EARTHWORM POPULATIONS FOUND NEAR ADELAIDE, 
AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE 
PRODUCTIVITY OF THE SOIL

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

"In the dry climate of New South Wales I hardly expected that worms would be common."

Charles Darwin 1861.

An estimate of the influence which earthworms have on field soils may be made if we measure the changes which a known number or weight of worms make in a soil culture, and the size of the population in the field. Because the population multiplier is large, it is important to know the accuracy with which the population has been measured, and the way in which it is likely to vary with place and time. I have measured the number and weight of worms present in different seasons and on lands subject to different agricultural treatments, but I have not attempted to study the separate factors which determine the type and quantity of worms present in a soil. After reviewing previous work on population determinants, I have suggested reasons for the differences observed in the field.