests.—
A recital—by no means exhaustive—of the offices which he has held from time to time indicates how cosmopolitan were his interests. He was a life member of the Royal Agricultural Societies of England, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia; also of the Royal Colonial Institute, the Shorthorn Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Hereford Herd Book Society. He held office as President of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, Vice-President of the British and Foreign Bible Society in England, and Vice-President of the South Australian Auxiliary; Vice-President of the Children's Hospital; Vice-President of the Zoological Society; Vice-President of the Society of Arts; Vice-President of the Blind Institution at Brighton. After his father's death he continued to pay the expenses of the missionary employed in connection with the Hindmarsh and Bowden Town Mission, and was a large contributor to Dr. Barnardo's Homes, the Boys' Brigade, the London Missionary Society, the China Inland Mission, the Zambesi Industrial Mission, and the Adelaide Y.M.C.A., also enjoyed his patronage and support. Many other institutions might be mentioned, but sufficient has been written to indicate the wide range of Mr. Angas's sympathies, and the practical manner in which he gave effect to his generous impulses.

—An Artistic Temperament.—
It may not be generally known that Mr. Angas had the artistic faculty of the family in a high degree—and in this respect he is resembled also by his son, Mr. C. H. Angas. In his youth he produced sketches of more than average merit, but his best achievements lay in the portraiture of birds, insects, and flowers. It is no exaggeration to say that some of his productions are exquisite in their extreme delicacy of treatment, colouring, and fidelity to nature, and it is a matter for regret that, possessing such talent, he did not continue to cultivate it; but pioneer colonists had little time to gratify their aesthetic tastes when the struggle with the wilderness demanded all their energies. Mr. Angas helped to battle against the forces of nature, for very many years finding no leisure to devote to the art for which, however, he had so much affection. The Collingrove estate, near Angaston, where the family reside, has long been famous for its beauty and the possession of those adornments which are characteristic of taste and culture. He knew how to blend artistic with utilitarian purposes; and spent large sums in beautifying his properties in various parts of the state. The coach road leading from the railway station at Farrell's Flat to Clare runs through his Hill River station, and at considerable personal expense he converted the road into one of the most charming drives in Australia by planting avenues of ornamental trees along each side of the thoroughfare for a distance of about five miles. The slopes upon which the house and station buildings are situated are adorned with extensive shrubberies, orangeries, and vineyards, while in other portions of the estate blocks of from 5 to 25 acres of land were planted with forest trees.

The deceased gentleman has left a widow (to whom he was married about 50 years ago), a son (Mr. C. H. Angas, who is now with his wife in England), and a daughter (Mrs. G. B. White).