(1) On the request of the School of History at the University of Melbourne, I have referred to unpublished B.A. Honours theses held by that School as unpublished essays. Unpublished essays privately held I have noted with (P).

(2) Footnotes preceded by an asterisk indicate a source which proved un-locatable due to shifting both of the Latrobe and National Libraries at a date after the initial reading.
A DECADE OF ASSESSMENT

Being a study in the intellectual life of the city of Melbourne between 1876 and 1886.

Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts, Australian National University July 1965 by

Jillian Isobel Roe
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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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Pamphlet Collections refer to those of the State Library of Victoria, unless otherwise stated.
This thesis deals with six main fields of colonial thought: religious, educational, political, literary, artistic and scientific. These fields are separately discussed, but are arranged so that the discussion converges upon a central chapter, which is a description of the city of Melbourne in about 1881. This chapter describes a seventh kind of thinking fundamental to the flanking chapters, and provides a focus for, and summary of, the efforts discussed in those chapters. By dispensing with the usual introduction and conclusion, and adopting a concentric structure, the writer has wished to emphasize two things. The first is the importance of the situation, which focused the attention of the thoughtful minority here discussed (a remark meant to indicate the direction of their thinking rather than its bases or content). The second is that this rather arbitrarily selected decade admits no real conclusions, and was not chosen out of any interest in its doing so.

Initially, it seemed to contain a number of interesting topics - the last fruitless years of the life of Marcus Clarke, the first writings of Ada Cambridge,
the foundation and demise of two serious periodicals, the Melbourne and Victorian Reviews, Higinbotham's lecture on 'Religion and Science', the beginnings of a school of Australian art, the Strong case, and perhaps behind it all the Fortunes of Richard Mahony. However these topics soon proved to be part and parcel of one intellectual world, which included some subjects with which the writer had little familiarity: notably political thought, and within that, questions which arose from the land and tariff debates, which could not be omitted, but which have received only brief and generalized treatment. Some aspects of colonial thinking have simply been omitted, by virtue of time, space, and the limitations of the writer: medical thought, radical political developments, ethnology, the new religionists, technical education and popular culture are amongst such omissions. However most of these subjects have already been dealt with. ¹

The thesis does nonetheless intend to present an overall picture of intellectual life and development

during the decade. That picture was originally meant to show the derivations of colonial thinking; but, like some of the colonists, the writer was surprised to find that Australian experience and ideas had an equal importance, and so was led to emphasize them.

This is not then an intellectual history owing its inspirations and methodology to that remarkable historian Arthur O. Lovejoy and those who contribute to the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, and does not involve linguistic analysis or the strict internal dissection of ideas. It aspires to follow after such a work as *Rebels and Gentlemen, Philadelphia in the Age of Franklin*, by Carl J. Bridenbaugh, and to relate social and intellectual movements. It owes a genuine debt to *The Making of the Middle Ages* by R.W. Southern, and, more obviously, to the author of *Victorian People and Victorian Cities* Professor A. Briggs. Finally the insights of Professor C.M.H. Clark have influenced the work.

The material drawn on has been found in the ephemeral literature of the day: in locally published (or written) books, periodicals, pamphlets, and to a lesser extent, newspapers. It has also been located in institutional records, which provided both background material and valuable evidence of colonial intentions. Had it not been for a host of helpful people in Melbourne
and in Canberra much of it might never have been located at all.*

Hereafter follows a description of the main pre-occupations of a small minority in the city of Melbourne between 1876 and 1886. Those pre-occupations came from an interaction of the colonial environment and inherited assumptions. Only a minority had sufficient ability and awareness to formulate the ideas and emotions borne of this situation. That minority included clergymen, teachers, politicians, journalists, civil servants, artists, painters and scientists.

Between 1876 and 1886 important political, educational and theological questions emerged. Clubs and institutions and individuals struggled with their own development. The three Reviews provided a forum for discussion. In short, the city provided a milieu for a certain kind of intellectual life.

By 1876 Melbourne was the premier city of the Australian colonies. By this time, too, a new generation, composed of the newly arrived, the newly important and

*The most important of these debts have been acknowledged in the text; and while it would be impossible to make full acknowledgement of assistance received, reference officers in the National and Latrobe libraries must be given special acknowledgement since they were often able to find material which others only believed to exist.
the native born, were able to assess the achievements of their predecessors. With fresh ideas, and attitudes drawn from greater familiarity with the new world, their assessment inevitably differed from that of the pioneering generation, who looked with obvious pride and not a little anxiety upon their work. Gathered together in the prosperous and self-important city, the two generations began a dialogue which produced no certain conclusions but a number of statements of continuing importance in Australian history.
I

THE COMING MAN

What man thought and believed in the city of Melbourne in the latter half of the nineteenth century was to a great extent dependent on what was being thought in Europe; and 1859 was a cardinal year in the intellectual history of Western Europe. In that year Charles Darwin published The Origin of Species. The idea of evolution, once formulated and substantiated, was in the following years to permeate thinking on all subjects to do with man and the physical world he inhabited. Its most emotionally disturbing relevance was to the truth of the revealed religion of Christianity; and while a whole syndrome of barely related forces gathered to disturb and undermine men's assurance in God, the implicit attack of Darwinism made the greatest inroads into the essential superstructure of faith. Englishmen in the early years of the nineteenth century may or may not have gone to church, or practised the religion commonly ascribed to them; but a serious questioning of the intellectual bases of Christianity did not assume serious proportions until the ideas of
evolution and new modes of empirical investigation brought out a body of knowledge not simply new but apparently contradictory to a world-view which hitherto had subsumed man's activities into the existence of a metaphysical world.

Men's activities had also become increasingly difficult to fit into the inherited world view. The newly hopeful rationalism of the Enlightenment, the confused developments of an industrialized world, and the inexplicable suffering of men supposedly progressing towards a better world, all contributed to a growing feeling of the irrelevance of Christianity. No less than other men of European origins, inhabitants of the colonial city of Melbourne found this development disturbing; and some cast belatedly about for ways out of the dilemma, and for a new image of the faith they wished to retain.

It is commonplace to imagine Melbourne during these years as swathed in a heavy Protestant and especially Evangelical piety, expressing itself in Sabbatarianism, temperance organizations and overall sobriety; and the columns of the newspapers are heavy with protests against Sabbath desecration, advertisements for tea-meetings and reports of philanthropic works. Many people did go to
church, too. In 1880-1 the Government statistician estimated that 290,349 of a total population of 882,232 attended the principle service of the day\(^1\) - that is, about one in three. The piety, prosperity and smugness of church-goers and the parochial squabbles of the clergy, provided obvious targets for local wits, like the sensationalist, Julian Thomas,\(^2\) and the irrepressible Marcus Clarke.\(^3\) Without the strong curtain of piety - and whether it truly existed or not is almost irrelevant, because people believed then, as they do today if they look back, that Melbourne was a sober and religiously minded city - it would be hard to understand the rancour of the debates barely concealed behind it: religious debates of a depth, vitality and passion unexampled in the history of the city.

By 1877, new men like Bishop Moorhouse and the Reverend Charles Strong had been called to Melbourne; issues, new as far as the awareness of the colonial churches was concerned, had surfaced; and organizational problems had asserted themselves. A new dimension of

\(^1\) Victorian Year Book, (1880-1), p. 332.
\(^2\) E.g. "In a Fashionable Church", Vagabond Papers (2nd series), no. 4.
\(^3\) E.g. A Marcus Clarke Reader, B. Wannan ed. (Melb., 1963), pp. 4-7.
speculation and formal doubt emerged; as the authority of the pioneering clergy was replaced or challenged by men fresh from England and the theological schools, leaders began to examine the ideas on which organized Christianity depended. The day when a colonial Bishop could deal with evolution in a single sermon had gone.\(^1\) Moreover, the State no longer subsidized religion, having withdrawn its subsidies on church buildings and schools by 1872; yet with the ever expanding population of the colony, and the demise of Christian education, church leaders felt an increased responsibility and looked for new ways of finding the men and the money to carry out their mission. From all sides, Christianity appeared to be challenged: by the insidious withdrawal of the State, by piecemeal criticism from men influenced by evolutionary, positivist and linguistic theories of the nineteenth century, and perhaps most distressing of all, by a certain colonial dislike of formal religion.

Not of course that this applied to all the branches of Christianity established in Melbourne. The old time religion, if not good enough for all, satisfied the majority. The Roman Catholic Church, for instance, stood apart. Its intellectual battles were fought in

Rome; and its leaders, having sent forth the Syllabus of Errors and the various encyclicals attacking the nineteenth century versions of humanist errors, left the servants of the Church to make practical applications. In the distant diocese of Melbourne, an energetic archbishop, James Alipius Goold, concentrated his efforts on providing more churches, more schools, and more teaching and healing orders. He kept his flock, mainly of poor Irish, clear of theological strife. 'To be a disciple', he told them, 'one must conform to the demands of the master...no half measures, no middle course will be tolerated'. The Jesuits who produced the Roman Catholic weekly the Advocate bolstered his anti-intellectualist stance, dealing with modern thought as ancient nonsense and upholding the authority of the one true Church. One of the few Roman Catholics to enter the contemporary controversy was the Reverend

---

1 P. Moran, History of the Roman Catholic Church in Australasia (Sydney, 1895), pp.724-5.
2 In 1880-1, 22.86 per cent of the population, or 197,157, claimed to be Roman Catholics. Census of Victoria, (1881), p.234.
3 'Lenten Pastoral for 1876', Advocate, March 4 1876, pp.3-4(4).
4 Ibid., February 26 1876, p.11.
5 'Protestantism and Infidelity', ibid., April 8 1876.
Joseph O'Malley,¹ but he after 1876 spoke publicly only on the education question.²

Although indifferent to the ephemeral debate, the Roman Catholic Church totally rejected the ideas on which those debates drew; and in the most fundamental way - through education - set about defeating them. In doing so, its spokesmen involved themselves in politics and so provoked a different kind of argument. Even when those provoked had little concern with the ideological basis of Bishop Goold's outspoken attacks on the State and his uncompromising stand for separate Roman Catholic schools,³ they recognized behind his words an intransigent force of indefinable strength opposed to the very essence of their proudly established world: a world in which priestcraft, aristocracies and privilege were meant to be superceded by individuality, rationality and true democracy.⁴ Gladstone was not the only Englishman to be horrified by the newly-expounded doctrine of papal infallibility, and to see the Church's

¹ Table Talk, July 11 1892.
² See p. 73
⁴ See Deakin/Crisp, August 23 1880, Crisp papers.
replacement of temporal power by spiritual authority as a fearful encroachment of liberty:¹ and colonists, involved in the education debate, were on the watch too. So, when the fanatical ex-Jesuit Charles Chiniquy toured the colonies with his tales of priestly immorality and his mission to convert misguided Catholics, he found receptive audiences and had little difficulty in creating a passionate wave of anti-papalism.² Even in the stately Melbourne Review, anti-papalism found a spokesman in David Blair, who felt it impossible that a system of fraud and forgery could continue, and proclaimed the day of powerful popes to be gone.³ The Advocate regularly complained about persecution.⁴

Some of the Protestant denominations showed a lack of concern for current ideas in quite different ways and for quite different reasons. The old ways proved

² For an example of his style see Papal Idolatry: an Exposure of the Dogma of Transubstantiation and Mariolatry. Dedicated to Archbishop Vaughan, (Melb., 1879), A.N.L. Pamphs. vol. 91. For an account of his preaching in Melbourne, see Age, February 3 1879.
⁴ E.g. January 1 1876, p. 10(1).
sufficient for the renowned preacher Samuel Chapman,\(^1\)
and there is little reason to assume anything different
of the other pastors of the small Baptist denomination.\(^2\)
Baptists had little reason to quarrel with a State which
allowed them the independence they had originally banded
together to establish (though they had doctrinal reasons,
too); and their fundamentalism rendered them remote
from intellectual debates.\(^3\)

\[\textit{As in The Old Paths, Collected Sermons of Samuel}
\textit{Chapman, (Melb., 1902).}\]

\[\textit{In 1881, there were 20,373 nominal Baptists in Victoria,}
\textit{and about 7,325 of those were estimated as attending the}
\textit{principal service of the day. Census (1881), p.233 and}
\textit{Year Book (1880-1), p.332.}\]

\[\textit{The Lutheran and Church of Christ denominations have}
\textit{been neglected, for this reason, and because of their}
\textit{size. There were 11,149 nominal Lutherans in 1881, and}
\textit{the attendance rate was declining, from 4,700 in 1876-7}
\textit{to 3,350 in 1880-1 to 2,930 in 1886-7. Census (1881),}
\textit{p.233 and Year Books 1876-7, p.201, 1880-1, p.332 and}
\textit{1886-7, p.748. The Church of Christ had a nominal}
\textit{adherence of 6,660 with 2,280 of those estimated as}
\textit{attendant at the principal service of the day. Ibid.}
\textit{Selby, in The Old Pioneers Memorial History of}
\textit{Melbourne, (Melb., 1924), p.181, recorded a debate}
\textit{between the Reverend M.W. Green of the Church of Christ}
\textit{and the Collingwood rationalists.}\]
Neither did anything startling emerge from the various Wesleyan groups, although men like the Reverend Joseph Dare stood out as men of eloquence and compassion in the best traditions of the Christian ministry. Partly because of the circuit system whereby ministers were shifted every three years, and partly because Methodism had always preferred to appeal to the hearts rather than the heads of men, Methodist leaders passed over the great controversies of the day. Wesleyanism flourished, and in providing churches, preachers and Sunday schools was the most active and successful denomination in the colony.

Whilst showing great zeal in matters of church polity, and urging members to responsible exercise of their voting rights (in maintaining the Sabbath,

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1 There were until 1902 five branches of this denomination: the Primitive Methodists, Bible Christians, the United Methodist Free Church, the Methodist New Connection, and the Wesleyan Methodists. C.I. Benson, A Century of Victorian Methodism, (Melb., 1935), ch.2. The 1881 Census lists four, not including the Bible Christians, and four other sects, (p.237).

2 In 1875 one branch alone had 81 ministers, 559 lay preachers and 525 places of worship, and by 1886, 109 ministers, 751 lay-preachers and 725 places of worship. W. Blamires and J. Smith, Early History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Victoria, (Melb., 1886), Appendix, p.314.

3 Minutes of several conversations between the ministers and lay representatives of the Victorian and Tasmanian Wesleyan Methodist Church, (1881), p.56.
attacking drinking and gambling, and providing religious instruction), the Presidents annually stressed a return to the preaching of repentance, faith and holiness: 'let us stand in the old paths',¹ they said. Whilst their paper the *Spectator* and *Wesleyan Chronicle*, founded in 1875, and edited by leading ministers, did maintain a consistent standard of comment, it was invariably pious in tone, and failed to reach the theological vitality to which it aspired.² Its evangelicism could reach such low ebbs as the advice to women it offered at one stage: 'better to have your maiden name on your coffin lid than marry one of God's enemies'. At best it remained intact and distinct, too busy with its own works to notice the larger questions.

The necessity for, and responsibility of, rethinking the doctrines of Christianity fell most heavily on that part of Protestantism best equipped, in terms of educated clergy, to take it; on the branches most accessible or vulnerable to the rationalist challenges of the

² *Spectator*, July 22 1876: 'with the present issue this journal enters upon a new era of its existence ... We intend ... to give greater prominence to select literary papers and to those leading Scientific questions of the day at present engrossing so large a portion of its current literature'.
nineteenth century. The middlemen - Anglicans, Congregationalists and Unitarians - bore the brunt of the dialogue between what is loosely called religion and science. The most intellectually responsive men of these groups, feeling the impact of Darwinism and being as disturbed by its implications as any other people in Christendom, at this time felt obliged to speak out.

The Congregationalists, with about fifty regular clergy, had good if not outstanding spokesmen; and the journalist who said they were a compact easy-going denomination, the via media between everybody and everything, was not far wrong. The loose and flexible structure of its church organization, and its refusal to impose any formal creed as a condition of church membership, plus its rather dry atmosphere, allowed it to survive the debates of the era with more dignity than some of the other churches.\(^1\) The central pulpit in Collins Street, always a distinguished one, attracted able men, and the congregation was said to be one of the largest in the colony.\(^2\) The Welshman Thomas Jones amply


upheld the prestige of the church,¹ but was soon replaced by Dr Bevan, who came from New York where he had counted Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell,Whittier, Bryant and Oliver Wendell Holmes amongst his friends.² Unfortunately the sermons of these men have not survived, though Sutherland recorded that Bevan in particular made important contributions to theological discussion.³

Even a cursory glance at the matter of the Chairman's addresses to the Congregational Union of Victoria shows how comparatively well-versed these men were;⁴ and the writings of the Reverends Roby Fletcher,⁵ A.W. Gosman and A.M. Henderson (both Professors at the Congregational College)⁶ are those of men seriously aware of an intellectual responsibility. One of the clergy rightly

¹ He was said to be Robert Browning's favourite preacher. 'A Poet's Praise of a Preacher', Melbourne Herald, February 9 1963.
² 'Anecdotal Portraits', Table Talk, March 17, 1893.
⁴ E.g., 'Materialistic Skepticism' (1880) and 'Christianity and the Poor' (1886), Congregational Year Books, (Melb., 1881 and 1887).
⁵ Collected by J.J. Halley in W.R. Fletcher, Biographical Sketch and Literary Selections, (Adelaide, 1895).
⁶ These two contributed extensively to the two Reviews and will be referred to later in the text.
maintained it was difficult to know what distinguished Congregational theology, since Congregationalism rested on an historical assertion of independence rather than any distinction dogma: even its Calvinist emphasis had dropped away, as had the need to assert individual freedom, and by the late nineteenth century, Congregationalism appeared to be in a state of restlessness.¹ The denominational paper, the Victorian Independent, showed after 1876 a more definite concern with intellectual integrity, and with more success than its Wesleyan counterpart; and Congregationalism, it seems, being neither rooted in social tradition, nor apart from the individualism of the century, was particularly and less painfully accessible to newer ideas. The leaders showed a consistent and moderated interest in contemporary affairs, social, political and intellectual.

Of all the church leaders, the Congregationalists moved most with the times, moving from the theological debates of the late seventies, the revival of interest in State aid to education in the early eighties, to the

questions of labour by 1886.¹ In 1876, the Chairman pin-pointed with exceptional clarity the difficulties of religion in colonial society, beyond the purely physical ones so occupying the Methodists and agitating the Anglicans. On the one hand, he saw that 'Isolation begat Ignorance which begat Suspicion which begat Bigotry' (and colonial Melbourne saw many examples of bigotry); on the other, that the men who migrated to the colonies migrated from motives of gain, and that once there, they held to the conviction that the one growth and gain lay in 'improving that environment', whether it took the form of 'richly bound books, costly prints, or table indulgences', or any other: and so can be seen as one of the first critics of the opulence and self satisfaction of the oncoming 'Boom period'. The catch-cry of Progress, he said - and was one of the few to say it - was a hollow one. 'He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent'. He, and men who followed him in the role of leader, held that Congregationalism had no quarrel with facts, reason and the right of individual judgement; and he came very close to the pre-occupations of men assessing Christianity when he called on

¹ Congregational Year Books, (1876-86), passim. This shift of main interests is outlined in more detail in the two subsequent chapters.
Congregationalism to reveal the man Jesus, and closer still to the point missed by the dogmatic rejectors when he said that in the paradoxes and mysteries of this ideal man, lay the core of religious belief.¹

Without ignoring either the piety or the impiety of the times, and without arrogance in the face of current criticisms of traditional Christianity, Congregationalists believed that their fundamental principle might well be adequate for the needs of confused men² and exhorted what was numerically a static denomination to greater efforts.³ Being in accord too with liberal individualism and the complete division between Church and State, they showed a healthy scepticism towards the busy efforts of Anglicans and Roman Catholics to provide religious education,⁴ and an attitude refreshingly free of dead moralism when dealing with social problems like drinking, where they argued that circumstances and legislation might change what temperance enthusiasts had hardly succeeded in effecting. These problems they said had had to

¹ Chairman's Address, *ibid.*, (1876), p.41, et seq. This looks forward to the Clarke-Moorhouse debate.


³ *Ibid.*, (1882), pp.50-54. 'We hope that our principles will...usher in a period of universal brotherhood' (p.54).

be dealt with in their own terms.¹ In fact, to Congregationalists, the liberal society might well be the Christian society, and men had a duty to arrange it in order to minimize sin and degradation. State intervention, the Reverend Mr Allen argued in 1886, might lead to great advances and the problem of poverty might be overcome with more equitable land laws, population controls, trade unionism and national insurance.² Moreover, in the person of Thomas Jones, Congregational leadership might respectably take in and discuss the ideas which denied religious knowledge: inevitably he 'refuted' the theories of Darwin, Tyndall, Huxley and Spencer, but he had a clear grasp of what these ideas actually implied about man's knowledge of himself and God, and the wish to face them candidly.³ Congregationalism almost by nature looked for compromise, refusing to desert old truths but anxious to restate them in new ways. Its structure allowed individuals a greater freedom to

¹ Ibid., (1885), p.64.
² Ibid., (1886), pp.72-79 [N.B., The views of Congregational chairman had not the authority of a Bishop, but definite importance as being the ideas of the best men within the ranks of the church. This applies to all Non-conformist denominations.]
³ Ibid., (1880), p.41, et seq.
explore such ways, and so it suffered neither relapse into outdated forms, nor the schism and anguish of innovation.

Unitarianism, though it had long since rejected the creeds which many were now finding objectionable, had only a small hold in Melbourne.\(^1\) For a dozen years Martha Turner had preached quiet reflective sermons on subjects like 'the problem of evil' and 'the sacrament of life' from the pulpit of the Grey Street church, which upheld without extending the Unitarian position.\(^2\) After 1885, the Church revived spectacularly, mainly because a new and fervent minister was appointed.\(^3\) The Reverend George Walters presented himself as an evangelist, intent on spreading the gospel — literally, the good news — of Unitarianism.\(^4\) As the Congregationalists hoped the times were with them, so Walters thought Unitarianism the answer to current spiritual ills. It had no creeds; it seemed rational and hopeful in the nineteenth century context; and it could attract the many who were perhaps already

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1 In 1881, there were 942 nominal Unitarians. *Census*, p. 234.
3 H.G. Turner, 'A History of Unitarianism' collected from *Month-by-Month*, in Turner's *Cutting Book*.
4 'The Gospel of Unitarianism', in H.G. Turner's *Theology Pamphlets Collection*. 
Unitarians at heart. To Walters, Christ was the noblest of the many sons of God, and God the eternal Spirit, the glory of Nature, the loving Father.

Walters, who endured many periods of doubt and painful shifts in his theological position, soon attracted followers. A new church was built to replace the pseudo-Greek temple; a paper was produced; and under a minister ready to participate in the intellectual life of the city, Unitarianism, so often a symbol of progressive thinking in the past, became again a force to be reckoned with.

In 1887, when the new church was opened, the leaders of the Australian Church, the Jewish community, and prominent would-be Christians, spoke hopefully of the religion of the future, where the 'creeds of Christendom' (Judge Higinbotham's phrase) would be replaced by true believers

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1 Ibid., p.9 et seq.
4 Addresses given in connection with the opening of the new Unitarian Church, Grey Street, East Melbourne, 1887, Theology Pamphlets, vol.115:15, is a revealing document of the appeal of Unitarianism to Melbourne intellectuals.
5 * Table Talk, July 26 1885, reported this: a monthly journal entitled Modern Thought, edited by Walters and with H.H. Hayter, A. Sutherland, H.G. Turner, and James Smith amongst its first contributors.
working towards 'the common welfare and elevation of man', as Dr Strong put it.¹ These two phrases, not sequential at the time, caught the two main preoccupations of religiously-minded men: the inadequacy of formal belief and the possibility of purer more humane ones. Unitarianism by 1885 had publicly opened its doors to the rebellious.

Unitarians were but few in number. The Church of England, nominally the largest in the colony,² enjoyed a similarly thoroughgoing shake-up with its new Bishop, James Moorhouse. From his arrival on January the eighth 1877,³ he made plain his liberal sympathies; in his installation sermon he preached from the text 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God', and showed his determination to speak out, and to train others to speak out too.⁴ The Age saw in this new man a reassuring width and openness of mind, and approved of the way he saw his task: though it found his ideas on apostolic succession absurd.

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¹ Addresses...with the opening of the new Unitarian Church, p.9 and p.6 respectively.
² In 1881, 299,542 claimed to be Anglicans, that is 32.7 per cent of the population. Census, p.233.
³ Age, January 8 1877.
⁴ Age, January 12 1877, p.3(2) and (3).
And the Protestant denominations welcomed him as a man who would bring vitality to the pedestrian round of colonial religiosity.\(^1\)

Though hinting too broadly of a sympathy with ritualism, and having in his statements the taint of Latitudinarianism,\(^2\) he soon overwhelmed his brethren with his vigour, his intelligence and his eloquence. As the Reverend Walter Fitchett wrote in the Methodist journal soon after Moorhouse's arrival:

> A bishop afflicted with the habit of writing letters to the papers on minute doctrinal questions is a phenomenon so abnormal that it will take us some time to accustom ourselves to it...the episcopalian clergy will find surprise in possessing...a spiritual head of such remarkable loquacity and copiousness.\(^3\)

Moorhouse said privately that he loathed newspaper controversy but thought it would do people good since they seemed ashamed of their beliefs.\(^4\) So he prepared to expose colonial Anglicans to theological debate as they had never been exposed during the years of Perry's

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2. *Spectator*, January 20 1877.
energetic but narrow-minded rule. The Austral Review which began by doubting his ability to replace Perry, summed up his nine years of service by comparing his impact with that of Disraeli in British politics. He was, it said, a man of iceberg intellect.

Prior to Moorhouse, Dr Bromby, of Melbourne Grammar School fame, had been the only Anglican clergyman to speak out on such questions as evolution, and had in 1869 caused a great stir with his liberal views on the origin of man. That Genesis merely allegorized man's experience and that the geologic record revealed his evolution from a lower to a higher animal, must have been rank heresy to a man of Perry's convictions. Bromby's support for 'development' rather than creation by a series of catastrophes, though only what had been thought in

Lady Stawell recalled that her brother, trained and ordained by Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford, was refused a post in his native Victoria by Perry because of his 'broad' views and so was forced to work in Tasmania. My Recollections, (London, 1911), p.207. Cf. Argus, (ed.), 30 May 1877 on Perry's illiberality.


England for some years, surprised and outraged his listeners. Bromby was gentle enough, maintaining that the soul had been specially created, and he attacked only literalism, but his lectures made him conspicuous in Melbourne, and presumably the remark that he could not picture Hell was meant as a criticism. Perhaps the fuss over his first public statements discouraged him; he published nothing more until 1880 when *Sermons on the Earlier Chapters of Genesis* appeared. This substantial restatement of his earlier position rested on a few main and simple points: the Bible was written by men for men and had historic, unhistoric and poetic portions; the earth an insignificant globule, had slowly evolved; the Garden of Eden had no historical existence; the Sabbath, and all religious forms, existed for man, not *vice versa*. Bromby would probably and rightly have described himself as a broadminded and liberal man with deep Christian

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2 There were very few non-Evangelical clergy in Perry's time: Canon Handfield of St Peter's Eastern Hill, and the Reverend Robert Potter of St Mary's, Hotham, were two. J. Douglas, *The Critic in Church* (Melb., 1872), p.14 and p.57.
3 J. Douglas, *op.cit.*, p.116: a reference to his best known lecture 'Beyond the Grave' (Melb., 1870), where he argued that the heathen and the ignorant simply have no immortality.
convictions; but he, like the members of Free Thought groups, inevitably appeared slightly freakish in the Melbourne of the sixties and seventies.

By 1880 the atmosphere had changed. As the Age remarked, 'The theology of 1880 is not the theology of fifty years ago':\textsuperscript{1} it could as well have said 'of ten years ago', as far as Melbourne was concerned. The discussion groups, and the forum provided by the serious Reviews fostered this change; and after Essays and Reviews appeared in England, even the antipodean clergy must have shifted in their position; Moorhouse was the man who set the pace.

This remarkable man gained his education the hard way. Brought up to become a cutlery merchant, he studied at night at the People's College in Sheffield, entered St John's Cambridge at the comparatively late age of twenty-three, and had to learn Latin, Greek and Hebrew from scratch.\textsuperscript{2} Beginning as a suburban curate he worked his way up, until, in 1876 he was offered either the Bishopric of Victoria, or the post of Metropolitan of India; and chose the former because he did not feel

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\textsuperscript{1} Age, (ed.) March 20 1880.
\textsuperscript{2} Rickards, \textit{op.cit.}, p.10.
\end{flushright}
sufficiently confident of his linguistic ability.¹ The good ship Anglican weighed its anchors, and with so resolute a skipper set sail into the dreadful seas of colonial piety, ignorance and apathy.

St Paul's Cathedral, long envisaged, but never begun,² and Trinity College, were the outward and visible proofs of his ability to get things moving. He set up important organizations within the church like the Sunday School Association, the Pastoral Aid Society, and the Bishop of Melbourne's Fund (a home mission fund), and quickly proved himself as an effective administrator. He campaigned vigorously for religious instruction, and had a firm sense of the dignity and influence available to a Bishop. But as preacher, teacher and apologist, Moorhouse was without peer in the colonial churches. His had been a truthful answer to the question put to bishops at their consecration:

Will you then faithfully exercise yourself in the same Holy Scriptures and call on God for a true understanding of the same; so as ye may be able by them to teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine and to withstand and convince gainsayers.³

¹ Ibid., p. 65.
² Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, p. 584.
³ The Book of Common Prayer, (The consecration of bishops).
However bigoted the lower clergy might have been - and the exchange of pulpits between Dr Bromby and the Presbyterian Charles Strong failed because of such bigotry,¹ - and however divided amongst themselves,² Moorhouse and a core of informed men like Robert Potter and Dr Bromby stood out, liberal spokesmen for an ancient faith which they realized to be endangered.

The Bishop was tireless in his demands for thoughtfulness, for money, and for more and better clergymen; and equally tireless in his attempts to put the gospel before men in terms they would not only understand but rise to meet intellectually. Having begun a Men's Institute in his Sheffield parish which grew to a membership of 400 in four years, and having debated publicly with that town's main Secularists, Moorhouse knew the common touch, and had a strong faith in rational discourse and the effects of education.³ Having delivered the Hulsean Lectures to the University of Cambridge in 1865 on scholarly topics, one of which was 'How Far the

¹ Moorhouse's equivocation before the High churchmen who prevented this exchange appears in his Pastoral Address of 1882, Statistics of the Diocese of Melbourne. (1880-5), p.11.
Hypothesis of a real limitation of our Saviour's Human knowledge is consistent with the doctrine of his Divinity,¹ and having been at one stage a Prebendary of St Paul's Cathedral London, he had also a scholarly distinction as high as the most degree-ed man of Melbourne, that man being Baron von Mueller, the botanist. Added to this he had a rarely dispassionate eloquence,² a rich but direct prose style which made contact with an audience, the bearing of a man of the world, and a civilized manner which, though he smoked a pipe and enjoyed a glass of wine, put him beyond the sniping comments of the city's many moralists. He took Melbourne as his parish and spoke, as he very nearly could do, to all its inhabitants.

Some men obviously found it as much as they could manage to address the faithful; they may well have learnt from Moorhouse's annual pastorals. He may have had a lively sense of the full employment of the clergy,³ but then he had a lively sense of almost everything of which a colonial bishop ought to be aware. His style was

1 Our Lord Jesus Christ, The Subject of Growth in Wisdom: Four Sermons, (London, 1866), pp. 31-64.
2 Rickards, op.cit., p. 55, 'here...we have a witness'.
anything but out-dated. He urged the laity to educate themselves, advising institutes and lectures, and called for modernized church services and proper Sunday schools. He wanted a lay diaconate and social work in the style of the Salvation Army. Christians, he insisted, should involve themselves with every aspect of human life: 'There ought to be no part of our life secular, and no act of our daily business too trifling'; and woe betide the clergyman who failed to explore the newer ways of reaching men.

Apart from his call for action from churchmen, he called also for thoughtfulness. The mental problems, presented to the faithful and the faithless alike, he took to be paramount, and continuously addressed himself to their solution. The very problems which Bromby bravely ventured to discuss, Moorhouse discussed freely and

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1 'The President's Address to the Church of England Assembly', pp.6-7, in Statistics of the Diocese of Melbourne (1880).
2 The Church Assembly, 1884...Address of the President, pp.15 ff; ibid., 1885, p.19; in Statistics of the Diocese, 1884, 1885.
3 Ibid., 1885, pp.25-6.
with a convincing and soothing optimism.\footnote{His address in 1879 exemplified this: speaking to the synod, he included everyone in his remarks, and argued that in a time of trouble, perplexity and upheaval, Christians could call on more allies than they realized. Science would soon befriend metaphysics, psychology would clarify the processes of the soul, and historical science would give new but not damaging facts about the origin of man. The question 'is God here', he said, was being asked with new eagerness and solemnity, but the new knowledge would aid men in their mission if they would only possess more than common zeal; the idle, the ignorant and the fanatical had no place. \textit{The President\textsc{'}s Address to the Church of England Assembly} (1879), pp.1-2, in \textit{Statistics of the Diocese}, 1879.} He could catch the mood and the uneasiness of the day and formulate questions with clarity: apart from his call for stronger faith, he discussed the vexed question of the place of creeds in religion, the church in relation to democracy, the lessons of the Salvation Army, universal education and enlivened the old idea of the priesthood of all believers. Here he revealed himself as one of those remarkable products of nineteenth century England, having a deep faith in rationality and universal education, coupled with a conviction that the truth of Christianity could be both rediscovered and applied. Behind his zeal for an educated clergy, lay his particular vision of the civilization of the South and his role in establishing it:
There will remain the fine energetic race, the high level of intelligence, the feeling after something better than the platitudes in religion, and the grand future before the Church of England, if only I can succeed in importing and training the right kind of clergy.¹

More remarkably, the Bishop of Melbourne set out to reach the business and professional classes of the city, to provoke them from a bourgeois apathy into a realization of the claims of Christ. His annual spring lectures, given in the Town Hall invariably attracted four thousand people. What they heard was no simplistic discussion of doctrine, nor any kind of revivalist campaign. He lectured them on The Expectation of the Christ in the New Testament for instance,² and after ten weeks of the most substantial theological material available, his listeners must have been much wiser than

¹ Quoted Rickards, op.cit., p.73.
² Other topics were 'The Peculiar characteristics of the teachings of St John's Gospel'; 'The Development of ideas in the writings of St Paul'; 'The Development of Monotheism as illustrated by the connection of the Religion of Abraham with the Polytheism of the heathen tribes of Canaan'; 'The Connection of Christianity with the philosophy and social life of Greece as illustrated in the first book of the Corinthians'; 'The Great Social Problems of the present day as illustrated by the symbols of the Apocalypse and the ancient life to which they refer'; and 'The Galatian Lapse'. Recorded in the Pastoral Address, Statistics of the Diocese of Melbourne, (1883).
when they began. As both the daily papers printed his lectures, he reached an even wider audience.¹

In lecturing on the lapse of the Galatians from faith, he treated his audience to the latest anthropological knowledge of the Asia Minor area, and to his disagreement with the reasons offered by the Tübingen Theological schools to explain the lapse. St Paul's advice, that the Galatians distinguish between what could and what could not be achieved by law, he discussed in great detail. This led him to socialist theories, and what Christians ought to allow as the field of the State and its legislation, amongst which he argued material well-being and education obviously belonged. But, he warned, a vast gap lay between making laws and persuading men to obey them. Schopenhauer was wrong to argue it could be done by sheer will and the socialists foolish to imagine education would solve the problem, and the contemporary illusion that humanity would inevitably progress to a better state by natural selection and the forces of history was to him sheer

¹ There has been no attempt to follow these lectures through in the press, though they are there for the finding; but two of the series were published as pamphlets, The Expectation of the Christ, a series on the messianic prophecies (Melb., 1878) and The Galatian Lapse (1878) and are bound in the S.L.V. Theology Pamphlet collection.
flippancy. The deliverance of mankind must come from one of the two great religions: Buddhism or Christianity. Buddhism he stood with Schopenhauer's pessimism; the true spirit of Christianity and the redemptive powers of Christ's death contained the solution, though the letter of the Bible must be first of all reconciled with its spirit. Like the Galatians, modern Christians might easily regress into fruitless squabbles if they concentrated on the letter of the law.¹

Despite the length and learnedness of the lectures, Moorhouse was, in choosing such a topic in 1884, commenting on the struggle within the Presbyterian Church, and making a tactful but well-substantiated statement on the debates of the decade; and beyond his purely dogmatic purposes, aligning himself with those who like Judge Higinbotham, proclaimed that the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life, without deserting his post, and without collapsing into the vague metaphysics of those who so desperately wished to reform the church from within. Moorhouse spoke for a liberalized, modernized and intellectually respectable faith, and in so thorough-going and wide-ranging a way that he was

almost an exotic in the city of Melbourne: a man who came, only to stand head and shoulders above his fellows, and who then went, leaving less trace on the city than could have been expected given the enormous role he played in its intellectual life for nine years.¹

Marcus Clarke thought the future Australian would probably be some kind of Presbyterian,² not, despite Moorhouse, Anglican; and he did so because the loudest, strongest, wealthiest, most pious denomination in all Melbourne was the Presbyterian. Its influence extended subtly into the Legislative Council to which many a wealthy Scottish squatter had been elected; it dominated most social questions, like the opening of the Public Library on Sundays; its stance on cultural matters like the painting 'Chloe', had to be considered; its particularly narrow morality permeated the city. As one of the less-biased of the race of denominational historians put it:

¹ C.H. Pearson, *Democracy in Victoria*, p.691 (in the Pearson papers) marked out the Anglican clergy as a strong conservative force. It would be easy to see the most prominent of them as a conservative, in his role in the education question and his position over Black Wednesday. (See p.144.)

Did the P. & O. send away its mail steamers on the Sunday, the trustees of the Public Library propose to open their doors, the Defence Department move troops to town, the Railways Department have a picnic at Macedon...Dr Cairns and the rest would have something to say about the wickedness.

As a representative of the spectacularly religious, Dr Cairns was without peer, even in his own denomination. When Queen Victoria had refused the petition of the Victorian Presbyterians against the bill to allow a man to marry his deceased wife's sister, he had wept 'for the immorality of it all'; he denounced the Governor for travelling by train on Sunday; and his address to the Assembly in 1878 was riddled with anxiety for the sanctity of the Sabbath. The Imperial Review regarded him as the real Bishop of Melbourne, and as one of the pioneering clergy he had wielded an enormous influence not simply denominationally but in building the city itself.

1 A. McDonald, One Hundred Years of Presbyterianism in Victoria, (Melb., 1937), p.103.
2 Ibid., p.100.
3 Camperdown Chronicle, Nov. 23 1877, in McPherson's cuttings, Presbyterianism in Victoria.
4 He arrived in 1853. McDonald, op.cit., p.34.
5 Argus, (ed.) February 24 1876.
Side by side with the representatives of this ancient Calvinism, the Presbyterian churches of Victoria boasted some intellectually distinguished preachers in the best of Scottish traditions. The 'Cathedral' church, Scots, had always invited such men. The first, the Reverend A.M. Henderson, earned a reputation as the most vigorous preacher of the sixties;¹ and the second, Peter Sinclair Menzies, an original thinker² who first made clear the antagonism between the ancient creeds of Presbyterianism and liberal thought,³ was followed by the Reverend Charles Strong, also an eloquent preacher, who eventually provoked the long-threatened clash.

Ironically, the denomination whose adherents most faithfully attended⁴ and whose dogmas seemed so faithfully upheld as to be inaccessible to liberal thought,

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¹ Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, p.585.
² Ibid.
³ I am grateful to Mr J. Rundle for providing me with a review of the book, Sermons by the late Peter Menzies (Melb., 1875), published in the Ballarat Star, February 8 1875.
⁴ 1876-7: 131,098 nominal Presbyterians 63,220 estim. 299,091 " Anglicans, 38,494 attendance at 198,067 " R.C. 68,386 the principal service of
1886-7: 151,712 nominal Presbyterians 77,297 the day 356,420 " Anglicans 58,862 " " " 232,849 " R.C. 85,812 " " "
Year Books, 1876-7, p.13 and p.201, 1886-7, p.47 and p.748.
was the one to suffer within its ranks the most sustained and destructive theological debate. The very exactness of colonial Presbyterians' translation of old Scottish Calvinism meant that when a challenge did come, it met with stiff opposition from the 'kirk': and the more so because of all the Protestant churches, the Presbyterian maintained the most formal and historically conditioned creed, the Westminster Confession, now three centuries old and filled with anachronisms extremely offensive to the liberal mind. Hence its vulnerability; and hence the force of the attack when it did come - as might be expected, from the minister of Scots Church. Though not necessarily accessible to theological debate, colonial Presbyterianism was particularly vulnerable to it; and when its intellectual and moral strengths came to be opposed rather than complementary, endured a bitter division.

Old-style Presbyterianism expressed itself vehemently on the mores of the community; but its members also judged one another with Salem-like skill. In 1876 began the tedious and evidently scandalous case of the blackballing of the Reverend R.K. Ewing, whose separation

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1 The Presbyterian Church of Victoria, briefly followed the divisions of Scottish Presbyterianism after the Disruption, but united as one church in 1859.
from his wife caused untold but obscure trouble. Two years later, the Reverend Mr Henderson of Ballarat, an ex-student of Principal Caird, offended rather differently by questioning the Whale's ability to swallow Jonah. In the same year Scots Church attracted unfavourable attention by introducing singing into its services, for which it was severely rebuked. But the case of the Reverend Charles Strong and Scots Church caused the greatest upheaval.

Relations between this church and the rest of the denomination had always been rather tense. Strong's uncompromising personality and pleasantly outspoken views on the social obligations of those who professed to be disciples of Christ attracted attention from the time of his arrival in 1877. Strong, another disciple of Principal Caird, brought with him the assumption that if Christianity did not adjust its grounds of authority and re-orientation towards modern men it would inevitably become obsolete. His early pre-occupation with

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1 See McPherson cuttings (1876).

2 In an early sermon reported by the Age, July 17 1877, he said that they all knew that Christianity had not come into the world a full-blown system, and that the paths in the beginning had not been clear to those most deeply committed.

3 'The day of Religion is only dawning', Plain Words in Present Troubles, (Melb., 1879), Theology Pamphs., vol.30:10, p.10.
Christianity as a humane ethic, his attention to Unitarianism, and his hopes of a 'new faith in the new world' marked him off as an alien among his colonial brethren. The possibility of Strong rejecting formal Christianity, of taking an irrevocable stand, had always existed even before he came to Melbourne; the need for an institution to protect itself against anarchy and individualism has a history as long as civilization; but the bitterness of the Strong case had a distinctively colonial tinge.

Having been criticised informally for his innovations in public worship, his sermons, and two articles in the ill-fated *Presbyterian Review*, as well as his remarks on the unsuitability of the Shorter Catechism as a childrens manual, he over-stepped the confines of Calvinistic theology with an article in the *Victorian*

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1 See his correspondence with Principal Caird, quoted E. Jones, *The Solitary Bishop, an account of the relations existing between Charles Strong and his two churches, 1883-93*. Unpub. essay, (Melb., n.d).

2 Ibid., pp.22-3.


Review's symposium on the Atonement. The article, a scholarly discourse tracing historical changes in the dogma, and bearing a humane and historicist assessment of its significance, caused a furore.

It took some time for the Presbyterian clergy to decide why the article offended them so much. They set up a special committee to examine it. The report, tabled four months later, displayed the work of closed minds: nowhere, it said, had Strong contradicted the words of the august Confession, but everywhere could be detected a spirit of compromise. Did he deny the miraculous facts or the Divine authority of the Bible? Could any scriptural doctrine of how God reconciled man unto himself be deduced from the article? Yes, but no. Finally they realized that the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, as the Son of God, had been omitted.  

1 V.R., vol.2:12, pp.772-3. Strong uses the twentieth century concept of alienation to explain the process of the atonement.

2 R. Hamilton, A Jubilee History of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria (Melb., 1888), p.392, records that in December 1880 notice of the intended motion to specially examine the article was handed to the Presbytery, because it 'has caused...uneasiness...by what appears to them the unsatisfactory character of its teaching'.

3 Ibid., p.403. This contains the text of the report. See also Age, April 20 1881.
As it proved difficult to condemn a man for what he did not say the matter was dropped. McEachran, one of the Cairns clan, felt the document gave the impression of unsoundness of mind.

If the Presbytery retired gracelessly, Strong's church rallied around its well-loved minister: who had been cautioned and alleged dishonest for his incomplete subscription to the Confession. J.C. Stewart, one of the elders of Scots Church, rose to defend his minister. If Strong was dishonest, he said, so was every other Presbyterian Minister: some doctrines, like infant damnation, were no longer preached anywhere.\footnote{A History of the Scots Church Case, p.7.} The Presbytery parried firmly, demanding apologies and recantations; but Stewart, taking a Luther-like stand, refused, replying that he could not be charged on a hypothetical statement. The defence was taken up by another church member, William Turner, whose statement, boldly worded and blandly convincing, could not be passed over. Were only the select to be saved and if so did this literally exclude the ignorant heathen and the infant dying unbaptized? Could the Resurrection have been a literal physical event? And could the Bible be
the literally recorded Word of God? Did God create the world in six days of twenty four hours duration? Turner answered this last question in the same blunt way that he answered all the others:

The mind cannot think it...cannot believe that even God can make anything out of nothing. 1

Even the most orthodox had now to face the articles of their faith which stood out in all their crude affirmative strength. The problem of their creed, long troublesome to thoughtful Presbyterians, 2 could no longer be ignored. 3 No remarks justifying Strong 4 or justifying the actions of the Presbytery 5 had any real relevance: 6 the problem, regardless of which individuals formulated


2 Menzies had obliquely broached the subject in the early seventies and letters appeared in the Argus, April 18-25 1876, on the Westminster Confession.

3 See the correspondence columns, Argus, August 22-31 1881 for spread of opinion.

4 As the whole A History of the Scots Church Case does.

5 E.g. Spectator, May 6 1881, p.8.

6 Neither does the valid but limited statement 'Strong was not the victim of a heresy hunt'. E. Jones, op.cit., pp.3-4.
it, came from the confrontation of Calvinism by contemporary knowledge about the nature and history of the world.¹ Shortly afterwards, another special committee produced a new amending Declaratory Act which vastly modernized the tough creeds of early Scottish Calvinism.²

In the interim, Strong ceased to be a butt for the traditionalists, but only because he left the colony for a holiday. He had not long returned when he offended his colleagues. He spoke in favour of opening the public library on Sundays: and at a secular meeting on a Sunday.

'I did not expect to see him', rasped his old opponent the Reverend Mr McEachran, 'join Unitarians, Roman Catholics and Secularists in an attempt to break down the sanctity of the Sabbath and turn it into a partial holiday'.³ Once again Strong escaped with severe admonition. But, since he went on putting his neck out, it was not long before the axe fell.

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¹ James Smith writing in the Victorian Review, vol.4:24, put this basic confrontation well, saying 'if scepticism has become rife in Scotland, and among Presbyterians all over the world, may we not hold a document of 1643 responsible? Man is naturally a religious being because he is also a reasonable being' (p.688) and pointed to the two tendencies - one a spirit of criticism and enquiry, the other of immobility and conservatism' (p.687).

² Hamilton, op.cit., p.415.

³ Quoted A History of the Scots Church Case, p.8.
The Literary Society of Scots Church, run by the assistant pastor, the Reverend James Lambie, invited Judge Higinbotham to address it on a subject of his own choosing. Higinbotham, with the approval of Strong, chose to speak on Religion and Science, and took the opportunity to rally the laity against outdated creeds and ignorant clergymen. In the view of orthodoxy, Strong, as minister for the church and chairman of the meeting, should have refuted his statements about outdated Christianity. He failed to do so at the meeting, partly because he thoroughly approved of Higinbotham's rebelliousness, partly because he did not envisage the scandal the lecture would create.

Almost immediately a date was set for Strong's trial for heresy. Instead of enduring a humiliating test on all points of doctrine, he preferred to resign: and instead of dealing with it within their own ranks, the Presbytery referred the matter to the whole Assembly who agreed to hear the case for Strong's resignation. By

1 Strong/Pearson, n.d., Pearson papers.
2 For a fuller discussion see pp.63-4.
3 The Spectator, August 24 1883, spoke of the agitation in the columns of the daily press, the answering letters, the widespread interest.
4 A History of the Scots Church Case, pp.11-12. Strong/Pearson, August 31 1883.
some misunderstanding Strong almost failed to present himself, and even after a last minute reprieve, was refused a certificate of resignation, which automatically debarred him from offering himself to any other Presbyterian church for employment: a refusal, or oversight if it was, which played no small part in Strong's decision two years later to found his own church in Melbourne. However justified Victorian Presbyterians may have been in standing on authority, and however foolish Strong was to proceed without moderating his actions, yet his letter to the Assembly stands as a moving and fine-spirited document of a man against heavy odds: and provides yet another comment on the confined community which so oppressed men of independent mind.

The proceedings in connection with my resignation and the Mr McEachran's unsustained and unsustainable charges have been unconstitutional and even illegal....I have been openly charged with being a dishonest and dishonourable man, and most unworthy suspicions have been insinuated. If I am what I have been represented to be, no words of mine can be of any avail to dispel the impression.

1 Strong's article on 'Norman McLeod D.D.', M.R., vol.I:3, the popular Scottish preacher, whom he admired so much, has an ironic twist now. McLeod remained faithful during the 1843 crisis, but spent his life attacking illiberal thinking and rigid orthodoxy, and in active works for the poor; but he managed to stay inside the church. Strong's position was little different but he antagonized his fellows.
I have done my best to serve what seemed to me to be the best interests of the Church and of religion while here... I have preached and tried to practise what I believed to be the essential doctrines of the gospel and of the creeds, and... when I can no longer remain a minister of the Presbyterian Church, I hope I have the moral courage to leave it. I feel that the brethren who have spoken so strongly against me have neither understood my motives nor spirit.

More so than the thinking of Moorhouse, the thinking of Strong fitted into the ideas prevalent in Melbourne. He had not the cogency and scholastic abilities which elevated Moorhouse - who had also a formal position to protect, and to protect him - though both were liberal in theology. Strong's glowing emphasis on the humanity of the Christian religion and his outspoken rejection of traditional forms, which more easily contained the Anglican's colder thinking, marked him as a man apart. He was trained in a mode of thinking newer than the ones established by the first clergyman of the city, and he applied his ideas with an almost unthinking fervour. His great sin was in doing nothing to emphasize orthodox colonial Presbyterianism, but he was close enough to its representatives for them to seize on his words in a way

1 Quoted in A History of the Scots Church Case, p.13.
they could not manage with the lunatic fringe of rationalists and secularists of the time. The emotional quality of his rebellion, and the mental imprecision which inevitably surrounded the ideas of men wanting to retain only the best of Christianity, emerged later with his attempts to found a new Church, which he hopefully called the Australian Church. Truly he preached on his return to the colony in 1885 from the text 'my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God' but who precisely was Strong's God?

It is often said that Strong's supporters gradually drifted away from the originally successful Australian Church because of his aggressive sympathy with the working classes;¹ and Strong's dislike of his assistant caused dissension.² Perhaps too after the stimulus of persecution had been removed, so some of his glamour disappeared, and the absence of theoretical coherence and strength in his position dissatisfied some of his supporters. He preached Jesus the model of humanity,³

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¹ 'Charles Strong', *Australian Encyclopedia*, vol.8, p.328.
and the true Church as a purely spiritual organization, with God as Infinite Thought, Ideal Goodness, Ultimate Reality and the Living Father. This transcendental idealism, cut out the core of Christianity, the best of which he had meant to retain, and left a set of concepts admittedly purified but at once too exalted and too vague to be properly coherent. As Bishop Moorhouse had earlier said with reference to Higinbotham's lecture 'you can't have Christianity without creeds'. For a multitude of reasons, not all of which were material or personal, the Australian Church ceased to have any force in Melbourne after 1893, even though the Christian socialism it implied had an exact relevance in the depression and the ideas which Strong alone acted out were versions of those circulating in other religious and political groups.

George Walters, writing soon after his arrival in 1885, remarked on the spirit of doubt in Melbourne as in England and Europe, and noted the strength of conservatism and orthodoxy in a community he had expected to find

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1. The Church of Jesus (Melb., 1886), Theology Pamphs., vol.3:4, p.11.
2. The Thirst for God.
free of traditional prejudice and animosities.¹ Nonetheless, people were looking for a more liberal faith, he believed; and the founding of the Australian Church could be seen as a testing of the colonial dream, of building an even better world than previously known. From the accepted basis of nineteenth century English civilization, a new and purer civilization might be built. The Protestant faith was thought by its critics within the church to be susceptible to such a transformation: though those outside felt society would be vastly improved by its total absence. The forces of conservation and authority won a victory over innovation in the Strong case comparable to the political victory of the Legislative Council in 1881.

Walters also pointed out a broader area of religious activity within the city. Beyond orthodoxy and its critics but within the gamut of church life worked the Salvation Army; the soldiers of the Cross appeared unobtrusively in the late seventies, to work steadily in the lower class suburbs of Collingwood and Prahran.² The Swedenborgian Church on Eastern Hill had a small

¹ Some Aspects of Religious Thought in Melbourne', M.R., vol.10:37, p.3.
² I.R., vol.2:10, p.36.
following.¹ The secularists, spiritualists, theosophists and freethinkers pursued their angry and lonely courses.² And at this time, enthusiasm for the great revivalist meetings in the style of the Americans Moody and Sankey occasionally swept the city: Dr Somerville in 1877 filled the Town Hall night after night with his campaigns from 'the open Bible'.³

For all the apathy lamented by the clergy, and all the opposition from within and without the established churches, the evangelical ethos permeated the city. And despite the depth, and even brilliance of the theological discussion of the decade, the forces of authority and tradition stood firm. Nonetheless, the field of debate was wide and the anxiety genuine and omni-present.

Churchmen had to fight disbelief on all fronts, and to the most aware, two main problems presented themselves: firstly that less and less people seemed to go to church, and more and more thought the Christianity was not 'true'.

The Yearbooks do not show any substantial decline in church attendance.⁴ Yet many clergymen thought less

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¹ Minutes of the first session of the Australian Conference of the New Church (Melb., 1881), Theology Pamphs., vol.3:3.
² See F.B. Smith, op.cit.
³ Age, July 10 1877, p.2(7).
⁴ See earlier references to Church attendance.
people went to church. The debate between the Reverend Mr Cross and the Reverend Mr Fitchett as to the causes of this, as it appeared in the pages of the *Melbourne Review* reveal this fear. As Cross said,

> I have felt the reproach of having failed to comprehend and satisfy the nineteenth century requirements of the men and women to whom we preach.\(^2\)

The declining influence of the pulpit, he argued, came from its spurious eloquence, a false divorce between religion and life, poor subject matter, and above all, fear of the effects of contemporary ideas: were the creeds outdated? Fitchett, the Wesleyan, retorted that his brother's limitations were saddening; but such limitations did not affect the clergy as a whole, who were largely intelligent men well aware that their job was to save souls not to satisfy minds.\(^3\)

If this opposition of views showed only to be the difference between the minds of the minority for whom belief had to be intellectually respectable, and the

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1 The following formulations appeared in the Reviews: in 1879, G.F. Cross and W.H. Fitchett debated the decline of pulpit influence (*M.R.*). A. Rigg wrote on 'The Pulpit and the Age', in 1881 and other articles appeared entitled 'Why people don't go to Church', 'The Belief of Unbelievers', and 'On changes of Creed'.


3 *M.R.*, vol.4:14, pp.50-54.
majority for whom intellectual respectability had nothing whatsoever to do with belief, it would be useful; but Fitchett's reply is in accord with the attitude of strict fundamentalists and the devout evangelicals of the city, whilst Cross, an Anglican, spoke for what might be called the more exposed denominations. St Paul had said 'by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, but of God'; and to see man as a passive recipient of grace, and faith as a merely emotional gesture, would eliminate many an argument. But for those to whom faith involved thoughtful human action, the grounds of authority were of importance. What kinds of arguments and proofs were available to bolster and encourage faith? The few examined this question with great, if belated, earnestness.

The traditional framework of Christian belief seemed inadequate to many theologians in the city, and it is interesting to see that by 1876 all the big questions had at last been taken up in Melbourne, by men who consciously or not belonged to a post-Darwinian generation. The most obviously suspect aspect of traditional Christianity was its emphasis on the miraculous. Christianity without miracles was Christianity deprived not only of accessories like the raising of
Lazarus or the Gadarene swine, but its great cornerstones of the Incarnation and the Resurrection.

Gosman, the Congregational theologian, recognizing the import of Spiritism, began with a demand for 'such a disruption of the supernatural as will satisfy our minds and clear away from them the mists of indefiniteness and uncertainty'.

The Anglican Russel took up the question: but he took refuge in the inadequacy of man's knowledge of the laws of nature, so leaving the possibility of their violation wider, although Huxley had long since undermined that argument by showing that in that case a miracle only became one more explorable empirical fact. Moreover, Russel tried to define the limits of scientific thinking so that a supposed higher moral Universe which culminated in a moral Godhead could survive intact: this God would perform miracles. Darwinian procedures had already attacked non-empirical deduction of this kind, and Russel barely touched the problem. The learned Anglican, the Reverend Robert Potter, fell into the Humian trap by admitting that a miracle was a fact which could not be

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1 [M.R., vol.1:1.]
accounted for by human experience,¹ but leapt out with theological agility by saying that it must refer to a higher region, and finally saved his assumptions with the kind of faith we might more easily find in Emerson—everything is a miracle.² He was immediately countered with a long refutation pointing out that people inevitably misunderstood Hume's position.³ Undaunted, Potter replied that he had been misunderstood since he explicitly postulated a hyper-physical region.⁴ Since nobody really questioned their assumptions, and depended totally on arguments worked out and refuted elsewhere, the real question remained disconnected with the debate, and in the absence of original thinking, barren to a degree.

Moorhouse had earlier defended miracles against the scurrilous attacks of Marcus Clarke.⁵ Alone of the

¹ Hume's definition was the stumbling block: 'the violation of the natural laws of Nature by a particular volition of the Deity of whose attributes and actions we could otherwise know nothing otherwise than our experience of ordinary Nature. No experience could establish a miracle unless its falsehood would be more miraculous than the alleged miracle'. Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, vol.8, p.686.
colonial clergy he had the sophistication to deal with
the problem: but to the secular mind more concerned with
humanizing rather than defending Christianity, he must
have seemed sophistical also. Though based on the same
assumptions as Russel and Potter, the Bishop argued
that if human volition could disrupt the operation of
natural laws, how much greater could be the disruption of
a superhuman intelligence if in Nature's adaptive
mechanisms (one way of seeing Nature 'red in tooth and
claw') one could detect an intelligent purpose; and if
man's nature had a higher as well as a lower purpose,
surely this was evidential proof of the existence of
God; and if God did exist then miracles must be admitted,
as Mill said. By skating over the pitfalls of Paley's
old proofs and idealizing natural processes, Moorhouse
sounded convincing.

If it was no longer easy to fit a God into an
environment ordered only by accidental variation and
remorseless laws, man's position as a unique being was

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1 See the discussions on argument from design.
(i) C.W. Purnell (M.R., vol.6:27) deplored the barren
generalities of the clergy, antagonistic to evolution,
while all ideas were disintegrating before it, and
pleaded that scientists and metaphysicians may join
hands - yet he only demanded an extension of the
Argument from Design.
(ii) Joseph O'Brien (M.R., vol.6:24) while believing in the
existence of an intelligent cause himself, says the
denials of Helvetius, Bradlaugh and Holbach were not
so empty as the interested would like to think since
most people conducted themselves on mechanical or
utilitarian principles any way.
not so tenable either. The concepts of time and space had by this time begun the process of extension by which they are now largely incomprehensible to the average person; but the idea of life extending back into amoebic beginnings, past prehistoric man (itself a new idea) threw conventional theological interpretations into shrieking confusion.¹ The idea of evolving from an ape still upset people; and it is interesting that McAllister in 1876 assured his readers that the theory of evolution was not so devoid of meaning as some of them supposed, although this did not detract from man's superiority.²

Speculations about man's place in recorded history came up, insofar as lugubriously learned articles on 'the Development of Religion in Europe', oriental religion, and the American transcendentalists found a place in the Reviews. These men threw their nets widely and earnestly, but caught little; of the spirit of contemporary enquiry they remained only half-aware, and it is only by implication, and through their mental determination, that we, and probably their readers, can see their anxiety for the framework of their faith.

¹ See Dr Bromby, Sermons on the earlier chapters of Genesis, especially no.2, 'The Creation of Man'.
² 'Man's Relations to the Lower Animals', M.R., vol.2:5.
The Bible could hardly be taken as a sure guide. The factual side of this once authoritative book was open to the criticisms of anyone with the interest to make them. The debate on its substance, though not of the breathtaking order of a Colenso or Robertson, was as Dr Bromby said, necessitated by 'angry controversy': and he went on to explain how a man could conceivably have lived for nine hundred and twenty years as in Genesis. Likewise, another Anglican, the Reverend Mr Wallaston, tried to explain the famous impossibility of the sun standing still as Joshua smote the Amorites. Though not a widely indulged pastime, Biblical criticism did occur - textpickers abounded in the secularist and freethought ranks - and the work of Continental critics from the Tübingen school, and Renan and Strauss, as well as the Scottish theologians, had the same kind of familiarity for them as the argument of Dr Darwin, even when these people were not specifically referred to.

As in the case with people far from the actual arena, generalized and well-sifted information was available;

this they discussed with a seriousness which was both painfully relevant and sadly second-hand. In most cases preachers of this kind of mind (invariably Anglican and Congregationalists) tried to find a working set of definitions. Few had the ease of mind of Moorhouse who could address a young men's meeting on 'the Genuineness of the Fourth Gospel' and begin:

In the present state of opinion you have need to know the facts. I have always tried to put the useful before the ornamental.\(^1\)

Strangely enough, Moorhouse did not always assess the useful in the same way as his listeners. His scope was wider than theirs, and the ideas which most circulated in the minds of the thinking laymen were much simpler and more localized than his. Four public debates of the decade came closer to whatever assumptions and attitudes were really relevant to a number of the colonists. The first and most spectacular occurred between the Bishop and Marcus Clarke; the second between the one-time South Australian premier Boyle Travers Finniss and Canon J.C. McCullagh of St Paul's, Sandhurst; both

\(^1\) 'Amicalis' (who also wrote on 'The Development of the Religions of Europe' for the M.R.) replied at length, saying Moorhouse did not present the facts, and the book was a forgery. 'The Genuineness of the Fourth Gospel', M.R., vol.3:10, p.262.
these occurred through the pages of the two reviews. The third, and very well known one, followed Judge Higinbotham's lecture to the Scots church literary society; and the fourth, from Judge Williams' book, *Religion without Superstition*. Moorhouse, and to a lesser extent the lower clergy, concentrated on reformulating Christianity within the old framework and putting their ideas in accord with the international debate - with, that is, making Christianity respectable. These four men, a writer, a politician, and two judges, who were in many ways the cream of colonial society, wanted to reform Christianity and find a religion beyond that framework. They took the academic effort for granted, although referring extensively to it, and sought something better.

'Creed' is not a word we use much today, but it figured so often and with such obvious emphasis that it soon looks as though the men who used the word attached to it an overwhelming significance: it provides a back door to the minds of those attacking religion, indicating an attack on the whole structure of religion, and implying an entirely new image on which it might be based.
Marcus Clarke had the knack of picking up the notions vaguely floating in the community. With natural flair, he made out the case for doing away with creeds:

Sincere believers in the doctrines of Christianity must be seriously disturbed by the number of persons, who, if not frankly hostile to the dominant creed of the civilized world are at least indifferent to its teachings.  

His next point equally well caught a prevailing assumption:

among the best intellects of our time, how few are there who freely accept the dogmas of the priesthood....They would fain believe, despite their reason: they are compelled to reason, despite their belief.  

And then:

the melancholy of the age arises from this growing conviction that the Religion of the old time is insufficient for present needs.  

Finally he stated that undermining realization, the bugbear of would-be believers - 'whatever grows in time is the child of time'. If one did not know Clarke as a convinced hedonist and an agile controversialist, one could read 'where shall the human heart next build its sanctuary' as his, and their, anguished and archetypal

2 Ibid.  
3 Ibid., p.66.
cry. With a journalist's ease, Clarke grasped the basic reason for loss of faith as the abandonment of the belief in the miraculous, pointing to the success of Science in making it clear that the operations of nature were conducted on fixed principles. Clarke summed up the themes and pre-occupations of the public debate: the insufficiency of old ideas, the need for rationality, the needs of the human heart, the sense of storm.

The main quality of his argument however was outrageousness. Clarke did a rapid skip up the path of evolution, with a few sidesteps to Mohammed and Brahma for effect, until he arrived to dance delightedly on the mountains of scientific revelation, and shout hopefully that the age of the miraculous had gone, along with the political necessities which sustained religion. His conclusion ran glibly:

Educate your children to understand the discoveries of Tyndall, Huxley and Darwin, and you will find them pleasantly laughing at the old fables of Jonah, Balaam and Lazarus.

And his gift of striking the familiar note emerged from his formulation of inevitable Progress:

The progress of the world will be the sole care of its inhabitants, and the revelation of the race the only religion of mankind.
In reply Moorhouse refused to dance around the bonfire of things past, and made short work of Clarke's jejune remarks on the evolution of religious beliefs, castigating him as irresponsible, and pointing out the stale devices he used.

The notoriety of the debate terrified Franklyn, editor of the *Victorian Review*, and Clarke's jaunty reply appeared in the *Melbourne Review* which sold, probably for the only time, its full quota, a thousand copies: naturally enough, when Clarke referred to Christ as that 'revived corpse sitting up in Heaven', accused the Bishop of Melbourne of pantheism, and turned Moorhouse's quotations from Mill inside out by quoting Mill's conclusions on miracles. Moorhouse had accused Clarke of atheism, provincialism, and a lack of concern for the basis of true civilization. The second accusation stung, and Clarke ventured to think that a person living in Melbourne, who read the newspapers and all the notable books on current questions, would know as much of modern thought as a country clergyman or a minister of a

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3 'Letter to His Lordship, the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne', *M.R.*, vol.5:17.
provincial town: once again, Clarke caught the beat of colonial intellectual assertion. It hardly however saved his argument.

At the same time, the Melbourne Review published an argument between Boyle Travers Finniss and Canon McCullagh, a more earnest and ill-spirited affair than the first. Finniss was anxious to attack 'the ecclesiastical spirit which had for centuries oppressed the mind of Europe'. The claim of churchmen that scientists were responsible for the prevailing skepticism, immorality and materialism - never put in that form, which was Finniss' own - particularly provoked him, and his real target was the Church's control over the minds and morals of men. He considered that learned and free thinkers had forever been smothered by 'a jealous hierarchy'. Like Marcus Clarke he thought Christianity a dead force - dead in fact since the last days of the Roman Empire - and that it ought to be discarded.

This flat and outspoken attack brought forward one of the Moorhouse contingent, who with righteous indignation,

1 Ibid., p.108.
3 It is interesting that Baron von Mueller, the distinguished botanist, was prepared to address Presbyterians On The Advancement of the Natural Sciences through Ministers of the Christian Church (Melb., 1877), Vict. Pamphs., vol.112:4. See Age August 7 1877, for a report of this.
conspicuously more learning and a fair degree of justifiability, forced Finniss into an open statement of his position.¹ And a revealing statement it proved to be: 'I seek in vain the pure teaching of Christ' and, 'Civilization is the parent of Christianity'.²

Though all of these objections could conceivably be answered, still Finniss was expressing a general set of ideas. McCullagh might validly reply that patient scholarship would ultimately lead to the pure teachings of Christ or that the Church's interpretation of these was just as important as some ideal teachings; he could say that examples of Christian persecution of secular knowledge was simply an historical and human fact; and reply that Finniss and many others used a chicken-and-the-egg argument; but he could not grapple with Finniss' main preoccupation that angry sense of deception and deprivation, and the urge to begin again. Where were the pure teachings of the man Jesus, and what need had they to impose creeds or those teachings. The coming man had need of a new kind of faith.

When George Higinbotham gave his considered opinion on the religion and science argument, he began from much the same grounds as Finniss and Clarke: the waning influence of the churches, the rigidity of their dogmas, the dilemma of the mind in the light of scientific knowledge. But whereas Clarke was flippant and Finniss angry, Higinbotham was genuinely anguished. To him the problem sprang from the ignorance of the clergy, and the solution in a newly awakened and thoughtful laity, who would then see the difference between the institutionalized religion, bound by creeds and dogmas, and the religion of Jesus. Difficulties could be transcended, he said, if men would but brave 'the rising floods and beating winds' and stand with him on 'the high central platform of thought'. Higinbotham's eloquence and his well-known faith in the common man stirred his listeners. The same idealism which characterized his political life shone through the lecture. If they would only defy the forces of conservatism, they would find a God greater than any of the old anthropomorphic conceptions, and the example of Jesus of Nazareth, the perfect man, would stand before them. Here they would find 'the rock of all ages,
where the human mind might build a secure and indestructible abode.¹

No one had caused such a stir since the days of Bromby. Like the Honest to God stir of the 1960s, Higinbotham's *Science and Religion* provoked a widespread controversy because a prominent man had at last put together in popular form a number of ideas already permeating thinking on the subject, in a way that made them seem very important. As St Paul found ancient Athens spending its time with the telling and hearing of new things, so the Wesleyan paper found Melbourne in the weeks following Higinbotham's lecture: given over to furious pleasure in novelty.² Lectures, sermons, editorials and letters began to pour out - so prominent a figure as Higinbotham must be answered - hesitantly at first and then with increasing courage.

A Low Churchman, the Reverend R.B. Dickinson, spoke first, but his answer only proved how right the others had been to hesitate. Higinbotham, he said, lacked even a scientist's reverence before the Bible; and suffered

² *Spectator*, August 17 1883.
from a cold intellectualism. Another Anglican, the Reverend Mr Cresswell did little better. While accepting that the influence of the Church was waning, he ascribed it - somewhat tautologically - to a lack of faith. For theologians science presented no problem, and not ignorance but sin had to be combated. As a prompt defender of Higinbotham replied, Cresswell had little idea of the state of scientific knowledge - having denied that man had progressed from lower to higher forms - and less as to what Higinbotham was really talking about.

The fiercest denunciations came from Presbyterian theologians. Campbell, Professor of Theology at Ormond College, considered the lecture a deed of shame; the Reverend Mr Nish suggested, rather irrelevantly, that the lecturer's gall probably sprang from his anger at the clerical opposition to his proposed religious education in 1876; Dr J.L. Rentoul, a recent acquisition to the Calvinist force, denounced the lecture in toto, and said that the majority agreed with him. By which

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criterion, said H.G. Turner, they should all turn Buddhist. 1

No wonder then that Higinbotham had spoken of the clergy's unwillingness to allude to the intellectual bases of religion. 2 Only a few attempted to discuss the matter on the ground Higinbotham had chosen: outdated creeds. Robert Potter, Anglican minister of St Mary's Hotham, was prepared to do away with smaller creeds like the Thirty Nine Articles which merely put barriers between believers, but insisted that the central dogmas, found in the Apostles' Creed and the Athanasian and Nicene creed must be retained. 3 He was not prepared to replace the supernatural Christ with the historical Jesus. 4

Moorhouse was widely regarded as the only man in the colony capable of answering Higinbotham. People packed the Diocesan assembly, which happened to be held at the same time, to hear his expected reply. He did not disappoint them: he began

1 H.G. Turner's review, bound in H.G. Turner's Contributions to the Press.
3 Examination of Secularism (Melb., 1883), 'Trinity College Pamphls.,' vol.2.
4 Charles Strong's belated reply, showed a sympathy with Higinbotham's tone, but not his position. Quoted in Spectator, August 31 1883, p.207.
I suppose you will be surprised to hear me say I am profoundly grateful to Judge Higinbotham.

With hand apparently outstretched, Moorhouse was to meet the judge on his own grounds. He praised the sincerity of the man, and applauded his plain speaking. He dealt with the criticisms methodically, referring specifically to his own teachings to refute the idea that clergymen were necessarily lazy and ignorant. Then he examined Higinbotham's proposals. There could not be a Christianity without creeds; and as they could not abolish the law because love was better, so they could not abolish creeds because truth-seeking and freedom were preferable.¹

Higinbotham, however, could hardly have expected an answer, from within the churches, as basically he wanted to do away with the confusing superstructure of religion. The Unitarians maintained a similar position. As H.G. Turner, in summing up the controversy wrote of the new religion,

> It must be universal without creed or shibboleth, asking no conformity, no promises and no pledges - its main aim [would be] practical righteousness...[and] the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.²

¹ Pastoral Address, Statistics of the Diocese of Melbourne (1883).
Freethinkers and spiritualists had something in common with him in pursuing what they believed would be the religion of the future. Charles Strong soon came to much the same position, as the prospectus of the Australian church showed.¹

The least known, but equally hectic controversy of the decade followed shortly after Higinbotham's lecture. Another younger judge, Hartly Williams, set out to show that Christianity was based on crude superstition, which disfigured its original and pure theistic base.² Williams proved the most popular of the controversialists, and in a bowdlerized form drew on the same assumptions.

He attacked the doctrines, dogmas and creeds of the churches. He substituted a purified form of belief, by humanizing Christ and 'elevating' God. He believed

¹ Prospectus of the Australian church: Cover, Theology Pamphs., vol.82:3.

Believing that theology is a progressive science, that genuine religion is confined to no one form of belief and that to fetter the minds, and bind the consciences of minister or people is not only a ridiculous folly, but a sin, in this Nineteenth Century....The promoters of the Australian church have sought to found a society, which while revering whatever is venerable in the past, will ever be open to any new light of God, and which may unite men in many shades of opinion in the unity of the religious spirit and of practical Christianity.

² Religion without Superstition (Melb., 1885), introduction to first edition.
himself to be speaking to and for the confused the unhappy and the unbelieving. The doctrine of the Trinity appeared as an historical appendage not deducible from the Bible; the Incarnation could not have happened, since it would have violated all natural laws; and the Bible could not have been inspired, if one considered all the filth it contained; the atonement was a fumbling and impossible concept. In the end Williams left his readers to contemplate 'the calm blissful sea of pure theistic belief'.

Once again came the letters, sermons, and pamphlets. Williams however was neither scholar nor thinker, and his shallow and rather vulgar reconstructions made him a sitting shot for his multitudinous opponents. Moorhouse immediately attacked the book,¹ almost sneering at it as 'popular among certain of the more thoughtless inhabitants' (of Melbourne). The Bishop replied more sharply to the second edition: Williams lacked seriousness, held to crude notions and indulged in Biblical exegesis so selective as to be irrelevant.²

1 Argus, March 30 1885.
Others followed Moorhouse: D.M. Berry, acting principal of Trinity College, and George Greenwell of Ballarat, for instance. Even a Theist set out to prove how badly Williams had stated his case.

Williams' lack of scholarship and tact proved a good stick with which to beat him. Yet the fact that the statement appeared at such a level ensured its being read, and understood; and showed also how prevalent a basically anti-Christian attitude was. Organized Christianity retained its hold over the majority; but even the most distinguished of its leaders proved unable to eradicate from independent minds the hope that it could be purified. The quest for the historical Jesus and for new men made over by his brotherhood, reached a public pitch of fervour during the decade which depended on the quality of the men involved, and referred to a new world dream, but which also depended on the intellectual capital available to all Englishmen. The hope of a new kind of man was an inevitable, and a universal one, even in Melbourne, given the religious debates of the nineteenth century.

2 Infidelity in Extremis, (2nd ed.), Theology Pamphs., vol.103.
century; the hope for new men in the new world found a firmer and localized context in the debates on education.
'The episcopal manifestoes, the pastoral letters, the thousand sermons, the ten thousand speeches, lectures, pamphlets, leading articles and letters in the newspapers, have all been lavished in pure waste', exulted the journalist David Blair in 1879, thinking to have a Last Word On the Education Question, 'the state system ... is not a set of phrases but a fact'. But the sermons, speeches and articles kept coming. In 1885, after a Royal Commission had belatedly recommended some form of religious education in State schools, W.H. Archer, first to do the work of Registrar-General of Victoria and one of the colony's most distinguished Roman Catholics, ended an eloquent apologia for Catholic civilization with a call to action against the 1872 Education Act which established an education system theoretically free, secular and compulsory throughout the colony of Victoria:

1 V.R., vol.1:1, p.15.
Therefore I say, agitate, agitate; agitate for your holy cause, a cause that is as just as the day of judgment.

During the whole of the preceding decade the views of indignant Roman Catholics could be heard: from the press, from the polemics of that almost strictly logical Jesuit, Father O'Malley, and the writings of his supporters who were often trying to guide the voting of the faithful. They argued that the new secular scheme was immoral and that the virtual financial punishment of Roman Catholics, who acted according to conscience in sending their children to their own schools, was unjust, and ultimately illiberal as well as bigoted.

2 Advocate, January-February 1876, contains instances of this.
3 E.g., Secular Education and Christian Civilization, (Melb., 1875), Educ. Pamphs., vol.16:13, where his Irish nationalism flawed his logic.
5 It is mildly ironical that the men who rejected Liberalism used much the same arguments as the great Liberal, J.S. Mill, to prove their case, as did Father Watson, S.J., 'Primary Instruction in Victoria', M.R., vol.4:15, pp.538-9.
No more reconciled to purely secular instruction was the newly arrived Anglican Bishop, James Moorhouse, who, from the beginning, vigorously supported the principle of 'undogmatic Scripture Reading'. He gathered into the Bible for Schools League that diffuse and disorganized body of Protestants who failed to support the principle at the time of the sympathetic but unsuccessful Higinbotham Commission in 1867. Believing that children could be educated by no other book but the Bible, Moorhouse rallied the faithful with warnings against godless instruction:

> We are more and more smiting with the blight of secularism both our textbooks, our teachers and our children; and in banishing religion, and even that modern history which contains of necessity a religious element from our primary education, we stand as far as I know alone in the world.

In arguing that children might easily grow up in dangerous ignorance of spiritual truths and the essential moral

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1 G.M. Dow, George Higinbotham, (Melb., 1964), p.169, argues that the main value of this Commission was educative in that it taught the people where the real obstruction came from. The obstructionists had learnt too, by this stage.

2 Pastoral Address, 1879, Statistics of the Diocese of Melbourne, p.16.

How *Melbourne Punch* saw Bishop Moorhouse and his campaign for the Bible in schools, 1879.
FULL OF FIGHT.

Dr. Gould (bottle-holder) — "Would anyone else like to ask my beloved brother a question?"
restraints derived from them, Moorhouse stood in apparent agreement with Roman Catholic spokesmen, and at one point indeed it looked as if he was preparing an alliance with them. He voiced his disapproval of antipapalism, vowing never to unite with the Secularists 'in the howl against Rome' to keep Christ out of the schools, even advocating a separate grant to Roman Catholics for their secular work. Basically Moorhouse and the Roman Catholics agreed on the principle that the mind of the child should first of all be educated into its spiritual heritage, and to see the path to its ultimate salvation; and there is something very worldly in this, since here and now the child is to become a son of God.

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2 When he criticized the views of C.H. Pearson in January 1881, (V.R.; vol.3) and supported the idea of local voluntary schemes as in Ontario, the Advocate, (ed.), January 8 1881 voiced its approval of 'a wise and agreeable proposal'.

3 At this time intermittently strong. See pp.6-7.

4 See Punch's comment on the apparent alliance.

5 Moorhouse's predecessor Bishop Perry, a Low Churchman, made no such assumptions about the Christian in society; had he done so possibly Higinbotham's proposals would have become law.
Men like Moorhouse saw their beliefs as integral to the progressive liberal civilization of nineteenth century England and so to one of its colonies, while Roman Catholic apologists went further and evoked an especially Catholic structure of society emphatically different from 'the prodigious development of the sciences of fine arts and the multiplication of all that goes to make up a life of refined physical and mental enjoyment (sic)'. Archer, who claimed the friendship of Cardinal Newman, rather weakly defined that structure as 'the development in a people of Christian character in all public and private relationships of life'.

The subtle difference can be seen in the reforms each group advocated. The Bible in Schools League only wanted to ensure the place of the Bible within the existing system, but the Roman Catholics wanted the old payment by results scheme which would enable them to maintain their separate system of schools.

To a convinced materialist like Henry Keylock Rusden, religious education, as The Bishop of Melbourne's Theory of Education (and he would have applied it to any bishop

1 Moorhouse adopting Huxley's argument, that some moral cement must exist within society, to his own purposes.

2 Archer, op.cit., p.12 et seq.
though Perry was his target in 1871) depended on a universal fallacy. Morality did not depend on religion, but on man's social experience. Rusden advanced another view of the potential of human life; the child represented a future citizen whose training should equip him to become a wisely self-interested participant in society, where the only sanctions for behaviour were drawn from moral education and pragmatic experience.¹ To less dogmatic men of a religious cast of mind, who had been stripped of their religious beliefs, the relentless views of a Moorhouse or O'Malley were not so easily rejected, and proved deeply irritating. Alfred Deakin, writing to the editor of the Bacchus Marsh Express in 1880, said:

I do believe that it is possible to fight the Church of Rome with the weapons which the hour puts into our hands...as its system of control is the most repugnant that exists!....I do so much resent its invasion [?] of individual rights...[yet] Its emotionalism has as much attraction for me as for you.²

Rusden and Deakin were not the only supporters of secular education to infer from the challenging Christian assumptions a warning to the people of the kind of

2 Deakin/Crisp, August 23 1880, Crisp papers, series 5.
domination their acceptance could lead to,\textsuperscript{1} and to suggest blackly that really the clergy were the enemies of learning.\textsuperscript{2}

With such opposed views on the purposes of education still in circulation, it is no wonder the argument continued after the State education system had become an established fact. A mere four years of State controlled education was scarcely sufficient to convince leaders of religious bodies accustomed for centuries to a monopoly of education in the old world, that all was lost by an act of a colonial parliament, or sufficient to assure secularists, a feverish minority, that victory was complete. The Nonconformist groups, especially the Baptists and the Congregationalists, which might have risen up to defend the principle of total separation of Church and State, were numerically too small to wield any substantial influence in the continuing debate; only the strength of colonial liberalism and of colonial apathy ensured that the claims of Moorhouse and the Roman Catholics failed to gain more popular support.

\textsuperscript{1} Though few reached Rusden's pitch in his last quoted article, railing against the clergy as unfortunate victims of cunning deceptive tactics of ancient medicine men, p.7. 

After all, who ever did give a satisfactory answer to the question put by a contributor to the *Victorian Review*, 'Is Spiritual or Secular Welfare in Education to be paramount'?\(^1\) That this question still engaged the minds of thinking men can be seen from other contributions to the reviews.\(^2\) That a Royal Commission should take up the question in 1882 and recommend some form of religious instruction is surely significant. The idea of education divorced from religion seems to have been foreign to these latter-day Victorians,\(^3\) and the secular solution,

\(^1\) *V.R.*, vol.2:10.
\(^2\) The *Melbourne Review* contained many articles on this subject, including four articles in vols.7-8, on 'Religion in State Schools', three of these by clergymen. The *Victorian Review* published the Pearson-Moorhouse disagreement in vol.3. Other of these articles are referred to in this chapter.
\(^3\) J.W. Adamson, *English Education 1789-1902*, (London, 1930), argues that most Englishmen had a strong but indefinable preference for education which included Christian teaching. This preference, plus the religiosity of mid-Victorian England stressed by most historians, surely applied to colonists of the same origins and experience.
one to be adopted only out of depressing
necessity. ¹

In so new a society as that of Melbourne, when the
first generation of pastoralists and then the gold rush
men were beginning to grow old, and they were looking
with mingled pride and uncertainty at the results of
their gambles and their labours, they peered ahead to
see who would continue their work. The voices of a new
generation were beginning to be heard; but along with the
promising Deakins and Sutherlands were the larrikins and
the gutter urchins and the children of the ragged schools.
What was to come of their youthful migrations? Ever
sensitive to vague mutterings in the community, Marcus
Clarke first formulated the seemingly silly question of
'The Future Australian Race'; ² in his flippant prediction

¹ E.g., the earlier view of George Higinbotham: 'Sir, I
admit that secular instruction, such as I am compelled to
believe now only possible, is a very humble function for
the state to undertake. I believe now it is not education
at all', quoted, A.G. Austin, op.cit., p.209. See also
Pamphs., vol.63:3, p.2: 'if I found that the clergy of
all denominations could really unite in some moderate
proposal...[and use] their whole influence in support of
the National School System, I should certainly be prepared
to make small concessions in exchange for a great good'.

² H. Mackinnon ed., The Marcus Clarke Memorial Volume,
(Melb., 1884), pp.236-51.
of the sporting Presbyterian philistine, Clarke caught up a moody vague concern with the effect of environment on the migrant peoples.\textsuperscript{1} The question of 'The Future Australian' and the question of secular education belonged together. As one writer put it,

\begin{quote}
History has no lesson more strongly marked than that which tells us of the degeneration of national character side by side with the decay of national faith.\textsuperscript{2}
\end{quote}

Meanwhile Bill Smith sent his children to the State school around the corner,\textsuperscript{3} and Patrick O'Reilly probably sent his sons to the Brothers and his daughters to the convent: both doubtless with the pleasing feeling of having done the right thing, and the equally pleasing assurance that the truant officer would not be knocking on their doors. David Blair, who seldom had a last say on anything, did have a point; the State educational

\textsuperscript{1}Walter Murdoch placed this essay as a lampoon on Buckle, which it probably was (see H.G. Turner's \textit{Cutting Book}). It was also a semi-serious contribution to intellectual life around him. Fifteen such articles appeared in the reviews during the decade, some specific like J.F. Hogan's 'The Coming Australian', in \textit{The Australian Christmas Collection}, (Melb., 1886), and some implicit like W. Balls-Headley, 'Victorian Matrimony', \textit{M.R.}, vol.2:8.

\textsuperscript{2}H.N.B., 'Religion and Education', \textit{M.R.}, vol.5:18, p.146.

\textsuperscript{3}It is interesting that the term 'State School' and the distinction it implies is still used in Victoria, whereas in South Australia where the church-state issue had less force, no such usage exists.
system was an established fact. After 1872, when religious leaders presented their arguments, individual politicians introduced bills recommending voluntary local systems, daily Bible readings or the Catholic claims, they had to establish, rather than simply defend, their assumptions. Since the diffuse and basically moral nature of education as an entertainable idea has always discouraged politicians, so no party had the courage (or in this chaotic period, the strength) to re-open the issue, except in appointing Royal Commissions. It simmered away in the literature of the day, and troubled conscientious men, especially politicians like Sir Charles Gavan Duffy and Sir John O'Shannassey who supported and were supported by Irish Catholics; but it could not emerge as a central, public issue.

The 1872 Act seemed to be working. The majority of Victorian children did seem to be acquiring some elementary

1 V.P.D., Session 1885, vol. 49, pp. 1292-3 for the Presbyterian Robert Harpur's attempting to introduce local control and religious education.

2 See Chapter 3.

knowledge, although it was so elementary as to be really rudimentary. The bureaucratic machinery to ensure that this continued had been set up, under the specially formed Ministry for Public Instruction, administering about half-a-million pounds of public money annually, employing a large army of teachers, which it examined and graded, and until 1884 building the necessary schools.

1 According to C.H. Pearson's calculation (which is more likely to be correct than those of the Education Department or the Statistician who copied them) of the approximately 163,000 children in the colony of school age, 151,827 were enrolled, and 81,514 were effective attenders. Report on the State of Public Instruction in Victoria, V.P.P., Session 1877-8(3), pp.33-4.

2 Regulations under the 1872 Act specified that throughout the six grades, children should learn reading, writing (plus, at various stages, grammar, spelling and dictation) and arithmetic, and (from Class II) geography, with needlework for girls and sometimes drill for boys. Regulations under the Education Act, 1872 (bound in Victoria: Education Report, Part of 1873, S.L.V.). For further insight into the curricular idea of elementary education, see the forthcoming work of Mr Selleck, Melb. Uni. School of Education.

3 In 1876 expenditure on public instruction was £510,400; in 1886, £659,553. Year Books 1876, p.209, 1886-7, p.767.


5 See Education Department, Papers for the Examination of Teachers (Melb., 1877).
It set text-books,¹ it employed inspectors and truant officers; it dealt even with problems like creaking doors in School no.294. The officials, said Pearson performed tasks of a kind 'laborious and repulsive in the extreme'.² Over-centralization had inevitably crept in to the new system. On the edge of this system were the last of the old dame schools, the hardier of the denominational schools and the burgeoning Roman Catholic system.³ Only the existence of the last of these was not being threatened by the State system.⁴

¹ Not without difficulty. See Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for Portion of the Year 1873, p.iii: '...no books in existence [are] quite unexceptionable to all classes of the community, but those already generally in use contain ample material free from all possible objection'. See also Higinbotham's view to the contrary, V.P.D. (Session 1876) vol.25, pp.1791-2. The expurgation of all specifically Christian references from school texts by C.H. Pearson (1879-80) is only the logical extension of this sensitivity. Quoted in A.G. Austin, Select Documents, pp.262-5.

² Report on the State of Public Instruction (1877) part 1, p.3.

³ The eighties saw the real numerical increase of these, staffed mainly by imported religious orders, cajoled and enticed by desperate bishops. See Bro. R. Fogarty, Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950, vol.II, ch.7, for an account of this.

⁴ In 1876, 41 Anglican schools existed; by 1886, 25. At the same time, the number of Roman Catholic Schools increased from 111 to 175. Statistical Register, (1876), part 9, p.10, (1886), part 9, p.10.
The main questions engaging the minds of professional educators sprang from the evidence of how the new system actually worked. At this level, questions about Christian or secular education were irrelevant. The Minister might content the Government with statistics to show quantitative improvements — more schools, more pupils, more teachers, more inspectors and more passes\(^1\) — but men lower down the ladder, and others like C.H. Pearson outside it, saw serious defects and qualitative problems as well. Despite the guarded language of their official reports, some inspectors saw that all was not well, and criticized constructively, attempting to usher in new ideas and practices by the back door. These few attacked the Mr Gradgrind method of teaching,\(^2\) as well as questioning

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\(^1\) The most constructive effort expressed in his reports was the attempt to stimulate science teaching, by requiring teachers to familiarize themselves with certain texts, and setting an examination for those wishing to qualify as science teachers. Report of the [Minister of Public Instruction, \((1878-9)\), p.12-13.](\textit{Ibid.} (1878-9) [Appendix I], p.193.)

\(^2\) Inspector T. Brodribb reported 'cramming' in his district and quoted the Reverend Mark Pattison to argue that 'The child is not to be taught to know but to be able to do'. Report of the [Minister of Public Instruction, \((1878-9)\), p.12-13.](\textit{Ibid.} (1878-9) [Appendix I], p.193.)
standards\(^1\) and putting the case for instruction in practical and scientific subjects.\(^2\) Although obviously some schools and some teachers must have managed good work,\(^3\) mechanical teaching from a limited syllabus obediently followed by teachers, themselves dependent on a payment-by-results scheme, must have often produced something far short of education, whether it was secular, Christian, or whatever else.\(^4\) The newly arrived Superintendent of the Central Training Institution for teachers was perhaps being tactful when he sought to summarise the situation he found by saying that, while most teachers were

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1 Inspector J. Main reported that 'the standard can be reached by the greatest dolt before he is fifteen years of age if he attends school regularly'. Ibid., (1875-6) [Appendix E], p.36.

2 In 1877-8 the list of children paying fees for extra-curricular subjects (and, given the curriculum, that included a number) revealed that 9 children in the colony took Natural Science as compared with 2093 taking Bookkeeping and 1110 taking Latin. Ibid. (1877-8), p.xi. The Minister found this 'a matter of extreme regret'. Inspector Brodribb was one who advocated increased science teaching. Ibid. [Appendix I], p.182.

3 Some inspectors reported their satisfaction with the work done in their districts, e.g. ibid. [Appendix I], pp.178, 182.

4 Robert Gregory, in The System of Payment by Results Exposed (Melb., 1878), Educ. Pamphs., vol.64:1, attacked Pearson's failure in his report to deal 'philosophically' with this aspect of State education.
'working well and honestly' and 'doing their best according to their light and ability', some exhibited 'an acceptance of what is weak and inferior or a tame acquiescence in it' and seemed 'unaware of the point of excellence that may be reached'. But in a familiar way, State education ground on, oblivious of real problems being thrown up. Speculation and criticism from within made little impact on a system characterized, in Geography lessons for example, by the charting of the rivers down the east coast of America, and by the endless struggle of the roll-books and the ever-approaching examinations.

While numerous politicians felt satisfied with current achievements, doubted the value of universal education, or spelt out doom for a system which shut out one quarter of the population, the incomplete application of the compulsory clause could not be ignored. During

1 Gladman's criticism continued: 'Our schools are so good in many particulars that any great defect becomes more evident by contrast; and the unintellectual character of much of the work is such a defect....The present mode of examination has secured laborious teaching of details, but the evil is, that in some cases at least, little else is attempted, and the teacher expends all his available force in mechanical grinding'. Ibid. [Appendix K], p.205.


3 Ibid., pp.61-2, see also Age, (ed.), June 20 1876.
the parliamentary debate on this matter, Graham Berry, then leading the Opposition, attacked State education more fundamentally:

...the danger is not so much that education will not be general as that, unless great care is taken but we shall have a far lower standard... than before.1

A year later, as Chief Secretary, Berry attempted to explore this problem, and to cope with the insistent demands of the Roman Catholic section, by appointing Charles Henry Pearson as Royal Commissioner into education. Pearson was well-equipped, being ex-Professor of History in London and Melbourne, ex-Principal of the Presbyterian Ladies College, friend of eminent English educational thinkers like F.D. Maurice and T.H. Huxley - and too valuable an acquisition to the Victorian 'Liberal' Party2 to be lost after an electoral defeat.3 The Age and the Austral Review welcomed his appointment,4 but not the Argus, which in its opposition to colonial liberalism, smelt political jobbery.5 Having put great

1 Ibid., p.68.
2 See pp.132-40 for this usage.
4 (Ed.), July 2 1877, and vol.1:1, p.22, respectively.
5 Tregenza, op.cit., p.375.
trust in Pearson's 'learning, zeal and discretion', the Government required him to examine six things: the best way of providing education totally free, the present machinery of public instruction, the condition of teachers, the mode and extent of public instruction, the formation and extension of training institutes, technological and night schools, and any means of making the system more efficient. Pearson was to assess the whole education system, and thus the work of the State in training its future citizens.

Out of laborious and solitary effort, Pearson, without being side-tracked by the great gaps he found or overwhelmed by the absence of vision, finance and experience he must have beheld at every turn, produced a coherent, creative and far-sighted report: a cardinal document in Australian educational history from an important and elusive figure in its intellectual history. Pearson analysed succinctly, judged with easy grace and recommended with fine tact. Without parading his


2 As for example in introducing his proposed high schools: 'I have hinted in my summary at the reasons which make it imperative that the state should establish schools intermediate between the State school and the University. I may add the very excellence of our State schools makes it necessary to supplement them'. Ibid., p.87.
unparalleled experience or his equally unparalleled (in the political world) scholarship, those qualities were obvious from the very structure of his Report. It fell into two parts, the first containing his recommendations in easily digestible form, the second, marshalling the specific observations and evidence on which the general recommendations depended. They were equally apparent in his poised comparisons,¹ and when used to support his highminded liberalism, must have added to the irritation of the Argus.

As regard elementary education, Pearson distributed praise and blame justly, being appreciative of the pioneering work being done but aware of vast anomalies within it. He thought teaching a depressed profession, inadequately trained, inadequately rewarded and shamefully dependent on the bureaucracy; he also thought the machinery of education was inefficient, and insufficiently concerned with standards. To remedy this, he outlined the elementary curriculum, the basis of intelligent teaching, the responsibilities which ought to devolve on the headmaster and on the local boards, and

¹ In discussing the numbers actually attending school, he reported that Victoria compared very well with England, but stood far behind Switzerland, Germany and Denmark. Ibid., pp.33-7.
recommended improved conditions for inspectors and teachers. In addition, he emphasized the basic need to make compulsion effective.

From Pearson's definition of what should and what should not be taught at elementary level, it is clear that he did not regard the untrained mind of the child as an object for which some early claim should be made, but simply as an untrained mind, needing both discipline and provocation. Grammar, he argued, should be taught in its rudimentary form without reference to other languages and word derivation; arithmetic should be seen as a mental subject requiring speed, concentration and discipline; geography should be taught not simply as a list of places but should have 'political' reference; history, he thought, should be reserved for advanced students; and if children were being taught to write, it was unnecessary to waste time in using slates. 'We are apt', he said; '...to trust too much to the scholar's memory and too little to his intelligence'.¹

Given that Pearson probably trusted too much in intelligence, and presumed strictly rational methods of learning, nonetheless he wanted to liberalize prevailing

¹ Ibid., p.93. For the substance of the preceding paragraph, pp.36-65, passim.
ideas of what learning was. He spoke as a nineteenth century academic, and had a clear concept of educational standards and a broad understanding of the correlation between education and social needs. Not surprisingly, his recommendations were virtually ignored.

Before proceeding to Pearson's more spectacular proposal that the State should provide high schools, it is worth considering what Bill Smith's children might proceed to, should they have survived six years of State schooling without impairing their taste for learning, or dulling their educational ambition. One son might have won one of the forty-one annual State exhibitions taking him on to a secondary school and then to the University, as Bernard O'Dowd did in the late seventies; another could have attended drawing classes at the local School of Design after work like Tom Roberts in Collingwood at the same time, and as for girls, why, let them marry.

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1 Report of the Minister... (1877-8), p.xv.
3 Pearson reports twenty-two of these. Ibid., p.151. They represented the one fruit of the Technological Commission of 1866; see S. Murray-Smith, Technical Education in Australia 1850-90, unpub. essay, (Melb., 1965). (P).
4 I am grateful to Mr J. Rundle for this information.
For the average citizen, secondary education was a luxury he could not afford, and a luxury of dubious value, since it focused on the University matriculation examination, useful only for those aspiring to the professions or a life of leisure. For all but a small minority, formal education stopped when the State's provision for their education stopped: at fourteen.

A host of schools existed to attract those few who could pay. Parents could enter their sons at the corporate religious schools, Wesley, Scotch, Geelong and Melbourne Grammar, or at the new Xavier College in Kew, schools which had quickly and inevitably assumed their roles as the colony's 'Public Schools', drawing on their English counterparts for the distinction they had not had time to acquire, and presenting themselves as acclimatized offshoots of the English plant. Private schools, like Professor Irving's Hawthorn College or Alexander

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1 Thus, in the Geelong Grammar School Quarterly, vol.3:4, pp.3-4, a student wishes for a Public School Club which he thought could muster up 400 to 500 members.

2 Thus S. Fairbairn, Fairbairn of Jesus, (London, 1931), refers naturally to Geelong as 'the Eton of the South'.

3 E.E. Morris, Annual Report to the Melbourne Grammar School, Educ. Pamphs., vol.45:6, p.29 speaks of the school in 1877 as 'a public school of the most approved modern type'; he had just introduced the prefect system.
Sutherland's Carlton College, having no would-be traditions and no religious support, emphasized their intellectual strengths. These ventures could only continue under the banner of good matriculation results, and parents wanting to ensure their sons' entrance to the University or Civil Service were probably well-advised to patronize such establishments, since they existed specifically for that purpose. Most girls' schools had the anonymity of 'Mrs Franklin's Educational Establishment'; even the exclusive Ryeton had not yet proceeded far beyond a backyard establishment, run by an impoverished but distinguished widow with six children.

1 A. Sutherland, Report Honours List and Prospectus, Carlton College 1879-80 (Melb., 1879), Educ. Pamphs., vol.23:13, p.11, claimed the College was one of the two leading private schools in Melbourne. In 1879 he reported that Carlton College was fourth in number of University entries, and that it had an average 'higher than any other School of the size' in matriculants and Civil Service entrants.

2 Sutherland in 1879, ibid., pp.11-12: 'the aim of the work done [at Carlton College] in the higher classes is to prepare the pupils for the University Examinations for Matriculation and Civil Service; to carry the advanced pupils through the work required for first year Exhibitions, and the work of the first and second years' courses so that such boys as remain long enough at school may be prepared for an honourable University career'.

3 Mentioned by A. Zainu'dinn, The Admission of Women to the University of Melbourne, unpub. essay, (Melb., 1964), p.31, 68, (P).
to support. ¹ With the founding of the Presbyterian Ladies' College, East Melbourne, in 1877, though, a new note sounded in the education of women, since the College, beginning under C.H. Pearson, was strictly academic in emphasis. ² Senior girls attended lectures on Euclid, algebra, the history of the English language, Latin and Natural Science, ³ and could study Italian and German if they so desired.

The Presbyterian Ladies College emerged not from feminist zeal but from the union of the traditional Scottish concern for higher education and the liberal enthusiasm of Pearson, who had lectured to women in the industrial cities of northern England. ⁴ In his well-known address on The Higher Culture of Women, Pearson took a similar position to that of F.D. Maurice and J.S. Mill, emphasizing also the effects of the industrial

² Annual Report and Prospectus, P.L.C., (1875); Pearson stated that 'the want of thorough teaching, and not any radical incapacity, is the cause of feminine ignorance'.
³ While other schools had to make curricular expansions to include science when it became a matriculation subject in 1881, P.L.C. had to drop astronomy in order to add emphasis to the physiology, botany and physics already taught. Ibid., (1881).
⁴ Zainu'dinn, op.cit.
revolution on the role of women. He had a moralizing touch, too, in that he thought serious education would prevent women from indulging in their traditional frivolities; that it would make them more responsible individuals, more adequate companions for men, and, if necessary, enable them to earn their own living. His assessment of the mental agility of women coincided with that of Mill, though lacked the latter's emphasis on the abstract justice of the cause - since there was no need for it in the colony. More immediately, he pleaded for tolerance and suspended judgement from the parents to whom he addressed these remarks. However the College prospered, even while Pearson did not last as its Principal.

A second college for girls, the Methodist Ladies College, first mooted in 1872, became an established fact in 1882, mainly through the efforts of the Reverend Walter Fitchett, later famous for his *Deeds that won the Empire, and other imperial fables,* and well-known in Melbourne.

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2 For a list of Fitchett's literary works, see E.M. Miller, *Australian Literature from its beginnings to 1935* (Melb., 1940), vol.2, p.692.
at the time as a witty journalist.\(^1\) He convinced the
curch that money could be found for so important a task;\(^2\)
and in this school, grace, both spiritual and feminine,
received a more single-minded emphasis than at the
Presbyterian Ladies College. Of the many other private
schools for girls little is known, though many presented
matriculation candidates during the eighties.\(^3\) Probably
the impressive towers of the two new colleges did not
dominate the field so completely as it now seems.
However, they innovated during this decade, and became
conspicuous; and they lasted.

Since secondary education was a private concern,
thinking remained free of the sectarian strife still
apparent at the elementary level. Teachers, academics,
clergymen, widows, in fact anyone who cared to set up a
school, could practise whatever they preached, or found
profitable. Consequently the most thoughtful and
articulate could afford to let their aims and assumptions
sit undisturbed, and concentrate on good teaching.

\(^1\) See p.20. He wrote 'Armchair Chat' in the \textit{Spectator}.
\(^2\) Anon., \textit{Seventy-five years at Methodist Ladies College,}
\(^3\) Zainu'dinn, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.63-6. Cf. Katherine Susannah
Pritchard, who won a scholarship to J.B. O'Hara's South
Melbourne College, which provided tuition to matriculation
Headmasters had only two external points to which their efforts must refer. Firstly they had to attract pupils. Secondary schools existed to supply a specialized demand, the demand coming from a well-established middle class and from the fewer ambitious lower class parents, and it paid to predict, formulate and provide for the needs behind it. Secondly, secondary education had to refer to some recognizable terminus, in this case the matriculation examination, established in 1858. In fact very few secondary educationalists seem to have proceeded beyond these two points.

The main problem emerging at secondary level, and one not answered either by what parents said they wanted or what the official standards prescribed, must have been the needs of colonial children presented for 'higher' education. What kind of subjects should they study? Did they have special needs, or would the old classical curriculum serve them as well, or as badly, as it had generations of English school boys. Even while his need for elementary instruction had been established, the course of education suited to the future Australian had not been clarified.

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By 1876, a partial answer had presented itself. Most colonial children had little use for the Classics. Those who allowed Classics to become an ordinary rather than a compulsory subject in 1858\textsuperscript{1} could hardly have envisaged that by 1876, French would replace even Latin as the most studied language in Victorian schools.\textsuperscript{2}

This was because it was thought to be a useful mercantile language, and agreeably easy to teach conversationally though not well taught by present grammatical methods.\textsuperscript{3}

The shift silently emphasized colonial impatience with one of the first colonists' ideas, that the mind was best educated through the Classics.\textsuperscript{4}

The disappearance of the classics merely emphasized the question of what ought to be taught. One answer was Natural Science, an apparently obvious and necessary addition to the curriculum, but one which failed to

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., pp.86-9.
\textsuperscript{4} As if they found out accidentally and belatedly what the Taunton and the Clarendon Royal Commissions found out in England in the sixties: that the traditional curriculum of existing schools was totally inadequate. Adamson, *op.cit.*, pp.259-83.
present itself as a necessity to most people. In 1870, Dr J.E. Bromby of Melbourne Grammar School, and Dr Alexander Morrison of Scotch College, unsuccessfully moved in the University Council that it be admitted as a matriculation subject.\footnote{1} While most of the larger schools actually taught scientific subjects by 1876, the demand was low;\footnote{2} not until after 1880 was science elevated from a subsidiary status, and not until after that, did the schools change their emphasis.\footnote{3} As one Geelong Grammar School boy wrote soon after:

For many years there has been introduced into our own curriculum a slender amount of Science and Natural History, but we fear only the merest smattering has been the result. The stern demand of Alma Mater for her quantum of Latin and Greek, Modern Languages and Mathematics has caused most to devote their time exclusively to the prescribed subjects.\footnote{4}

\footnote{1} French, \textit{op.cit.}, vol.1, p.247.
\footnote{2} P.L.C. has already been mentioned, p.95; see also Wesley Prospectus (1866), \textit{Annual Report, Scotch College} (1876).
\footnote{3} Pearson tabled the time actually allotted by the secondary schools to science, and showed clearly its subsidiary position, \textit{op.cit.}, p.99. In 1881, the Principal of Wesley College began to stress the importance attached to the chemistry, astronomy, physiology and geology now taught at Sixth form level. \textit{Prospectus and Annual Report} (1881), p.4.
\footnote{4} \textit{Geelong Grammar School Quarterly}, vol.4:2, pp.1-2.
A few reforming headmasters, inspectors and observers saw a need for scientific education. The President of the local Royal Society annually reported the progress of institutions imparting, directly or indirectly, scientific knowledge,¹ and attempted to turn attention towards scientific training. Apart from these few, however, the community showed little interest in a subject not yet established in England, and of uncertain usefulness in the colony, since it led into no jobs except engineering; and only the Government provided employment for engineers. Conservatism, expediency and prejudice stood in the way of thoroughgoing reform in the teaching of science, as of other 'modern' subjects. However, by 1886, science had been partially absorbed into the curriculum, with new masters and laboratories to back up a new emphasis.

This subtle change evaded the eye of topical journalists, one of whom wrote of the whole process of secondary education as if it were a shocking waste of time, money and effort, provided by snobs for snobs:

look, ye principals of Scotch colleges, grammar schools Wesley Colleges and so forth, our education is railways, bridges, roads, ships, agriculture, mathematics, politics, armies, commerce and all that.  

Certainly few headmasters noticed their academic bias, and showed bare recognition of the point of scientific and technical studies. The lists of prescribed textbooks accompanying every school prospectus pointed to a formal academic emphasis, and the continued study of Latin, Greek, French and Mathematics. Even locally produced text books aiming to replace inappropriate imported texts showed little sense of relevance and less of what children could learn, after being overweighted with barely selected facts. Not only was thinking on what should be taught at secondary level piecemeal and retarded by conservative forces; few transferred the main question of the debate on religious education to ask what kind of people secondary education might aim to produce. Only in the burgeoning interest

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1 'Education', A.R., vol.1:1, p.77. This was an unfair comment on Dr Bromby as well, and on Morrison of Scotch who displayed a continuous anxiety that education should prepare boys for life (see Annual Report, 1870, p.5.).

2 E.g., C.H. Pearson and H.A. Strong, The Students' English Grammar (Melb., 1877); A. Sutherland, A New Geography for Australian Pupils (Melb., 1885); M. Clarke ed., A Short History of Australia (Melb., 1877); W.R. Guilfoyle, The A.B.C. of Botany (Melb., 1878).
in technical education came the signs of a specifically colonial awareness that some kinds of knowledge were more relevant to the needs of the future Australian than others. 1 Meanwhile people wondered at the annual phenomenon of 'cramming' and the examination which encouraged it. 2 Hence, the system of privately run secondary schools allowed incoherence and promoted little interest in the fundamental ideas of secondary education. 3

The unheeded voice of C. H. Pearson in 1877 had recommended that the State should establish its own high schools, thus providing that 'ladder reaching from the gutter to the University along which every child...should have the chance of climbing as far as he is fit to go', as Huxley had envisaged it. 4 His idea of high schools included considered and interlocking definitions of what should be taught, and why, 5 and optimistic

1 S. Murray-Smith, op.cit.
3 Moreover, the amount of theoretical literature on the subject from England and Europe, by this time immense, was surely available.
4 Quoted by Pearson, op.cit., p.29.
5 From the general assumption that certain subjects educated certain faculties, and so included modern subjects. Ibid., p.89.
suggestions as to how this whole new facet of education should be financed. He championed the people unable to afford secondary education, seeing their lack of opportunity as an individual and public loss.\(^1\) In positing an entirely different model for these schools than the one offered by the grammar schools, he made clear the premise that 'the poor must prefer the language of commerce',\(^2\) a premise that the more involved pedagogues could only come at circuitously, if at all.

Pearson's recommendations represent the only clear statement on secondary education during the decade, so although they have been discussed many times before,\(^3\) they must again be emphasized. The most radical of his recommendations was that the State should assume responsibility for the articulation of all education, by providing secondary education for all who merited further training. Less conspicuously radical but equally

\(^1\) [Ibid.], p.88.

\(^2\) [Ibid.], the existing grammar schools, based on the great English foundations, taught 'the dead languages', a limited amount of mathematics, and an even more limited amount of science. 'Much of the teaching given', Pearson grimly observed; 'is useless or attained at an extravagant waste of time'.

\(^3\) E.g., by J.H. Tregenza, E.L. French, A. Zainu'dinn, S. Murray-Smith.
hard to absorb was his assessment of what colonial children ought to learn: not Greek, certainly, 'that most artistic of Chinese puzzles', but rather English and French, not a number of special mathematical subjects but general mathematics, not English history but Australian history, and most importantly the useful subjects, Natural Science and Drawing.\(^1\) By resting this curriculum loosely on the commonly accepted theory of education as the training of separate faculties,\(^2\) Pearson could present his scheme as genuinely liberal and properly educative.

For all the intellectualism as apparent here as in his remarks on elementary education, Pearson did come to the heart of the problem, which was to ensure as far as possible an educated electorate and properly trained professional classes in an urban, and predominantly middle class society.\(^3\) However unpleasing his conclusions

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\(^1\) Section on High Schools, Report on the State of Public Education in Victoria (1877).

\(^2\) French, op.cit., p.259, et seq. has seen this as an 'intellectual sleight-of-hand'. Given how well-known Hamilton's theory of the faculties had become it seems more a comment on the backwardness of colonial thinking, rather than an intellectual gimmick justifying a liberal stance.

\(^3\) Pearson, op.cit., p.32: 'The whole tenor of my report is that a certificate of qualification should precede every appointment, and should be the condition of practice in every profession'.
about State responsibility might be to doctrinaire liberals, stalwart conservatives and impecunious governments, they were the ones most feasible in this young community founded after the industrial revolution. Some who had considered the problem, privately expressed their approval; others upheld the conventional view that secondary education would not benefit the average child, therefore the State needed only to support high schools rather than create a new system; others again thought the Commission an expensive joke, as did the Melbourne Punch.

The University, or rather its Council, remained the controller of education, of both its content and its standards. In effect it laid down the subjects to be taught from elementary to tertiary level. During the decade, the Council provided the platform for a confused clash of educational principles between several determined and ambitious men. Although, the death of the first

1 E.g. E.E. Morris, and H.J. Wrixon, letters to Pearson, March 23 1878, and March 27 1878, respectively, Pearson papers.
3 G. Blainey, A Centenary History of the University of Melbourne, (Melb., 1957), p.63.
Chancellor, Sir Redmond Barry, was followed by important liberalizing reforms like the long-resisted entry of women to the University, the acceptance of science as a matriculation subject, and the creation of six new professorial posts, the course of events was by no means clear; and the success of those reforms of a very limited kind.\(^1\) In the midst of internal constitutional and curricular change, the University spared little thought for secondary education. It stood in the public eye as a laudable English institution: a satisfactory status symbol,\(^2\) perhaps to become 'the Oxford of the Southern Hemisphere'.\(^3\)

Visitors expecting it to be a source of colonial innovation found only a provincial University.\(^4\) The cloisters of the University, along with the grammar schools set in bare suburban paddocks, epitomized the

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\(^1\) I owe this observation to Mr G.C. Fendley, at present writing a history of the Australian universities, at the Melbourne University School of Education.

\(^2\) E.g., J.H. Freeman, *Lights and Shadows of Melbourne Life*, (London, 1888), p.4. All the 'publicists' of Melbourne, mentioned in ch.3, pointed out the University as such.

\(^3\) Sir Samuel Wilson, *Proceedings on the laying of the memorial stone of the Wilson Hall at the University of Melbourne*, (Melb., 1879), p.30.

stiff upper lip. Had the visitors looked closely at what was taught within those buildings, they would have seen a surprising attachment to the classics, 'that all preponderating element in English education'.

Old attitudes disappeared slowly; new ones, brought out by the colonial situation, had barely emerged; for example, Christopher Crisp, that tough-minded but sensitive country editor, thought himself un-educated because he had not studied the Classics. Nonetheless, perhaps the most remarkable thing was that a University existed at all.

'We are engaged this day', quoth Redmond Barry on Friday the thirteenth of April 1855, 'in throwing open the portals of a great institution'. The founding of a University was to him a statesman-like act for through it would flow the very life blood of civilization. This University would be opened on the principles of enlarged charity towards the opinions and conscientious scruples of the different groups in the community. It would instruct the young men of the colony in all that was useful as well as speculative, and enlist them in

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1 R. Barry, Address, Proceedings on the occasion of the inauguration of the University of Melbourne, 1855, p.15.

2 Ibid., p.6. Implying a virtue of a necessity, if it was to open at all.
the ranks of literature, 'in that which is correct, elegant and sublime'.

Thus, without strictly conforming to the practices of the ancient and as yet unreformed universities, the new institution would uphold the noble traditions of scholarship, producing generations of men with truly civilized minds.

Barry's proudly trumpeted but conventional patrician values covered up a number of more mundane motives: the desire to keep up with New South Wales, the desire for civilization so apparent during 'the golden age', and the liberal belief in education for its own sake. The idea of a university as a utilitarian institution did not obtrude.


2 *Ibid.*, p.17. The aim of education, Barry said, was to produce minds trained 'in the scrupulous and well-weighed style of observation and thought [with] the power of preparing careful, well-regulated and independent analysis, and casting off the slough of frivolous and extraneous accident...[to] instill a sense of self-reliance and a high moral perception'.

3 Some of the newly arrived Professors expressed their views of the role of the University in more utilitarian terms; Professors Hearn and Wilson, reporting *On the Proposed Course for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the University of Melbourne (1859)*, *Educ. Pamphs.*, vol.22:10, said that it would be useless, mischievous and even suicidal to enforce the study of the Classics. They pointed out that 'the conditions of Academic Existence were very different' from those in England.
disguised the acres in Carlton, and for twenty-five years its Chancellor kept the modernizers at bay.¹

As was the case at every other level of education, obvious deficiencies in university education presented themselves to those with the vision, sufficiently fresh and free, to see. In 1875, Trollope noted that the University's services were by no means in demand.² Only 130 students matriculated in 1876, and only some of those would have wanted to enter the university; ten years later, 427 passed the matriculation examination, an improvement paralleled in the number earning degrees which increased from 28 to 74. This improvement was not, however, contained evenly within the faculties: the number of undergraduates passing in the older Arts discipline improved from 34 to 92, and in Medicine from 40 to 98, but in Law only improved by 3.³ The fault lay

¹ Barry clung to the ideal of a classical education, as shown in his address at the Proceedings on the Laying of the Memorial Stone of the Wilson Hall, p.26; and while it is unfair to imply his complete antipathy to utilitarian education, it is true that reform did not come until after his death, which has therefore a symbolic point. See the forthcoming work of Mr P. Ryan on Sir Redmond Barry. Due to the small reference made to this important man by the present writer, the custodians of the Barry papers (S.L.V.) did not feel it necessary to allow access to those papers.

² Victoria and Tasmania, p.35.

³ Annual Reports, Calendar of the University of Melbourne (1876), p.197, et seq. (1886), p.270, et seq.
with the kind of educational opportunity available in the colony, rather than any innate colonial distaste for higher education, or necessarily with the University itself; but only a certain conservative attitude could have prevented anyone before C.H. Pearson from noticing the gap between elementary education and the university, which caused the situation.

Perhaps the Council did not care to notice; and the Professors, having no say at that level, could do nothing. The importance of the Professorial Board, and the subservience of the professoriat to the Council had earlier infuriated Pearson;¹ and, seeing this as a real obstacle to educational progress, he proposed in his report a constitutional change to shift from the Council the final say in what should be studied.² There should be three governing bodies instead of two, and the Professorial Board should become part of the Council.³ This recommendation became the University Constitution

¹ Tregenza, op.cit., p.201.
² Note, letter from the Professors in 1876 protesting against the proposal of the Council to deprive them of the power of prescribing books and the details of subjects for ordinary examination - a protest about which the Council decided it could do nothing. Minutes of the Council of the University of Melbourne, Book III, p.318.
³ Pearson, op.cit., p.111.
Amendment Act of 1880 which became law in 1881.\textsuperscript{1}

Campaigners for technical, scientific or more liberal education now had a better chance of being influential at the most important level.

Pearson had also recommended that women be admitted to the University,\textsuperscript{2} and that courses include more 'modern' subjects,\textsuperscript{3} though his hope to abolish fees and with them the idea of an exclusive institution remained unfulfilled.

Once again, Pearson enunciated his main principle:

\begin{quote}
I venture to think that the great English universities are the worst model that could have been selected for a young country. The mere fact that they differ from the Universities of Scotland and America show that they have grown up under exceptional circumstances. We have to assume that our students are now and will continue to be men who expect to earn their bread by the work of their brains.\textsuperscript{4}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{V.P.D.}, vol. 35, p.1239.
\textsuperscript{2} Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's University Act Amendment Bill (1875) proposed this but was defeated by the old argument that 'a woman's place is in the home'. The Council after a confused meeting, finally passed this reform itself in 1880. Zainu'dinn, op.cit., pp.23-5.
\textsuperscript{3} In 1882 five new professorships were created, in chemistry, mental and moral philosophy, modern languages and literature, pathology anatomy and physiology, and engineering; the chair of history and political economy was filled. Blainey, op.cit., p.99.
\textsuperscript{4} Op.cit., p.121.
In his report, his parliamentary efforts, and his work as a member of the University Council, Pearson formulated most clearly the attitude adopted by the few anxious to reform and re-orientate education, to make it relevant to colonial needs. Behind his coherence lay the work and ideas of others, in England and in the colony. More specialized and piecemeal criticisms emerged in Melbourne during the seventies and eighties which supported his views and emphasized his role as definer and spokesman. His friend Professor Strong for instance argued that the continued teaching of anti-Darwinian biology - by the distinguished scientist Professor McCoy - the absence of proper teaching in modern languages and the number of subjects being taught all detracted from university education.¹ E.E. Morris, later Professor of English, wrote on his arrival in 1876, that the University's control of educational standards had not been wisely exercised.² The efforts of Dr Bromby, Professor Irving and Dr Morrison had, since the early seventies, been directed to curricular expansion. In Pearson they had a leader; he was foremost amongst the

reformists. Even J.S. Elkington, the notorious Professor of history, was to thank him for his vigorous leadership in the cause of the teaching staff in their efforts to improve the university.\(^1\) Without his leadership, university education could perhaps have remained static, since the inspiration of its founders, Barry and H.C.E. Childers had long since been formalized into its establishment. These changes were more important in the liberal principles they so clearly established than in their effective practice; and more significant in the history of the university than in the life of the University during this decade, when the foundation of Trinity and Ormond Colleges gave it an even more traditional appearance.

University life continued relatively undisturbed by the wranglings of the Council, the efforts of the new Professors, and the appearance of self-conscious and conspicuously chaperoned female students.\(^2\) In fact, the intake of students did not accelerate dramatically; few women enrolled, the new courses did not attract a great number of students, and those new courses still forced

\(^1\) Elkington/Pearson, n.d., Pearson papers.

\(^2\) The main stir occurred in the Medical school, where the women students originally demanded separate dissecting rooms. See K.S. Inglis, Hospital and Community, (Melb., 1958), p.116 et seq.
professors to teach across enormous fields.\textsuperscript{1} Even textbooks were frequently in short supply.\textsuperscript{2} The classics, and the idea of an aristocratic education associated with their study, disappeared only imperceptibly, and the idea of a university as a training school for the professions emerged equally imperceptibly. But, during this decade the principles were laid down.

In many ways, the University was much better off by 1886. It had more staff, more buildings, two residential colleges and a third proposed, a larger government grant,\textsuperscript{3} a central Hall,\textsuperscript{4} and even after years of undignified complaint by the Chancellor, a fence around its borders. In losing Barry and his ideas it

\textsuperscript{1} After regular complaints from the Professor of Classics about his teaching load, a chair of English French and German languages and literature was established in 1882: which E.E. Morris taught single-handedly.


\textsuperscript{3} In 1876 the University received £11,250, in 1886, £21,750, Statistical Register 1886, part 9, p.7. These were also years of big endowments from the squattocracy, when the Wilson, Wyselaskie and Mollison bequests were made. List of Principal Benefactions to the University of Melbourne.

\textsuperscript{4} The Wilson Hall, described by Barry, Annual Report, Calendar of the University of Melbourne, (1875-6), p.205, as Tudor perpendicular in style, with arched windows, a hammer-beamed roof, and a plain strong floor with tessellated parquets (it was, when built in 1879, Gothic in style) and regarded by the Imperial Review, vol.II, p.152, as 'the latest piece of feudalism'.

sustained an indefinable loss; but it made well-defined gains, too.

A certain confusion in men's minds about the ends of education continued, though in the upper echelons the pre-suppositions of early and mid-nineteenth century English educational thought had definitely clashed. While Barry had envisaged that the University would produce 'loyal well-bred English gentlemen', Pearson saw men earning 'their bread by the work of their brains' as its end result. Both ideas had their noble aspects, but ultimately the needs of the community for teachers, doctors, lawyers and scientists would ensure the triumph of the latter.

The students themselves sensed an adjustment. They seem to have approved of the constitutional and curricular charges, but suspected the utilitarianism behind it; and they showed an interesting vigilance for the claims of disinterested scholarship - a concern in one sense universal, in another, closely allied with their own predominantly classical education at secondary level, and again, a tribute to the talents of professors like W.E. Hearn, Frederick McCoy and C.H. Pearson. The successive professors of Classics were also gifted and

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1 Apparent in the first two volumes, M.U.R.
enthusiastic men who must have done a great deal to maintain respect for the older subject; Professor Tucker, who arrived in 1886 was perhaps the most popular and eloquent of these distinguished teachers seeking to conserve the central point of an older educational ideal.

Though it seems clear enough that by 1886, Victorian education had established its direction as secular rather than Christian, scientific and utilitarian rather than literary and aristocratic, and modern rather than traditional, yet these principles had not yet been accepted in the forms now put forward. Educere: meaning to lead out. But precisely where the coming Australian would be led, by the education he received, was not yet clear. Neither the kind of society nor the kind of human being to function within it had been clearly enough envisaged. The most substantial statement came from

Professor Strong habitually gave an end of year address to his students, on subjects like the value of Classics, and the associated fields of inquiry awaiting the receptive student. See his addresses, Educ. Pamphs., vol.62:4, and Melb. Univ. Pamphs., vol.1.

See 'Why do we study the Classics?', and 'The Permanent Residuum of Education', Tucker papers, Articles and Addresses group 1/1/8 and 1/1/6.
that eminent spokesman for progressive middle class civilization, Charles Henry Pearson, who thought that it should lead to a community of skilled tradesmen, literate workmen, properly qualified business and professional men, and educated women. Although he said little about the future requirements of citizens of an 'advanced' democracy, his work showed a continuous awareness of that reference point.
POLITICS, HISTORY AND PRIDE

(1) Politics

By 1876, Victorians could celebrate twenty years of responsible representative government, within one of the most advanced democratic structures in the modern world. Despite dramatic crises a decade earlier over land settlement, protection for native industries, education, and the powers of the Upper House, when political clashes

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1 The Constitution, ratified in 1855, provided for a bicameral legislature headed by the Governor as representative of the Crown, and arbiter for inexperienced legislators. The Upper House, called the Legislative Council, consisted of thirty members from six provinces elected on a high property franchise, and could not be dissolved: thus acting in two ways as a protective body. The Lower House, called the Legislative Assembly, consisted of sixty members from thirty-seven constituencies, elected on manhood suffrage according to a new proportional system. Limitations written into the powers of the Lower House, especially in the provision that it did not have the final say in money bills, later caused it to clash with the Upper House. E. Scott, *The History of Victoria* (Melb., 1917), Aust. Hist. Pamphs., vol. 3:2, p. 18.

crystallized latent group antagonisms\(^1\) in a community unstable in more than its political aspects, every man did have a say in the government: provided that he could be bothered and that he had fulfilled the seemingly minor residential qualifications and paid his shilling registration fee.\(^2\) Well-established public men like the Irish patriot Sir Charles Gavan Duffy and Thomas Turner a'Beckett could look back with pride on the sure application of British political principles into colonial forms.\(^3\)

Had they foreseen the political events of the oncoming decade, they might have seriously questioned, as thinking men soon did, the validity of their model and of democracy itself. Ever since the deadlocks of the sixties, firstly over the protective tariff which

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3 'Our first Legislature: a prelude to the political history of Victoria, *M.R.*, vol. 3:9, p. 3, and 'Twenty-five Years' Retrospect', *M.R.*, vol. 1:3, p. 280, respectively.
McCulloch 'tacked' to the normal Appropriations Bill in an attempt to force the wealthy free-trader Council to accept the principle of protection,¹ and then the controversial Darling grant, people had wondered at the efficacy of British political institutions, and the Constitution which defined their activities. English opinion of colonial politics had long been fed on such doubts: could men who ignored the teachings of political economy, who simply assumed manhood suffrage, who transgressed the unwritten laws of British parliamentary practice, and whose lack of moderation was only equalled by their lack of patriotism, really be expected to preserve parliamentary democracy?²

The Melbourne Punch was only the most vicious of critics beginning to speak out locally. In 1874, Mr Punch attacked

... this costly and ridiculous failure - this system of Government minus statesmanship, capacity, forethought, experience, wisdom, disinterestedness or any one faculty that arises above the dead-level of a miserable mediocrity.³

³ 'Melbourne Punch to Young Victoria', June 4 1874, p.221.
One of the first debates of the decade tackled the topic 'On the Permanence of Democratic Institutions', and Henry Wrixon, one of the more speculative of local politicians, pointed out uneasily that democracy as practised in Victoria was quite unlike anything the world had seen. Eighteen years later an even more thoughtful participant in Victorian politics, C.H. Pearson, was to refer to its achievements in order to support his prediction that democracy as known to nineteenth century liberals would soon be superceded by State Socialism.

1 Argus, August 1 1876, p.7(2).

2 Switzerland and Belgium were probably more totally democratic; but the political structure of Victoria was not identical with British or European forms of democracy. G. Greenwood ed., Australia: A Social and Political History, (Sydney, 1955) p.99, contains this formula, which was by no means apparent or desirable to all those actually participating: 'In politics, Australia was the precocious child of nineteenth century England, [her] political destiny rough-hewn by the Great Reform Bill and the Durham Report. Even without gold, the Australian colonies, with no traditional Conservative class and without traditional established institutions, could hardly, have left the broad road from Benthamite liberalism through political democracy towards state socialism, though they may have travelled it less quickly...'

3 National Life and Character, (London, 1894), p.18, Cf. H.G. Turner, op.cit., p.118, who thought in 1904 that Victoria's protection policies had had 'the debilitating effects of an oriental fatalism'.
The years from 1876 to 1886 were ones of intense political vitality - Alfred Deakin, looking back thought them the most intense in Victorian history\(^1\) - when great issues, and powerful orators like Graham Berry, involved the heckling cheering crowds at public meetings and debates, while the more sophisticated sat at home writing critical articles to support or combat the 'demagogues'. While the vigour of the oral tradition cannot be recalled,\(^2\) it is impossible to understand the fears of the more fastidious, anxiously examining the political situation, without reference to the hitherto unexampled participation, whether it merely constituted 'a nice night's entertainment', or reached a passionate pitch over any of the main issues, like the Land Tax or Constitutional reform. Berry, it was said, had a power 'actually despotic';\(^3\) Higinbotham was reputed to have spoken like an angel; and the practice of 'stumping the country' was widespread. Very few could afford to present their views in the more formal pamphlet,


\(^3\) *Ibid.*, p. 11. Deakin himself was a fine orator.
although those who could benefitted in avoiding the notoriously partisan reports of the *Age* and the *Argus*.

The serious reviews, the *Melbourne*, *Victorian* and *Imperial Reviews*, founded between 1876 and 1879, cashed in on this vitality and concern, and published article after article on local political questions in their first more successful years. With the declining interest of politics after 1881, the Reviews ceased to attract political articles and neither the increased interest in international affairs nor the obvious literary padding could keep them going.¹ After 1882, the *Melbourne Review* in particular showed signs of flagging, since it was a completely non-commercial venture founded by enthusiastic young men interested only in promoting discussion.² The *Victorian Review*, which ran as a limited liability company financially supported by a branch of the Henty family, and with an ambitious editor in H. Mortimer Franklyn,³ had more specific purposes, and retained its drive longer, but collapsed at the same time, in 1886. The

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¹ See Appendix.
anonymous *Imperial Review*, a lively but repetitious commentator on events began in 1879, having taken over the short-lived *Austral Review*. Only it continued publication, although its support of colonial liberalism and democracy had worn rather thin during these six years.¹ Since it promoted an opinion rather than opinions and disdained discussion it maintained consistent political principles throughout: Wentworth and Higinbotham were its heroes and Berry would have been had he not deserted the popular cause in 1883.² The *Melbourne Review*, in attempting an honourable English neutrality,³ suffered for the degree of abstraction deemed suitable by its editors, H.G. Turner, Alexander Sutherland and A.P. Martin. It leaned heavily to conservatism,⁴ but, as the South Australian philanthropist and reformer Catherine Helen Spence said, it did provide an opportunity for

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¹ 'Editor at Home', *Imperial Review*, vol. 1:3, pp.224-5 (hereafter cited as *I.R.*)
² 'Victorian Liberalism', *I.R.*, vol. 2:13, pp.1-3. It is impossible to guess how influential this Review was in the absence of circulation figures and the total anonymity of its production.
³ *M.R.*, vol. 1:1, 'To our readers'.
⁴ See E. Langton, 'Political Parties in Victoria: a Rejoinder', *M.R.*, vol. 4:14, p.118 'the idea] lurks that the party opposed to the present government [Berry's] recognize the *Argus* and even this Review as their party organs'.

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publicizing ideas and suggestions which had little chance of being heard at a political meeting or a parliamentary debate. The editor of the Victorian Review had pronounced free trade views which he tirelessly applied, and as contributors were paid, had more control over the Review's political tone; 'the editor does not profess to maintain a colourless neutrality', its introduction pointed out. These three reviews, whose establishment and most prosperous years coincided with the years of most strenuous political debate, played an important although indefinable part in political culture.

Satirists and cartoonists also had a field day. The Melbourne Punch devoted itself almost exclusively to politics, calling on the gifted cartoonist Thomas Carrington to further enliven the unrelievedly vicious

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3 Turner, loc.cit., p.92.

4 One of the Bohemian group, and co-author of The Yorick Club: its Origins and Development, (Melb., 1911).
OUR RULERS.

NED KELLY (Ist.).—“WHAT A GRAND OLD TIME WE ARE HAVING OF IT—EH, MATES?”
personal comment it directed first against the Berry government, and then against the O'Loughlen administration - both 'liberal' groups. Culling from its pages, it published *A History of the Berry Ministry* in 1880 which featured Berry, C.H. Pearson (always with his grammar book) and Duffy (carrying a parchment with HINTED TREASON obviously printed on it), old Mother Age in her blinker-like bonnet, and Ned Kelly, as its mock heroes. Three years later, O'Loughlen suffered the same treatment, appearing in *The Career of the O'Loughlen Government* as a toad with a huge jewel, representing office, in its brow. So well did the *Melbourne Punch* sell that worried supporters of reform attempted to counteract its visual attack. They adopted a stock American comic figure, Sam Slick, created by a Nova Scotian Judge to comment on

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1. *Punch* was only the most extreme in this. The *Age* used similar tactics against the *Argus* and its political opponents.

2. See p.102.

3. See p.126 for a typical cartoon.

4. Ibid., Pol.Sci. Pamphs., fo. series, vol. 1:9, p.12. The *Punch* line on this was 'the list of O'Loughlen failures is longer than that of any other ministry that ever held office in Victoria' (p.27).

the inanities of provincial politics, and through the laconic cigar-smoking figure, tried to boost Berry and the reformist group. *Sam Slick in Victoria* lasted only for six months, but in that time its editors showed their anxiety at the tone of political comment, and added to its scope.

The political scene was as confusing as it was lively. A temperate observer could be forgiven disillusionment with representative government, given the rapid shifts of alliances and the conflicting interpretations offered by leader-writers, cartoonists and commentators, who seemed to see the direction of events with truly remarkable clarity. The *Age* adopted a schoolmasterly tone and with the material available blackboarded the daily lessons in Democracy, while the *Argus* spoke loftily of the self-evident truths of

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1. L. Pierce (ed.), *Sam Slick in Pictures: The best of the humour of Thomas Chandler Haliburton*, (Toronto, 1956).
2. June-December 1879. The only full series, held by the Latrobe Library, had been misplaced at the time of writing, and only the two copies held by the A.N.L. have been seen by this writer.
3. *Sam Slick in Victoria*, vol.1:1, p.4. 'The unmitigated ferocity and the coarse abuse with which public men are assailed in Victoria has no parallel under the sun... especially if he serves in the liberal ranks. In America, spirits kindred to Punch are cowhided'.
free-trade and of constitutional sanity, a position usually echoed by the *Daily Telegraph*. The *Age* referred to these two contemptuously as 'the Conservative Caesar and Pompey'. Totally different points of view on such questions as land appeared in the Reviews, thus indicating the wide area still open for discussion in a community where political direction had not yet clearly emerged.

One writer allegorized local politics by imagining the consecration day of a new temple to Representative Government. Delegates from all over the world gathered; writers started note-taking from their special boxes; the cheering crowds gathered. A wonderful tableau depicting the triumph of Popular Rights over Ancient Tyranny was about to begin. The curtain rose - half an hour too soon - to reveal the backsides of local politicians too intent on stealing each other's robes and scraping the gold off the statues to notice.  

This cynical view gained some justification from the local scene. In ten years, Victorians voted six

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governments in, and out. The shifting interest and fluctuating animosities of the decade mirrored a young society where men were Irishmen, or Chinamen, or northern wheat farmers, before they were Victorians.¹ The numerous clashes of principle between interest groups, and so between the two Houses of the Legislature, culminated a long conflict wherein squatters and merchants, rather than squatters and farmers or merchants and manufacturers, stood together; where town and country interests came into frequent opposition; and where certain groups like the Roman Catholics stood apart.²

Unpredictable stands by individual politicians also bedevilled politics as long as the older traditions of the gentleman politician and the people's representative survived against political organizations and party government. Berry achieved this latter kind of solidarity briefly in uniting the National Reform and Protection Leagues; but for the most part, individuals and groups rendered debates confused and gave them the complexity of

¹ Bartlett, op.cit., p.3.
² J.E. Parnaby, The Economic and Political Development of Victoria 1877-81, Ph.D. thesis, (Melb., 1951) discusses this in great detail. See especially her Conclusion where the triumph of the squatter-merchant alliance is outlined.
an eighteenth century English parliament. Had George Higinbotham not retired from politics in 1876 out of an understandable inability to condone either the policy of the Government or the tactics of the Opposition - an action so principled as to seem almost petulant to the aggrieved Age, and an unexpected blessing to his opponents - the reformist party might not have pursued so traumatic a course in the following years, as commentators often pointed out. Independently minded men, like Wrixon who refused to budge from his faith in the inviolability of Parliament during the chaotic months of 1876, could be deeply annoying to those pursuing reform. And at a time when Berry needed every vote, young Alfred Deakin preferred to resign his seat rather

1 (Ed.), January 13 1876.
4 Cf. Deakin/Pearson, June 8 1876, Pearson papers: 'with the exception of Mr Higinbotham, no public leader possesses such general confidence as you do'.
than enter parliament on a faintly dubious poll;\(^1\) and James Munro, before the critical elections of 1880, was forming a new Liberal Association rather than continue supporting the existing one.\(^2\)

The terminology of the day indicated a deeper confusion, and pointed to an area of mental confusion. \textit{Punch} genuinely believed itself to be defending Liberal values.\(^3\) James Service, leader of the conservative Constitutionalists allied himself to the popular cause by supporting the Trades and Labour Council and reminding his listeners of his Chartist origins.\(^4\) Men straining to undermine Berry's hold believed they were saving Liberalism; and the distinction between 'true' and 'spurious' liberalism often appeared in political discussion.\(^5\) C.H. Pearson outlined 'The Liberal Programme'

\begin{enumerate}
  \item \textit{Deakin, op.cit.}, pp.41-3.
  \item \textit{Age} (ed.), January 1 1880, p.3(7).
  \item \textit{Punch}, January 16 1879, p.21. 'We are true to the traditions of our family; true to our Liberal instincts; true to the cause of justice, right and freedom'.
  \item \textit{Argus}, February 8 1883, p.4.
  \item J.F. Hogan, 'Manhood Suffrage in Victoria', \textit{V.R.}, vol. 2:10, p.526, pointed to 'a strange and unaccountable transformation' of the word in the Antipodes where it became 'the poll of the people'.
\end{enumerate}
in Victoria, but his dedication to land reform showed that he meant something quite different from many of the other contributors to the Victorian Review: something closer to, but never formulated by, the populist and urban-focused Imperial Review. Everyone claimed to be Liberal, but Liberalism might mean English Liberalism based on middle class needs and government by property, or the pragmatic and more egalitarian Australian version hopefully emerging.

In the absence of locally-wrought definition and the neglect of formulas on the part of acknowledged leaders, politicians either interpreted for themselves, or allied themselves wherever their constituencies' interests best.

\footnote{\textit{V.R.}, vol.1:4, p.524.}
\footnote{A neat, though earlier, example of the conflict between the two came in men's attitudes to Free Trade. Adaptable men like Pearson could put aside long-held beliefs. Others could not. Witness Duffy writing to J.S. Mill because his constituency (Gippsland) favoured protection and he was a free-trader. Mill/Duffy, \textit{*} October 2 1866, \textit{Duffy Correspondence} (S.L.V.).}
fitted. The open and questionable alliances of the O'Loughlen government in 1881 shocked the doctrinaire.

As one such put it,

it is a contravention of constitutional government to allow any set of men to administer the affairs of the country unless they have previously assisted each other in making certain political principles clear.2

And how, in the next coalition government, the very man who fought to establish popular principles in the seventies could ally himself with James Service passed the comprehension of the Imperial Review. It warned Graham Berry that he, like Esau, would have to seek a place of repentance.3 In fact he had, and found it in the bosom of the bourgeoisie.

1 The Honourable T. Bent, representing the semi-suburban, semi-rural area of Brighton was quite prepared to 'stone-wall' a measure proposing to amend the 1869 Land Act (though the measure aimed only to provide temporary relief to indebted selectors for the two years until the whole Land Act came up for review in 1880), unless a non-residential clause was introduced immediately. V.P.D., Session 1878, vol.29, p.1626. Victorian politics at this time provide an exemplar of the political process at its most basic; B. Crick, In Defence of Politics, (Pelican, 1964), p.18, defines this as 'accepting the fact of the simultaneous existence of groups, hence different interests and traditions, within a territorial unit under common rule'.


Politicians who held to well-defined ideas were often labelled as slightly mad. The Honourable Mr Andrew, defending the residence clause in the 1869 Land Act and so the idea of settled peasant proprietors as against middle-class absenteeism, and the practices of dummying, was thus rewarded for his vigilance.\(^1\) C.H. Pearson, who brought scholarship and formal liberal thinking into parliamentary debates,\(^2\) was regularly condemned as a failed-teacher-cum-failed-politician. The principles of a Higinbotham, an interjector said, could be ignored since he too was 'mad'.\(^3\)

In 1876, Higinbotham was one of the few politicians adhering to definite political principles and in pursuit of a policy capable of being made into a party policy. When invited to lead the Victorian Liberal Party, he politely replied that no such party existed, and that it could not until enough people made up their minds to preserve the public estate, save the fertile areas of the colony, open the closed roads, tax the wealthy landowners.

\(^1\) V.P.D., Session 1878, vol.29, p.1614.


\(^3\) V.P.D., Session 1877, vol.27, p.1878.
and reform the Legislative Council. ¹ To just such a policy was the Berry party dedicated in 1877;² the apologias of leading men like Duffy and Pearson showed substantial agreement with Higinbotham, though they also showed an anxiety about tariff reform with which he had less concern;³ and while Berry confined himself to fiery election⁴ and parliamentary speeches, he was similarly bound to that policy. Actually, the so-called Liberal party united only on a policy of Reform in the late seventies⁵ and could more sensibly be called the Reformists. The so-called Conservatives rallied around the Constitution, and on occasion rightly called themselves Constitutionalists. That they also stood

²A more radical and determined set of men than Higinbotham could have foreseen, as shown by Bartlett.
⁴See, Age, January 22 1878.
for property followed because the Constitution preserved 'the haves' against 'the have nots', by giving the final say to the Upper House.

Observant men were also aware of new labels that might apply to as yet diffuse political forces; the fear of 'communism'¹ and 'socialism'² surfaced at critical times; and what the non-propertied classes might yet be capable of was a matter for serious speculation. One writer in 1883 proclaimed 'an era of momentous change' and entitled his discussion of this The Coming Revolution, to be heralded by such mundane things as Civil service reform and the freeing of state railways and schools.³ Though he was wrong about the direction and the momentum of change he caught the right tone: unobtrusiveness.

Interest groups, individualism and imprecise terminology apparently confused political debates; but only those factors could have produced such debates, which, with their undercurrents of antagonism and anxiety, depended at their most basic level on a conflict of

¹ Meaning 'as of the Paris Commune'.
² Socialist ideas had circulated in Victoria since at least 1872. See H. Mayer, Marx, Engels and Australia, (Melb., 1964), part 1.
generations, and also contained the embryo of class war, things with a great deal of ideological content but with no sure intellectual base. Colonial politicians moved slowly towards definition of the ideas and assumptions contained in their most productive legislation, like the Factories, Workrooms and Shops Act of 1885,\(^1\) Deakin's Irrigation Bill in 1886,\(^2\) and in Pearson's Education Report.

The area of government activity was wider in the young colony; and political thinking had to go beyond the assumptions of English liberalism in order to develop. Inevitably, many were unwilling to go past the familiar and the established. While the model followed in the fifties proved narrower, in their scope than the one sought by newer representatives of an increasingly complex society, many, because of their own interest or perhaps their unchanged political ideas did not approve of this trend. The popular challenge, led by Berry in the late seventies on the established political institutions,

\(^1\) Cf. Wrixon, speaking to what he called an unpretentious but valuable bill, \textit{V.P.D.}, Session 1885, vol. 49, p. 1440.

\(^2\) \textit{V.P.D.}, Session 1886, vol. 51, p. 446. Deakin introduced his scheme as one of vital interest to the State, if only from its position as owner of the railways, and collector of revenues.
constituted a verdict on their pre-supposed sufficiency.¹ The force of that challenge illuminated the problem of what a government ought and ought not be doing with reference to specifically colonial needs; and it emphasized a form of democracy so all-embracing as to be known later as 'socialism without doctrines'.

That that form of democracy failed to replace completely the original English form can be seen from the failure of Berry's last Reform Bill, which, though a legislative success, left the powers of the Upper House virtually untouched. In compromising, the party of Reform found themselves accused by the Opposition of plagiarism and evasion.² Pearson's reply contained an important and characteristic recognition on the part of reformists that they might not achieve their hopes by straightforward radical measures, but that in a society so homogenous despite its youthful divisions, they might

¹ Berry in 1878 summed this up. '...Speaking from the experience of a quarter century, we point out that our Constitution Act is defective in construction, and has in consequence been the cause, in the short space of time I mention, of probably more difficulty, heart-burning and danger to the people than has ever been encountered... by any constitutionally governed country in the world'. V.P.D., Session 1878, vol.29, p.1707.

achieve their purposes gradually and indirectly:

We are sacrificing the individual importance of this House in order to close a contest which has lasted so long, and embittered class against class, to come to some settlement and to win for the people the right of making their will supreme. I am willing to accept this compromise...¹

Most politicians and political thinkers were slow to recognize the distinctive character of colonial politics, where there could be little to conserve and little to liberalize,² even while there was a great deal to be done if all members of the community were to live prosperously and happily together. This pragmatic principle was not easily arrived at, although the conflicts and debates of the decade hinted at its coming; but the appearance of things, and the course of events hardly gave promise of success.

¹ Ibid., p.1466.
² Henry Wrixon recognized this; in 1886 he said The old fashioned terms Liberal and Conservative are now meaningless...and really quite unsuited to our young middle-class community, where we have no privileged class, no ancient institutions, demanding reform....The [early] leaders of those parties were politicians, who, born and bred in the old land, passed their youth amid the din and contending cries and platforms in England, and who, when they came to Australia, naturally fell at once into the old lines.... Quoted by S.M. Ingham, op.cit., p.31.
In January 1876, violent scenes occurred in the Legislative Assembly. Graham Berry's Opposition tried to prevent the McCulloch government from governing by the simple device of garrulousness, called 'stonewalling', in protest against the Acting Governor's refusal to dissolve a Parliament which they and the Age claimed was unrepresentative.

This tactic was welcomed by some as the long threatened challenge to the existing political institutions. Berry's claims did constitute such a challenge. The Age, whilst denying that a revolution was in the making, insisted that the reformers should stick to unparliamentary tactics if government was ever to be democratic in a colony where, to use Higinbotham's famous phrase, 'the wealthy lower orders' could manipulate land tenure and control taxation in their own interests. In vain moderates warned that attempts to seek authority outside Parliament constituted treason against democratic institutions. When McCulloch introduced the equally

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2 Argus, (ed.), January 12 1876.
3 Age, (ed.), January 12 1876.
4 See Wrixon, op.cit., pp.9-10.
un-British device of 'gagging' (the cloture) he defeated the stonewallers, and temporarily stemmed the Reformists.¹

Berry's sweeping victory in 1877² proved that the extra-parliamentary majority did support his policies; and it formalized the rifts in the community symbolized by the different groups represented in the Upper and Lower Houses.³ The Age exulted in a popular victory in which 'earnest liberals', 'trimmers', 'gaggers' and freetraders had no place, and in which the wealthy would receive no hearing.⁴

Almost immediately the Reformist party legislated a Land Tax which hit straight at pastoral wealth. The Legislative Council did not oppose so popular a measure,

² He held a 2:1 majority. Bartlett, op.cit., p.55.
⁴ Cf. the sour comments of the Argus (ed.) May 12 1877, p.6 (6) - 'Property and intelligence will be but poorly represented'.
especially since the alternative was an income tax;\(^1\) here the issues of Constitutional Amendment and of Payment of Members might otherwise have emerged.\(^2\) In an attempt to achieve the latter, and if necessary force the way for constitutional reform, Berry then 'tacked' the cost of Payment of Members to the normal Appropriations Bill.\(^3\)

The Council, having bided its time, then stood on the neutral ground of procedures and asserted its supremacy by rejecting the Appropriations Bill: and with it, a purely political principle dear to the Liberal heart, and particularly important to Berry's supporters, new men from lower income groups in the community.\(^4\) Unexpectedly the Assembly adjourned itself, economized by sacking a number of civil servants and continued by borrowing money independently.\(^5\) Another deadlock had occurred; but

\(^1\) Parnaby, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.105-6.

\(^2\) \textit{Argus, (ed.)}, December 11 1877, p.6 (6-7).

\(^3\) Mr Kerferd attacked this as 'coercion'. \textit{V.P.D., Session 1877-8, vol.27}, p.1877. Payment of members was still in the experimental stage, and the allowance had to be voted by each parliament.

\(^4\) Bartlett, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.55-7.

\(^5\) Turner, \textit{op.cit.}, p.201.
instead of calling a general election, the Reformists stayed in office and challenged the Council’s supremacy. 1

Even the Age, dedicated to egalitarianism and opposed to minority government, admitted this was an extreme reaction. Citizens woke to think they might as well be under a Committee of Public Safety. ‘Black Wednesday’ as the day of retrenchment came to be called, dramatized the deadlock. It seemed probable to thoughtful people that democracy had failed.

Shock, moral indignation and anxiety spread through the community. Immediate reaction came in the form of sympathy for the victimized civil servants. Protestant leaders presented a public Remonstrance. 2 The articulate Reverend Mr Henderson, of Presbyterian Review notoriety, preached against ‘a great unrighteousness’. 3

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1 By the end of 1877 members were saying that ‘either this Chamber must be utterly extinguished or else the Council must be brought into its proper sphere of action’ and that the Council was the real aggressor. V.P.D., Session 1877-8, vol.27, p.1887 and p.1880, respectively.

2 Age, January 22 1878; signed by the Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Congregational leaders.

3 Argus, January 16 1878, p.7 (2-3). Published as a pamphlet, A Voice from the Pulpit, it sold at least 15,000 copies.
Even the Roman Catholic journal supported the protest.\(^1\) Capitalists, hearing rumours about closing the Port of Melbourne and confiscating gold-bearing lands, took alarm at the possible reprisals of such a government.\(^2\)

Letters flooded the correspondence columns of the daily papers. The *Age* said blithely that this only showed that every cat will miaow and every dog will have its day,\(^3\) but the *Argus* hinted grimly of Americanized institutions and the demoralization which would follow Berryism,\(^4\) as it was now called.\(^5\) The ancient and powerfully sustained antagonism of the historian H.G. Turner dated from these events. His was a belated and perhaps therefore more extreme statement of what many people felt:

\(^1\) Or rather, the churches' right to speak out in defence of the principles (on which) the stability of Christian society rests'. *Advocate* (ed.), January 26 1878. It also published the Remonstrance.

\(^2\) Turner, *op.cit.*, p.199. Being a banker, Turner spoke with authority here. Peter Lalor, Minister for Customs at the time of the crisis, for instance, did display a readiness to provoke the Council, and presumably to attack its rights. E.g. *V.P.D.*, Session 1877-8, vol.27, p.1879.

\(^3\) *Age* (ed.), January 17 1878.


\(^5\) Melbourne Punch propagated this usage, and always referred to the Chief Secretary as 'Jerry'.
The advent of Graham Berry to the important position of Premier of the colony in August 1875 [his first term of office] marked the commencement of an era of political intrigue, Parliamentary degradation and strenuous self-seeking that for seven years threatened to justify the predicted failure of popular representative government and filled the more thoughtful colonists with shame and indignation.¹

However such vilification could not obscure the popularity of Reform.

The deadlock continued. As the weeks extended into months, it became apparent that simple solutions like 'get rid of Berry' or 'be moderate', failed to take in the problem. While impolitic tactics were the necessary cause of the crisis, that alone could not have sustained it. The constitutional issue drew on a widespread feeling that 'it was about time something was done about the Council'.²

The all important question was the one now bluntly posed: who was the most important in the colony, the people or a wealthy oligarchy. The answer desired by the Reformists was that legislative finality rested with the Assembly;³

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¹ Turner, op.cit., p.182. Cf. Punch, July 17 1879, refers to Black Wednesday as 'associated...with a deed of deepest cowardice and the basest tyranny'.

² Formulated in Parliament by the Honourable Mr Patterson, V.P.D., Session 1877-8, vol.29, p.1818.

³ 'Step by step have the people of the colony been brought to the point at which they demand finality in legislation' (Berry), V.P.D., Session 1878, vol.29, p.1709.
the answer given by the Constitutionalists was that it rested with the Council, rendered indissoluble and beyond legislation by the Constitution, and superior because of its members' larger interests and better education.¹

Until the question was definitely answered, deadlocks could recur, and political institutions would remain under that cloud.

Various devices to prevent deadlocks were suggested. Berry originally proposed to make the Council into a checking body; and unicameralism did have supporters.² The Age campaigned for the French plebiscite;³ but, like the Norwegian system of equivalent houses from one electorate proposed by the Francis ministry in 1875,⁴

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¹ See R. Murray-Smith's defence of the rights of the Upper House, V.P.D., Session 1880-1, vol.35, pp.1459-61. That this argument when embodied in Presbyterian squatters and self-made merchants failed to embarrass its exponents only reflects the security they felt in the Constitution.


³ See A.L. Windsor (editor of the Age) whose article 'The Plebiscite in Defence', V.R., vol.1:2, constituted one of the most lucidly argued articles ever to appear in the Reviews.

⁴ Turner, op.cit., p.172.
it was too far divorced from British practices\textsuperscript{1} to inspire enthusiasm. Many of the moderate politicians followed the Council in advocating popularization of the Upper House; the British acceptance of representative government based on property could not be so easily swept aside.\textsuperscript{2} Others, like the Honourable Mr Garnson, saw no point in fidelity to models, and groped for an original structure better suited to the colonial situation:

\begin{quote}
The thing is perfectly monstrous. The supposition is that our Constitution is framed on the model of that of the mother country; but what would be the working of the latter under circumstances like ours...\textsuperscript{3}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1} Compare J. Campbell, \textit{What Shall We Adopt?} (Ballarat, 1878), Vict. Pamphs., vol.116:3, p.19 and James Smith 'The Plebiscite', \textit{V.R.}, vol.1:1, pp.11-12. Smith rejected it as a barbarism, an anachronism and a dangerous innovation, substituting the popular will for the collective rationality of the community. The crowds chose Barrabas, not Christ, he said.

\textsuperscript{2} See Pearson's different emphasis on 'property'. Commenting on the class-war which had ensnared previous Reform bills, he said that 'it was most unfortunate for this country that the Legislative Council was at the very beginning taught to believe that it represented property'. \textit{V.P.D.}, vol.35, p.1467.

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{V.P.D.}, vol.27, p.1890.
The issue was stated and restated.\textsuperscript{1} The \textit{Argus}, with its \textit{Monthly Summary for Europe} ensured that at least one side of the argument reached English ears.\textsuperscript{2} C.H. Pearson, well aware of the damaging repercussions of English criticism, was one of the few to present the Reformist case in England.\textsuperscript{3} The Chief Secretary spoke too optimistically when he argued that all the best English journals knew of Victoria's unworkable Constitution,\textsuperscript{4} although distant commentators did join in with the discussion. Robert Stout, Attorney-General of New Zealand, saw the crisis as beyond party squabbles. Reviewing the proposals already put forward, Stout rejected suggestions like abolishing responsible government


\textsuperscript{2} And usually only one side. W.D. Wanliss, \textit{The Constitutional Contest in Victoria} (London, 1879), Vict. Pamphs., vol.118:1 which represented an attempt to enlighten Englishmen on the dangerous situation in Victoria, obviously drawn from \textit{Argus} reports.

\textsuperscript{3} 'Democracy in Victoria', \textit{Fortnightly Review} (May 1879), in the Pearson papers.

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{V.P.D.}, vol.29, p.1711.
and replacing it with nominee or elected committees,\(^1\) or unicameralism; the only ones he considered were those proposing to limit the powers of the Upper House. He then suggested that a locally elected governor with the power of veto might prevent deadlocks.\(^2\)

The role of the governor became important. Although the powers of the Crown had atrophied since 1850, colonial self-government did admit the legal supremacy of the British parliament, its absolute control over foreign policy, and the constitutional power of colonial governors to dismiss officials and dissolve parliaments.\(^3\) The right to dissolve parliament proved the most controversial. Under what circumstances and on whose decision should the Governor act?\(^4\)

The Governor of Victoria at the time of the deadlock, Sir George Bowen, acted on the liberal principle that he

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\(^3\) Greenwood, *op.cit.*, p.132.

must accept the advice of responsible ministers on local matters. Critics like Professor Hearn defined his dual role as imperial officer and head of the political structure differently, emphasizing his right to discretionary action, so locating the failure of the political structure externally.¹

Behind this, as every other aspect of the constitutional debate, lay the two opposed views as to the source of political authority. Radical Democrats viewed all other areas of government as subservient to the represented will of the people.² Conservatives, drawing heavily on Burke, de Tocqueville and Bagehot, were anxious to establish the supremacy of a minority, and even, of one man if necessary. However, if the Governor really held discretionary powers and special authority, the argument followed that his failure to exercise it in 1877 stemmed from interested motives. One scandalous comment was that 'the song of the Governor and Legislative Assembly (was) but a monetary duet'.³

¹ Ibid., p.423.
² Ibid., pp.425-8, contains an excellent discussion of this. The Age went further and supported the sovereignty of the people themselves, (ed.), May 12 1879.
Bowen's private comment on the Governor's vulnerability had a wry appropriateness:

It is curious that of the six governors of Victoria, two should have been killed, two shelved and two sent to Mauritius.¹

Nonetheless, to many the question of the Governor's authority was a red herring. Replying to the attack on Bowen, another writer returned to the question of supremacy. In a democracy, good government rested on the assent of the governed and not on a specialized authority, no matter what the Governor did nor how justified the Council might be.² In reply, Edward Langton pointed to the extremist actions and inflammatory measures of the Berry group and defended limitations to popular power and protection for capital, so speaking as a determined Conservative.³

Between 1878 and 1881 four proposals for Reform from the Assembly and three from the Council were discussed at parliamentary level.⁴ In 1879, all hope for

¹ Bowen/Duffy, April 2 1879, Duffy papers, G/313.
⁴ Parnaby, op.cit., p.429.
local solution having been set aside, the much-maligned Embassy set off to seek Imperial assistance. Punch pictured 'Jerry' in his best clothes and Pearson with his grammar book setting off across the seas in search of a holiday, and perhaps the Imperial Parliament. Though subject to continuous criticism from the conservative press, the Embassy was a popular expression of the Assembly's sense of frustration; if only the Colonial Secretary's admonition of colonial immoderation and innovation. The Age had early said that Australians had no occasion to clinging to the old paths; but ultimately they could do little else.

Since the ball had been hit back firmly into the colonial court, politicians and lawyers returned to the now rather cheerless game. Judge Rogers said that if moderation could not prevail, and the two Houses disagreed twice on the same issue, a double dissolution should follow, and a Privy Council, especially established,

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1 Argus (ed.), December 24 1879, p.5, for this long after it was all over.
3 Age (ed.), March 11 1879.
should be a final court of appeal. Professor Hearn drew a distinction between finality of administration and finality of legislation, and so sought to retain the balance of power between the two Houses. Meanwhile the strangely cosmopolitan *Victorian Review* invited European opinion on the situation, so that in 1880, Earl Grey pronounced to its readers the superiority of unicameralism, the Duke of Manchester of moderation, and a Frenchman M. de Ferron on the paramountcy of the second chamber, as held by the French senate.

Because this long-drawn out struggle coincided with severe economic distress—drought, unemployment and financial instability, all summed up by *Punch* as 'the

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2 'Finance and Finality', *V.R.*, vol.1:1, p.59.
5 'The Question of Two Chambers', *V.R.*, vol.2:8, p.232.
Berry Blight" - the once united party of reform began to disintegrate. When local wits adapted an English political burlesque, The Happy Land, and prepared to perform it, Berry censored the performance; neither the colony nor its Government saw any point in satire. Berry's second attempt to effect constitutional reform failed at this time, by one vote; and so the Legislative Council was not reduced to a nominee house, and the plebiscite not introduced. Here the democratic challenge faltered, and in its more extreme form, died. When Berry hopefully gained a dissolution and an appeal to the country, it returned the Opposition to power, with the astute James Service as the new Chief Secretary. The lawyer P.D. Phillips quickly claimed that this defeat constituted a popular judgement on the Reform issue. Actually it constituted a Roman Catholic judgement on the

1 Ibid., February 6 1879, p.52: 'From Melbourne the blight spread rapidly over the whole colony. Property of all kinds withered beneath its baneful influence... capital fled...money became scarcer...it seemed as if nature herself...had resolved to withhold her bounty from the land and that its fecund bosom had suddenly become sterile'.

2 Age, January 16 1880, p.2(7).

3 Turner, op.cit., p.209.

failure to legislate on education, the bureaucracy's anger at 'Black Wednesday', capitalist withdrawal dating from the same day, and economic distress.

However, Service also failed to cope with the constitutional reform.¹ The Service Reform Bill of 1880 proposed a greatly extended franchise for the Council. Should disagreements occur twice, a double dissolution would enable the two new Houses to vote again; should the disagreement remain, they should sit jointly and vote on the matter.² Five times the number of people as could be crammed into the Gallery of the Assembly gathered to hear the decision;³ the Bill failed by two votes.

Service gained a dissolution, but then the country returned Berry. The Reform Bill eventually passed in 1881 had eliminated all the extremist or radical-democrat proposals, incorporated some of the Service ideas, and represented the Lowest Common Denominator for both sides. Electoral reforms certainly popularized the Council and narrowed the gap between the two Houses, so reducing the

¹ Though he was expected to. See F.J.C., 'The Political Situation in Victoria', V.R., vol.2:8, p.265.
³ Argus, June 25 1880, p.5(1).
likelihood of deadlock; but the Council would still reject money bills and still retained its supremacy. In that sense, Neil Black was not a man of yesterday; men of property still had the last say. Yet even the Age exulted, and stood satisfied with what was in the literal rather than the colonial interpretation of the word, a liberal victory. 1 Thus the known political institutions had been saved; and the innovators had failed to establish more than their criticism, and the strength of the support which under certain circumstances they could muster.

Shortly afterwards, Sir Bryan O'Loughlen took over with a makeshift ministry whose main appeal came from the widespread belief that anything was preferable to Berryism, and that any group promising 'Peace, Progress and Prosperity' deserved support. Issues and principles virtually disappeared, and railways, social services and loan bills increasingly engaged parliamentary attention. Commentators returned to more abstract discussion, like manhood suffrage; 2 and Windsor wrote a further pellucid

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1 Age, (ed.), June 18 1881.
defence of democracy at this time. A retrospective attention was paid to American innovations of the late seventies, like the caucus and the cloture; and discussions of proportional representation appeared. The further coalitions of the decade indicated, to all with the energy left to notice, that conflict had disappeared from local politics.

The question of land settlement remained. The 1869 Act had failed to achieve its purpose; and middle-class theorists and doctrinaire liberals still clung to the dream of small farmers peacefully and profitably tilling the soil so wastefully monopolized by the wealthy pastoralists. In 1880, 612 squatting runs took up 14,337,041 acres of Victorian land, while some 50,000 free-holders cultivated a mere 1,977,943 acres:

4 See also W.J. Napier, 'Colonial Democracies', V.R., vol.6:30, that 'the force of reaction has been in a direct ratio to the magnitude of the agitation'.
5 Statistical Register, (1880), parts 7 and 9. These figures were published in the Victorian Parliamentary Papers for the year.
situation in itself disturbing to those who supported egalitarianism.

When the Berry party had campaigned under the slogans 'Unlock the land' and 'Bust up the large estates', it subsumed those points into the broader aim of stripping away the established privileges and powers of landed property.¹ Land Tax as much as Constitutional Reform provided a means to this end. Given the electoral promises made to the small farmers and selectors, the need to find the interest for loans, and the pressure of dedicated Liberal reformers like C.H. Pearson, what better combination of inclination and necessity than the imposition of a tax of 25/- per £100 capital value on estates larger than 640 acres.² No other device suggested at the same time - graduated succession duties for instance³ - could come so close so quickly to busting up the large estates; and the reformers had hoped to use the Land Tax debate as a stepping stone to Council Reform.


² Parnaby, op.cit., p.104.

Sir James McCulloch and Sir John O'Shanassey (amongst others) quickly condemned the Bill as class persecution based not on necessities but on party policy.\(^1\) It had no direct relevance to the many problems of selectors, presumably the Government's main concern; it simply placed on country land-owners the burden of the first direct taxation and constituted an interference with the rights of property which until this time had been respected.

The ideology of the attack had been clarified by C.H. Pearson and popularized by the *Age*. To Pearson, it was perfectly fair to tax land, or rather its unearned increment, since land was a special kind of property, rightfully belonging to the State.\(^2\) The *Age* spoke in similar terms, claiming that part of the special profits from land should accrue to the State.\(^3\) Though few cared to envisage the Mediterrean Arcadia, described by Sir Charles Gavan Duffy as the result of close settlement,

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1 V.P.D., Session 1877-8, vol.26, p.685 and p.699 respectively.
3 *Age*, (ed.), April 4 1877.
penal reform and diversified production,¹ the abstract virtues of peasant proprietors impressed themselves strongly on the middle-class imagination, and politicians rarely deviated from the assumption that this was the most desirable form of settlement.² That assumption gained force from the genuine difficulties facing bona fide settlers; and the abstract justice of their cause appealed strongly to Pearson, who urged politicians not to sit back in 'a fool's paradise' while the colony's lands passed out of the hands of the genuine selectors into those of the various capitalists.³ The cause had its political implications as well. The individualism of independent farmers would stabilize the liberal appeal according to Pearson;⁴ others saw in the peaceful system new hope for conservatism;⁵ but its immediate political content was more important.

² Sir John O'Shannassey, Alfred Deakin, and C.H. Pearson all held to this, for instance.
⁵ H.M. Franklyn, A Glance at Australia in 1880, p.16.
Support for Berry's Land Tax Bill came not only from theorists and the depressed selectors. It came from the working and urban population of the towns. Long mounting grievances against privilege came into the open. Since the burden of taxation, as levied in protective duties, fell most heavily on them, they supported a measure directed against a group until now comparatively free of such burdens. As John Lamont Dow put it,

> The present system of taxation is an outrageous system of class taxation, and I want to burst it up by imposing taxation upon certain gentlemen who have hitherto escaped.¹

While Radicals actually said that they did not care what form wealth assumed, it should be taxed,² Berry himself claimed to be protecting the labouring classes against taxation.³ All this referred only vaguely to the needs of the future generation, though that rationale emerged,⁴ and despite the Age's claims to the contrary, only abstrusely to the demand of the population for

¹ V.P.D., Session 1877-8, vol.26, p.700.
² E.g., the Honourable Mr J. Dwyer, V.P.D., vol.26, pp.702-3.
³ Ibid., p.694.
⁴ Ibid., p.704.
access to the land.\textsuperscript{1} Political realities made rural and liberal myths secondary to the struggle for supremacy in the colony. Berry's party proceeded in the name of the people in the land issue as it did in the constitutional struggle, and with extreme measures drawing on popular support, introduced the radical-democratic view of land-ownership to support middle-class interests.\textsuperscript{2} To the land-owning group, the only virtue of a land tax was that it would catch absentees;\textsuperscript{3} but they could not oppose the measure once proposed.

A further challenge to the pastoral ascendency came in the form of Henry George's book \textit{Progress and Poverty}, discussed within weeks of its English publication by Catherine Helen Spence in the \textit{Victorian Review}.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Age}, (ed.), July 8 1878.

\textsuperscript{2} It is hard to see the argument over the residential clause in the 1878 Land Act Amendment Bill in any other terms. Cf. Mr Barr, 'I fail to see the justice of prohibiting the best class in the colony - I allude to the middle class, the class who carry on business in a variety of ways - from taking up allotments of land... even if they do not reside wholly upon them'. \textit{V.P.D.}, Session 1878, vol.29, p.1617.

\textsuperscript{3} J.W. Hackett, 'Should Absentees be Taxed', \textit{M.R.}, vol.2:5, p.885, disagreed even with this saying it would discourage the necessary investment.

\textsuperscript{4} 'A Californian Political Economist', \textit{V.R.}, vol.4:20.
colony proved a fertile field for the ideas of a man who, with disarming simplicity, claimed that as the land was the source of all wealth, governments should levy a single tax on its unimproved value; Berry had already attempted something like this in 1877, but had only included large estates, and had not imagined that it was the only area for taxation. Supporters of the landed interest hastened to refute so confused a view of the origins and nature of wealth.¹

However their main defence against further selection—whatever form it took—depended on economic geography. Small estates, they argued, were inevitably unsuccessful in a colony where the vagaries of climate and of land fertility necessitated capital and big estates.² To these people the future of the colony was a bucolic one.³ The idea of small farms however took even greater force during the eighties, after the railway boom; and the irrigation system legislated in 1886 was to give it added realism.

State interference, in the name of public good, with individual rights and private monopolies almost circumstantially became surer, and the defenders of an earlier system of tenure and government slowly moderated their positions.¹

In the same way, Free-traders had less chance to remove the by now well-established protective duties which put such a blot on the colony's ideological escutcheon. No matter how often they reiterated the abstract justification of free trade,² or how sumptuously they described 'the free breakfast table,'³ protective duties, like the education system, were an established fact. In reality, the principle had merely become a regular part of election promises, and to be juggled in budgets and bills to cope with interest groups.⁴ The Victorian protective policy became truly controversial not within

¹ J. Crozier, 'Land Tenure', V.R., vol.5:28, pp.413-17, is an attempt to show historically the inevitability of this situation.
⁴ See the Customs Duties Bill, V.P.D., Session 1877-8, vol.27, pp.1893-4.
Victoria but in the context of the reviving Federation movement.¹

Conflict over the basic authority of government, the uses of the land, and the place of industry, sprang from the conflict between the established men of the first immigrant generation, and a newer one, which lived in or came to a society rather different from the one first envisaged. The relationship between these two entangled groups took dramatic force in the conflicts of the late seventies. Those conflicts also directed attention to an even more basic relationship, that of Capital and Labour. No wonder writers shifted their grounds on this subject. The political power of the common man rendered his condition important; and a discontented electorate would threaten the institutions of the country even more than the one which gave its mandate to Berry in 1877.

In 1876 Henry Keylock Rusden expressed his views on the subject, and no one bothered to reply, even though he put them in his usual forthright style. Perfect government he stated, echoing Buckle, consisted of the maximum of security with the minimum of interference;

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As pointed out by the Argus, (ed.), August 17 1877.
and (with typical nineteenth century aplomb) antagonisms
between capital and labour were but squabbles between
husband and wife, whose interests were really identical.¹

By 1880, a vague uneasiness appeared in the
writings on the subject. Even someone who could entitle
an article 'Some thoughts on the Duties of the Upper
Classes', found the roots of present difficulties (meaning
political difficulties) in the social relationship
between two classes.² In many cases the inappropriateness
of solutions proffered indicated a question incompletely
understood. James Smith, the journalist, railed against
the intemperance of the labouring classes,³ Franklyn
thought the emancipation of capital and the opening up
of the mythical interior would ease tension,⁴ and
Mrs Carter pleaded for individual charity from 'the upper
classes', and for government legislation to conciliate
and encourage capital.⁵

⁴ 'The True Solution to the Labour Difficulty in Melbourne
and other large centres in Australia', V.R., vol.2:2,
p.723.
Five years later, the tone of discussion had completely changed. The comforting assumption of identical interests was replaced, at least at this level, by two separate views, one from the employers and one from the employed. Bruce Smith, the lawyer spoke of that steady growth, of power and confidence, among the working classes as secured by...unionism, and urged the employers to adopt the same device.¹ Charles Montrose in the following year wrote of the powers of well-organized trade unions, and while earnestly upholding the harmony of interests theory, showed a lively awareness of the incidence and costs of strikes which destroyed harmony; he emphasized the need for arbitration, but felt that organized coercion could justly be met by organized resistance.² Though unionists retained their faith in peaceful adjustments³ and no devastating clashes occurred prior to 1886, the changing attitude derived from the political events of the late seventies.

A fugitive literature undoubtedly grew up within a working class movement,¹ and ideas taken up by discussion groups like the Eclectic Association and the Democratic Association of Victoria passed into more common usage. Some came through disaffected middle-men like C.E. Jones, who, after escaping a political scandal in 1870, returned to Victoria in 1883 and set up a weekly, The People's Tribune.² The paper seemed as much as a large advertisement for the multifarious talents of Jones as it did a tribunal, but proclaimed itself a 'truly Liberal journal', supporting land and educational reform, a national bank and cheaper communications.³ Jones supported gradual reform, but, especially on the land question where he incorporated the ideas of Henry George, reform nonetheless, and in the name of the people.⁴ The ordinary newspapers and journals probably played a more important role in

¹ One of the only examples of this preserved in the S.L.V. was J.A. Andrews, Each According to his Needs, Neither God nor the Law, (Melb., 1895), Pol. Sci. Pamphs., vol. 26:1, an anarchist tract referring readers to the works of Spencer, Bakunin, William Lane, William Morris and Mark Twain.
² It was founded in November 1883 and lasted until 1886. Only two numbers, held by the A.N.L., here referred to.
³ The People's Tribune, November 7 1883, p.6(4).
⁴ Ibid., p.1(1).
spreading radical and reformist ideas. The Imperial Review constantly tried to direct attention to the conditions under which people really lived, and by implication to the new attitudes needed to deal with them. If the formal activities of the working classes seemed moderate, and their privileges extensive when compared to those available in other countries, nonetheless the structure and ideological confidence of an independent trade union movement was solidifying.

No journal tried harder to educate opinion and direct the cause of popular political rights than the Age; and no more powerful advocate of those rights existed in the colony than its legendary proprietor, David Syme. Through the columns of the paper, on sale for one penny after 1869, he campaigned for universal education, land reform, protection, and the supremacy of the majority.

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1 W.E. Murphy, History of the Eight Hours Movement, (Melb., 1900), vol.2, p.3.
3 Cf. 'Lavollee - Les Duvrieres', I.R., vol.3:17, p.56, 'we have long come to the conclusion that the only right is might, and that the law of the world is expediency'.
4 Syme himself probably wrote little by 1876, since he could rely on journalists of the calibre of C.H. Pearson, A.L. Windsor and Alfred Deakin to expound his policy; but he retained overall control until 1883 at least. See A. Pratt, David Syme, The Father of Protection in Australia, (London, 1908), introduction, p.xvi.
Solid Scottish determination carried him through the early struggle to maintain the *Age* as a vehicle of his own views. Through it he relentlessly expounded the details of his vision of

a nice balanced industrial community, composite, stable and progressive; a self-contained, self-supporting, independent nation,¹

keeping politicians on tenterhooks by virtue of the influence he wielded.² Of powerful self-trained intellect, and with great faith in the strength of individual judgement, especially his own, Syme never moderated his views for the sake of politeness.³ The two books he wrote at this time substantiate and argue out the stance taken by his paper.

According to Syme, the whole people should govern.

In *Representative Government in England*, published in London in 1881, he sought the historical origins of the flaws in the English system of representative government; and in effect warned against uncritical acceptance of

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¹ Quoted by Pratt, *ibid.*, p.124.

² Estimates of the *Age's* circulation vary. L.F. Whitfield, *op.cit.*, p.7., estimated a daily issue of 23,000 in 1874; rising to 31,000 in 1881. *Table Talk*, November 20 1891 p.4(2), said it had risen to 100,000 in 1891.

³ Hence the long list of libel cases. 'The Victorian Press', *V.R.*, vol.3:18, p.685.
that system. He believed the rot had got into originally pure medieval institutions when residential qualifications for representatives disappeared and Septennial Acts extended the life of a parliament to seven years. From this followed corporate ministerial responsibility and government by party, both of which betrayed the spirit of representative government and substituted outside pressures for the constitutionally expressed will of the electors.  

Without specifically referring to the events of 1876-81, Syme had been provoked by them into a formal defence of direct democracy and a reasoned attack on the claims of the constitutionalists. The assumptions behind the book, that the electors were more important than the elected and that the State should function for the well-being of the majority, are those of the Age with its incessant demand for Council reform and finality through a plebiscite.  

His contribution to political economy, *Outlines of an Industrial Science*, (London, 1877)

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2 For a sympathetic local review, see M.R., vol.7:25, pp.107-10.
contained a defence of the pragmatism and inductive thought required by the subject and underlined by his experience in the colony, especially with reference to the land question.\(^1\)

The most distinctive thing about Syme's overall position, and his attitude to political and economic relationships within society, was that he saw the State as a protective rather than a free-ing body, and was one of the first to formulate the ideas of State responsibility later to be regarded as the distinguishing and original aspect of Australian government. Art, Syme said, should both mend and follow Nature; the art of legislation came in looking after the interests of the whole of society.\(^2\)

Is it desirable, from a social point of view, that a certain act should be performed? Then the State should perform it....It would be...absurd to expect the individual to do for society what is chiefly for the interest of society. If it has ends, then it must take the proper means to accomplish those ends.\(^3\)

\(^1\) J.A. La Nauze, *Political Economy in Australia*, (Melb., 1949), discusses this in detail.
Syme strove to write clearly and to the point; he eliminated qualifications a more widely-ranging and subtle thinker would have included, and assumed a more didactic tone than any other colonial political thinker. His directive proved inescapable, nonetheless; and when he wrote:

We must plant the tree before we can enjoy its fruit; we must build our houses before we can live in them,1

he made a comment which embraced the conflicts and struggles of the decade, and transcended them.2 For the gold-rush generation, the ready-made generation of the fifties, the houses had been built. Those who followed disagreed, and the struggles of 1876-81 constituted an assessment and a challenge, to the original interpretation of representative government.

While anxiety about the local political situation rapidly subsided after 1881, anxiety about international

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1 Ibid., p. 186.
affairs quickened after 1882. Defence debates took a new tone of urgency, and the colony's resources suddenly looked pitifully inadequate. ¹

To Victorians, international affairs meant what was happening to the British Empire, a subject of permanent importance to insecure colonists on the edge of the new world. The aggressive intentions of the German government, and the fate of the Ottoman Empire, attracted the attention of a few in Melbourne; and the Irish question obviously involved many of the colonists deeply; but for the most part, before 1880 such events were agreeably remote - with the exception of the Russian scare of 1877 - and, since Britain won most of the wars, of literary interest rather than anything else. When the journalist Arthur Topp, in one of his many essays on the situation in Europe, ventured in 1879 to predict the inevitable decline of England and the rise of a powerful German state, he was firmly rebuked for his virtual disloyalty: and for a certain callousness of spirit, which led him to ignore the untapped reserves of military and spiritual strength

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V.P.D., Session 1882, vol.40, pp.1003-1009.
stored up by 'the great civilizing and colonizing race of the century'.

Then in 1883 Germany annexed a large part of New Guinea. France decided to send her worst criminals to New Caldeonia. The peaceful empire of England-in-the-south stood, as it seemed, threatened. Topp had early called for a hardened British attitude to Russian claims in Turkey, and argued that the Turkish situation had great relevance to Australian colonists, living in the most vulnerable part of the Empire: Russian dominance of the Near East meant insecurity in India, or simply isolation for Australia. The question 'does Germany want colonies' in 1880 was purely speculative, and like Topp's remarks, only another magazine article. Now Imperial policy on such matters became not only important, but extremely worrying.

Not only did the British government condone the German and French intrusion in the Pacific; from every corner

of the empire came humiliating news of British defeats and vacillations. In 1881 the Boers defeated British forces in Majuba; and a nationalist uprising in Egypt challenged British power. In the next year the Irish question dramatized itself with the murder of two important English dignitaries in an open park in Dublin. 1883 saw the evacuation of the Sudan, a British decision which led to the shocking death of General Gordon on the steps of the palace in Khartoum. In the same year, 1885, war with Russia again looked probable, after British forces had failed to hold Penjch in Afghanistan.¹

The Australian colonists could hardly sit back in peaceful assurance of British might. It became plain to Victorian leaders that if they did not speak out in their own interests, no one else would; and probably the developments in the Pacific would not otherwise be noticed.² Mortimer Franklyn summed up one point of view when he asked bluntly 'Will the Gladstone Government be permitted to achieve their aim, the dismemberment of the

² Cf., A. Deakin, The Federal Story, (Melb., 1963), pp.22-3, where he described his role in the Imperial Conference of 1887.
Franklyn called for some more powerful identification of colonial and imperial interests; and within a year, had become one of the most vocal supporters of Imperial Federation.²

That grand idea, long nurtured by British-born colonists in the Royal Colonial Institute at home, had hitherto seemed slightly ridiculous to colonists.³ While the Argus in 1877 praised the Institute's propagandist works in the interests of the colony, it damned with faint praise its 'theoretical discussions'.⁴ Even loyalists like Hearn failed to discuss it at any length; and so influential a man as Governor Musgrove privately dismissed it as totally impractical.⁵

² E.g., 'Imperial Federation', V.R., vol.12:69; and The Unit of Imperial Federation, (London, 1887).
³ Australasian, May 6 1876, p.513(3).
⁴ Argus, August 19 1876, p.9(4).
⁵ Musgrove/Pearson, February 7 1887, Pearson papers.
The *Age*, naturally enough, also dismissed early proposals as impractical, supported colonial neutrality and proclaimed separation as inevitable. Confederation, said one writer was an English idea, and simply part of English political infighting and Anglo-Australian impracticality.

In 1884, English exponents of the proposal held their first Conference, with W.E. Forster as the first President. Prominent expatriates from Victoria in attendance included the historians G.W. Rusden and F.P. Labilliére, Sir Henry Barkly and the Marquis of Normandy, ex-Governors, A.P. Martin, John Rae and T.D. Wanliss, and the philanthropist Sir Samuel Wilson. The Conference protested against the belief, thought to be held in the colonies, that a party existed in England careless of imperial connexions and hopeful of early dissolution of the empire.

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2 *Age*, (ed.), October 12 1880.


A year later, after the death of Gordon, the first meeting of the Victorian branch of the League was called in Melbourne. Thousands crammed the Town Hall to hear the League's proposals which included permanent unity, independence on local matters and a common system of defence.¹ The Mayor, the Anglican Bishop, two Professors, numerous politicians, Councillors, and eminent professional men appeared on the platform. The Executive set up included well-known men like Justice Holroyd, Edward Langton, Dr Maloney, Edward Fitzgibbon, W.E. Murphy, and surprisingly, J.L. Purves, later the energetic President of the Australian Natives' Association. The meeting was a great success, and an eloquent expression of middle-class loyalty and concern. In the face of peril, good Anglo-Australians remained loyal, and so they thought, practical: if the Oceana of Elizabeth I's reign could be practical.² Mere localism and questions of economic or constitutional effectiveness, were swept aside in a wave of enthusiasm contiguous with that surrounding the plans

1 Imperial Federation League (Victorian Branch) Addresses etc., 1885-88.

for a statue for Gordon, an enthusiasm which had its dark and insecure side.

The Australian Natives, brutal in their rejections of derivative and dependent attitudes, protested loudly against the form taken by that insecurity. Imperial Federation, said George Muedell, in a sharp summary of the arguments put against it, represented an escape from English problems, an attempt to handcuff the colonies, a free-trade plot, political regression for Victoria, and increased militarism. The A.N.A. itself, after its early years of relative quiescence more than doubled its membership in the early eighties and turned to its

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2 'Old and Young Australians', *The National Australian*, vol. 1:1, p. 8(3).
3 'An Australian's Protest against Imperial Federation', *M.R.*, vol. 10: 38.
4 The Reports of the decade, until 1885, have been lost.
political platform with new zeal.  

1 It too called a large public meeting early in 1885 to condemn British ineffectuality over New Guinea, and, aroused by the realization that the Australian colonies came within the vortex of old-world skulduggery, promoted federation with increased urgency.  

2 To them, 1885 stood as an 'epoch year' in colonial thinking.  

The solution of Australian federation had been quietly gathering dust at Inter-colonial Conferences. The apathy attending the early proposals of Earl Grey, Wentworth and Duffy attended the attempts of Parkes after 1867 to vitalize the Conferences.  

3 Intercolonial problems and jealousies made such efforts seem unreal.  

4 When the Victorian and New South Wales railway lines met at Albury

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1 Established in 1870 as a National Benefit and Literary Society, it specified that all members be native-born Australian between the ages of 14 and 45, that it should be a-political, a-religious, with no secret forms and with the chief object of Australian Federation. A.N.A. Regulations, A.N.L. Pamphs., vol.52.  

2 Age, (ed.), January 8 1885.  


5 Age, (ed.), January 13 1876: a denunciation of federalism, because it opposed Victorian fiscal policy.
in 1883, however, prominent politicians and especially James Service took the opportunity to boost federalism.

Increased interest, both in the daily press and the reviews, emerged after 1880. Full-bloodedly nationalist arguments, like 'The Strength of Isolation',\(^1\) were put forward. Franklyn started a weekly paper in 1882 devoted to educating the public mind in the federal idea.\(^2\) The *Imperial Review* hammered the advantages of unity.\(^3\) Almost, it seems, as soon as the local crisis dissolved, and Victorians had set their own house in order, they began peering out its windows to the world beyond, and examining Victoria's relationship with it. Turmoil beyond the continent led them to consider larger and more secure structures which would protect them. Experience during the decade turned men's thoughts to political structures which in 1870 had barely entered their consciousness. The emotional and intellectual depth of their thinking bore the signs of increasing maturity.

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\(^1\) F. Myers, in *V.R.*, vol.3:15, p.289.


\(^3\) 'Australian Questions', *I.R.*, vol.1:1, pp.56-60.
(2) History and Pride

One of the best expressions of this maturity came through the first burgeoning of an interest in the past. Despite the political instability of the late seventies, and despite the fact that there were only five decades of European experience to explore, a few men began to write the history, or pseudo history, of Victoria. By now it was possible to stand aside and look over the events and achievements of the past, and in imposing patterns on them, predict the events and achievements of the future. The beginnings of the white man's history in Victoria, at the sandhills of Sorrento, seemed agreeably remote, and even likely to be forgotten; the story of British progress in the South ready for the telling; the praises of the colony and its capital only waiting to be sung.

No academic enthusiasm inspired, or even reached, the crop of would-be historians in Melbourne; they devoted themselves more to rescuing records and promoting the image of a prosperous colony than to the serious task of writing history. John Shillinglaw, James Bonwick and Francis Labillière, in their romantic enthusiasm for things of the past, were in effect antiquarians; a much larger group devoted their energies to propagandist work,
and amongst these could be counted Mortimer Franklyn, the Sutherland brothers Alexander and George, David Blair, Alexander Michie, James Smith and Garnet Walch; only George Rusden attempted serious historiography in his two three-volume works, *History of New Zealand* and *History of Australia*, both published in England in 1883, though not appearing in colonial editions until the nineties.¹ By birth representatives of the most advanced nation on earth, and by choice spokesmen of antipodean progress, these few directed their attention away from the polemics of the present, to assess the direction of it all. Rusden's hero was Macaulay, though he found little in Australian history to sound the chant of Progress; had the more ephemeral writers sought a model they could have found none better, since Macaulay's exuberance and optimism, though now half-a-century old, were only surpassed by their own.

Victoria was a colony of the British Empire; within no other context did any would-be historian proceed. Both David Blair and Alexander Sutherland felt that the

colony had no real history. 1 George Sutherland bluntly called his work _Australia: or, England in the South_. William Westgarth, a genial and intelligent publicist who wrote five overlapping books on Victoria between 1853 and 1889, 2 quoted the Prince of Wales in his introduction:

We regard the colonies as integral parts of the empire and our warmest sympathies are with our brethren beyond the seas. 3

Even James Bonwick, with more claim to serious historical achievement than most, 4 proclaimed that the Britain of the South was healthier, freer and happier than the Britain of

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1 Sutherland prefaced his lengthy _Victoria and its Metropolis_, 2 vols., (Melb., 1888) with 'of ordinary history we have none'; Blair began an attack on Rusden's History with the argument that 'a city like Melbourne can claim to have no more than annals, records or chronicles', saying that only when a nation existed could the word history be sensibly used. 'Australia and its Historians', _V.R._, vol.10:55, p.2.


3 Prefatory Remarks, _Half-a-Century of Australasian Progress_.

4 'Not a few of us have already taken up the pen on behalf of our infant Hercules at the Antipodes, but more laboriously and more successfully perhaps than any other, my old friend has toiled to provide the earlier food for future historians of Australia', _ibid._, p.xxiii.
Europe. No such optimism underlay Rusden's work: taking for granted that the most successful colonization was that which established abroad a society identical to the parent community, he undertook to reveal the innovations which Englishmen in the South had allowed to eat away the precious British heritage. Only David Blair was prepared to hint of an independent Australian history: that he was not a precursor is laboriously revealed by that vast compilation of facts, *Cyclopaedia of Australasia*, published in Melbourne, 1881.

Behind the earnest and largely unadorned labours of Francis Peter Labillière, a London barrister bred in pastoral Victoria, lay two motives, the first to publicize the wealth of documents neglected in the Colonial office, and the second, to sing the praises of Great Britain. Unfortunately for his readers the first predominated, to

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2 The *Cyclopaedia* would, he hoped, foster a spirit of patriotism. Introduction, p.x (8).
5 As secretary to the Royal Colonial Institute, Labillière was an ardent Imperial Federationist.
the point where he believed history would be more accurate if told by the doers,\(^1\) so that at least two thirds of his 676 pages consist of direct quotation from the documents.\(^2\)

James Bonwick was even more archival in his approach than Labillière, believing that at that stage most historians fell into the traps of fine writing, party prejudice and mythmaking, because writers had little real grasp of the facts.\(^3\) He himself published literally dozens of books throughout the last half of the nineteenth century;\(^4\) so vastly did he draw on the material available to him in Tasmania, Victoria and then London. His first successful publication, *The Last of the Tasmanians*, written in 1870, though not the most important, was one of his best works because his moral fervour for the fate of the aborigines overrode his antiquarianism. The *First Twenty Years of Australia* written in 1882 constitutes his most important contribution to Victorian historical


\(^3\) *The Writing of Colonial History*, (Sydney, 1895), pp.3-5, A.N.L. Pamphs.

\(^4\) For a complete list see J.A. Ferguson, *Bibliography of Australia*, vol.5, pp.365-380.
writing at this time. Although he made an admirable attempt in the last chapters of *First Twenty Years of Australia* at social history, showing real feeling for the privations of the convicts and the first settlers, and for the aborigines, he too often preferred to string documents together with links like 'the writer then declares', and to continue for pages without even editorial comment. His importance came rather from his services in collecting documents, first privately, and after 1887 for the New South Wales Government.

Although Bonwick's faith in the present found occasional expression, the romantic past really claimed his attention. As he said of early Victoria,

> The story of the Early Days ... is one full of interest. It so differs from the tale to be told of present life there as if centuries had passed in the interval.

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1 *First Twenty Years of Australia* (London, 1882), pp.178-84.
2 E.g., *ibid.*, pp.4-5.
3 As in *Port Phillip Settlement*, (Melb., 1856), pp.95-108.
5 Works like *The Bushrangers* illustrating the early days in Van Diemen's Land, (Melb., 1856) and *William Buckley, The Wild White Man*, (Melb., 1863), 2nd. ed.
6 *First Twenty Years in Australia*, (London, 1882), Preface,
Only in his old age did he admit that his beloved documents might not always reveal the past.¹

John Joseph Shillinglaw, associated with various literary efforts and lively contribution to many of the newspapers,² devoted his most serious efforts to history. His only publication, *Historical Records of Port Phillip: the first annals of the colony of Victoria*, consisted of three hitherto unknown documents from the Sorrento period, a surveyor's notebook, the order book of Lieutenant-Governor Collins, and the first chaplain's journal. Although Shillinglaw associated with the Bohemians of the day,³ he surrounded himself with books and selfconfessedly preferred the past to the present,⁴ always having on hand projects for books, including one on Matthew Flinders. Ironically, the only one to reach the light of day was a

¹ 'I find ... I have occasionally been misled by accepting accounts which I have since discovered were sometimes influenced by party feeling, or private sympathy. It is often difficult to be just and to tell the whole truth'. An Octogenarian's Reminiscences, (London, 1902), p.258.


⁴ Shillinglaw's Letterbooks 1876-80, p.44(b). (S.L.V.).
a school text-book, and that under the name of Marcus Clarke.1 With six children and two hundred and ten pounds a year, and no financial support to sustain his scholarly hopes,2 Shillinglaw failed to write history at all, though lacking in neither diligence nor enthusiasm. His failure, like that of his friend Marcus Clarke, hints only too strongly of the thwarting effect of the colonial milieu.

Rusden also had little enthusiasm for contemporary Australia, though his was at least overtly political rather than a romantic rejection. His History of Australia has survived as a serious history, not simply because it fills in gaps in our knowledge, but because it is sustained by a serious argument, which, however disagreeable to his political opponents, was but an extreme formulation of a set of assumptions by no means foreign to human experience, and certainly regularly expressed in Melbourne in the seventies and eighties.

1 Shillinglaw claimed he wrote it. Ibid., p. 121. The book, A History of the Continent of Australia and the Island of Tasmania, (Melb., 1877) being a collection of facts arranged in topics and listed chronologically, added little to anyone's scholarly reputation anyway.

2 The Letterbooks contain regular complaints about his poverty.
It is easy enough to dismiss Rusden's achievement, or present him as a thoughtless Conservative, too absorbed in the seating arrangements for his numerous dinner parties to notice events around him. However, given the standards of English historical scholarship, the state of Australian archives and the fact that, for a third of his work, he dealt with contemporary events, his research was wide ranging; as Clerk to the Parliaments, he had considerable experience of political life, and revealed an acute sensitivity to his own times; and, finally, his conservatism need not have discredited his performance. Rusden followed a tradition made fine in his own century by Jacob Burckhardt and Alexis de Tocqueville; many intelligent men have preferred to support the Crown and an aristocracy, rather than popular government. Rusden was the victim of his own assumptions; but many other people accepted them too. He did more than accept them, in fact he admitted no questioning of them. Consequently, any challenge to the established constitution,


2 The substantial agreement between Rusden, and the only other serious Victorian historian of the century, H.G. Turner, is more than coincidental.
any mass movement, as well as any radical idea, stood condemned at the outset; Rusden only embellished the condemnations.

It is hard to see how so small an event as Eureka could invite such wrath, in the face of the miners' grievances; and his treatment of the trials of those 'responsible' ignored the fundamental and overt principle in the colonies that all men were equal and in the face of an injustice had a right to a proper hearing.\(^1\) Equally blindly, he took the constitutional deadlocks as the work, in the first case of George Higinbotham, and in the second, of the whole Legislative Assembly along with Governor Bowen. His condemnation of the events of 1878 differed little from those appearing at the time in the reviews and in the *Argus*:

> it was not the constitution, but its abusers, who were disgraced when, on failure to carry a measure, constitutionally, they resorted to unconstitutional violence.

Political judgements prevented him from assessing human beings as well as events. The figures of Dr Lang and

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\(^1\) *History of Australia*, vol.II, pp.553-86; David Blair rose in indignation at Rusden's blindness; see 'Australian History Falsified', *V.R.*, vol.9:54, p.569.

\(^2\) Ibid., vol.III, p.303.
Duffy are sketched with a maliciousness worthy of the Melbourne Punch, while Wentworth and James Service appear as paradigms of virtue. Even if he was by temperament an advocate\(^1\) he allowed no hearing to those whose principles opposed his own.

In the same way trends escaped his grasp. Instead of assessing the positive ideas attending the actions of constitution-makers in the fifties, apart from those of W.C. Wentworth in New South Wales,\(^2\) he concentrated his attention on what he saw as a 'lowering' of the franchise. His words are worth quoting:

> There was probably no society in the world which could less afford to undergo rapid degradation of the franchise. There was, probably, no society in which the rulers were so ready to adopt or suggest rash experiments. It may well be doubted whether, taken man for man, there was any community possessed of more intelligence than that of Victoria. But there was a lack of combination of the general intelligence for the general good. The restlessness of gold seekers; the lawlessness of thousands who had formally expiated crime by imprisonment, but were not purged of it in their hearts; the evils which had culminated in the insurrection which it had been found necessary to put down by force of arms; the election of former agitators by the gold field constituencies - all these were clouds of

\(^1\) Green, *op.cit.*, p.303.

danger....To lead men's minds to sober thoughts at such a time was a duty of which the addresses of candidates showed no recognition.¹

A man who could write so masterfully was not using his abilities for a lost cause. Such a passage as the above captured the eloquence, the flow, and the faith of his hero, Macaulay; his acidic asides and lively vignettes added to the zest of his work. Additional virtue could be found in his compassion for the sufferings of the aboriginal populations of Australia and New Zealand, and his dramatic realization of the heroism of the early explorers. Rusden's interpretation of the history of Australia must be put against the thirty troubled years of responsible Government in Victoria he experienced and alongside the views of his fellows.

He was not a great historian, but he was an historian of above average ability, and among the first of the tribe in Australia. Because he spoke for men of property, for the powers of an Upper House, for Imperial Federation, and for some kind of aristocracy, suffering also from what has since been called 'the cultural cringe' and guilty of many a snobbish stance, he was nonetheless an

¹Ibid., pp.85-6.
historian and it is within this context, and by the standards of historiography at the time, that he should be judged. He set out to describe the innovations of the Antipodes, and in addressing himself to English readers, has first to make the embarrassing confession that

the composite forces which have built and sustained England in the past have not been cherished in the colonies.

More positively, the colonial milieu also fostered a belief that the colonists had founded a remarkably progressive community. Before 1886, there was little reason to doubt it. After the troubles of the Berry regime, Victoria had settled down not only to 'Peace, Progress and Prosperity' as promised by the O'Loughlen

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1 In terms of Australian historiography Rusden's achievement is a landmark in at least three ways:

(1) he controlled a vast amount of material which no previous analyst had ever managed to do;

(2) he stood apart from the glib interpretations of Progress which other writers of time accepted;

(3) he consistently presented a Conservative interpretation, rare in Australian historiography.

It seems ridiculous to condemn Rusden because he was 'wrong'. Historiography involves an understanding of a writer's assumptions, his environment and his audience. His major failing was rather his failure to condense his material.

government, but to a booming economy, an expanding prosperity, and productive times. In eight years, Victoria convened two International Exhibitions, announcing to the world in general and the colonists in particular that Victoria had arrived.

Conservatives had attacked the idea of an Exhibition from the outset in 1877, but it had too much appeal to those who wished to advertise themselves and the colony; and so with the 1880 Exhibition the tone of pride, assurance and increasingly ill-founded optimism was set. Most of the ephemeral boastful works appeared at the time of one or other of the Exhibitions, verbal summaries of what the milling crowds could see for themselves inside the grandiose Exhibition building.

Garnet Walch, a successful member of the local literati, confessed candidly that his drawing-room book *Victoria in 1880* happily combined business and pleasure, being written for the occasion. He dedicated it to the squatter W.J. Clarke, President of the Exhibition. Walch made no attempt at Historiography, dismissing the

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2 *Victoria in 1880*, (Melb., 1880), preface.
past in two chapters, 'Olden Days', and 'Golden Days', before beginning with the entertainment he meant to provide.¹ It came in the form of an armchair tour of the colony, and with many a genial flourish, Walch pointed out the natural beauties and goodness of the land, and the wonders of Modern Melbourne.² God made the country and man made the town; and between the two of them they had made a delightful job. Although Walch's work was trivial and deliberately superficial, he was making the most of a prevailing mood: as one reviewer wrote, 'if only John Batman could see the village of 1881'.³

What Walch assumed glibly, Mortimer Franklyn and James Ballantyne set out to substantiate. Both became self-styled immigration agents, inspired by the Exhibition to inform potential immigrants of the wonderful opportunities of Victoria. Ballantyne stuck firmly to his purpose in Our Colony in 1880, and collected a vast array of facts and figures to underline Victoria's progress and hospitality. In A Glance at Australia in 1880, Mortimer

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¹ Ibid., p.vii, 'my object has been to present Victoria and Victorians in a fairly pleasant light'.
² Ibid., p.28 and pp.165-6.
Franklyn put together the leading ideas which were in the following years to provide him with that inexhaustible supply of articles for his Review. Influenced by his American experience, he thought Victoria's resources limitless, and imagined that the Australian frontier was like the American, so he set himself up as the prophet of pastoral and agricultural expansion.

Two books resulting directly or indirectly from the next and even grander Exhibition in 1888 dealt even more deftly with the assumptions of the day.¹ William Westgarth's *Half-a-century of Australasian Progress* expressed the views of an urbane and successful expatriate financier who, visiting the colony for the Exhibition, found a number of 'high questions' to engage his lively mind. As a genial believer in the progress of the colony, Westgarth had a number of sensible suggestions to assist it: irrigation, speedier communications and liberal racial legislation, for instance. He also supported Imperial Federation, arguing that existing fiscal disagreements need not prevent political union, at

¹ Though these both fall outside the decade discussed, they belong with the rest of the propagandist works written during the decade.
least among the Dominions of the Empire. Alexander Sutherland, in another expensive drawingroom book commissioned by a local publishing firm for the Exhibition, produced in two volumes, an historical account of the colonies and remarkably extensive social survey. Although Sutherland wrote fluently, and laboured strenuously, he failed to transcend above the clichés of his day: expressing them perhaps with greater clarity than anyone. He acquiesced to the present in a remarkable way; and his conclusion - 'there is nothing wanting... of all that busy fulness, that scope for sympathy and artistic development which form the charm of city life' reveals the isolation which may have comforted the second-rate, but which so disturbed men of ability.

In 1880, the essays of Archibald Michie reappeared, providing a nice edge to the moods of either unrelieved pessimism or unrelieved optimism of those who wrote about the colony. Michie neither fully accepted nor

4 *Readings in Melbourne*, (Melb., 1880), originally lectures given in 1868 (preface).
fully rejected the present. The first essay, attacking the dissatisfied and homesick colonists who failed to appreciate the goodness of the land and the opportunities it offered, had more point in the sixties than the eighties; but the third one, 'Loyalty, Royalty and the Prince's Visit' contained valid comments both on the evils of the mob, and the necessary dignity and rights of every individual, which more politically balanced men might well accept. In the hands of a skilled debater, the assumption that the British deserved to inherit the earth took on more serious dimensions. All the universities and public libraries and museums so enthusiastically described by the apostles of progress did not necessarily prove that the colonists had arrived at a standard of civilization beyond criticism. The city of Melbourne had its barbarisms, and they were not merely barbarisms of spirit.
"Industrial Melbourne"

[Taken about 1870; by courtesy of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria]
When Robert Hoddle surveyed the scrubby flats of the head of Port Phillip, he planned the future city of Melbourne, leaving space within the central rectangle cut by straight wide streets for churches, public buildings and the institutions of culture. Unlike many of the industrial cities of England, and even its neighbour Sydney, Melbourne was meant to develop around a planned core like Adelaide. It was not meant to become an agglomeration of peoples, collected in a particular spot by the necessities and opportunities of the Industrial Revolution, or simply by historical accident.

By 1876 Melbourne looked remarkably like one of those midland cities, having the same diversity of

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1 The only copy of this map now available is contained in Victorian Historical Magazine, vol.113, p.56, which does not show this. He followed the plan of another colonial successful city, Philadelphia, I.R., vol.1:7, p.12.
3 Studied by A. Briggs, Victorian Cities (London, 1963) as such. See pp.16-23 for his outline of the main features of such cities.
function, spread of suburbs, transport system and municipal institutions. It differed because it was less industrialized; because it was completely new; and in its remoteness from the centre of British civilization. It had actually more functions than most English cities, being the capital, chief port, railway terminus and focus for all economic and cultural activities;¹ but in doing so it served a population less than twice the size of Liverpool.²

What coal, iron and running water did for many a provincial English town, gold did for Melbourne. Within fifty years, Melbourne had become the largest city in Australia,³ and financial heart of the continent.⁴ One generation witnessed this transformation, the gold-rush generation.⁵ When John Batman thought the banks of the

³ In 1880, the population of Sydney was 174,249, Adelaide 85,000, Brisbane 27,000, Hobart Town 20,000 and Perth 7,000, as against Melbourne's 265,000. Whitakers' Almanac, (London,1880), pp.257-8. Census of Victoria, (1881), p.211 gives Melbourne's population as 267,381 (excluding 'shipping population'). Almanacs often give an approximation.
Yarra provided a site for a village, he probably visualized an eighteenth century English village, as Oliver Goldsmith did in the 'The Deserted Village': with its church, its smithy, its small shops, the school house, the village green and the rough inn, providing a focus for a pastoral community and a port for its products. He could never have envisaged the aspirations of future immigrants, nor the effects of the gold-rush, bringing new wealth and vigour to the community, much less the booming city of 267,000 people which in 1880 had announced its maturity with an International Exhibition.

Like the great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace three decades earlier, the Exhibition was a glorious show, and undoubtedly 'the greatest gathering Victoria had ever witnessed': in six months 1,330,000 visits were made to

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1 The trend of urban concentration characteristic of nineteenth century cities had been established in Australia, where it was accentuated by the growth of Melbourne. The comparison between America and Australia at the same stage of population is revealing. In 1790, when 3,924,214 people lived in America, 3.14 per cent of those lived in cities. In 1891, when 3,809,895 people lived in Australia, 33.20 per cent lived in cities. A.F. Weber, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century, a Study in Statistics* (Cornell U.P., 1963 - first published 1899), ch.1.

view the 3,200 exhibits.\(^1\) Behind the educational advantages and industrial progress which enthusiasts hoped would justify the splendid but expensive affair\(^2\) lay the urge to tell the rest of the world that Melbourne was the capital of the Southern Hemisphere.\(^3\)

Some visitors decided that Melbourne was all its promoters claimed.\(^4\) The novelist, Ada Cambridge, despite her strong reservations about colonial life,\(^5\) wrote of her arrival in 1870:

> No description that we had read or heard of...had prepared us for the marvel Melbourne was. As I remember and see it now, it was a great-city for its age.\(^6\)

The historian, Froude, said in amazement 'They have done the work of centuries'.\(^7\) Almost every visitor remarked

\(^1\) Sutherland, \textit{op.cit.}, vol.1, p.477.
\(^3\) Ranked with the cities of England in terms of population, it came next after London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds and Sheffield, and was much larger than other colonial cities like Montreal (pop. 134,200 in 1880), according to Whitaker's \textit{Almanac}, p.365.
\(^4\) R.E.N. Twopenny, \textit{Town Life in Australia} (London, 1883), pp.1-2, 'Melbourne is justly entitled to be considered the metropolis of the Southern Hemisphere'.
\(^6\) \textit{Thirty Years in Australia} (London, 1902), pp.18-19.
on the similarity between Melbourne and English cities like Birmingham or Liverpool. While they deliberately looked for signs of colonial innovation and made allowances for youth, they noticed two things above all else: that the colonists had literally transferred English institutions and ways of life, and that they had been incredibly successful in doing so. They are ourselves, Froude said.

The inhabitants of Melbourne were well aware of the phenomenon their city presented, and showed their pride at every available opportunity. Trollope commented sourly on the Victorians' habit of 'blowing', by which he meant bragging, to which a colonist smartly retorted that they had every reason to boast. Only the hypercritical

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2 *Op.cit.*, p.89. Froude was arguing a case for Imperial Federation and the more anxious to establish similarities and unity.

3 Froude was unable to comment on their proudest achievement, the museum, public library and art gallery, because he was shown so many other sights by his enthusiastic hosts in the same day that he did not have time to record his impressions. *Ibid.*, p.96.


could disagree after walking around the city proper: or only those, who, like Francis Adams, asked questions which the first colonists had not thought of asking.

The evidence of prosperous city life was everywhere to be seen. As capital of Victoria, Melbourne provided the seat of the Legislature, in an incompleted building said to be costing £180,000,¹ and a Treasury nearly as impressive in Spring Street. With its Harbour Trust, its Customs Office and its bustling wharves, it revealed itself as chief port. From its two as yet rather dilapidated Railway Stations, trains left regularly for Echuca, Wodonga, Ballarat, Geelong, Stawell and for the outer suburbs,² bringing goods and people to and from the city. The city proper underlined the overall impression: within the rectangle bounded on the east and west by Spring and Spencer Streets and the north and south by Latrobe and Flinders Streets, a goodly number of the marvels of 'Marvellous Melbourne' could be seen. As Trollope noted, the institutions of all kinds were more or less magnificent.³

¹ Twopenny, op. cit., p.9.
² In 1877 two companies ran these services, but during the eighties the Government took them both over.
From the steps of the Treasury building in Spring Street, the visitor looked down Collins Street, the show street of Melbourne, at the buildings housing Melbourne's top surgeons, physicians and dentists and the select Melbourne Club. Beyond them stood Scots Church, and 'the bustle of Babylon', heralded by the clatter of the offices of the Argus and the Daily Telegraph. Further down stood the inevitable noble pile of Victorian buildings: the Town Hall and the Block, and beyond them, the imposing banks, mercantile houses and insurance companies, which in the very opulence of their architecture announced their fundamental importance. Then, hidden away behind the domes, turrets, spires and facades, in Flinders Lane, were all the finest and most successful warehouses, the unobtrusive palaces of trade which no less than the busy wharves bespoke the commercial strength of the city.

From the steps of Parliament House, a block beyond the Treasury building, the visitor, if still unconvinced, could look down Bourke Street, once the leading thoroughfare of Melbourne and always its rowdiest: a street of theatres, concert halls, cafes, restaraunts and coffee houses, with few of the churches, public buildings or commercial houses which flanked most of the
other streets. To the hedonist, Bourke Street would have been the heart of the city;¹ there flourished the theatres, the billiard halls, and many of Melbourne's thousand odd hotels.²

Those looking for further evidence of a successfully transplanted civilization might look to the quadrangular Law Courts in William Street, the Public Library in Swanston Street, or the University. They could not have helped but notice the half-finished spires of the city's two cathedrals, and the flagstaff of the Governor's residence across the Yarra. That civilization, and the prosperity which made its establishment possible, shone through every public building.³

In a new city where people wanted buildings to be both lasting and worthy expressions of their occupant's material success, architects had plenty of work and scope, even while the idea of them having civic responsibility

¹ Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, p.552. See H. McRae, op.cit., pp.31-3, for a happier description.
² Twopenny, op.cit., p.13.
³ And in many private ones too. E.g., the mansions of Toorak and Brighton, and the rows of villas established in the outer suburbs. See M. Casey etc., eds., Early Melbourne Architecture 1840-88, (Melb., 1963), 2nd ed., passim.
had little currency.¹ The architects who designed the
portico of Parliament House, the complicated Renaissance-
style Law Courts, the Gothic churches, the Wilson Hall
and Coop's Shot Tower - some of the landmarks of the
city during the seventies and eighties - exhibited a
formal exuberance and an unchecked individualism which
showed little concern for the look of the city but a
great involvement with its dominant attitude. In size
and ornateness, many of the public buildings presented a
convincing statement of bourgeois success.²

If the British middle classes had literally inherited
the earth, their buildings substantiated that inheritance
and their architects drew, with the same uncertainty and
electricism of taste as characterized the fine arts,³
on practically every style known to western man, with
special reference to the varied grandeurs of the
Renaissance and Gothic styles. Joseph Reed, the most

¹ James Smith in his Presidential Address delivered at
the Inauguration of the Kalizoic Society (Melb., 1884),
Art Pamphs., vol.100:6, p.9, introduced this idea:
'...in large cities (people are) shut out from the sight
of natural objects and live in entire isolation from
everything that can feed the hunger of the eye...'
² Cf., C.M.H. Clark, A Short History of Australia, (Mentor
books, 1963), p.139.
³ See chapter VI,
successful of Melbourne architects, designed the Town Hall and the Post Office in Rennaisance style, but was equally adept in translating the Gothic for churches and the Wilson Hall.\footnote{R. Boyd, \textit{Victoria Modern}, (Melb., 1947), p.9.} Other architects like Pugin's disciple William Wardell, whose triumph was Saint Patrick's Cathedral, J.J. Clark and the firm of Smith and Johnson added to the increasingly ponderous variety.\footnote{Ibid.}

In vain did the occasional voice speak out against the wholesale copying of Old World styles and lament the sterility of the architectural imagination.\footnote{\textit{Argus}, (ed.), July 28 1880.} Most people seemed to accept the prevailing styles. Alexander Sutherland throughout his long description of the city never criticized the styles of the buildings he described. The numerous visitors, busily absorbing the spirit of the city, never commented on the styles of the buildings, which regardless of architectural principles, accorded with that spirit. Probably the styles were so familiar that they failed to notice; and the colonists, in recalling similar buildings in the cities of England,\footnote{Cf., A. Briggs, \textit{Victorian Cities}, pp.160-4, or Leeds Town Hall, designed in the Gothic style by Cuthbert Brodrick, to accord with municipal aspirations.}
felt comforted as well as flattered, when they contemplated the work of their hands. The ever-expanding suburbs were even more prodigious than the centre of the city. ¹ There three-quarters of Melbourne's inhabitants actually lived; from there they came daily for work, shopping and pleasure. Although about 66,000 people still lived within the actual City of Melbourne, in 1881, the total population in that area had only increased by 19 per cent in the last decade, while the inner municipalities of Collingwood, Emerald Hill, Richmond, Prahan and Fitzroy had increased by amounts varying from thirty-eight to fifty per cent, and at the same time contained 117,000 people. Spectacular increases in as yet distant suburbs like Essendon and Flemington, from 2,456 to 5,061 people (an increase of one hundred and six per cent) verified the impression of an expanding city; as did the increasing settlement of once-secluded rural retreats like Hawthorn and Brighton, whose populations had increased by eighty and seventy-six

¹ The buildup of local capital in Melbourne in the seventies and influx of British investment in the eighties which led to pastoral expansion in the north and the suburban building boom, is described by R.J. Moore, Marvellous Melbourne, unpub. M.A. thesis, (Melb., 1958), pp.17-27.
per cent respectively during the decade. In 1881 Melbourne already ranked in area and population amongst the large cities of the world; and to people not yet accustomed to large cities such rapid growth may well have seemed a mixed blessing.

Within the small area, roughly encircled by Williamstown, Footscray, Brunswick, Collingwood, Richmond and Brighton, existed the laws, institutions and manner of life which were recognisably urban. The structure of municipal life, newly clarified though not necessarily strengthened by the Local Government Act of 1875, would if examined reveal a network of services and facilities inefficiently trying to make orderly the settlement of tens of thousands of people. Often the Councils wasted their newly acquired borrowing powers in building splendidiferous Town Halls. Some municipal leaders,

1 Victorian Year Book (1880-1), p.24. The population of the city increased substantially during the two decades which this thesis spans, from 207,000 in 1870 to 491,000 in 1890 (F.B. Smith, op.cit., p.2) but as this has relatively little bearing on the intellectual milieu discussed, 1881 provides an appropriate base year for descriptive purposes.


3 Grant and Serle, op.cit., p.139.

4 See the attempt of Prahan ratepayers to establish their own gas company, J.B. Cooper, The History of Prahan, (Melb., 1912), pp.225-7.

notably the enlightened Edward Fitzgibbon, Clerk of the City of Melbourne, did show concern for the well-being of citizens and exercised vigilance over their rights to services and facilities like parks.¹

The inhabitants of Melbourne were in fact extremely conscious of living in a city,² and gala events like the Exhibitions only heightened their feeling of modernity. But every time they put out a milk-billy or their night-soil they automatically behaved as city-dwellers. Whenever they rode in cable cars, or took a train to the beach, or cantered over surfaced roads, they did things their country cousins rarely did - and things regularly done by their British counterparts. In using the Public Library, or strolling through the spacious Botanical Gardens, or visiting Professor McCoy's museum at the University, they enjoyed facilities only provided by the city. They could easily attend a political meeting,

¹ Impressed with Birmingham and the efforts of Joseph Chamberlain with his gas-and-water socialism, Fitzgibbon wrote in 1877 after his overseas tour 'Municipal Corporations [are] the surest safeguards of liberty, property and order'; and he made a number of recommendations to strengthen the Melbourne Corporation. (Letter) To the Right Worshipful the Mayor, James Paterson Esq..., (Melb., 1877), Vict. Pamphs., vol.110:10, p.2.

² Cf., the solicitor Theodore Fink, in 1891: 'I am proud to be citizen of this great centre'. Table Talk, March 20 1891, p.3.
criticize the Trades and Labour Council, go to another cricket match, listen to a different preacher, or buy at another shop, if they felt like it. The ways they lived and the things they considered important had little to do with life on the frontier or the distinctive activities of life on the land, unless political agitations like those of the late seventies made rural questions relevant. The ordered life possible in Melbourne, as in any other city, provoked a distinct way of living.¹

Moreover, in cities, people draw together for different reasons and on different bases from those underlying communal behaviour in rural communities, where ties based on blood and custom tend to persist and predominate. Ties based on special interests, abilities and inclinations tend to replace the traditional ties; and in loud bars, in discreet clubs, and in halls both plain and ornate, a network of groups established itself in colonial Melbourne. Associations ranging from the select Melbourne Club to the smallest suburban Mutual Improvement Association existed to further members' idea of the satisfactory life.

Whatever people did during work-hours, their existence was established beyond their jobs as labourers, clerks, shop-assistants, machinists, traders and lawyers: such occupations seldom sustain or define men. A society is more than a group of people doing work. It is also, as Redfield has put it, people sharing common convictions as to the good-life, and can be recognized through the sense its members have of living together.¹ Those common convictions could be seen in the development of a system of universal education, in the search for a more humane faith, and in the attempt to reconstitute the political institutions of the country. An overall pride at what had been done and anxiety for the future united the citizenry. From the interchange of ideas and beliefs, and from the questioning and focusing of these, came the vitality of urban existence.

The churches provided one such focus, occupational unions and political organizations another, and the University yet another. Beyond this flourished a host of clubs sustained by little practical purpose. The

¹ Ibid.
Melbourne Club administered food and wine to the best of society;¹ the Australian looked after visiting squatters;² the Yorick, having been deserted by its Bohemian founders, was patronized by the more daring business and professional men,³ the Bohemian likewise;⁴ and the Beefsteak Club was founded in 1886 for those who enjoyed steak and conversation.⁵ More seriously, the Melbourne Atheneum, run by the ubiquitous Garnet Walch, aimed to diffuse literary, scientific and other useful knowledge amongst its members through classes, lectures, concerts and its circulating library;⁶ and the many institutes and improvement societies had much the same

¹ E. Scott, Historical Memoir of the Melbourne Club, (Melb., 1936).
³ Anon., The Yorick Club, its Origins and Development, (Melb., 1911). Its minute books for the decade have been lost, p.33.
⁴ The Bohemian Club Rules, (Melb., 1879), Vict. Pamphs., vol.120:3.
⁵ One of the first of the wine-and-food clubs, its motto, from Addison, was 'All celebrated clubs were founded on eating and drinking'. The Chronicles of the Melbourne Beefsteak Club, vol.1, by the Recorder, J.F. Deagan, (Melb., 1890).
⁶ Walch, its first secretary, reported, in Victoria in 1880, p.177, that it had nearly 2,000 members and was the premier self-supporting literary association in the colony.
purpose. The Kyrle and Kalizoic societies, of a different order again, existed because a few wanted to promote art as a social force.\textsuperscript{1} The Shakespeare and Browning societies gathered every month in happy reverence for Shakespeare and Browning.\textsuperscript{2} The Secularists, the Sunday Free Discussion Group and the Electric Association depended for their existence on certain rationalist and political ideas which they discussed and endeavoured to propogate. The temperance organizations, the friendly societies and the lodges dispensed purposeful and collective cheer to their many members.\textsuperscript{3}

Beyond the pale of established society scrambled the gutter children, the larrikins\textsuperscript{4} and the much maligned

\textsuperscript{1} See pp.320-1.

\textsuperscript{2} The Book of the Melbourne Shakespeare Society, (Melb., 1887), Shakespeare Pamphs., vol.11:2, pp.13-17, contains the learned papers presented at the former. A.W. Jose, The Romantic Nineties, (Sydney, 1933), p.39, sums up the culture of Melbourne by imagining this Society's first president, Professor E.E. Morris saying to his wife, 'its a fine morning, my dear; let's go out and found some more societies'.

\textsuperscript{3} These organizations must have wielded wide social and political influence. G. Davison, Clubs, Associations and Opinions in Richmond 1860-92, unpub. essay, (Melb., 1963), discusses some of these in Richmond.

\textsuperscript{4} A social problem by 1880. Age (ed.), September 16 1880.
Chinese, and further still, the oddities and pathetic poor described by Freeman, who set out to show that the magnificent city of which they were all so proud, had its deplorable aspects. Without constituting a 'submerged tenth', the very poor, like the sick, had no secure place within the city. Even more than the labourers, they merely belonged, silent witnesses to the triumph of the respectable, serious and well-established men of the middle classes: visiting the Exhibition, cheering at the Saturday sports, making the most of what they did have. The grim picture of the underworld painted by Fergus Hume in his successful thriller, The Mystery of the Hansom Cab was but a faithful description of one part of the city, and of one group of its inhabitants, whose main support came from the beer they drank in vast quantities. But neither the outcasts nor the poor nor

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1 Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, pp.557-8, for a moralistic account of the 'opium smokers'. Cf. L. Kong Mung etc. The Chinese Question in Australia (Melb., 1879), Vict. Pamphls., vol.116:7, a plea for justice and reason from the Chinese themselves.

2 Freeman, op.cit., preface.

3 J. Jamieson, 'Colonial Beer', M.R., vol.3:11, p.305, claimed that colonists drank on an average 17½ gallons per head per year. Present day consumption is not estimated; the Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia (1961), p.1126, only estimates that for the years 1959-60, 230 million gallons of beer was produced in Australia.
the common man of the streets, set the tone and created
the distinctive ethos of the city.

The men who belonged to the clubs, who supported
the various associations - the ones who established
Melbourne, and set in motion its institutions of education,
religion, politics, culture and science - set the tone.
They were not necessarily very poor or very rich, but they
were by the 1870s the established. In the beginning they
had held to a vision and an enthusiasm something like that
of the American Puritans, who two centuries earlier, had
fought to establish a society that would be 'as a light
set upon a hill'; but as nineteenth century emigrants
from England based themselves on an acquiescence to, rather
than rejection of the English model, so they aimed to
re-create the best of what they had known. Their
acquiescence had a double face. They could not build a
society inferior to the one they had known, for that
meant failure; they had to keep abreast with an ever-
expanding British civilization. Ideally, they would want
to establish a superior society. Certainly they hoped
to do better, and in adapting institutions to a new
environment, and to their own increasingly clear needs
in that environment, they had to decide carefully between
valuable and spurious innovation and between serious and
silly innovators. Such decisions could not easily be made by those already sure of their position.

One of the clearest expressions of early enthusiasm and idealism came from the fervent evangelist, the Reverend Thomas Binney, in 1859:

You are but in your infancy now. But I think it is a great thing to be in the beginnings of things; it is a grand thing to have an influence on the first institutions, the first movement on those things which will modify and form the character of a great people. You are here and it is therefore your duty - with your light, laws, literature and language - to see that you establish, and see that it takes root, your pure Christian protestant evangelical faith.¹

Few enough showed a specific zeal for the Protestant faith; most merely assumed that a bicameral legislature, schools, a university, churches, libraries, museums, art galleries and clubs were natural and necessary. When visitors, twenty years later checked these institutions off an invisible list they merely confirmed the obvious: like the colonists of ancient Greece, with whom they often compared themselves, the Victorians had gladly taken with them the institutions of a successful

¹ And they stood everyman in his place, a sermon preached by the Reverend Thomas Binney (Ballarat, 1879), p.12.
civilization,\(^1\) and set them up in a new environment. Their own verdict coincided with that of distinguished visitors: they had done well.

No institution attracted more attention, nor provided a better focus for civic aspiration than the Public Library. Visitors and citizens alike praised it: Franklyn saw it as yet another of the State's benefits to the working classes:\(^2\) and visitors applauded it as a magnificent enterprise. A young Scotsman, William Archer, who otherwise thought Melbourne 'a beastly hole', reserved his praises for the Public Library:

Any nation might well be proud of this magnificent establishment which is certainly the most effective instrument of general education imaginable. It is not a particularly fine library but it is perfectly sufficient for every practical purpose.\(^3\)

The pride of its first governor, Sir Redmond Barry, knew no bounds. He told the workmen who had just completed

\(^1\) Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (London, 1961), p.30, says of the ancient city that the building of schools, libraries and archives were amongst their first and most distinctive achievements; and writes of the city as a structure especially designed and equipped to transmit the goods of civilization.


the Great Hall that the institution 'bade fair to rival those of the greatest distinction and celebrity in other lands', and compared its potential with that of the great libraries of Greece and Rome, and the collections of Constantine and Theodosius.¹

In England, free libraries had been hard to establish. Despite Ewart's Bill in 1850 authorizing municipalities to levy rates for libraries, enthusiasts had to overcome ideological and practical difficulties. Strict Evangelicals and doctrinaire utilitarians disliked institutions which might provide mere entertainment, and the money councils did collect often went on buildings rather than books.² No such problems confronted library enthusiasts in the colony. Without a library the colonists might easily relapse into the ignorance fostered by isolation, and adopt unsavoury habits detrimental to social well-being. As Barry pointed out, in the colony it was not necessary to stress the free aspect of libraries: in so democratic a community that was taken

¹ Address to the workmen employed in building the Great Hall of the Melbourne Public Library, (Sept. 8 1866), from J.V. Barry's Bound Book of Speeches, as from Mr P. Ryan.
for granted. Soon after the arrival of the first 25,000 books, Barry was outlining plans to make them available to readers beyond the capital:

It has been deemed highly important to spread abroad...the beneficial influence brought into being, of which those who live at a distance are unable to partake,...to increase the facilities for general literary improvement and for the expansion of the public mind.²

Within a short time the library was sending boxes of books to Mechanics Institutes, although not until 1893 did it establish a general country lending service.³ By 1877 fourteen municipal libraries as well as a smaller number of private circulating libraries also existed.⁴

The colonial situation made good libraries seem essential: no one questioned this. The libraries stood as civilizing and educating agents; and the importance attached to the central institution can be seen from its all-inclusive design and the building, designed by Reed and built in 1870, which housed it: an impressive

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¹ Two papers read by Sir Redmond Barry at the Conference of Librarians held at the London Institution, October 1877, Vict. Pamphs., vol.113:13, p.5.
⁴ Two Papers read by Sir Redmond Barry..., p.4.
Renaissance style house for the intellect which dominated Swanston Street. The trustees included one after another the most prominent men in the colony. ¹ By 1876 the Governments had spent nearly half a million pounds on it, and continued to spend annually between ten and sixteen thousand pounds. ² At the stocktaking in 1876 it contained about 73,000 books and 14,000 pamphlets; ³ four years later it held in toto, 108,000 books and pamphlets and claimed 266,839 readers a year. ⁴ No wonder the Age crowed at its being the creation of one generation ⁵ and to it the propagandist Sutherland early directed his readers' attention.

¹ When the institution was reorganized in 1870, the trustees were headed by Barry and included Sir William Stawell, Sir Francis Murphy, Sir John O'Shannassey, Gavan Duffy, James McCulloch, T.T. a'Beckett, the Rev. J.J. Bleasdale: Berry, O'Loughlin, Pearson, James Smith, Morris Nanson, M.L.J. Ellery and H.G. Turner; all became trustees during 1876-86. E. la T. Armstrong, op.cit., p.41 et seq.

² This covered the whole institution - Museum and Gallery as well - so was hardly so generous. Statistical Register, 1876, p.11 and 1886, p.13.

³ Sheffield/Barry, March 7 1876, Barry papers, as from Mr P. Ryan.


⁵ See also Age (ed.), September 10 1877, in praise of suburban libraries as a force of civilization.
The library had its limitations, some of which could be traced to the predelictions of its head,\(^1\) whose enthusiasm for the classics and rare books led him and his underlings to ignore, until comparatively late, some of the more up-to-date and practical areas of human knowledge.\(^2\) Periodic exhibitions of rare books\(^3\) did not make up for the fact that by 1880 it had almost no colonial books.\(^4\) But it was free, available and well-patronized.

In 1886 the Trustees found in its functions the most gratifying evidence of our civilization, that while our material interests necessarily claim our first and greatest efforts as a people we find time and money and sound judgement for the cultivation of those higher pursuits which make up the grace, and are essential to the full enjoyment, of human life.\(^5\)

They went on to say that if libraries, picture galleries and museums were deemed essential in the old world, they

\(^1\) As the *Age* pointed out when discussing this dominant influence, (ed.) January 27 1879.

\(^2\) 'The Public Library', *I.R.*, vol.1:1.

\(^3\) Barry papers, held by Mr P. Ryan, *Newspaper Criticisms on the Periodical Exhibitions of Rare Books and Works of Art in the Melbourne Public Library* (n.d.).

\(^4\) *Age*, (ed.) January 27 1879.

were even more necessary in a new country where without their ministrations people might remain forever ignorant of the true glories of their heritage.\textsuperscript{1} The success of the Public Library provided a central pillar in the colonists' self-esteem, and a self-evident proof of their success.

By the later seventies the city had attained sufficient size and poise to allow and contain a degree of self-criticism of the institutions, and the way of life supported by them, which had been established. Moreover certain environmental stresses had revealed unsuspected deficiencies. The criticism which emerged was almost invariably contained within the known and accepted area of 'improvement', even though some advocates of non-democratic government did appear during the debate over democracy.

A formal demonstration of this acceptable area came in the Social Science Congress convened at the same time as the first International Exhibition. The lectures and discussions on education, law reform, economic development, sanitation, music and the fine arts, and taxation, were meant to embody 'the more intellectual

\textsuperscript{1}\textit{Ibid}. 
aims, and sophistications for social reform without which the civilization of no community can be considered complete.\footnote{Age, (ed.), October 11 1880.} Improvement rather than radical change or reform was the catch-cry of the conference.

The urge to do better, and an anxiety that the best had not yet been done, was everywhere apparent amongst the more thoughtful. Truly Marx wrote of the bourgeoisie with its revolutionary energy and its everlasting anxiety and uncertainty. The decade of assessment exhibited this duality, though there was nothing revolutionary about the successful colonists.

The founders of modern Melbourne, formulating their ideas according to their English experience, discovered that they stood on shifting ground. As they pursued with increasing rigidity the best that they had known, and defended the institutions they had so carefully established in accord with their own needs interests and ideas, they found themselves in conflict with newer ideas and interests characteristic of a second generation. This generation included new arrivals, and the more energetic of the native born, who, being in close contact with the
parent civilization, were more aware of the subtle stresses and demands of the new environment, and with a substantial establishment to consider, attempted serious amendments to the ideas of the originators.

By 1880 the stalwarts of political life in the sixties, McCulloch, Duffy and Higinbotham had retired, to be replaced by men of a different stamp, Graham Berry, C.H. Pearson, Alfred Deakin and James Service. The mainstay of the central cultural establishments, Sir Redmond Barry, had died, and was replaced by numerous individuals who introduced various reforms both in the University and the Library. The education system which Higinbotham had failed to establish in 1867 was by now subjected to the vigorous criticisms of Pearson, the newly arrived superintendent of the Teachers College, and some of its own inspectors, and to the revived attacks of the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans led by Bishop Moorhouse. In 1880 'the uncrowned bishop of Melbourne', the Reverend Adam Cairns died; and the dominant religious force in the community, Presbyterianism, suffered schism following the Strong case, so that its moral hold suffered some diminution. The Salvation Army appeared to remind the churches of their social responsibilities; the various rationalist and new-religionist groups, along with the institutional rebels,
proclaimed the actual death of established religion. With the death of Marcus Clarke in 1881 the older, over-emphatic, literary Bohemianism of the sixties disappeared, to be replaced by the equally over-emphatic but more conventional literary culture of the reviews and the clubs. The two pioneers of colonial theatre Coppin and W.S. Lyster retired and died respectively, and big commercial companies took over the Melbourne stage. In 1881 Tom Roberts went overseas and George Folingsby arrived to train local art students in a more up-to-date fashion. In the same year, William Sutherland gained first class honours in experimental physics at the University of London, and returned to Melbourne quietly to establish himself as the first locally born man of science of any distinction; and the long persecutions of Baron von Mueller faded as more and more international acclaim was heaped upon him for his botanical researches. New journalists like 'the Vagabond', James Hogan, the Reverend W.H. Fitchett and Alfred Deakin vied with established journalists like David Blair, Marcus Clarke and James Smith, for newspaper space.

Into this imprecisely defined dialogue of generations fitted the debates of the decade on education, religion and politics. After one generation and its offspring had
actually experienced colonial life, and the excitement of making the place habitable had been replaced by an awareness of success, assessment and criticism naturally emerged more strongly. The final result was by no means clear, and the more aware tempered their pride with concern for the future. As Thomas a'Beckett wrote in 1876,

> its permanent character awaits development in the adolescence of the children of the present generation.¹

When Sir Redmond Barry sent a circular around to all the cricket clubs requesting the measurements of colonial cricketers, that he might compare the result with those born in the corresponding latitudes of America,² he was exhibiting that same concern for the future. Many of the older citizens had severe doubts about the coming generation, and harsh criticism of their own achievements by young Natives added to their anxiety. If Victorians were the heirs of all civilizations, asked one of the native born, George Muedell, why was it that so many barbarities existed in the social and political structure of the colony.³ While Marcus Clarke, James

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¹ 'Twenty five years Retrospect', M.R., vol.1:3, p.300.
² Australasian, January 1 1876, p.17.
Hogan and later Francis Adams condemned the young for their ignorance and hedonism, Julian Thomas, ('the Vagabond'), set about exposing the weaknesses and unpleasantnesses within the city for which the architects of that city might well take the blame, and from which they could expect to see undesirable human beings develop;\(^1\) the urchins, larrikins, outcasts, inebriates, beggars and the sick, of whose existence the *Imperial Review* made regular copy.

While loyal and respectable Anglo-Australians looked forward to their role as partners in a great Imperial Federation, members of the Australian Natives' Association booed at their public meetings. While the *Age*, and its law-abiding readers said good riddance to Ned Kelly, many tried to prevent his execution. While capitalists enjoyed prosperous times, the trade unions were quietly gathering the strength they attempted to use in 1890. Even if many people still attended the principal service of the day, an increasing number proclaimed themselves to be of no religion. And, amidst the proofs that the colonists aspired to 'higher things', a few stood apart to question the quality of those aspirations. When the

\(^1\) The *Vagabond Papers*, series I, II and III (Melb., 1877).
captains of industry and men of mark moved to convene yet another Exhibition some individuals wondered how justified this further act of self-praise really was. Behind the optimism and poise of Marvellous Melbourne lay a number of as yet un-questioned assumptions, and a deepseated but economically justified concern. Thoughtless ease, malignant vitality, group antagonisms and the evidences of social inequality presented themselves to those who cared to look beneath the well-established veneer of respectability and assurance. Gaps and tears in the fabric of city life attracted the attention of those thinking people involved in its creation.

Drawn together perhaps only by the covers of a Review or an occasional public platform, and existing in close knit social groups, the minority of sufficient self-consciousness and education examined and argued about collective and individual purposes. Some of the most distinguished minds stood apart from these self-serious people, and drew their inspiration only indirectly from the local milieu.

Journalists, politicians, professional men, a few men of leisure and wealth, academics, a few clerics comprised this group. The ideas they drew on were not their own, but English, American or even European ones;
their provocation sometimes came from local necessity, sometimes from the simple and understandable desire to keep up with the rest of the world; and their success stemmed from the fact that they were the few capable of introducing new ideas. The English intellectual elite of the same time had a poise and assurance, so superbly used by Matthew Arnold, because they belonged clearly enough to a great middle class civilization sufficiently complex to contain them\(^1\) and sufficiently uncertain to have some need of the few who could formulate experience clearly: as for example could Lord Tennyson or Matthew Arnold. The small group in Melbourne was not simply linked with a triumphant group: many of its members were integral to its triumph, and some of them its greatest ornaments. Men like Pearson, Moorhouse, Syme, Barry and von Mueller, while pillars of the community, were also the men who made great contributions to the breadth and vitality of intellectual life, by what they said and were and by what they did.

Those who associated themselves with constructive and social objectives usually achieved a satisfactory relationship between themselves and their society. In

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campaigning for religious or scientific education, in puzzling away at theological and constitutional reforms, in choosing the books for the public library and the paintings for the gallery, in founding reviews and writing criticisms of newly arrived books they played a significant role in society, and earned its esteem. Those less interested in society and more interested in themselves had a more difficult time, and only their failure to come to grips with any real questions remains to hint of their deepest preoccupations. A few who could be defined beyond their association with any of the various groups, caught, by their ambiguous positions, the real tensions imposed on thoughtful people by the colonial situation and the socialized and externalized objectives of their fellows. Against the materialism of the city, and the earnestness of their intellectual equals, these men moved inside a peculiar colonial neuroticism, best expressed in the life of Richard Mahony. Only Francis Adams who arrived in 1884 had the resources and objectivity to stand apart and say plainly that he did not approve of the objectives so loudly proclaimed and so strenuously pursued by the leaders of Melbourne's social and intellectual life. 'What a need for culture is here' he said plainly in his first essays, which he
dedicated to Matthew Arnold. 'I see nothing of the best and much of the worst'.\footnote{F.W.L. Adams, \textit{Australian Essays}, (Melb., 1886), p.84.} Unsympathetic to the efforts made locally, he felt that the colonists displayed little idea of the best that had been thought and known in the world. Marvellous Melbourne was not all that its spokesmen claimed.
What of the men who, aspiring to independent thought, wanted to write novels and poems and music, and paint pictures? The everlasting problem of finding a coherent relationship between man and his environment took on a new dimension for colonists with artistic aspirations, though not many of these people questioned themselves in a rigorous way. Sometimes they lacked creative ability and in resting content with imitative work only served to emphasize the real problems for others; sometimes they failed after serious effort, and in their failures revealed the barriers which only the rare individual could surmount, and in so doing, illuminate the existence of men.

The distinctive activity of an artist is his attempt to make conscious orderly and significant the experiences of men. He is without special skills in his self-imposed task: his modes of thinking are only those of all men, his tools of trade the words used by all men, and his material the material accessible to every individual. From his efforts, he must produce something controlled, contained and unique; and if he is successful he adds to
human knowledge in one of its most difficult aspects, self-knowledge. The relationship between the individuals who pursue this kind of knowledge and satisfaction, and the world in which they live, is invariably a sensitive and complicated one.

Although 'Marvellous Melbourne' offered a certain scope, it offered little ease and less encouragement to artists, and like the uncomprehended world beyond provided no place for them, despite the many clubs, societies and institutions which fostered culture and art. The middle-brows, the architects of colonial civilization, often thought hopefully of the day when a native-born Shakespeare or Rembrandt would emerge to set the seal on their efforts to civilize the new world. Taking assurance from the fact that the Greeks had once been colonists, they waited in general expectancy for the channels of creativity which they had constructed to fill. But the place and the achievement of the artist in a brand new middle-class community could not be planned, and artists failed to fit easily into sport-loving, church-going, materialist Melbourne; and the crown of achievement was withheld.

Henry Handel Richardson created the prototypal figure of the artist in the twentieth century novel The Fortunes
of Richard Mahony. Mahony was the colonial man of sensitivity, who, if not an artist, did have the qualities usually associated with the artistic frame of mind: self-awareness, refined and thoughtful responses, imagination, intelligence, and to a lesser extent, the ability to express himself. When creating this figure, Richardson drew on material easily available to the writers of the seventies and eighties - some had only to examine themselves - with a success they never achieved.

We watch him, dominated by his anxious sense of exile, making tragic choices, as with increasing frequency his personality and his position conflict: incapable of adjusting to circumstance, and pushing on according to his own lights, most fatally. Whether as a storekeeper or a doctor on the gold fields, as a leisured man about Melbourne, or as a wealthy traveller, or finally as an up-country doctor, Mahony displays his restlessness, his homeless spirit, his increasingly destructive inability to assess his world with realism. From the ominous opening sentence where he watches a man being buried alive to the tragic conclusion, Mahony's inner conflict goes on, and his grip on order and reality diminishes. We first see him weeping not for the dead man but for himself, brooding 'with all the hatred of
unwilling exile for the land that gives him houseroom'; and we finally witness his release, at the seashore burial where 'the rich and kindly earth of his adopted country absorbed his perishable body as the country itself had never contrived to make its own his wayward, vagrant spirit'.

Why could Richardson turn this experience into a satisfying novel while those in the midst of it wasted themselves and their substance in mechanical verse, pedestrian stories and often, pretty picture-making. Even if the feeling of apartness lay so deep that those who actually endured it could not hold themselves together sufficiently to explore, there was as ever plenty to incite the imagination. As Baron von Mueller knew full well, a whole new natural world lay before those with eyes to see and ears to hear. The manners and morals of men in so different a world presented themselves to would-be novelists; men's feelings, the immediate provocation of nineteenth century poetry, fluctuated perceptibly; their attitudes, so relevant to aspiring essayists, took new substance. As D.H. Lawrence liked to say, art is

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2 Ibid., p.830.
about life; and life lay all around them. But the fact remains that nothing significant and enduring in itself emerged.

Was it the place, or the people, or both? Beyond the merely trivial and entertaining, and behind the efforts of the few really trying to make sense of their experience, lay a host of forces working against creativity, not all of which were simply temperamental or individual in nature. In response, artists often divorced themselves from the very experiences which could have enriched and vitalized their work; they seemed offended and partially paralysed by those experiences they could lay claim to; and they could not rise to the problem of finding new words, new concepts and new forms which would properly contain new experience. The dearth of good writing sprang from the fact that these were men apart: not apart in that way pleasant and necessary to those aspiring to independence, but sadly and fundamentally apart from the human and physical context in which they found themselves. The unanswered question, of how to establish primary ties with the land, the people and the world with which they had once so thoughtlessly thrown their lot, undermined their serious efforts to function as artists. To create a believable world of words and
colours and shapes proved much more exacting than building a city.

An artist must do more than appreciate his materials and select from them fancifully: as Marcus Clarke often remained content in doing, notably in his light historical essays *Old Tales in a Young Country*, first published in 1871, where he dressed up the more amenable bits of the colonial past. He must also reconcile his perceptions and find coherence. Samuel Taylor Coleridge defined this process as the working of the Secondary Imagination, as distinct from the Primary which involved only the process of becoming aware:

The Secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former [the primary] co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or, where this process is rendered impossible... it struggles to idealize and unify. It is essentially vital even as all objects (as objects) are fixed and dead.¹

Such was the quality brought to bear by Richardson on the grim chronicle of Richard Mahony, on material available to all. But few artists of the period had sufficient grip of what was happening - or remained simply aware of it - to succeed in re-creating and so transforming,

making the comment, the entertainment, the jingle, into art. The challenge of successfully existing in a crude commercial city, isolated from the ideas and discussions of a more vital community, proved too much for the often inconspicuously endowed writers of the day, dependent, too, on a worn-out tradition of romanticism by now turned sour and melancholic. Marcus Clarke in his glib but perceptive way, put the impossibility of it all when he commented on Louis Buvelot's pleasant rural painting, 'Water Pool at Coleraine':

Australasia has rightly been named a land of the dawning. Wrapped in the mists of early morning, her history looms up large and gigantic. The coming horseman, riding through the moonlight and the day, sees vast shadows creeping across the vast and silent plains, fears strange noises in the primeval forest... and feels, despite his fortune, that the trim utilitarian civilization which bred him shrinks into insignificance beside the contemptuous grandeur of forests and ranges... there is a poem in every form of tree or flower, but the poetry which lives in the trees and flowers of Australasia differs from that of other countries.¹

No one had located an Australian idiom by 1886. Beside the legendary efflorescence of the nineties, when Robert's epic canvasses, the introverted poetry of Brennan, the

¹ M. Clarke, (commentary on) Photographs of the Pictures in the National Gallery Melbourne, (Melb., 1875).
ebullient verse of O'Dowd, the pastoral ballads of Paterson and the prose of Lawson all appeared the achievements of Melbourne artists a decade earlier appear insignificant. Yet their work was valuable, and the 'slim volumes', the serials, the paintings in the Art Union and the occasional cantatas, have a significance in themselves, and in the development of Australian art.

The main novelists were Ada Cambridge, whose work first appeared in the Australasian in 1878, Rolfe Boldrewood, well-known in the local press but not established as a novelist until the publication in 1888 of Robbery Under Arms, and Marcus Clarke, who died in 1881. Memories of Kingsley's pastoral novel, Geoffrey Hamlyn lingered, and the overseas acclaim for For the Term of His Natural Life re-assured the philistines of Marcus Clarke's real talent. George McRae, Arthur Patchett Martin, Douglas Sladen, Patrick Moloney, Ada Cambridge, and Garnet Walch and Marcus Clarke occasionally wrote poetry. Richard Birnie was the only formal essayist but the journalistic efforts of James Hogan, Francis Adams, 'Julian Thomas' (author of the influential Vagabond
Papers)\textsuperscript{1} and Marcus Clarke also included excellent essays. There were even a few self-styled literary critics - Henry Gyles Turner, A.P. Martin and Alexander Sutherland took it upon themselves to assess and encourage Australian literature, and James Smith and David Blair also had a say in the matter.

Ada Cambridge, wife of the Anglican clergyman of Williamstown, began writing novels for pocket money; but she developed into a substantial writer and the most earnest novelist of the decade. She found only one circle of friends in the colony, an exclusive set of wealthy leisured country families; and confessed candidly that she had never succeeded in allying herself with her adopted home, entertaining for forty years 'a chronic nostalgia which could hardly bear the sight of a homeward bound ship.'\textsuperscript{2} Her writings reveal both explicitly and implicitly her divorce from colonial life.

\textsuperscript{1} Sold 8,000 copies of the first series. \textit{Argus}, April 10 1877 p.5(2). See also \textit{V.P.D.}, vol.24, pp.448-9 for parliamentary reference to the Vagabond's 'exposures'.

\textsuperscript{2} Quoted by H.M. Green, \textit{A History of Australian Literature}, (Sydney, 1963), vol.1, p.245 et.seq.
She wrote six serials and three novels before 1886, and after the real success of *A Marked Man* in 1890, fifteen more novels by 1914. Her consistent involvement with the question of how people should face up to and endure the consequences of their own choices, especially matrimonial ones, emerged clearly in these works, though somewhat superficially. Incapable of the sentimental and sensational writing which characterized so many popular novels of the day, she achieved her later popularity because she wrote in a thoughtful, moderate and sensible fashion; and won a place in the development of Australian literature because of her attempts to ground her work in colonial life. Unlike George Eliot in *Middlemarch*, however, Cambridge never really achieved a fixity of place, nor the feeling of the particular world she might have explored.

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1 Only *A Mere Chance*, (Melb., 1882) is now available in mainland libraries; *My Guardian: a story of the Fen Country* written in 1878 and *In Two Years Time*, in 1879, have not been seen. The serials appeared in the *Australasian's Saturday* supplement under the initial 'A.C.' - 'Up the Murray' (1875), 'Dinah' (December 1879-80), 'Mrs Carnegie's Husband' (November 1884-85), 'Missed in the Crowd' (October 1881-82), 'Across the Grain' (October 1882-83) and 'Against the Rules' (November 1885-86). For a complete list of her novels see Miller, *op.cit.*, vol.2.

2 Cf. The success of fellow-Melburnian, Mrs Kathleen Caffyn, who as 'Iota' achieved great popularity with *The Yellow Astor* in 1894. Miller, *op.cit.*, vol.2, p.660.
The colony held its own attractions and to these, mainly physical, she was not blind. In her first serials published in the Australasian she displayed an exuberance in attempting to describe them. The skies, sunset and climate held a distinctive appeal;¹ the native birds, especially the mopoke and the curlew found frequent mention;² and she tried to define the total effect when she wrote such passages as:

as the dusk fell, the curlews began to pierce the stillness with their wild and thrilling notes, and the jackasses to laugh together on dead skeletons of trees .... What lonely-sounding echoes they sent beating and throbbing amongst those closely folded hills.³

Yet she carefully balanced her near-enthusiasm with the advantages of England, commenting that an English climate would make the place intolerable, while the Australian climate in England would make it a Paradise too perfect for humans to live in.⁴

The human environment, however, failed to inspire her, and she was either evasive or plainly critical about what

¹ 'Up the Murray', Australasian (Supplement), 1875 (1), p.517, (4). [Hereafter cited as Australasian(s)].
² Ibid., p.582(2).
³ Ibid., p.646(5).
⁴ Ibid., p.646(4).
she observed. The newly arrived Dorothy in 'Up the Murray' noted that

it was delightful travelling along the smooth metal road, though for some time the scenery was disappointingly tame, by no means ... enlivened by the queer little villages that were scattered here and there.¹

Cambridge obviously regarded Melbourne as a sordidly materialistic place, and reserved her contempt for those women, who mistaking quantity for quality preferred to marry wealthy Melbourne upstarts rather than impoverished English gentlemen. When in 'Across the Grain', Janey's mother contemplated the proposed marriage between her daughter and a gauche Presbyterian squatter, she approved of it because

in town, a lady of birth and culture as the wife of a gentleman of small means would have no position in society.

and it is the novelist's voice which adds

money is the gauge of social consequence in Melbourne.²

When Dinah, in the serial of the same name, returned to Melbourne after a European education she was determined to be rich and marry a Presbyterian businessman. She

¹ Ibid., p.543(5).
² A'asian (S), November 4 1882, p.1(4).
and her sister drove past his house, and the following is reported:

I pulled up the ponies and paused silently expecting to hear Dinah break forth into expressions of contempt and disgust, both for the Brummagem edifice and the vulgar ostentation of the millionaire who built it ... instead ... she ... gazed at it ... as if it was ... Warwick castle at the least.¹

Against Presbyterian wealth, matchmaking Toorak matrons, and vulgar ostentation, all part of Marvellous Melbourne, she put the refinement of the English landed gentry, the colonial equivalent of which was the only thing she found to admire. She looked for that 'blending of simplicity and culture, homely ease and comfort with all that is genuine in social refinement'² which, she said existed in about a dozen Victorian country houses, the only institution which recommended itself to 'a disinterested and discriminating European'. Within the portals of these houses, and their immediate antitheses, those of the nonveaux riche, she set most of her novels. Yet the innocent and misguided girls who choose wrongly and suffer during intolerable marriages she rescued in the end, and so kept the ambiguously placed heroines

¹ A'asian (S), 1879, p.710 (2).
² 'Across the Grain', A'asian (S), November 11 1882, p.1 (1).
within the confines of romantic serials, and retained a convenient vehicle for her social comment, thus weakening her central moral concern; the aristocrats of birth and sensibility, gain only in clarification, not in expansion of experience.

Although she could portray individuals who did not belong to the leisured and aristocratic group she most admired - and the ugly novelist Adam Crewe in *Fidelis* (London, 1895) and the poor girls who set up a tea-room in *A Humble Enterprise* (London, 1896) prove that she was not purely class-conscious — she upheld only those who pursued the noble life, whether they did it by habit from birth, or they had especially endowed minds. Dorothy's family, in the first serial and Richard Delavel, hero of her first successful novel, *A Marked Man*, are only among the many who make the best of things in the generalised wilds of Australia. Constance, in 'Across the Grain', like Mrs Carnegie, in 'Mrs Carnegie's Husband' have an intellectual stature which sustains the novelist's interest; Constance, faithful to her married lover, attains

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Even the heroine of *A Humble Enterprise* (London, 1896) suffers only genteel impoverishment, and comes from the better-off social group.
a near-tragic, and certainly a dramatic stature. All of Ada Cambridge's early novels use Melbourne as a locale, but it is an incompletely realized locale, with people whose virtues are preconceived ones, and villains whose vices are locally prominent and socialized ones.

Like Francis Adams she insisted on quality in life; but she had only one idea of the origin of quality. Like an earlier colonial novelist, Catherine Helen Spence, she recognised a colonial context; but found it stultifying rather than challenging. Although one of those grim Toorak matrons would have provided a rich field for exploration, she preferred to uphold wooden English gentlemen and innocent young girls who learnt by experience of their superiority. The central characters frequently took what definition they had only from the contrast between them and the rest.

Because she felt the quality of colonial life would not bear too close an inspection, she did not inspect. She noted a confusion of class and order, which made the question 'Who is who' an impossible one. She noted further a spirit of snobbery and pretension which deeply offended her. In taking refuge in the only known

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1 'Up the Murray', A'asian (S), p. 710 (1) and (2).
standard, Ada Cambridge missed the real tensions between people and place which might have challenged a more self-assured and skilled writer. When Dorothy in the first serial was asked how she liked the look of the place she evaded the question:

'Very much', she replied, regarding the ugly brick and mortar prospect around her, 'I knew I should'.

The sort of acceptance characteristic of 'Tasma', (Mrs Jessie Couvrier) was impossible to her. In 'Tasma's' one successful novel, *Uncle Piper of Piper's Hill*, which appeared in 1889, the subtle shifts of manners and attitudes noticeable in colonial society came through triumphantly. Though 'Tasma' limited herself to the same wealthy class, and followed the conventions of romantic novel-writing rigorously enough to avoid any deep questioning of human behaviour, she imbued her novel with vitality and realism. The central figure, Uncle Piper, was more than a vulgar and wealthy colonial; he was also a fond, foolish and amusing old man, who grew in stature and awareness through the events described.

Having made his fortune, Uncle Piper invited his sister and her family from England to share his success.

Thus, the Cavendish family have to some extent to accept the world into which they come. Margaret Cavendish might well wish her uncle had not been a butcher, but she could not afford to be too snobbish about it. Moreover the sharp fortune-hunting Sara, the lovers George and Laura drawn as sensualists cynics and positivists, and the genial authoritarianism of the truly vulgar Uncle Piper, have a zest and independence seldom granted by Ada Cambridge to her more stereotyped characters. Perhaps because 'Tasma' had lived in the colonies since she was three, and yet had a more cosmopolitan background, than most of the writers, she had an easier time of it, creatively speaking. She grasped the central point missed by Cambridge and indicated by Joseph Furphy a decade later, that the variety and vagaries of human nature could be as interesting in a colony as anywhere else:

no-one is thoroughly typical unless he be a savage or a peasant. Portia and her relatives retained their ... individualities nonetheless that they had been influenced in their outward bearing and modes of expressing themselves by a long sojourn in the backwoods of Victoria

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1 Ibid., p.32.
2 Her father was a Dutch merchant who lived in England before migrating to Hobart. 'Tasma' lived in Melbourne at this time, during a short-lived first marriage, then went to Europe.
in daily contact with all sorts and conditions of men.¹

Not until she wrote *A Marked Man* in 1890 did Ada Cambridge begin to explore the interaction of place and person, which had she ever fully pursued it, might have given deeper significance to her work. Though she was sensible enough to stick to the locale she knew well, she preferred her native Norfolk. Though she confined her attention to a specific group of people, the only ones within that group she could accept were those of English breeding. She did not achieve any balance between what was to her the actual and the ideal, and after commercial success abandoned her earlier attempts to do so within an Australian context, and, like Rolfe Boldrewood, terminated many of her novels in England. Her preference was so fixed that the very force she tried to avoid defeated her, and her published novels, both in plot and in structure of feeling, reveal themselves as 'colonial'.

Her writing lacks tension. A more poised and consciously ambivalent writer, and a much later one, Martin Boyd, wrote of the conflicting claims of Australian's

actual home and their 'spiritual' one in such novels as *Lucinda Brayford* and *The Montforts*; and in admitting some weight to the Australian experience, gained a sharpness and relevance which Cambridge never achieved. In admitting only one valid source and end to experience, Ada Cambridge deprived her writing of the strength it might have had, and in shying away from any recognition of her Australian experience, isolated herself as she isolated her novels: into a land where nobody belonged.

She gained in strength, however, as she clarified and controlled her concern with romantic love. The question appeared in *A Mere Chance*:

> and should love, when all is said and done, be the ruler and lord of the all-supreme arbiter of the destinies of purblind creatures, not one in ten, perhaps not one in fifty of whom have the Faculty to see him and know him as he is.¹

In later novels, like *The Devastators* she was able to explore the follies and the irredeemable suffering of those who missed their chances or deliberately rejected them, without recourse to a happy ending; but at no point did she particularize her general concern sufficiently for it to take on its own unique and independent life; and at no point did she upset the structure of the conventional

¹ *A Mere Chance*, vol.3, p.248.
novel enough to make her interesting comments into a more comprehensive and positive point of view.

A much better known novelist, 'Rolfe Boldrewood' (in real life Mr T.A. Browne) actually enjoyed his position in colonial society, and after the success of *Robbery Under Arms*, published in 1888, wrote prolifically from his long experience there. As his reminiscences reveal, though, it was the pastoral days and the gold-rushes which really claimed him.¹ In his imagination he lived with the whip-cracking drovers and the good-natured diggers rather than the contemporary city, though neither that nor his steadfast adherence to conservative values need have reduced the merit of his writings. Certainly, the English gentry seemed to him a noble breed; Dick Marston's reprieve by the Honourables Mr Falkland and Mr Stonefield is as good an illustration as any of the desirable presence of such men,² though his later novel *A Sydney-side Saxon* presented the case more thoroughly.

This novel, written in the form of an extended yarn, narrated the career of a Kentish farm-boy who, by

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¹ *Old Melbourne Memories* (Melb., 1884).
emigrating and working hard, earned wealth, comfort and prestige in Australia:

a country where I could get a chance and have my share of the good things.¹

From a rather drab chronicle, regularly enlivened by incidents of cattle-duffing, swagmen's crimes, accidents from horses and the deeds of faithful aborigines, where hardworking and sensible men endure the hardships and inhospitalities of the land, there emerge those material satisfactions which Australia could provide, though any country could have provided them. Job Claythorpe, the narrator, had in fact arrived at the status of local gentry, and so achieved what he could never have achieved in England. Boldrewood's later novels have those familiar happy endings where the hero returns to England to become a squire; and his earlier novels have English gentlemen as their heroes. Even the great bushranger Starlight is hinted to be a tragic representative of this class.

Yet Boldrewood's heroes enjoy colonial life and revel in their adventures. For Boldrewood, the land itself was challenging and of a distinctive character, which, far more than its people, he wove into his narrative.

**Ups and Downs** takes its interest from the climate and the land of the Riverina area, and is so closely drawn from his own experience as an unsuccessful pastoralist there as to be quite dull. The main characters and the commonsense love-affair never have the dramatic quality which make exciting his long description of the Murrumbidgee flood which drowned his hero's sheep. The Riverina pastures, like 'the Hollow' where the bushrangers sheltered in *Robbery Under Arms*, and like the interior of New South Wales where Job Claythorpe made his fortune, are vividly described; but the squatters, the pioneers and the bushrangers who live there take what force they have from what the land does to them, and the adventures it leads them into.

Those who enjoyed his adventure-stories obviously did not notice the flat people and the trite comment which filled out the action. As a writer, Boldrewood re-created the frontier which allowed the extremity of action and avoided the intricacies of thought. Whether it was a real frontier or a fanciful one, it provided an exotic setting for this disciple of Sir Walter Scott, and was far enough divorced from everyday life to be controlled by the none-too-inspired Boldrewood; and so he enjoyed a vast audience. Boldrewood, being little concerned with
the manners, morals and nature of human beings, succeeded in his aims: to romanticize and recall. The fact that he wrote well about Starlight's horse and described the land devotedly hardly qualifies him as a serious novelist. His work has a 'colonial' flavour because he exhibited to an amazing degree the colonial emphasis on external things; the internal situation imprecisely defined by Cambridge did not enter his mind.

The only other novelist of the decade was Marcus Clarke.¹ A more spectacular and enigmatic figure, Clarke has often been regarded as the exile par excellence, and from his oft-quoted preface to Gordon's poems, pigeonholed as the artist who felt overwhelmed by the Weird and Melancholy Australian Bush. The slight and sophisticated townsman did respond to the peculiar impassivity and potential terror of the Australian bush, and after returning from a brief sojourn in the Glenorchy

¹ Miller, op.cit., vol.2, pp.618-33 lists fourteen other novelists, not including the itinerants, Carlton Dawe and Fergus Hume, whose successful thriller The Mystery of the Hansom Cab, (Melb., 1886) has already been referred to (p.219). The present writer has seen about five of these: E.J. Hawkins, The Fitzdolphus Papers, (Melb., 1878), Cecilia Hill's Checkmated, (Melb., 1878), John Rae, The Shield and the Banner Won, (Melb., 1882), Mrs H.A. Dugdale, A Few Hours in a Far-off Age (Melb., 1893), and A.P. Martin, Sweet Girl Graduate (Melb., 1876). None of these seemed worth rescuing from obscurity.
district, expressed himself many times on the subject. 'There is', he wrote in 1872, 'an indescribable ghastliness about the mountain bush which has affected most imaginative people'. In his much-praised short story 'Pretty Dick' and the eerie 'Holiday Peak', he tried to catch the progressive effects of the bush on people caught there in unusual circumstances. Unfortunately in the first mentioned he succumbed to his own verbal facility and created a pathetic, not tragic, effect:

There, among the awful mystery and majesty of Nature, alone, a terrified little human soul, with the eternal grandeur of the forests, the mountains and the myriad voices of the night, Pretty Dick knelt trembling down, and, lifting his little tear-stained face to the great, grave, impassable sky - sobbed.

Later in his one significant novel, For the Term of His Natural Life he dealt more thoroughly with the dehumanizing and inhuman natural scenery, as in the description of Hell's Gate; and the implied cannibalism of Gabbet is in part a comment on the inhospitality of

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2 Ibid., p.149.
the natural world.\footnote{For the Term of His Natural Life, The World's Classics, No.527, pp.154-5.} In his lesser imaginative works, Clarke wrote within a literary convention which included Gothic horrors, melancholy, and ghostliness; and the scenery he knew best, the Grampians, the Dandenongs and that of Southern Tasmania did lend itself to that convention, which in many instances he failed to go beyond. When writing more prosaically, Clarke actually perceived something of the quality which D.H. Lawrence has since been praised for noticing:

\begin{quote}
that strange, as it were, invisible beauty of Australia, which is undeniably there but which seems to lurk just beyond the range of our white vision.\footnote{Kangaroo, Penguin books, p.87.}
\end{quote}

Clarke was aware of an emotional and verbal challenge, though he himself never fully met it. Only this accounts for the strange and exalted passion apparent in his best writing:

\begin{quote}
the phantasmagoria of that wild dream land termed the bush interprets itself, and the Poet of our desolation begins to understand why free Esau loved his heritage of desert sand better than all the bountiful richness of Egypt.\footnote{The Marcus Clarke Memorial Volume, p.116.}
\end{quote}
Although Clarke associated himself extensively with the place, writing up its history in the form of 'Australian Tales', participating in its social and intellectual life with continuous zest, and describing his human environment with deceptive ease; yet the man is hard to locate. According to those who knew him, he was a sociable charming fellow who appeared to be at odds with no one except his creditors and those whom he offended in debate. His early sketches of people, in the 'Peripatetic Philosopher' column of the Argus, show a lively and cynical awareness, near enough to acceptance, of Melbourne in the late sixties; and his satirical sketches of the slow-witted hard-drinking inhabitants of Bullock Town are firmly done, usually in colloquial and fluent prose, in a tone superior rather than angry.

But he had, as Francis Adams said, a facility that was fatal.¹ Between 1876 and 1881 he wrote two plays and collaborated in one, and published two novels, two collections of Christmas stories, two serious controversial essays, a few critical articles, contributed widely to

¹ 'Marcus Clarke', Sydney Quarterly Magazine, (June, 1887), p.121.
the press, including the provincial press, even as he worked from nine to five in the Public Library. He flitted from subject to subject, grasping the essentials in the opening paragraph, making a few clever asides throughout and bowing out in a sort of bored acquiescence. Nothing afterwards extended and sustained him like the writing of *For The Term of His Natural Life* - and even that was a fortunate and unique accident in his journalistic career - where in exposing the horrors of the convict system, he seems to have been possessed by his material, taking from it a purpose and involvement, which, in all his other writings, is conspicuous by its absence:¹ for once Clarke had a serious point of view and a purpose permanently valid: to expose man's inhumanity to man in a particular context. For the most part, however, Clarke did not pause to think out a serious point of view; and those who paused where he never did will never understand his writings.

¹ *For the Term of His Natural Life*, preface, p.xxv; 'some of the events narrated are doubtless tragic and terrible; but I hold it needful to my purpose to record them, for they are events which have actually occurred, and which, if the blunders which produce them be repeated, must infallibly occur again'.

Perhaps because the line between literature and journalism was so imprecise in the colony, Clarke inevitably took the easy way. Expediency and the mood of the moment dictated what he wrote. He had a large family, and lived extravagantly, and in order to keep going, exploited his ability to string words together: which he seemed prepared to do on any subject, or even, virtually on none. The overall triviality of his writing, when put alongside his one good novel, illuminates his failure.

Of a different calibre to Richardson's Mahony, he was yet a 'wayward vagrant spirit' claimed by nothing more, and as it proved, nothing less, than his moneylender. Apart from this, Clarke was the supremely uninvolved: a gifted young man who found nothing in Melbourne to protect him from his own exuberant powers of self-dissipation, and no security which would free him sufficiently from the excessive responsibilities, which, like all else, he so carelessly assumed. Apart from the long past convict system, he found nothing substantial to force him to focus his abilities for long enough. In

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this sense Clarke was the man apart, without peer. For at the deepest and most truthful levels, Clarke was silent. At this point his lively imagination baulked and he could not proceed; after 1875 he wrote little worthy of recall. 'Twixt Shadow and Shine written in that year, whilst intended as a gay skit on his Bohemian friends, was a pot-boiler; and The Mystery of Major Molineaux, and Human Repetends, published in 1881, rested only on a smart pseudo-scientific appeal.

The language of poetry is more intransigent than of prose, and more deeply embedded in predetermined form. Only the rare individual will mould it to fit new experience; and the productive poets displayed their even greater divorce from experience in their dogged pursuit of technical facility within already outworn forms and on abstract literary subjects.

None had the inventiveness to break through the forms already worn to shreds by Mathew Arnold, Tennyson, Browning and Rosetti. It had been thought that Adam Lindsay Gordon had sounded the liberating note with his racy ballads, his simple lyrics of alternating melancholy and exhilaration, and his sick stockrider images. Gordon himself presented the conventional picture of the poet, as gentleman, bohemian, steeplechaser, and finally
suicide. Gordon only looked like a poet and wrote like a poet, however; he wrote fashionable verse, which in its concern with certain feelings appeared to be distinctive. His career flattered the melancholy of the poets who stayed on to endure what he could not endure: neglect, and mediocrity. To them he became a culture hero.

A small group of versifiers existed in Melbourne. These few, inspired by the eccentric but singleminded 'Orion' Horne who lived there in the sixties, published the inevitable 'Slim Volumes' and featured in the two Reviews. The oldest of this group, George Gordon McRae, wrote only one major poem during the decade, 'A Rosebud from the Garden of the Taj' which appeared at length in the pages of the Melbourne Review. His earlier poems 'Mamba, the Brighteyed One', and 'The Story of Balladreado' had been poeticized aboriginal legends. The poem here relevant was a series of pictorial dreams, presumably Oriental in feeling, and posing as a translation from the Persian. Nothing from the actual world impinged upon McRae's poetic sensibility; and the fantasies he spun at such length appear now contrived, and being in heroic

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couplets less ethereal than they might have been. McRae's withdrawal to his property near Arthur's Seat after retiring from the Civil Service symbolized his gentle but determined aloofness. He had a place in the poetic circles, but found none as a poet.

Douglas Sladen, who came to Melbourne in 1879 fresh from Oxford, and stayed in the colonies for seven years, is known now as an anthologist and an early promoter of Australian literature in general, and Adam Lindsay Gordon in particular. He also wrote a great deal of verse, and published locally during his stay five volumes, the first being Frithjof and Ingebjorg in 1881 and the last being In Cornwall and Across the Sea in 1883. He exploited the already hackneyed theme of exile, remaining firmly fixed in his English origins; and since he quickly saw that the colonies would provide no easy political or literary career, he returned to England, if indeed he ever left it. His preferences as

2 J.R. Stevens (comp.), Adam Lindsay Gordon and Other Writers, (nd., n.p.), pp.29-30.
3 In six years he published at least twenty-one poems in the Melbourne Review.
he said were those of an Englishman who knew and loved England but who kept an eye open for 'the strangenesses, beauties and grandeurs' of his adopted land.¹ He set out to deal with Australian subjects, but was defeated for all his good intentions by his own technical exuberance and the distance he put between himself and the subject:

Today between us roll and heave five thousand leagues of foam,
Yet 'tis not easy to believe that I am far from home;
For the same friendly English speech salutes the wanderer's ear,
And English hearts and hopes can reach this Southern Hemisphere.²

As a wandering Englishman supposing himself to be addressing the Englishmen of three continents,³ he failed to grapple with the idea of an Australian poetry, and produced at best bookish verse, at worst, boyish jingle; and succeeded only in making explicit his kind divorce from his situation.

The juvenalia of Arthur Patchett Martin is refreshing, not because he wrote good poetry, but because

¹ 'To The Reader', A Poetry of Exiles, (Sydney, 1883), first ed.
he enjoyed trying to write it. His apology for writing in a lady's album fits his main mood:

Ah! you relent. In gentlest tones
You now accept my poor excuses;
And I, you add, have clearly shown
That Poetry has its abuses.¹

Like Sladen, his enjoyment of new forms overwhelmed him; like all the poets except Ada Cambridge, he addressed his poetry to literary subjects, or conventionally romantic ones. What talent he did have had not grounded itself in deeply-felt experience; and not even the Bohemian world of Clarke, Walch (both of whom wrote verse too trite to consider) McRae and Moloney attracted him.²

Patrick Moloney, a native born doctor, wrote competent Shakespearian sonnets. He wrote a great deal more than the one remaining series 'Ad Innuptam', and had a wide and eccentric delight in literature. The series published in Martin's anthology An Easter Omelette revealed that enthusiasm rather than anything else; though the impassioned sequence, of a young man imploring his love to notice his devotion, takes an odd twist in the last sonnet. In the first twelve the Greek gods have

¹Lays of Today, (Melb., 1878), p.17.
²'Farewell to Bohemia', ibid., pp.24-5.
watched the process: in the thirteenth his native city
too it appears has watched, and it is Melbourne that
he addresses:

0 sweet Queen city of the Golden South,
Piercing the evening with the starlit spires
Thou wert a witness when I kissed the mouth of

and the Southern Cross shines on his victory as the gods
on that of Constantine: not a very successful parallel
but an interesting one. Moloney's frame of reference
was equally bookish, but he was a more accomplished
versifier than some of his friends.

The poetry of Ada Cambridge, on the other hand,
referred so exclusively to her own private world that even
though her concern with the religious and socialist ideas
of the day fitted well enough with what a number of
people were thinking even in Melbourne at the same time,
she almost immediately withdrew her one book from
circulation. There was nothing bookish, affected or
dilettante in her poetry, though it might have seemed
careless to her fellow poets in Melbourne if they had had
a chance to read it. The protest she submerged in her

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1. This has often been anthologized e.g. by B. Stevens, *An Anthology of Australian Verse*, (Sydney, 1903), p. 51.
prose she expressed forcefully in her poetry; and the inequalities of society and the problem of faith were her main preoccupations.¹ Within the loose form and rather slack diction she used, she wrote with consistent and impassioned concern for the poor, and the wronged and the defeated, and out of a deep personal necessity to reconcile her own doubts and to defeat her feeling of loneliness. By entitling the collection *Unspoken Thoughts* and withdrawing it from the audience for whom it was meant, she openly declared her independence from her given world.

Others, not so open, and not even as conscious of their situation, real or imagined, as she, took more devious routes to the same place, and found in flippant poses or earnest participation a security which neither society nor the quality of their work allowed. The Bohemian world, centring on certain cafes and hotels sufficed for the group around McRae, Marcus Clarke and Patrick Moloney;² the serious efforts of the editors of the *Melbourne Review*, Turner, Sutherland and Martin, provided a forum for the more staid of the literary world;

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¹ 'What of the Night', *Unspoken Thoughts*, (London 1887), p.91.
² See McRae, *op.cit.*, p.20, on 'The Cave of Adullam'.

and some, like Cambridge and Boldrewood, belonged to no group. No matter how they tried to overcome their sense of not belonging, however, their work revealed the crippling distance between those who devoted themselves to literature and the alien colonial world. In their overall failure to come to significant terms with their situation - expressed by their various evasions of it - they could not attract the attention they needed to reassure and stimulate them. It became a vicious circle, which only the truly gifted individual, or a totally unembarrassed force like the Bulletin, ultimately broke through. These writers were not even passive before experience. They were stultified and in a real sense uncreative, though the urge to write was with them, because of a situation and a preoccupation too deep to find expression except by writers of a later generation, the fact of belonging nowhere.

Well might Punch promise writers undying fame, a vast audience and a stupendous fortune, on the condition that they cast aside 'the Trammels of conventionality and give...the story of Reality'.¹ No writer liked what he saw of 'Reality' enough to pursue it. The whole

¹ 'A New Novel', Melbourne Punch, October 9 1879, p.147.
environment discouraged the exercise of the creative imagination, and writers were not able to find new terms in which to write. The channels of creativity were so narrow as to be easily blocked; for instance by the continuous flood of English books.

In 1879, Victorians spent £116,437 on imported books. A literate public wanted books. They could hardly wait until the colony produced its own, and literature was one industry quite unprotectable. The Public Library in the same year held about 100,000 books, the mechanics' institutes over 300,000, the municipal circulating libraries probably hundreds of thousands more. One of the oldest booksellers in Melbourne, A.G. Melville, stated the inevitable when he said that the book trade existed by the sale of English books and periodicals. He pointed out that after 1861 a whole flood of English novels came from such professional novelists as Miss Braddon, Mrs Henry Wood, Mrs Oliphant, Wilkie Collins,

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2 There appear to have been only five circulating libraries in the city. *Melbourne Directories*, 1876, p.711, and 1886, p.71 (four).
George Eliot, Henry Kingsly, Charles Reade, Whyte-Melville, Anthony Trollope, Edmund Yates, Charlotte Yonge, Walter Besant, William Black, Mrs Alexander, Amelia B. Edwards, B.L. Farjeon, Charles Gibbon, George McDonald, Florence Marryatt, Mrs Riddell, Mrs Lynn Liation and F.W. Robinson. Who would choose to read Marcus Clarke when he could read any one of these. The bookseller had to earn his living, and neither he, nor the colonial publisher was likely to step out in search of colonial writers. If those writers failed to make it in England, they would fail to make it in the colony, so they reasoned.

The most interesting of Melbourne bookseller-publishers was E.W. Cole of Cole's Book Arcade and Cole's Funny Picture Book fame. Cole however, had no interest in encouraging local literature, being far too involved with popularizing his own religious ideas and furthering his belief in the rationality of man. Generations of Australians remembered what happened to the boy that smoked and shuddered at Cole's patent whipping machine. Whether they also imbibed his basically rationalist views - inherent in his idea that
'laughter is the best cure'\(^1\) - about the future world society, or his moralism as expressed in the various sections of the Funny Picture Book like 'Mother-land', 'Reading Land', and 'Naughtiness Land', no one can ever say with certainty.\(^2\) Edward Cole was not unique in his earnest moralism and his driving faith in the perfectability of man, even in Melbourne, though most Melburnians rejected him even as they adopted his bookshop as one of the city's landmarks. In his ability to advertise, simplify and sell his ideas, he was unique. With the Rainbow Sign, the stream of booklets and anthologies he produced, and his method of putting his world-view into pictures, he exercised a wider, subtler and more enduring influence than anyone else who put pen to paper for any kind of literary purpose during the decade.

Another bookseller-publisher whose influence might be traced differently, and with more direct reference to local literary opportunity was George Robertson, who had

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1 The first of these books, *Cole's Fun Doctor*, (Melb., 1885), no.2 was subtitled 'a laugh-cure series, containing 400 comic pictures', including a brutal lampoon entitled 'Fun about Women's Rights', showing Miss Sappho Helen in her top-hat, breeches, glasses and brolly (p.35).

2 Any edition of *Cole's Funny Picture Book* will bear this out, though the sixty-first edition is the one used here.
the strength and interest to support local ventures. But even Robertson refused to go on publishing the Melbourne Review, when it continued to sell badly. The only safe publications were those previously accepted in London as For the Term of His Natural Life had been, and locally published books usually involved financial loss unless subscribed to prior to publication. Though the number of printers and publishers doubled in Melbourne during the decade, few would have been willing to support an unknown local writer. With few patriotically minded publishers, fewer interested middlemen, and an audience emotionally orientated towards English books, writers naturally felt discouraged; and in fact existed in vacuum.

The literate tried to fill this vacuum amongst themselves, with the result that they intensified their situation rather than improved it. In creating a

1 Robertson/Turner, October 6 1885, Turner papers.
2 Even the Australian Journal publishing serials, stories and poetry returned to this in 1886, vol.22, p.256 et seq. serializing His Natural Life.
3 A list of subscribers appears, for instance, at the beginning of Lays of Today.
4 Melbourne Directories, 1876, p.786, eighty-nine printers and publishers; 1886, pp.1065-66, one hundred and sixty six.
literary Establishment they neither made closer contact with their potential audience nor fostered creativity. The little magazines hoped to promote educated and lively discussion, and encourage independent thinking. The Melbourne Review in particular regularly reviewed local writing of all kinds as well as imported books; but earnest endeavours like those made by its editors could not marshall the artists and the thoughtful few into a coherent and sustained group, nor could they overcome public apathy. The writers did try various devices to reach a potential audience. The most conspicuous of these was the seasonal collection; every Christmas occasioned a new miscellany of prose and verse meant to entice the present-hunter. Some twenty of these collection efforts, edited by one or another of the writers, appeared during the decade. Garnet Walch, ever opportunistic, edited three, including Hash: a Mixed Dish for Christmas with ingredients by various Australian authors (Melb., 1877) which contained work by 'Tasma', Clarke, Moloney and Martin; 'Julian Thomas' presented The Vagabond Annual with the same contributors

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1 E.g., M.R., vol. 4:13, Review section.
2 Miller, op.cit., vol.2, pp. 943-47.
and others including Brunton Stephens. The Sydney-sider H.W.H. Stephen, member of the famous English family, produced *Our Exhibition Annual*, featuring McRae, Kendall and 'Iron-bark'. Arthur Patchett Martin edited *An Easter Omelette* in which appeared Moloney's sonnets. The most unusual of these was *The Australian Ladies' Annual* appearing in 1878, which contained only the work of women writers. 'Tasma' contributed a ghostly short story, while one of Ada Cambridge's first colonial published poems 'Around the Camp-fire' appeared here. Individual writers also tried to break in on the seasonal market; Clarke's *Four Stories High*, James Hogan's *Christmas Collection* and Martin's *Sweet Girl Graduate*, written four years before the University opened its doors to women students, also constituted genial but determined bids for support.

The writers felt keenly their neglect, and the bitterly sarcastic preface to *Hash*, signed by all its contributors revealed this:

1 Edited by the Riverina pastoralist, F.R.C. Hopkins, better known as a dramatist. See p.317.
We...fully appreciating your worth, and being intensely desirous of offering you a mark of esteem, take this opportunity of expressing our Goodwill .... Most of us have been acquainted with you for several years and can bear witness to Your Numerous Virtues.

These virtues, they said, included an innate love of the Good True and Beautiful, absolute Detestation of Humbug Trickery and Cant, and a clear discernment of Right from Wrong, as well as a preference for Legislative Honesty.¹

Most of the writings for these publications were low-pitched, superficial and intended to entertain, as was Clarke's *Four Stories High*.² Despite these efforts, however, it seems doubtful that a popular audience was established.

No writer evinced any assurance of reaching such an audience, or expected to earn a living from serious writing. The most highly-esteemed poet of the continent, Henry Kendall, earned eighty pounds for *Songs from the Mountains* in 1880;³ Marcus Clarke sold the rights of the only novel likely to earn him money for a meagre sum;⁴

¹ 'To the gentle Australian Public', *Hash*, (Melb., 1877), A.N.L. pamphls., vol.154:2976.
² Preface, *ibid*.
³ H.M. Green, *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.147.
Cambridge and Boldrewood earned little in the early stages of their careers;¹ Martin and Sladen gladly left the colony in search of more profitable careers in London.² Earlier writers like Spence, in Adelaide, had given up the struggle.³ The essayist Richard Birnie is reported to have said:

I can lecture (sniff) like Coleridge; (sniff) I can write like Addison; (sniff) yet I haven't got a solitary sixpence (sniff) to buy my dinner with! (sniff, sniff) A member of three universities (sniff, sniff) Oxford (sniff) Cambridge (sniff) and the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum.⁴

Martin said disgustedly that if Tennyson himself had lived in Melbourne he would have been ignored.⁵

No break-through occurred; those trying to write failed to find the appropriate forms for experience which in itself remained intractable. They continued to suffer under a debilitating cultural situation. Though their

³ Spence/Pearson, Pearson papers.
⁴ H. McRae, My Father and My Father's Friends, p.13. Birnie was a competent, if dry, essayist, See 'Ridicule', Essays, Social, Moral and Political, (Melb., 1879). He did actually die in The Melbourne Benevolent Asylum.
⁵ 'By Way of Preface', Lays of Today.
numbers increased,\(^1\) coherence and success did not follow. So they remained apart and their work revealed more about what they could not achieve than what they could. It also revealed an aspect of Melbourne and its intellectual life: energetic and sharp when involved with external things, but uncertain and anxious to the people best fitted to describe its inner emotional basis.

\(^{1}\) **Census of Victoria** (1881), p.101, lists fifty-two authors in 1881 as compared with twenty-five in 1871.
VI

THE FINE ARTS

Legend has it that a newly arrived governor of the colony, chatting to a society woman at a Town Hall concert, casually remarked that he hoped to introduce Wagner soon. 'Oh', she replied, 'we'll be delighted to meet him'. That faux pas, coupled with the fact that, apart from a much admired Cantata in 1880,1 practically no music was written in Melbourne during the nineteenth century2 could point to silent and sterile space which in a more substantial city, or an older one, might have been occupied by music-making.3 Only a few wrote music; there was no orchestra, no training school for musicians,4

1 'Victoria: Prize Cantata', music by Leslie Caron words by J. Meadon, A.N.L. Pamphs. See Argus (ed.), October 2 1880.
4 The University held the statutory powers to grant degrees in music but had no faculty. Act of Incorporation, Statutes and Regulations, (Melb., 1857), p.8 (X).
few occupations for musicians apart from music-teaching, and no range of musical associations catering for the diverse tastes of chamber, instrumental, orchestral, madrigal or popular music. The actual musical world was small; as ever serious music appealed to the few. Alfred Plumpton, the most articulate of local musicians, spoke in 1883 of the time only a few years earlier when no one would have dared present a programme of classical music alone with any hope of financial success.

Moreover, serious music, as the most abstracted and remote of the arts, might easily have been ignored; and the sophisticated audience and highly-trained musicians needed for its establishment might never have migrated.

However, Francis Adams, the most uncompromising of critics, regarded the Melburnians' enthusiasm for music as their one and only redeeming grace; and Plumpton, who should have known, said that the nucleus of a real musical

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1 Census of Victoria, (1881), p.102, lists 190 men and 732 women music-teachers, but also 354 'musicians and vocalists'.
2 See G.W. Torrance, Address at the Opening of the Fine Arts Section of the Melbourne Social Science Congress (1880) Music Pamphs., vol.5:6.
public did exist. On occasion, that public showed its enthusiasm full-bloodedly, as when, in five days in 1882, it supported six concerts, which included Beethoven's 'Choral' Symphony, Costa's 'Eli', the third act of 'Tannhauser' and Handel's 'Israel in Egypt'.

Musical accomplishments were also an ordinary part of the equipment of every well-bred human in previous centuries; and the civilized men and women of Melbourne sang, and played flutes, fiddles and pianos after a dinner as a matter of course. Without wirelesses and record players to disseminate music of all kinds, these people still wanted to sing and dance and be entertained, and as Sir George Verdon put the matter in 1886, to enjoy 'those higher pursuits which make up the grace and are essential to the full enjoyment of human life.'

In drawing rooms and plush Town Halls, in music-halls and tough bars, the inhabitants of Melbourne enjoyed music, whether it was presented by fife bands, black-faced

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1 Loc.cit., p.275.
2 W.A. Carne, A Century of Harmony (Melb., 1954), pp.98-100, has the programmes.
3 As did Richard Mahony, H.H. Richardson, op.cit., p.471.
minstrels, massed choirs or marriageable young women. ¹
From 'Villakins and His Dinah' to the 'Hallelujah Chorus',
and from flute solos to the 'Eroica', they listened
avidly, as probably they always had. ²

The churches with pipe-organs, pianos and choirs,
were the most regular providers of serious music - for
those who went to church - though that music would have
been subsidiary to its religious purposes, and few, if
any, church organists would have gone beyond favourite
sacred music to play secular or contemporary music. ³

According to Plumpton, the standard of church music in
the city was lamentably low, especially in Protestant
churches, where, he noted disdainfully, attempts to sing
seconds only produced cacophony; but he was trying to
persuade them to hire qualified singers. ⁴ The stricter
of the Presbyterians even disapproved of music in church,
and it is most unlikely that the churches played a

¹ There is no attempt made here to deal with popular or
folk music.
² A. Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, pp.506-7 for music in the
early days of Port Phillip.
³ An idea suggested by Dr Floyd, who once said in his
'Music Lovers' Hour' that he had often adapted contemporary
orchestral works and played them on the organ of St. Paul's
Cathedral, since there was no other chance of them being
heard in Melbourne.
stimulating role in local music, or in elevating
taste.

From 1874, when the massive Town Hall organ had
been built, the city had at least one instrument capable
of supporting in orchestral fashion the choirs which
constituted the main form of musical activity and
entertainment. David Lee, the official organist and
conductor of the Philharmonic, also gave regular concerts
on it which were well attended.¹ Those who enjoyed
orchestral or instrumental music, however, could hardly
feel satisfied with the bill of fare.²

Three local musical societies provided what music
there was, apart from that offered by visiting celebrities.
All drew almost exclusively on the one instrument easily
available in the colonies, the human voice.³

Two liedertafels flourished. The large Metropolitan
Liedertafel and the smaller but equally active Melbourne

¹ Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, p.508.
² Cf. Ada Cambridge’s pleasure in the Orchestra established
for the Exhibition in 1888. *Thirty Years in Australia*,
pp.186-7.
³ The spasmodic and spasmodically successful Brighton
Philharmonic Society, conducted by Julius Herz between
1874-82, folded up from male frailty but was assured of a
supply of female singers from the district’s church choirs.
Liedertafel had been founded by Germans, and existed to encourage people who wanted to sing, to sing well; and both attracted wide support. The Metropolitan could expect about two thousand people to its Town Hall concerts, while hundreds attended the informal smoke-nights. Both tried to produce 'the best works of the old masters' and to keep up with 'contemporary' composers like Meyerbeer, Donizetti and Weber. In 1885, the Metropolitan sang 'The Damnation of Faustus' by Berlioz, 'The Ruins of Athens', 'The Feast of the Apostles' and the final part of Schubert's 'Night in the Forest', as well as local works by Plumpton and Austin.

They did not sing 'The Messiah'. That was the prerogative of the more prestigious Melbourne Philharmonic Society, which had the necessary women singers. In fact the Philharmonic sang it fifteen times in ten years.

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1 Herz conducted the Metropolitan. Table Talk, June 26 1885.
2 Annual Report, Metropolitan Liedertafel, (Melb., 1883), Music Pamphs., vol.5:3, p.3.
3 Ibid., (1883), p.12.
4 First established in 1840, it collapsed from lack of support and lack of musical instruments, but revived in 1853. Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, pp.506-7.
5 Carne, op.cit., pp.86-104, includes the programmes.
During the same time they sang Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' four times, Costa's 'Eli' twice, Spohr's 'Calvary' three times, Gounod's 'Redemption' twice, and Haydn's 'Creation' three times, while miscellaneous concerts given at least once a year invariably featured choruses and solos from Handel and Mendelssohn. Special efforts like the 'Choral' Symphony for the 1880 Exhibition and Dvorak's 'Stabat Mater' in 1885\(^1\) aroused such wide enthusiasm that it is possible that not only music critics tired of 'elevating' programmes. As one critic put it:

> it would also be well for the directors to bear in mind that there are other works of the composer of the 'Messiah', that Sebastian Bach remains still almost unrepresented, that modern composers such as Brahms, Bruch, Goetz, Sade, Benedict, Macfarren and Sullivan and many others have engaged the attention of Europe, but are still unknown in Melbourne.\(^2\)

Disregarding the lonely voice, the Philharmonic continued on its exalted and repetitious way. The orchestra may have been incompetent, the singers barely trained\(^3\) and the programmes predictable, but the Society remained

\(^2\) Federal Australian, vol.1:4, p.100 (1).
\(^3\) Harry Emmett's Theatrical Holiday Book, pp.36-7.
assured of support, especially since the Governor attended\textsuperscript{1} and, in the vice-regal wake, the best of society.

The three societies were not only making the best of limited resources. They sang the music they preferred. When Alexander Sutherland claimed that most major works could be heard in Melbourne, he was being rather short-sighted: Mozart, Bach and Brahms were by-passed, for instance. Emphasized by isolation and limited resources, colonial taste merely formalized mid-Victorian musical taste, and extracted its two main strands, choral music and music demanding technical virtuosity. Not surprisingly Wagner and Handel were favourites, and so were Mendelssohn and Liszt; behind this lay the familiar nineteenth century assumption that art should be elevating.\textsuperscript{2} Their idea of good music followed English attitudes, but was not based on a diversity of musical life as rich as that of London, where ten or twelve concerts might be advertised daily during the season.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{E.g.}, \textit{Age}, July 21 1877.
\textsuperscript{2} Cf. R. Barry, 'Music and Poetry', p.13, \textit{Bound Volume of Addresses}.
In Melbourne the weekly fare might include, as it did in July 1877, Lyster's production of 'The Brigands' by Offenbach, the original Christy's Ministrels, and the background music for the Royal Marionettes, and held out hopes for a concert by the Philharmonic, or a visit from a prima donna, with a few suburban concerts as well.1 From visiting celebrities they drew their standards; from their own experience and nineteenth century background they drew their preferences; and from their situation, their enthusiasm. This applied to both performers and audience.

The colonies provided a ready-made audience, and Melbourne the richest and readiest of them all.2 By the sixties it was a regular bidder on the world opera market,3 and the first success came when W.S. Lyster presented 'The Bohemian Girl', a work pleasing in its excessive demands on singers' skills,4 and satisfying to an audience enjoying the ornate and the extravagant. Entrepreneurs

1 See Age, July 7 1877, p.8; July 21 1877, p.8.
3 Stirling, op.cit., p.61.
4 Sutherland, op.cit., vol.1, p.508, says it was popular immediately for its 'mounting and general efficiency'.


like Lyster and Williamson made fortunes, and local groups prospered almost despite themselves. One star after another endured the long trip to the colonies for the sake of the applause and the profits they gained. In 1875-6, Ilme de Murska came,\(^1\) in 1877 Antionetta Link, claimed to be the greatest opera singer before Melba,\(^2\) and in 1880, Carlotta Patti, sister of the great Adelina Patti.\(^3\) Each time the musical public stirred with pleasure.\(^4\)

Equally exciting were the locally born artists who became stars and gained for themselves, and by implication for their city, world-wide attention and applause. Ernest Hutcheson, born in 1875, flabbergasted audiences in 1880 with performances on the Town Hall organ, and they called him 'the infant Mozart'; W.J. Clarke sent him to the Conservatorium of Leipzig; he gained fame as a concert pianist, and later became Principal of the Julliard School of Music.\(^5\) Johann Kruse, the violinist,

\(^{1}\) Argus, January 24 1876, p.6 (1).
\(^{2}\) J. Smith, Cyclopaedia of Victoria, vol.2, p.81.
\(^{3}\) Hanslick, op.cit., p.181.
\(^{4}\) 'The Melbourne musical public is always greatly exercised in the matter of a prima donna' (sic) Age, July 28 1877.
\(^{5}\) McLeod, loc.cit., p.402.
went to Europe by public subscription and returned in 1884 to perform in a style amply satisfying to those who had subscribed.\(^1\) Finally, singing in a church choir was the future Dame Nellie Melba, who left for further studies overseas in 1886.\(^2\)

In 1884, the executive of the Metropolitan Liedertafel rejoiced that they had given a concert in which all the main performers were Australian-born.\(^3\) The question of where the next generation of musicians and a musically educated public would come from, however, had become a serious one, besides which the previously mentioned concert was almost a flash-in-the-pan. As spokesmen explained, music was an important part of moral and spiritual well-being\(^4\) and extensive education and improvement was necessary if badly-trained amateurs, ignorant critics, and imported stars were not to dominate Australian music. Behind the statements of a minority lay a realization that a native-born generation was growing up with little idea of serious music apart from

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\(^1\) Annual Report, Metropolitan Liedertafel, (1884-5), p.8.

\(^2\) G. Hutton, Melba, (Melb., 1962), pp.3-4.

\(^3\) See note 1.

what could be gleaned from the concerts of the local societies, the commercial theatre and the occasional visiting performer.

The existing organizations, the Musical Association (a certificate-awarding body of music teachers) and the privately run Melbourne School of Music could hardly be taken as adequate for training local musicians,¹ and the offshoot of the Musical Association, the Musical Artists' Association, formed to help musicians practise together, was in no position to bear the entire burden of improving standards of performance.² Meanwhile how much longer would they be able to depend on the appearance and quality of visitors?³

In 1884, a Mr T. Summers wrote to the papers suggesting that a colonial school of music be established. After some discussion, he proposed the foundation of a Federal Australian College of Music, by the simple means of five

² Federal Australian, vol.1:4, p.100 (2).
³ Not all the celebrities were accepted uncritically. Remenyi, the violinist, was reported to have 'declined to scrape more than once a bar' (Harry Emmett...) and a pianist of leaving out whole phrases of Beethoven's sonatas. M.U.R., loc.cit.
hundred citizens giving fifty pounds each, with himself as the first donor.¹ The hints of the more outspoken music lovers began to look like bearing fruit. The London Royal College of Music, founded in 1882, and written up by Plumpton in the Victorian Review,² provided a possible model. Francis Ormond, a wealthy Presbyterian pastoralist and philanthropist who had given one hundred guineas to the London College, then offered to assist financially any worthy effort to establish a music college in Victoria.³

After much discussion, as to whether a College, an orchestra or a Chair of Music at the University would be the most productive, it was decided to accept the conditional offer and endow a Chair at the University. Despite public apathy, even within the musical societies, the necessary £20,000 was eventually raised and the Ormond Chair of Music formally established in 1887; though it remained empty until the appointment of Marshall Hall in 1891.

¹ C.S. Ross, op.cit., p.124.
² Vol.7:40, pp.424-6.
³ Ross, op.cit., p.124.
A writer in the *Centennial Magazine* in 1891 thought there had been a general awakening in the colonies to things musical.\(^1\) Undoubtedly by 1890 more kinds of music could be heard in Melbourne and the ground work had been laid to ensure the build-up of future musicians and musical public. In the interim, the situation was healthy, though very limited in its scope, and closely dependent on British standards.

While George Bernard Shaw in the late eighties, was scourging British musicians and music lovers for their ignorance\(^2\) he was also scourging British dramatists and theatre-goers for their ignorance of drama. His pungent criticisms appeared after 1888, but the situation had existed in both arts for the preceding quarter century. Theatrical standards were more debased than those of the musical world; and the theatre, lacking inspiration from new playwrights, had long since lapsed into a dependance

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1  F.W. Elsner, 'The Progress of Instrumental Music in Australia', *C.M.*, vol.1:8, pp.544-5. Attributed by the writer to the Orchestra established in 1888 for the Exhibition under the conductor F. Cowen.

on the star system, which far from killing interest merely made it insatiable.

Theatre managers in Melbourne prospered, and George Coppin and J.C. Williamson made, and in Coppin's case, lost, fortunes while they kept a judiciously selected stream of celebrated actors and companies flowing into the city. Meanwhile, local dramatists wrote innumerable plays, which, if they were lucky, were played once, and never heard of again. The very assurance and continued application of imported material, in itself of doubtful quality, thwarted colonial playwrights and helped to establish them in unproductive techniques and assumptions. Playwrights faced a similar problem to that faced by writers, composers, and the immigrant painters.

Individual enterprise dominated the theatre as it did industry. Decisions of taste were made by individuals often ill-equipped to make them. In drama, individual performances and grandiose settings provided a touchstone of validity, as technical virtuosity and size did in music, and fine detail and exalted subjects in painting. No well-known criteria prevailed to give coherence to the arts; and drama consisted in one programme after another,

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of whatsoever was available. No sense of urgency, of the need to express tensions in the form of a play, vitalized the theatre. The demise of legitimate theatre in England sprang from this impasse; even there, playwrights found no accepted sets of aesthetic or social assumptions to draw on, and the efforts of Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne and Meredith to revive the theatre failed, although this resulted also from the fact that each of these drew their inspiration from poetic or prosaic rather than dramatic forms. The stage became an open field for entertainers of all kinds, and playwrights whose names are now but names, Arthur Pinero and H.A. Jones, gained pre-eminence. The best companies fell back on Shakespeare, and so helped to foster that apparently endless adulation of his plays first begun by the Romantic Poets. Apart from the regularly convened Shakespearian festivals, the stage in England was still hardly respectable, being the haunt of 'low people' rather than patronized by the best of

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1 Cf. R.H. Tawney, Literature and Society, Lecture, (Melb., 1951), for a discussion of the interplay of forces and assumptions which might have fostered the Elizabethan literary effervescence.

society.¹ What chance then was there for colonial theatre.

The malaise which ran right through English drama affected the whole English-speaking world.² Not until the nineties, with the propagandist plays of Shaw and the comedies of Oscar Wilde, did any kind of life reappear in British theatre. At this time, Shaw raised the question of what drama might be; he introduced, albeit distortedly, the tragic realism of the great Scandinavian Ibsen into England in a book called *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*. These much-needed injections had not come in the seventies and eighties; and never really arrived in Australia in the nineteenth century.

Francis Adams, writing from Queensland in 1891, noted that 'the stage is a sore subject in Australia as in England'; and having been a theatre critic in both places, said authoritatively that it was contemptible.³

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¹ Cf. 'Julian Thomas', 'In a Theatre Vestibule', *Vagabond Papers*, (Melb., 1877), for a description of the part of the audience in Melbourne theatres.


³ F.W.L. Adams, 'The Contemporary Stage', *Centennial Magazine*, vol.1:4, p.201.
Twopenny, more snobbish and not at all concerned with art, observed that colonial taste in theatre followed British taste, and exhibited a preference for the 'new Babylon' type of play, and Gilbert and Sullivan. As with music, Melbourne provided a big audience for visiting actors, and as Twopenny also pointed out, actually depended on them.

The decade of famous Shakespearean actors ended in Melbourne in the sixties. G.V. Brooke, Sir William and Lady Don, Barry Sullivan Montgomery and the Keans had one after the other delighted Melbourne audiences, and left behind a legend of exuberance and quality. A Marble bust of the imperious Brooke stands in the State Library to this present day, and Farmer Whyte in 1913 could still recall the public debates in the sixties between Clarke, Horne, Smith and others, as to whether Hamlet was or was not mad, a debate sparked off by Montgomery's interpretation. Only the season of Madame Ristori in

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1875-6 equalled those of the past, and she was the last, and some thought the greatest, tragedienne to visit the colonies.¹ Twopenny thought the companies of the 'eighties second-rate: Rose Hersice the leading prima donna and Dion Boucicault still a favourite indeed'.² After all, he said by way of reprieve, town life was a recent innovation in Australia.

Melbourne was, nonetheless, the centre of theatrical life in the colonies,³ with the biggest and best theatres,⁴ the most enterprising actor-managers (who were in effect early entrepreneurs) and willing audiences. George Coppin came first,⁵ then W.S. Lyster in the sixties, and J.C. Williamson in 1877, the last soon

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² Twopenny, *op.cit.*, p.216.
⁴ Sutherland, *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.519, wrote that the Princess Theatre built in 1885, was 'all that wealth and lavish enterprize could effect'. The other theatres were the Theatre Royal, the Opera House and the Academy of Music (the Bijou).
⁵ Coppin, 'Autobiography and address on his eightieth birthday' *Coppin papers* outlined his career as actor, manager, philanthropist and politician, since the gold rush days. Between 1855-73 he built four theatres, lost money at the rate of £3000 in his first opera season, but prospered as the Grand Old Man of Show Business. See also, *Australian Encyclopedia*, vol.3, p.56.
becoming the firm of Williamson, Garner and Musgrove. ¹
This combination began the period, between 1878 and 1899, when actor-managers dominated the Victorian stage. ²
At the beginning of the decade, Coppin controlled the 'Royal' and the 'Princess', Lyster controlled the Opera House, and G.B.W. Lewis, an ex-circus manager of the fifties, ran the 'Bijou'. By the end of the decade, 1886, the situation had changed and three wealthy composite managements controlled Melbourne theatres: Williamson and Company ran Coppin's old 'Royal' and 'Princess', Rignold and Allison took over Lyster's Opera House, and the Majeronis ran the 'Bijou'. ³ Although J.C. Williamson had already begun to corner the business, ⁴ it was so successful that other managers, like William Dampier who consistently tried to produce 'legitimate' theatre prospered too, as did the versatile Boucicault Company.

³ Table Talk, June 26 1885, p.6.
⁴ With the Australian copyright to Gilbert and Sullivan he had a good start. Stephens, op.cit., p.21.
The city which had one theatre in 1872,\(^1\) had four in 1886, and these presented a relatively large number of plays weekly,\(^2\) but what the plays were depended on what the triumverate had decided would sell.

One historian has seen the eighties as the most theatrically alive period in Australian history,\(^3\) but what kind of vitality was it? A critic in 1885 bewailed the tyranny of the entrepreneurs, and wrote that it was difficult to decide which of them was doing least to popularize the drama.\(^4\) If they had felt dissatisfied in the days of Coppin, he went on, they would now see that by contrast these two had been princes in their own way, introducing real talent to the colonies. Now they had to endure 'the melodious trifles and inane comicalities' of the Gilbert and Sullivan, Easter pantomimes, and comic opera provided by Williamson, or Offebach who 'appeals to...the crapulous instinct' from the Majeronis, or

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1 Sutherland, *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.517.
2 Popular entertainments, though not within the scope of this thesis, were numerous: black faced minstrels, conjurers, vaudeville, song and dance teams, were regularly advertised. See also *Age*, July 28 1877, for 'The Home of Ministrelsy' and 'The Blondin out-do'.
3 Lesser, *op.cit.*, preface.
4 *Table Talk*, June 26 1885, p.6.
tolerate a stage filled with second-rate performers at Dampier’s theatre.

There had indeed been a shift in the kind of plays presented to colonial audiences, and probably that did not mean improvement. Adelaide Ristori,\(^1\) who had been seen as a herald of widespread improvement in colonial theatre had only provided the swan-song for the international stars. Though imported plays, actors and standards still prevailed these were performances of the hour, plays and musicals successful in London and New York a few years earlier, which after their colonial seasons would be heard of no more. Instead of seeing Shakespeare, or at the other end of the scale, colonial plays, Melburnians went along to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin', 'The Woman in White' and 'Valjean', adaptations from the novels, or the Majeroni performances of 'East Lynne' and 'Jealousy', in 1884.\(^2\) One of the greatest successes of the decade was the polished London Comedy Company which came in 1880. The idea of theatre, as drawn from visiting companies mainly interested in promoting themselves, and entrepreneurs primarily concerned with

\(^1\) Australasian Sketcher, September 4 1875, p.83, for an account of her appearances in Sydney.

\(^2\) Kardoss, op.cit., p.39.
profits, degenerated into the nadir of contemporaneity, or rather up-to-date-ness, and had little to do with the mind, apart from the oft-repeated aim of relaxing it.

For the idealistic few, who maintained some idea of great theatre and clung to its power to elevate men, the change, even with Shakespeare retained as pepper and salt, was lamentable. The day of the merely meretricious, the ornate, and the technically impressive had arrived. Arthur Patchett Martin was so distressed by evidence of this, in a friend's proposal to put a full-size air-balloon on the stage, that he was prompted to discuss again the view of Charles Lamb, that Shakespeare was to be read not acted, in a wider context. Theatre in Marvellous Melbourne meant large scale entertainment.

The Keans, visiting in the eighteen-sixties, thought the audiences poor; so perhaps the audiences got not only what they deserved but what they wanted. Williamson, on the other hand, thought colonial audiences well-educated since they only saw the most successful plays of the Old

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1 King Lear was presented in 1822. Ibid., p.38.
2 'Charles Lamb on Stage Representation', V.R., vol.4:15, p.285 et seq.
World, and quietly stayed away from inferior productions. The policies of the managers ensured that audiences saw the successful plays. The poor quality of current English theatre barely saved the managers from the criticism that they exercised their cultural responsibilities only in reference to their own pockets. They did little to improve colonial taste, or to encourage local play-writing. Plays, moreover, had little reference to the otherwise prominent cultural aspirations of cultural leaders. This was due mainly to the unimportance of contemporary English theatre in the country's triumphant Progress; the colonials seem to have unconsciously accepted this fact, and so directed even less attention to indigenous drama than to other art forms.

Dr Neild, drama critic of the Argus, was well-satirized by the Austral Review. When asked why he did not criticize constructively, he was made to reply

I have to fill my regulation columns every week and cannot afford to waste my time in waiting for the drama to revive.

On the whole drama critics, like the music and art critics, had little time to foster independent theatre,

1 Stephens, op.cit., p.34.
and little interest even in demolishing false standards in the dependent commercial theatre, contenting themselves with summaries of the plays, descriptions of the scenery and the audience, and the allocation of praise or blame to actors. Silence from the critics, vigorous profiteering by the managers, and continued patronage of the theatres all combined to veil the basic barrenness in dramatic ideas and efforts.

The local playwrights faithfully mirrored the situation, however, and their efforts reduced it to its fundamental inadequacy. When W.H. Waters proudly presented a list of the works of Melbourne playwrights, he proclaimed that

This great cosmopolitan city of Melbourne receives literary and artistic talent from all parts of the globe, and many a popular dramatic author has allowed evidences of his genius and ability to first see the light amongst ourselves.

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1. There has been no consistent analysis of theatre reviewing attempted here, though from spasmodic reading, there seems little reason to doubt that critics bolstered imported work, and did not go beyond prevailing assumptions.

2. This was what Adams attacked so vehemently - the anti-intellectual anti-aesthetic and pseudo-dramatic work called plays. _Loc.cit._, pp.202-3.

3. 'Our Own Authors and their Productions', _Harry Emmett's Theatrical Holiday Book_, p.17.
Evidence of that genius and ability was not apparent to those people presumably most likely to recognize it. Dr Neild read hundreds of locally written plays but could only recommend five to producers.威廉son also read hundreds and rejected them. In the decade twenty-two individuals wrote seventy plays, though some were not published. Most were, from their titles, farces, satires, burlesques, sketches or at most historical dramas; one by the well-regarded John Finnamore was a tragedy, 'Carpio', which was performed in 1880.

Beyond the run-of-the-mill work, the manager William Dampier and his admirer Francis Hopkins, the Riverina pastoralist, produced more relevant work. Dampier, in 1886, adapted For the Term of His Natural Life for the stage, and later, Robbery under Arms. Hopkins, who

2 Or was reported to have done so. Stevens, op.cit., p.28.
3 From the contemporary Waters (loc.cit.) rather than a modern bibliographical guide.
5 Stephens, p.29.
attempted to write serious plays, wrote one in 1883 to stir people about the defence question. ¹  George Darrell, also one of the better-known, tackled the convict theme in 1887 with *Transported for Life*, but as an 'original sensation' it may not have reached the level of serious drama.²

Marcus Clarke and Garnet Walch achieved a greater success than any of these. They set out to entertain, and put on productions during the seasons when people sought entertainment, especially at Christmas. Clarke with his usual facility turned out nine plays in eleven years.³ This included *Goody Two Shoes and Little Boy Blue* and *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*, both pantomimes, two original dramas, and two adaptations from foreign novels - in 1877 he produced an adaptation of Wilkie Collin's famous thriller, *The Moonstone*. He also wrote the libretto for the flippant 'Alfred the Great'.⁴ His last effort in

¹ Presumably, 'Russia as it is: or, Micheal Strogoff, the Courier of the Czar' (Sydney, 1882). See also Souvenir of the dramatic works of Francis Hopkins, (Sydney, 1910), where he expresses his debt to Dampier.


³ Miller, *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.378, lists five. Waters listed nine, all of which he claimed were actually performed.

⁴ Score and libretto held by the A.N.L., Petherick Collection.
1880 brought these light-hearted efforts to an end. The political burlesque The Happy Land adapted from an English script of the same name brought public censure and probably lost him the post of Public Librarian¹ (which he had depended on as a way out of his financial strife).

Garnet Walch also stayed on the level of entertainment in what he wrote for the stage. Of the fifteen works presented between 1872 and 1883,² the most ambitious was his adaptation of 'Löhingrin' in 1874. The rest were pantomimes, farces and burlesques.³ Walch, like Clarke, found the level on which a mediocre local dramatist would compete with imported plays and productions. That no one else found any level at all illustrates the difficult position of the colonial artist, who, working within the traditions of a parent culture with which close contact was maintained, had either to surpass, under-cut or supplement the work of professional artists, whose only problem was to keep on writing.

¹ B.R. Elliott, Marcus Clarke, p.233, et seq.
² Miller, op.cit., vol.1, pp.378-9 lists fourteen 'and others'.
³ Selby, op.cit., p.232 remembered his pantomime Bluebeard, or the Fakir of Oulah as typical and splendid entertainment.
Once the theatres had been established, the problem was not to keep them filled, but present on their stages the best dramatic works, and to encourage writing in the colony. Williamson said that the plays he read were either too literary or too melodramatic to present, a revealing comment. The would-be dramatists evaded their experience, or failed to grapple with it; they rested in outworn conventions; they produced plays so ephemeral as to have been, by and large, simply forgotten.

In 1863, the Government appointed a Royal Commission 'to enquire into the subject of the promotion of the fine arts'. The Commissioners were required to submit a scheme for the formation, conduct and management of a public museum, gallery and schools of art for the colony. They had also to decide how one thousand pounds could best be spent to begin an art-gallery.\textsuperscript{1} This practical gesture came as a response to the agitations of men like Barry and James Smith, and was one of last expressions of the exuberant gold-rush image of a civilized society. A National Gallery had been opened a few years earlier

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{V.P.P. (1864-5), vol.4, no.58, Second Progress Report, The Commission.}
in the wing of the Public Library, and contained a collection of casts, coins and medals, which were until 1864 its own purchases. The first exhibition of paintings was held in 1864, after the trustees, following the recommendations of the Commissioners, had appointed agents in London, and Sir Charles Eastlake and H.C.E. Childers had bought certain paintings.

The Commissioners, eleven public men relatively well-versed in artistic matters, recommended that the Gallery be united with the Library and Museum under the title The Public Museum, and be controlled by one body of trustees. They also recommended that a specific kind of collection be established. This was, in fact, the main question. The debate between those who thought

3 I.e., Redmond Barry, Alexander Michie, George Verdon, Gavan Duffy (all later knighted for their public services), Professor Wilson, James Smith, Charles Summers the Sculptor, Tulke the Public Librarian, W.T. Mollison, W.W. Wardell, and F. Wilkinson.
4 V.P.P., part IV (44).
that the public interest would best be served by buying copies of famous paintings and those who wanted originals to be purchased was resolved in compromise. A limited number of copies was desirable, mainly for educative purposes; but originals should predominate.¹

At the outset the trustees had hoped to build up an historical collection, containing some contemporary paintings. They planned to present 'the chief epochs of mental excellence', and in doing so, to elevate public taste.² The Commissioners agreed with the original plan, but in their debate over copies and originals they brought out its impracticability. To acquire a genuine historical collection the trustees would have needed financial resources far wider than those they actually had. The only originals they could afford were contemporary paintings. So they could not realize their hopes of an historical collection, and had to rest content with Academy paintings which made a mockery of those hopes. Moreover, their London agent often lacked the time and the ability to select suitable paintings. When

¹ Ibid., part II (24).
Sir Charles Gavan Duffy went to the Royal Academy to select paintings, he picked out six, only to find afterwards that five of those had already been purchased. Eastlake, the first agent and President of the Royal Academy had already set the pattern of buying paintings there, and began the process which as one art historian put it, threatened to turn the Gallery into a Palace of Vanities.

By 1876, the main institution of art in the colony contained a large collection. It could assemble nearly six thousand works of art; but 5,687 of those were photographs, engravings and drawings. In addition, the Gallery School had been established, and the Macarthur Gallery had been completed. The National Gallery of Victoria was firmly established, and the apostles of culture had made a substantial point: though, as was by now obvious, not the one they had hoped to make.

The paintings acquired did not illustrate the epochs of mental pre-eminence. Sir Charles Eastlake's first

2 Armstrong, op. cit., p. 16, includes a list of these.
purchases started this. His most conspicuous purchase, 'The Departure of the Pilgrim Fathers', by a future President of the Royal Academy, was a huge, glossy, historical illustration, the aesthetic appeal of which escapes the twentieth century eye; paintings like 'Horses and Pigs', and 'An Italian family' spoke for themselves, being typical examples of mid-nineteenth century Academy art. The paintings bought during the seventies and the eighties belonged to the same genre. In 1877 a copy of Herbert's 'The Descent of Moses from the Mount' arrived; in the following year the Trustees commissioned another work from the painter of 'Bunyan in Prison'. The standards of official British art became the standards of official Melbourne art; and circumstances and finance ensured that its realistic or decorative style and its preference for literary or historical subjects dominated the colonial Art Gallery and the attitudes of those who supported it.

There is little sign that the public, or the trustees, disapproved of the development, and the collection of plaster casts, built on the original historical principle, was scrapped at the end of the century, probably because

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1 Armstrong, op. cit., p. 39. See Catalogues (1875) and (1894) for photographs of paintings mentioned.
of public boredom. Very few criticized prevailing standards, and the Gallery regularly received approving comment from visitors and writers like Sutherland and Walch. Perhaps the drama writer of the Argus, Dr Neild, was the only one to find some of the Gallery's acquisitions in bad taste:

The examples [of sculpture] in the National Gallery...are melancholy illustration of probably good intentions but disastrous ill judgement on the part of the buyer.

Nield did not go on to question the assumptions behind the acceptable painting of the day however, and no one else did either. When the executive body of the institution said they wanted big paintings, they meant it; when they said they wanted paintings 'of a high order', they may have been sincere, but they had little idea of what that actually meant.

The Gallery fostered that bad taste for which the nineteenth century has almost been forgiven. The Trustees,

1 Course, op. cit., pp.2-3, reports that among the casts were Apollo Belvedere and the Laocoon, but that the rest were identical with the display at the South Kensington Museum and other places of public interest in England.


3 Catalogue, 1875, p.11.
in accepting paintings which had only non-aesthetic virtues, showed little understanding of the culture they so genuinely desired. In 1875, they published a book of photographs of the pictures in their care, with a commentary by Marcus Clarke. Although Clarke was no ignorant Philistine, he had no criteria for assessing a painting, and confined his text to literary reference, personal reminiscence and historical background. When discussing 'The Weald of Kent', a low-toned landscape by Samuel Brough, an Edinburgh painter, Clarke wrote enthusiastically about the delights of Kentish landscape, historical events which happened there, and referred to the paintings only to describe what it contained, though that was obvious to the eye alone. He praised the painting for its perspective, its realism and its carefully-wrought detail, all aspects of craftsmanship rather than artistic ability.

Thus the Gallery did little to educate colonial taste, either through its purchasing policy or its official statements. The Trustees could take pride in the Gallery, and interpret the Academy paintings it

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1 Photographs of the Pictures in the National Gallery, Melbourne, (Melb., 1875), plate 4.
contained as a sign of progressiveness;¹ but in fact they were being very conservative. Behind the official art, and the attitudes of its supporters lay two things: that pervasive belief that art should elevate (in breathtaking skill and in serious subject matter) and that equally pervasive emotional fixation of the colonial with 'home'. This latter aspect often expressed itself in the superficial and externalized desire to keep up with developments there: which unfortunately and inevitably meant being left behind.

If people thought about art, they usually based their thinking on its subject-matter, and their associations with it. What pleased them was not the abstract aesthetic qualities in a painting, but its measurable virtuosity, whether that lay in details, in lavish colour, or simply in careful execution. The reassuring criterion of realism, with its moral and scientific bases, remained the important one. When James Smith, the most influential of local art critics and the doyen of Melbourne journalists, wrote on his impressions of Italian art, he clearly formulated these criteria.

¹ Ibid., frontispiece.
Two things are to be learnt from the Galleries in Rome and Florence. The one is the equality of Andrea del Sarto with Raffaello, and the other is the assurance that to the paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth century belongs the uncontested pre-eminence in landscape painting. The interpretation of the external world with fidelity and feeling was certainly not one of the gifts of Italian art. They loved art... but there they stopped.

Painting which depended on fidelity and feeling was then the most desirable painting. Until 1888, when the Australian impressionists held their first exhibition, art in Victoria based itself entirely on Academy conventions. The excessive naturalism of that convention, and its emphasis on external things fitted colonial needs well enough. Indeed, given the British origins of most of the inhabitants of Melbourne, and the short time most of them had been absent from England, it is almost inconceivable that any other kind of painting could have appealed.

The appeal of inherited standards remained too strong to allow any widespread interest in original developments.


2 Cf. Punch, October 9 1879, p.4. The writer wants the novelist to exhibit 'fidelity to nature' and 'scrupulous adherence to the truth'; see also p.272.

3 See B. Smith, Place, Taste and Tradition, (Sydney, 1945), pp.103-4.
among local artists.\footnote{V. Spate, Art Criticism in the Melbourne press, 1880-1900, unpub. essay, (Melb., 1859), p.8.} When the Commissioners in 1864 had thought of indigenous art, they thought of earnest students learning from Gallery exhibits,\footnote{Second Progress Report, part III.} not until George Folingsby arrived in the early eighties to direct the Gallery school was the stultifying practice of learning by copying abolished. James Smith, and other promoters of art, were too busy filling newspaper columns and establishing Kyrle and Kalizoic Societies\footnote{The Kyrle Society existed for the mental elevation of the labouring class. Federal Australia, vol.1:2, p.36(4).} to appreciate local departures or modern styles when they did come. The Government showed a complete lack of interest, considering its duty well-done with the annual grant to the Gallery. The Trustees of the Gallery took little enough interest in local painters.\footnote{The Kalizoic was similar. J. Smith, Presidential Address delivered at the Inauguration of the Kalizoic Society of Victoria, (Melb., 1884), Art Pamphs., vol.100:6, pp.8-9.} The public failed to support local exhibitions.\footnote{F.J. Bromfield, 'Art and Artists in Victoria', Centennial Magazine, vol.1:12, pp.883-4.} Artists did not therefore

\begin{footnotes}
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\footnote{V. Spate, Art Criticism in the Melbourne press, 1880-1900, unpub. essay, (Melb., 1859), p.8. The union of aesthetic and non-aesthetic evaluations of visual technical and social criteria formed a coherent structure which withstood...the assaults of new ideas and new styles.}
\footnote{Second Progress Report, part III.}
\footnote{The Kyrle Society existed for the mental elevation of the labouring class. Federal Australia, vol.1:2, p.36(4).}
\footnote{The Kalizoic was similar. J. Smith, Presidential Address delivered at the Inauguration of the Kalizoic Society of Victoria, (Melb., 1884), Art Pamphs., vol.100:6, pp.8-9.}
\footnote{Crawford, op.cit., p.14. The Victorian Academy of Artists, founded in 1870 and modelled on the Royal Academy, collapsed in 1883 from lack of support.}
\end{footnotes}
stop painting; but they failed, until the 9 x 5
Exhibition of 1888, to make any serious impact, or to
attract attention.

People resented nothing so much as the suggestion
of cultural deficiency;¹ and in the midst of their eager
efforts to keep up with British art, they were aware that
at some stage, (probably, they thought, within three
generations) their efforts would bear fruit in an
indigenous school of painting; they hardly expected it
in their own.

The first influx of painters occurred in the fifties.
The few painters who achieved any kind of prominence
until the eighties were men of the gold-rush generation,²
with the sole exception of the most talented and esteemed
of them all, Louis Buvelot, who arrived from South
America in the sixties.³ Competent landscape artists
like Eugene von Guerard, Nicholas Chevalier and Henry
Burns formed the first core of an artistic community.
Beyond them existed an anonymous host of painters, dabblers

¹ The Australasian Critic, June 1 1891, p.217, noted a
narrowness, and a tendency towards 'fulsome praise', in
Melbourne art circles.
² Crawford, op.cit., p.2.
³ Obituary, Argus, May 31, 1885, p.5(4).
and commercial artists,\textsuperscript{1} who may have shown work in the Victorian Academy of Artists' exhibitions.\textsuperscript{2} Most of these probably merited little attention, and equally probably contributed to the ignorance which surrounded art. Only von Guerard and Buvelot attracted support, Buvelot's sensitive Arcadian landscapes, in which he captured the fleeting half-lights of evening and early morning, found ready purchasers;\textsuperscript{3} and Buvelot's membership of the Victorian Academy of Artists was a matter of great prestige. When he threatened to withdraw in 1877, and refused to exhibit in 1880, fellow artists felt betrayed by their most distinguished representative, and left, as it were, in the lurch.\textsuperscript{4}

Apart from this solitary man who never even learnt to speak English,\textsuperscript{5} the immigrant artists did not find ready supporters, not simply because there was no support

\textsuperscript{1} Census of Victoria, (1881), p.102, lists 223 painters, 26 sculptors and 39 engravers.
\textsuperscript{2} Between 1872 and 1883, this body held nine exhibitions. Crawford, \textit{op.cit.}, Appendix.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Argus}, May 31 1888, p.5(4).
\textsuperscript{4} Crawford, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.16-17.
\textsuperscript{5} W. Moore, \textit{The Story of Australian Art}, (Sydney, 1943), vol.1, p.68.
to be found, but because, like the writers, they did not know how to appeal to that potential support. It was no easy job to shift the art audience away from its academic preferences. The only organization to find a route to the public was the Art Union, set up by the Victorian Academy of Artists, which could find almost one thousand subscribers to what amounted to an art lottery with an Australian painting as its prize. This constituted the same kind of attempt to reach an audience as the seasonal miscellanies published by local writers. Even so, the public did not always support the Art Union. The break with conventional forms and ideas had not yet been made. It called for an approach to painting quite different from any customary to nineteenth-century English art.

More immigrant painters arrived in Melbourne after 1878, painters trained in European schools. At the time when Tom Roberts finished his training at the Collingwood School of Design, and George Folingsby re-orientated

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1 An 'Exhibition of Works of Art, Art Treasures and Ornamental and Decorative Art', attracted, as the result of a Public Appeal, 1,406 exhibitors, 700 of whom lent oil paintings. Armstrong, op.cit., p.23.


3 Ibid., p.5.
teaching at the Gallery School, Julian Ashton and Daplyn arrived in Melbourne fresh from the *plein air* teachings in Paris. Two Florentine painters, Noerli and Catami arrived. At the end of the decade, Kohler, trained in Munich, and George Walton and J.C. Waite also arrived.¹

Even before Tom Roberts returned from Europe to form the Heidelberg group, some painters were beginning to paint in the open air,² instead of sitting in their studios dreaming up Venetian palaces, studies of Italian peasants, sketches of Flemish maids and images of England. Hints of a new approach might have been detected by a sensitive observer, had he watched the work of the new arrivals and the more effectively trained local students like Frederick McCubbin and E. Phillips Fox.³

Tom Roberts was the painter who introduced a new approach. On his return from London and Paris, in 1885, he began to apply, and to convey to his friends, the ideas he had received from those places. Although not a

² W. Moore, *op.cit.*, p.70.
³ F.J. Bromfield, *loc.cit.*, p.883. See also *Table Talk*, January 9 1891, on Folingsby; January 23 1891, on Phillips Fox.
precise teacher, he conveyed effectively enough the simple fact that the technicalities and ideology of Academy art would not help artists to paint what they saw. He said simply

When I came back to Australia, our little circle - McCubbin, Condon, Streeton and myself - set to work and made the beginnings of a modern Australian movement - open air and go-to-Nature without any immodesty.¹

Llewellyn Jones, one of Folingsby's students contrasted this with the way students had been painting indoors, and had no real idea of 'values'.² Perhaps the most important thing Roberts had learnt while in Europe was to proceed directly from his own perception of the object before him, and to try to catch what was inevitably a fleeting sense impression. In applying this, he established new interpretations and an effective criticism of the old ones. Like Joseph Furphy, writing Such is Life at about this time, Roberts went beyond the conventions established and appreciated by an earlier generation which were still followed by the acquiescent and the confused. Although Roberts and his fellow

¹ V. Spate, Tom Roberts, p.61, quoted from Sydney Morning Herald, August 3 1920, p.6. This brief discussion of Roberts draws heavily on Miss Spate's authoritative study.

² Moore, op.cit., p.94.
painters concerned themselves only with the external world, they had managed to control and recreate their impressions of that world; of all the various kinds of artists in Melbourne, they alone had been sufficiently freed to exercise what Coleridge called the Secondary Imagination. They drew on a new approach to painting and in doing so they offended the visual sensibilities of the artistic world, as the angry criticism of their first exhibition proved. No such European inspiration reached the would-be playwrights, the versifiers, and the novelists. Moreover painting was a more direct way of formulating colonial experience than composing, or even writing; so that while they had begun by 1886 to find an accord with their material, writers and musicians remained a little further away from their experience, and could not formulate it. Playwrights failed to locate the areas of tension, or drama, in their environment, and had no vital tradition to draw on; poets, suffering the same conventional sterility, usually evaded the deepest emotional experiences; and novelists could not fully face the most interesting areas of colonial life. However, once painters learnt to see the physical world they could proceed to establish a recognizably Australian idiom of painting. People might criticize their paintings and
reject them; but that was only a healthy differentiation of artist and society, since they had established a serious contact with sufficient of that society and the world beyond to function as artists; and as individuals who might find a self-respecting independence.
VII

THE SCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE

The people possessed of the scientific attitude\(^1\) - even a mere eighty years ago professional scientists or even men with scientific training were rare\(^2\) - found sufficient to interest them within Victoria and within the existing body of knowledge. A few were world-famous in their own fields. Baron von Mueller,\(^3\) Professor

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1 Sir James Jeans, 'Physics and Philosophy', *Philosophers of Science*, S. Commins ed., Mentor books, speaks of it thus: 'Because we are human beings and not mere animals, we try to discover as much as we can about the world in which our lives are cast. We have seen there is only one method of gaining such knowledge...the methods of science which consist in a direct questioning of nature by observation and experiment'.

2 The University reforms of the 1850s changed this; but even if most scientists were dilettantes, they were not necessarily also amateurish. D.S. Cardwell, *The Organization of Science in England* (London, 1957), pp. 12-13.

Frederick McCoy\(^1\) and William Sutherland\(^2\) had made permanent contributions to scientific knowledge. A small number were less spectacular but competent workers, like W.C. Kernot, first Professor of Engineering, and the self-taught Government Astronomer, R.L.J. Ellery, who presided over the Royal Society of Victoria for twenty years. The majority however, were simply enthusiasts, doorkeepers at the Temple of Science, whose services were as necessary as they were laborious.\(^3\) *The Darwinian*

\(^1\) Frederick McCoy, F.G.S. (1818-99), b. Ireland, educated Dublin, first Professor of the Natural Sciences at Melbourne University; geologist.


\(^3\) *Census of Victoria (1881)*, p.101, lists under 'Those ministering to science', 216 civil engineers, 11 engineers' draftsmen, 10 analytic chemists and 63 'others' (which included those in botany and astronomy and even 7 phrenologists. 1,595 men and women of medical and dental and associated professions came under 'Those ministering to health' (p.100) From the addresses given with the membership list in *Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria (1876)*, the following rough categorization has been compiled:

- 32 civil servants;
- 49 professional men (i.e. 6 doctors, 3 lawyers, 11 involved with higher education, 8 ministers of religion, 7 politicians, 1 army colonel, 13 from 'Collins St. East'),
- 4 commercial men,
- 8 distinguished honoraries,
- 29 private members (of these 10 lived in the country, and 12 were interstate or overseas members).
revolution may have dominated the minds of men facing the everlasting questions about the nature of man and his relationship to a debatable Deity, but for colonists who followed the same calling as Charles Darwin, more mundane problems presented themselves.

By 1876 Melbourne had several fairly well-established scientific societies of the British kind. The Royal Society was the first of these.\textsuperscript{1} It watched over the activities of smaller specialist societies like the Microscopical Society, the Field Nationalist's Club,\textsuperscript{2} the Zoological and Acclimatization Society,\textsuperscript{3} the Horticultural

\textsuperscript{1}There was as yet no equivalent to the British Association for the Advancement of Science (f.1831) until the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science was proposed in 1883. A Victorian branch existed briefly in the fifties but amalgamated with the Melbourne Philosophical Society in 1854, which became the Philosophical Institute of Victoria, and once chartered in 1860, that became the Royal Society of Victoria. D.J. Fry, The Foundation and Early History of the Royal Society of Victoria, unpublished essay, (Melb., 1953), pp.7 and 14. [The Royal Society of Victoria hereafter referred to as 'The Royal Society'].

\textsuperscript{2}Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria (1880), vol. XVII, p.xvi.

\textsuperscript{3}Founded in 1871 from the original Acclimatization Society, 'The Melbourne Zoo', Royal Historical Society of Victoria newsletter, no. 71 (n.d.).
Society, \(^1\) and the Geographical Society, \(^2\) although all except the first were independent in aim and in practice. Not all provided forums for discussion of scientific knowledge, but they could and sometimes did. Even more down-to-earth was the Australian Health Association which worked energetically during the decade to improve public standards of hygiene. \(^3\) Several professional unions could also have sponsored discussion and research. The Medical Society apparently did \(^4\) and the Pharmaceutical Society certainly did. \(^5\)

Within this structure of Scientific activity, the State played a small role. Its annual grant to the Royal Society paid for the publication of the transactions. \(^6\)


\(^{3}\) Its aims are set out on the back of *A.H.A. pamphlet*, no.5, in Medical Pamphlets, vol.102.


\(^{6}\) This amounted to £200. *Transactions and Proceedings*, vol.XIII, p.xii.
It supported the two Museums, the Industrial and Technological Museum housed in the Public Library building, and McCoy's carefully kept Museum of Natural Science at the University, and the Observatory and Botanical Gardens in the Domain. Ventures undertaken in the common weal like the useful geological survey of the state in 1867 and the ill-considered Burke and Wills expedition\(^1\) often added to scientific knowledge. Research into such subjects as 'The Drainage of Melbourne' had relevance to the needs of the government,\(^2\) but as von Mueller's complaints showed, the State was very little interested in research.

Seen in the wider context of scientific thought in the nineteenth century, the papers presented to the Royal Society of Victoria look at best unassuming. While the colonists fussed over sewerage, electric light bulbs, little known marine organisms and hopeful sites for gold-fields, the researches of British and European


scientists were surely but imperceptibly leading towards another revolution in man's view of the world. Progress in physics for instance was soon to destroy completely the unitary and mechanistic world views current since the work of the great seventeenth century scientists Galileo and Newton, and to pave the way for the twentieth century breakthrough by Einstein and Planck.

Two main features of this change, according to Singer, were that

1. the success of science was due to the faithfulness of its practice...[but] its destructiveness arose from the error of its philosophy which saw that practice as though it were the outcome of a world-view with which it was, in fact, fundamentally incompatible; and

2. an enormous broadening of the field...a multitude of smaller achievements...the perfecting and extended application of instruments, and the exemplification of general ideas in particular cases.

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3 Ibid., p.420-1.
Within physics fundamental contradictions seemed to emerge; from the study of sound, heat, optics and electro-magnetism came new and irreconcilable data to challenge fundamental principles. A new instrument, the spectroscope, diverted study away from the laws of the Universe to the tabulating of individual luminous bodies, whose observable structure and unpredictable movements contradicted rigidly determinist explanations. When applied to chemistry, the spectroscope enabled scientists to see how vastly complex the seemingly basic units of matter really were. Magnetic movements were seen as occurring within a field instead of between set points; light was shown to move in complex waves rather than straight lines. The nineteenth century ended with the beginning of a new physics where mechanical forces recede into the background and quite other conceptions take their place. The principle of relativity was made possible by the realization that the ultimate data of physics is not material objects but our measures of material objects.¹

During these years, physicists produced new theories about the transformations of heat, further explorations of the imagined 'ether' and more precise explanations of magnetic forces; astronomers were analysing and

¹ Ibid., p.460.
categorizing the stars; in 1873 the valency table was established, making modern chemical analysis possible.

William Sutherland was the only man in Melbourne to participate; but his contributions to learned journals did not begin until after 1885.¹ Sutherland gave his whole time to research, earning a living from examining, coaching and occasionally journalism, ignoring local scientific circles and making serious if unco-ordinated contributions to theoretical physics.

The quality of his dedication comes out in such remarks as

I have been in fine form...a paper all ready to send off to the Philosophical Magazine or the Royal Society of London. My head is churning now with theories of molecular force for liquids and solids - hyperbolic and parabolic for gaseous molecules; elliptical for liquids; but in solids the law changes and the question is, how.²

There is no hint of so vigorous and enthusiastic a mind amidst the few theoretical papers of the Royal Society.

¹ Osborne, op.cit., p.68, claims that his first article 'The mechanical integration of two functions' appeared in the Philosophical Magazine, August †1885, and his first important paper in the same place in 1886. He lists 69 papers written by Sutherland in the next twenty-five years. Appendix.

² Quoted by Osborne, ibid., p.41.
Meanwhile, the biologists seemed to have conclusively established a determinist explanation of life. It was Darwin's achievement to convince the scientific world for once and for all that the diverse forms of life are of common descent, that the species are inconstant and in some cases incapable of definition, and that some mechanism must explain that evolution: the Malthusian concept of 'survival of the fittest', or Natural Selection.¹ Darwin's originality has often been explained away and his success seriously questioned,² but the force of his theory and its impact could not be.³ However the main debate was non-scientific; once the evangelical work had been

¹ C. Darwin, The Origin of Species, (Mentor, 1958), p.30: 'although much remains obscure and will long remain obscure, I can entertain no doubt...that the view which naturalists until recently entertained... - namely that each species has been independently created - is erroneous. I am fully convinced that the species are not immutable, but that those belonging to what are called the same genera are lineal descendents of some other and generally extinct species, in the same manner as the acknowledged varieties of any one species are descendants of that species. Furthermore, I am convinced that Natural Selection has been the most important...means of modification'.


done, scientists as a whole withdrew. No real evidence emerged until the end of the century to correct the Darwinian view. Then, with Mendel's material on the discontinuity and chance involved in the transmission of genes, and the unpredictability of cellular reproduction, as well as revelations on the inter-action of the body and the nervous system, biological theory could no longer be clear-cut. During the last twenty-five years of the century, biologists, micro-biologists, geneticists and physiologists were working on problems defined not answered by the Darwinian revolution. Baron von Mueller had too many plants to collect and categorize for him to be concerned with their origins; and he was the most distinguished biological scientist in Melbourne.

The expanding field of applied sciences was not less stimulating. And for the colonists, the more they looked the more their wonder grew. Ellery in his last address said to the Royal Society in 1878:

I referred at some length to the then recent invention of the telephone....This wonderful little instrument has been greatly improved, and is now in actual use in Melbourne, not

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1 See M. Mandelbaum, 'Social Background and Evolutionary Theory', Ibid., pp.534-6 on the way human questions sprang from a theory supposedly focused on plants and animals.
only as a scientific toy, but as a means of communication....The phonograph cannot be said to be out of the category of scientific toys.¹

More than entertaining toys had come from the industrial revolution; and enormous changes resulted from the inter-action of technology and theoretical science. New machines, and the power on which they depended, were not only made more efficient, but also more comprehensible. New intermediary industries sprang up. Railways, telephones and electric lights were but the outward signs of vast scientific development.² It is impossible to do more than hint at the practical and mental effort expended on knowing what these new machines, big or small, complex or simple, could do; but here at least, people as far away as the Victorian colonists came into their own. They could apply and adapt as well as the next man, and part of the story of scientific thought in Melbourne between 1876-86 is the story of application and adaption both of pure and applied scientific knowledge.

¹ President's Address, Transactions and Proceedings vol.XV, p.xxiv.
² J.D. Bernal, Science and Industry in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1953), gives a Marxist interpretation of this process.
Why was a vigorous theoretical effort not found in Melbourne's scientific circles? In the first place, very few had the training or interest to participate at so intellectually demanding a level. Those scientists who did come to the colonies were not those attracted to abstract work. They responded to the challenge of a completely new physical world, exploring, describing and cataloguing it into comprehensibility. Thus Baron von Mueller's remark:

On reflection, I saw myself surrounded by so vast and bewildering a multitude of objects that to do justice to my theme became a hopeless task.¹

The point is not that men so far away from the centres of scientific thought failed to contemplate Pure Science, but that they laboured so strenuously in its interests. The kind of efforts they made referred to the kind of opportunities and demand issuing from a new environment, which unlike the artists, these men were able to deal with directly. It is easy to imagine von Mueller tramping across the continent stuffing specimens in his bag as he went;² or Mr McGillivray scouring the Victorian coasts

² Willis, op.cit., p.31.
for polyzoa;\(^1\) or Alfred William Howitt testing the rock structures of eastern Victoria while riding out on his magisterial duties;\(^2\) and in this context, light bulbs and sewerage were inevitably more important than the discovery of gallium.

Of all the colonial men of science, it was the Melburnians who took up Huxley's suggestion to the Royal Society of London that it should work towards the union of all English-speaking scientists.\(^3\) This was not purely a display of colonial cheek, though the fact that a response came from Melbourne rather than Toronto, or Cape Town, or Sydney, says something about the self-assertiveness and confidence of Melbourne in the eighties:

\(^1\) He presented the first of many papers, 'Descriptions of New, or Little Known, Polyzoa', in July 1881. Transactions and Proceedings, vol.XVIII, pp.115-21.


\(^3\) Proceedings of the Royal Society of London, vol.39, pp.282-3; and vol.41, pp.380-1. By the end of 1886, they still were in committee on the subject.
it was also a realistic acceptance of dependence.
The colonial men of science could only function at their best if they kept in close contact with the rest of the scientific world; on the other hand they would contribute important new material. The formal aim of the local Society was

the advancement of science literature and art, with especial reference to the development of the resources of the colony;¹

that advancement depended on inherited knowledge as well as local investigation. As Ellery, President for seven of the ten years here discussed, remarked in 1876, 'the fields of investigation are only too numerous'.² Six years later he elaborated, pointing to a wide field of research in natural history, social and sanitary science, engineering, microscopical investigation, medical and physiological science, geography and ethnology, all of which he correctly said offered unbounded fields from which to raise crops of knowledge 'for the benefit and

¹ Laws of the Royal Society of Victoria, Science Pamphs., Box 1, (A.N.L.).
enlightenment...of the community. He at least was aware of a dearth of harvesters in that community.

The Royal Society still faced big problems, practically and intellectually. Because the annual grant of two hundred pounds allowed the publication of its work, overseas contacts were more effective. By 1878, the single ugly hall, hopefully planned as a centre of an Institute of Scientific Societies still stood solitary, though trees improved its general appearance. Despite Presidential remarks that low numbers did not matter they began a drive to expand, hoping mainly to gather in younger members. Ellery's device of associate membership, introduced in 1878-9, offering them entrance without fee, proved successful. Membership doubled during the decade - in 1876 there were approximately 125 Fellows, but in 1886 there were 250, of whom 69 were associates.

1 Ibid., vol.XX, p.xxvii.
2 Ibid., vol.XIII, p.xxv.
3 Ibid., vol.XVI, p.xiii; in 1877 the Society exchanged work with 104 other scientific societies. Ibid., vol.XIV, pp.317-21.
5 Ibid., vol.XVI, p.xii.
Dealing with intellectual problems like the standard and amount of work done by the Fellows proved more difficult. However, when a copy-hunting journalist took it upon himself to accuse the local scientists of apathy, Ellery warmly defended the work of the Royal Society, and in doing so upheld certain values not easily maintained in Melbourne:

Although there are no Newtons, Faradays, Owens or the like among the pioneers of scientific work in these colonies, there are among our younger students, numbers of possible ones... let it also be remembered that no occupation, not even that all-absorbing one of 'making haste to be rich' which dwells among us here like a burning perennial fever can confer such real and lasting pleasure as is experienced by earnest and devout students of Nature...[1]

One of the conditions of membership of the Royal Society was that research be original; and Ellery did have something to defend, had it only been the work of the Government Botanist, von Mueller: who in that year published almost single-handed the eleventh volume of the Fragmenta, a report of the Forest Resources of Western Australia, the fourth section of his work on the eucalypti, and saw his book on select industrial plants available

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for industrial culture published in Calcutta for use in India.¹

The piecemeal work of the society as a whole was also by now quite defensible, as was the work of its special sections, though in ways too obscure for a work-a-day journalist.² Certainly most of the members were purely nominal and contributed little,³ while the active ones worked overtime. In consequence the interests of the few dominated the society's work.⁴ Moreover, because the most distinguished colonial men of science did not, naturally enough, present their work in Melbourne the standard looked lower than it actually was.⁵ Finally,

¹ Ibid., vol.XVI, p.xxi.
² Ellery provided more judicial estimates. The laws of the Society allowed for specialized sections; and in 1877 Section A (Physical and Mechanical Sciences, including Engineering) under the future Professor of Engineering, Kernot, began its flourishing career; while the amalgamated sections BCD established in 1880 to concentrate on microscopical work, natural history and other subjects including geology, mineralogy and metallurgy, was still in 1883 'a dead letter'. Ibid., vol.XX, p.xxvi.
³ The highest attendance at a monthly meeting in 1882 was forty-five, it sometimes fell to about a dozen. Ibid., vol.XIX, pp.297-309.
⁴ Ellery emphasized Astronomy, and Kernot, the next President, Engineering. But they were the only articulate ones.
⁵ No papers appear from von Mueller, McCoy or Sutherland in the Royal Society's proceedings.
though the direction of the work done was utilitarian, it was not obviously so, and so more open to criticism; and at least part of the Royal Society's function like that of the London Royal Society lay in coordinating scientific work, as well as actually doing it. As Professor Kernot was to report in 1886, the old work continued honestly.¹

With the coming of the specialized societies, the old work actually expanded. Just as the cantankerous Joseph Banks, in his role as President of the London Royal Society, was reported to have grumbled about those societies,² so Ellery noticed their presence with faint regret, thinking the community too small to contain a number of scientific societies.³ Yet his own reports show that the diversity was a healthy one, that an interest, often manifested in practical concern, in scientific knowledge did exist. The Medical Association, for example, concerned itself with questions like the causes of

¹ Transactions and Proceedings, vol.XXIII, p.xii.
² 'I see plainly that all these new-fangled associations will finally dismantle the Royal Society and not leave the old lady a rag to cover herself'. Recorded, S.F. Mason, A History of the Sciences, (London, 1953), p.356.
typhoid fevers, cures for snake bites and the value of Melbourne's climate for consumptive people; and, as there had been a serious outbreak of typhoid in 1877, snake bites had puzzled doctors and chemists for years, and consumptive people like Francis Adams did hope Melbourne's climate would ease their suffering, these were important subjects to consider. Similarly, the Pharmaceutical Society functioned in relation to special concerns and specialized knowledge, but drew its particular emphasis from local necessities; it campaigned for standardized drug selling, a journal for pharmaceutical opinion and for a College of Pharmacy, in each case successfully.\(^1\) The flourishing Field Naturalists Club, on the other hand pursued neither practical nor theoretical interests, but existed for the special enjoyment of field-observation and bush-walking\(^2\) (doubtless the more enjoyable for the female members which it alone of the

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1 Since the University was not yet prepared to pay a Lecturer in Pharmacy, the Council of the Association established its own college. See *Second Triennial Report of the Pharmacy Board of Victoria*, (1883), p.4.

2 The formal aims, contained on the frontispiece of the *Fifth Annual Report of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria*, Nat. Sci. Pamphs., vol.3, involved affording members regular and frequent opportunities for discussing those special subjects of natural history, and for observation in the field by means of excursions.
scientific clubs allowed). The papers given at the club meetings tended to be brief, descriptive and enthusiastic; and in 1884 it felt sufficiently well-established to publish its own magazine, from which venture, it was hoped, both the public and members would benefit, since papers could be circulated, specimens exchanged and a list of Victorian species provided for collectors.\(^1\) Equally non-utilitarian and much more specialized was the small Microscopical Society, founded in the late seventies and headed by a genuine devotee, Dr Ralph. Ralph urged his fellow enthusiasts to purpose and industry for the sake of the great pleasure which attends any acquisition of knowledge which is directed towards natural objects.\(^2\)

He referred to criticisms that it was not a useful pursuit, and replied that training in the use of the instrument was at that stage more important, and that ultimately microscopists would make medical and histological contributions.\(^3\) Although their numbers were small, the microscopists met each week in 'practice meetings', and

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\(^3\) Ibid., vol.1:1, pp.5-6.
they held to the purely scientific aims of systematic observation and original research.¹ Some remained entranced with the device and cared little what object they examined but the more earnest and accomplished railed against the dilittante members. One J.R. Goldstein attacked them quite ferociously:

When we consider that here in Australia the scientific observer has at his feet whole worlds of undescribed life, where everything is new and strange nothing can be advanced to excuse him from setting to work steadily and usefully.²

So rarified a society could only exist if its members were sufficiently devoted and, probably, sufficiently wealthy. Apparently the group came to need support, because it joined with the Royal Society in 1882, continuing its work as a special section.

Of all the newly-founded societies,³ the Australian Health Association could least be accused of apathy. At its own down-to-earth propagandist level it did valuable work in spreading a knowledge of hygiene throughout the city. Although this society was not

¹ Ibid., p.31.
² Journal..., vol.1:2, p.43.
³ Other scientific societies did exist, but there is no space to discuss them here, e.g. The Geographical Society.
included in the Royal Society's overseeing reports, it was an off-shoot of scientific endeavour. It aimed 'to create an educated public opinion with regard to sanitary matters...to induce people to live in accordance with laws whereby health is maintained and disease prevented, (and to) remove all noxious influences deleterious to public health.' It was headed by prominent public men who hoped to influence legislation in that direction. The means this body of philanthropists chose was tracts, with which it hoped to combat 'a dense mass of ignorance', and which it distributed freely. Though it may not have required detailed knowledge to write pamphlets on small-pox, sun-stroke, disinfectants or how to blow the nose hygenically, the work of the Association underlined the general need for applied scientific knowledge, and the responsibilities which those with medical or chemists' training had to assume in a new

1 Advertisement, Medical Pamphs., vol.102:5.
2 James Service and George Higinbotham served as Presidents see frontispiece, Annual Reports 1876 and 1883, Medical Pamphs., vol.107:12.
3 Spectator, November 11 1876, p.951 reported that the Health Association had delivered free 22,000 copies of three tracts. Prevention of Scarlet Fever, Pure Air and Ventilation and The Prevention of Typhoid Fever.
and sprawling industrial city. The now conventional
codes of cleanliness and health had not been established;
thoughtful people, seeing a partial remedy in education,
showed their willingness to spread scientific knowledge.
Only a daily newspaper could have done the job as
strenuously as the Health Association. At various
levels, this progressive and enlightened attitude towards
the uses of scientific knowledge continued to be expressed,
and undoubtedly influenced legislation.

In its own more abstracted way the Royal Society was
trying to make its own contributions to such problems,
and functioned according to much the same attitude.
Ellery repeatedly encouraged men to make use of their
special knowledge for the benefit of the community, and
was anxious to strengthen the influence of the Royal
Society.¹ His annual surveillance of the institutions
providing directly or indirectly for scientific education
bore witness to his concern to spread 'the scientific
attitude', simultaneously with its own private research.

How did the Royal Society try to make its voice
heard, and accommodate the idea of social responsibility?

¹ Cf. His idea of popular lectures on scientific subjects,
The only specific gesture seems to have been a series of papers published in sixpenny pamphlets. The papers were on the following subjects:

(1) The Strength of Columns.

(2) On the Method of Calculating Increment on the Value of Land.

(3) On Electric Lighting (2 papers).

(4) The Transportation of ore and other materials by means of endless wire ropes.

(5) Experiments on the hardwoods of Australia.

(6) The quantity of water consumed in irrigation.

(7) Notes on Hydrology.

(8) Shingle on the east coast of New Zealand.

(9) Tramways (2 papers).

(10) On recent earth tremors and the conditions which they indicate.

(11) The stability of structures in regard to wind pressures.

(12) The superintendance of contracts. ¹

They were, then, concerned with practical and utilitarian problems, like transport, water supply, mining techniques

¹ Royal Society of Victoria, Papers read before the Society and other Pamphlets on Engineering, 1878-1890.
and earth tremors. From the ordinary proceedings these same concerns appeared. A paper presented in 1876 set the tone; 'Practical Geodesy' was in effect a proposal of trigonometrical simplifications which would facilitate surveying. Papers like 'The Improvement of Pt. Melbourne' and 'The tensile strength of colonial timbers' were written with similar intent; and the one on the lateral stability of the Victoria Street Bridge has a pleasant contemporary ring. The resources of the colony were a subject inviting attention: new areas for gold-mining, the relationship between forest land and climate, and methods of purifying Melbourne water supply drawn from the Yan Yean, and of irrigation, were given consideration. Urban transport problems, especially those thrown up by the railway construction and the tram system, were discussed; and the vexed question of sewerage recurred.

3 Ibid., vol.XIX, pp.281-86.
4 Ibid., vol.XVI, pp.144-5.
After a paper recommending Schone's system of chemical breakdown, Kernot remarked that it was 'too good to be true'.¹ Dr Jamieson, a tireless writer on medical matters dealt more thoroughly with the same problems with which the Health Association was involved, in papers like 'Experiments in the Comparative Power of some Disinfectants'.²

Although literature and the arts were within the formally defined scope of the Royal Society, no one exhibited much interest in these associated topics. Occasionally a clergyman might present a paper on a subject like 'Consanguinity' or Sir Redmond Berry, perhaps feeling the need for some more elevated thought among such busy and practical men, would make his gentlemanly contribution.³ Only three papers appeared during the decade on linguistic topics,⁴ and probably no more in

³ *Ibid.*, vol.XVI, p.185, an account of the manuscripts deposited by Governor Latrobe's executors in the Melbourne Public Library.
⁴ E.g. 'The Yarra dialect and languages of Australia as compared with those of Mozambique and Portuguese East Africa', *ibid.*, vol.XVI, p.187.
demand than 'Consanguinity' was the series on 'the Oceanic Languages Shemitic'. More surprisingly no one studied what remained of the Australian aborigine. Beyond the scientific circles, men like G.W. Rusden and R. Brough Smith displayed a consistent concern for the plight of the remaining seven hundred and seventy four pure blood aboriginals surviving in the colony; and occasionally contributors to the Reviews discussed the nature of the aboriginal. Ethnology, though an increasingly important field of research in England nonetheless did not interest the Fellows of the Royal Society. This respectable body of men did not tolerate speculation gladly either. One man presented a paper claiming that certain marks in a Westralian cave could be interpreted as evidence of an

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1 Ibid., vol.XIV, p.308.
2 Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria, new series, vol.73, Article 3.
3 E.g.,"D. Macallister, 'The Australian Aborigines', M.R., vol.3:9, thought that their nigh-on total extinction was significant 'to those familiar with the evolution theory', and seemed to accept the situation. Indeed he thought it a powerful proof of that theory, and had little trouble in showing that the 'animal' predominated in the aboriginal. See p.160 Marcus Clarke's early satirical story 'King Billy's Breeches' made a neat point about the irrelevance of European standards when applied to the aboriginal, and also made fun of the administrative mentality in the situation.
early discovery of the continent by the Phoenicians; if
the marks did read 'I am Goliath' commented the writer
of the Transactions dryly, 'the figure is in many respects
in keeping with such an origin'. Only two papers during
the decade concerned themselves with abstract or
theoretical work, and both of those came from recent
graduates of the University, young men probably hopeful
of sustaining the kind of mental effort they had made
whilst there. The utilitarian emphasis of the Society
was pervasive.

The main interest apparent from papers presented
lay in the classification and description of the new
environment. The work of the three most important
scientists in the colony, McCoy, Ellery and von Mueller
was of this kind. While all of them devoted much time
and thought to the practical uses of their specialized
knowledge, and all directed institutions devoted to
science, (Ellery the Observatory, McCoy the Museum of
Natural Science, and von Mueller until the late seventies
the Botanical Gardens), none were much concerned with speculative work. McCoy was a tireless systematizer of the geological, zoological and paleontological specimens which he accumulated and his Descriptive Catalogue of the mining, metallurgical geological and agricultural models in the National Museum of Victoria (1871) revealed his main interests. Vast compilations of astronomical tables contained the labours of Robert Ellery. Not only was he responsible for all ordinary meteorological and astronomical observation, but as one of the best equipped observers in the Southern Hemisphere,

1 His two main publications were the Geological Survey of Victoria. Prodromus of the Paleontology of Victoria, (1874), and Natural History of Victoria, Prodromus of the Zoology of Victoria, (1883).


3 As in The Monthly Record of Results of Observations in Meteorology, Terrestrial Magnetism etc., taken at the Observatory 1876-86 under the supervision of R.L.J. Ellery, Meteorology Pamphs., vol.66.

4 Everyone was proud of 'the Great Melbourne Telescope'. See Ellery's report after a world trip, 'I cannot find that we are much behind-hand in any direction, but in some respects the very reverse...The only detail in which...the Melbourne Observatory is deficient even to Greenwich or Paris is the small size of our transit circle'. Report of the Government Astronomer, 1876, Eleventh Report of the Board of Visitors to the Melbourne Observatory, p.8.
he was also responsible for important cooperative work like observing the transit of Venus in 1882, and the checking and revision of Sir John Herschel's mapping of the nebula, which involved astronomers all over the world. The work of von Mueller will be discussed later, not only for its own significance, but also because his career illuminates the position of a dedicated scientist in a very naturalistic and democratic community.

Other men laboured diligently even when they lacked the inexplicable spark and zeal of the distinguished. Men like McGillivray of Sandhurst, who in six years published twelve papers on little-known marine organisms, the polyzoa, and Father Julian Tennison Woods (better known as the originator of the independent Roman Catholic Schools system, friend of Adam Lindsay Gordon, and later, President of the Linnean Society of New South Wales) who gave one paper on new marine mollusca, were perhaps also above the average, but their researches were typical. Though few besides McCoy showed any interest in the indigenous fauna, botanical and geological description proceeded apace. Papers on 'The rocks of the Buchanan district', the structure of Tasmania, the formation of the Australian Alps and the question of glacial action, bear witness to this. In the last
a certain amount of speculative thinking was involved; and seismic upheavals after 1884,¹ like the one in Bass Strait, another in the volcanic area of the North Island of New Zealand, and then the Krakatoan eruption of 1885,² did distract them away from more local researches.

The second main interest of the Fellows, as manifested by such papers as 'The Tay Bridge' and 'The Ombrograph: a self-registering rain-gauge',³ came from contemporary mechanical and technological developments, and new precision instruments. This came not simply from the urge to keep abreast of scientific developments⁴ - a difficult task - but from a characteristic practicality.

The problems of inhabiting so vast a continent, and in ordering so young a community made them eager to adapt new ideas and instruments. The most obvious aspect of this eagerness was the regular display of new instruments

¹ Transactions and Proceedings, vol.XXII, pp.10-19, 'on the Recent Earth Tremors and the Conditions which they indicate'.
² Ibid., vol.XXI, pp.89-91, 'Experiences of the barque "W.H. Besse" in the Java Earthquake, August 1883'.
⁴ Ellery was particularly careful in his attempts to do this. His remarks on 'The ever-extending boundaries of the physical and chemical sciences' in 1880 is as good an example as any.
like the spectroscope and the microphone. ¹ In a place where disastrous droughts made improved meteorological knowledge imperative, displays of barometers and rain gauges had an obvious relevance. ² Engineering problems made ideas like the one presented on the best form of a balance beam important. ³ Surveyors would have found Fuller's special slide-rule displayed in 1878 of interest. ⁴ More spectacularly, the various effects of newly applied electrical knowledge, like new types of storage batteries, electric fire alarms and microphones, attracted excited attention.

Such developments were broadly related to the needs (and the aspirations) of colonial life, and the young community, while important theoretical discoveries like that of the chemical gallium came to the attention of the Royal Society and the broader activities of the parent body were noted annually, ⁵ only unconsciously selected

² See also 'Barometer Construction', *ibid.*, vol.XIV, p.122.
⁵ Ellery drew attention to both these, but in discussing the latter noted ruefully that he could not discuss it fully even there because 'science as yet unfortunately only interests the few'. *Ibid.*, vol.XIII, p.xxiv.
aspects of scientific knowledge impinged on the minds of colonial men of science.

This is not to say that the Royal Society in London had no influence on colonial science. Even the interest in meteorology, which could have come entirely from Victorian exigencies, was part of a world-wide interest at the time, and could equally have been a response to the call for more evidence from the parent body;¹ but alongside that call was Ellery's constant struggle to win precedence for meteorological telegrams,² and the fact no one had lived in Victoria long enough to collect sufficient reliable data by which to categorize explain and even predict its weather.³ The London body obviously set standards for research; its coveted medal capped the work of von Mueller in 1888, and a fellowship, as extended to Ellery, remained a great privilege.

Local needs, however, directed the research and discussion of the Royal Society in Victoria, and its basic

² Also expressed in the Report of the Board of Visitors to the Melbourne Observatory, (1877).
³ Discussion continued throughout the decade in the Royal Society, e.g. 'On the Present State of Meteorology', Transactions and Proceedings, vol.XIV, p.121.
pre-occupations were frequently, and naturally, things forced upon its attention by the immediate environment. Since building was one of the marks of 'Marvellous Melbourne', it is not surprising to find attention given to the principles and refinements of construction. Most of the Fellows would have seen Iron Arches in use, if in fact they were not adorning their own dwellings with variations on the theme. Railway disasters, such as a crash following a scandalous wash-away of an entire bridge emphasized both that theme and another, that of railway construction. The re-occurrence of diseases, especially typhoid, and so the fluctuating mortality rate, rendered the discoveries of Louis Pasteur relevant. The uses of electricity created excitement, in the daily press as well as in the ranks of the Society. As Ellery said, 'Few sciences have made such strides in a utilitarian direction'. Scepticism disappeared as news of the artificial lighting of the British Museum and the Blackpool pier arrived; and no doubt the fact that Kernot and Ellery were among the five directors of one of the

1 Ibid., vol.XXII, p.171.
2 Ibid., vol.XXI, pp.xxii-iii, (on 'Mr Pasteur's discoveries').
3 Ibid., vol.XIV, p.xxiv.
first electrical companies in Melbourne had something to do with the enthusiasm shown within the Society. Moreover men imbued with the scientific attitude would have seen as they looked around them open sewers, haphazardly constructed buildings, ill-lit roads, wasted lands, and improperly exploited resources; when hearing of the Bishop of Melbourne's refusal to pray for rain, they could not but be uncomfortably aware that they could not fulfil the responsibility for prediction so squarely thrown upon their shoulders, and that they could not yet expound the principles of irrigation which would alleviate the problems of rural water supply. Others, seeing unknown plants and animals, unpredictable tidal behaviour and uncertain geological structures, would feel the pressure both of communal need and abstract knowledge. Baron von Mueller's address on *Industrial Plants deserving Extensive Culture in Victoria* remains a paradigm of this attitude which rarely gained full expression but was everywhere apparent:

1 Advertisement, frontispiece to paper four, *Papers of the Royal Society of Victoria 1878-1900: The Australian Electrical Company, with registered capital of £100,000 announced in 1882 that it was prepared to book orders 'for the supply of machines, lamps etc. for lighting'.
I had announced my intention to address you... on the desirability of bringing within the extensive scope of Victorian agriculture various hitherto disregarded plants but when more fully reflecting on the leading plants which presented themselves to my view, I found it preferable to confine this discourse to the fuller consideration of one species only; and thus I offer as it were the first chapter of a series of essays which successively might bring before you many other plants promising for the agricultural pursuits of this colony.

Given their inclinations, attitudes and special knowledge the active Fellows of the Royal Society were involved with the problems and challenges presented by their world; and their inconspicuously wielded influence was extended towards its improvement.

Von Mueller proved the most articulate and most convinced man of scientific enlightenment in Melbourne. From his tireless explorations of the natural world and his continuous attempts to apply his knowledge, he developed a passionate conviction that the existence of humanity could and would be immeasurably improved by the

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1 He was addressing the Ballarat Farmers Club in 1875, and the subject was 'Tea' (p.1). He was willing to utilize his vast knowledge at every opportunity - and remains known to Tasmanians at least as the man responsible for the introduction of the blackberry pest - and in On Development of Rural Industries (Melb., 1880), Agricultural and Industrial Pamphls., Box 8 (A.N.L.) is another example of this.
conscientious application of scientific knowledge. A man who spent most of his life looking at individual plants, who wrote about three thousand letters a year, who delivered innumerable addresses and papers, and maintained contact with all the important botanical circles of the world could still present a total vision of life in the new land breathtaking in its optimism as in its prolixity:

Glancing at the map, the thought must flash across our minds, that where a whole continent of vast natural richness and fertility is handed over to us, with but a scanty number of nomadic claimants, with no fuedal burdens of the past, with no flowering strength of the population carried off in decimating wars, that there, with our two milliards of acres, we ought to be the happiest and the free-est of all the peoples of the world, ought soon to emerge unburdened from the material obligations which stimulated our earliest settlement, ought to be able to invite with brother hand the new colonist to our wide dominions untrammelled and unfettered, to breathe the pure Australian air on free estates and in free domiciles! For the civilization of Australia a great nation has stood sponsor.¹

In this context the work of the polyzoa collectors and microscopical enthusiasts takes on its own honour, and in some cases heroism. Though not a provocative group, the Royal Society continued with valuable work, as

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¹ On the Development of Rural Industries, p.43.
did associated scientific groups. The standards by which they proceeded and the methodology they used were necessarily those of their English counterparts. Some of their work had direct reference to the map of knowledge, some indirect: the direction their most important efforts took was determined first and foremost by local stresses. As Thomas Huxley said to the London Royal Society in the early eighties –

I hardly need to remind my present hearers... that that which the investigator perceives depends much more on what lies behind his sense organs than the object in front of them.

As with any serious intellectual effort, scientific thought in the colonial city of Melbourne depended on a general tradition and developed along certain lines according to particular stresses.

For all this, the position of the dedicated scientist, and of science itself was by no means easy or honoured in colonial society. Baron von Mueller was awarded his Royal Society medal in 1888 for 'his long services in Australian exploration and for his investigation of the flora of the Australian continent', and

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1 *Proceedings*, vol. XXXIX, p. 296.
Here, at last, behold the Baron happy and contented. The Government has granted him a piece of ground in the centre of a howling wilderness, with which he can do as he jolly well pleases. The bones of his compatriot, Leichardt, are scattered around, ready alike for the tear of science, or the token of amity. In the distance will be observed "his friend and the bottle to give her." If there is one thing—one little trifle more—that the Baron would ask to make his happiness complete and perfect it is the head of that "common gardener" Guilfoyle on a medal—only this and nothing more.
the awarders said:

no one has investigated the Australian flora
and the geographical distribution of its
components with so much perseverance and
success, and no one has so enriched our
herbaria laboratories and gardens with
materials for study to so great an extent. 1

In Melbourne, however, von Mueller lived under constant
financial strain and in a state of subservience to the
government which no twentieth century scientist could
imagine or tolerate. Although von Mueller after his
removal from the post of Director of the Botanical
Gardens tended to be over sensitive, his discouragement
was genuine enough. His correspondence with C.H. Pearson
revealed his anxiety and the stresses under which he
worked. Thinking Pearson a man who might be expected to
understand his problem, he even asked Pearson to visit
him, to see that his requests were valid. He pointed out
that no provision had been made on the Estimates for a
building he needed; and that the 'malicious and ignorant'
reports of the Argus might even imperil his present
allowance. 2 Not only the Argus but the Age and also
Melbourne Punch attacked him for his single minded

1 Ibid., vol.XLV, p.56.
2 Von Mueller/Pearson, June 9 1878, Pearson papers.
devotion to his work. The _Age_ attacked him as a 'recalcitrant official', and its comments reveal a contempt not only for the man but for his work:

> He owes everything—fame, honours, titles to this colony, and he has made no return whatever....A distinguished descriptive botanist...it would be difficult to discover a single service which he has performed for this colony [or] point to a single plant that he has successfully acclimatized with the exception of the Cape Weed....As Professor of Botany at the Melbourne University he would be in the right place and [could] make some return for the debt which he owes it, or else he should be treated as any other recalcitrant official.  

His previous achievements might have stood between him and such criticism.  

The publications and multiple honours, yet to come, prevented such attacks after 1877. His _Select Plants available for Industrial Culture_ was going through innumerable editions overseas; in 1877 came a text book _An Introduction to Botanical Teaching in the Schools of Victoria_ and the seventh volume of _Flora Australiensis_; in 1878 _Select Extra-Tropical Plants_ was republished for use in India; in 1879, _An Atlas of the Eucalypts of Australia part I, The Native Plants of Victoria Succinctly Defined_ and _The Chemistry of Agriculture_

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1 _Age_ (ed.,) July 16 1877.

2 He was knighted in 1878 for his field work for Bentham's _Flora Australiensis_. C. Daley, 'Baron Sir Ferdinand Von Mueller', _Victorian Historical Magazine_, vol.10, p.53.
(where he attacked thoughtless de-forestation). By 1882 he had produced the *Systematic Census of Australian Plants part I*, a supplement to *Flora Australiensis* and the twelfth volume of the *Fragmenta*; in 1885, he published *Key to the System of Victorian Plants*, and in 1888 he completed the *Iconography of Australian Species of Acacia*. This period was his most productive; and the high peak of labours which made him the man to define single-handed the entire field of Australian botany. More than anyone else, he represented 'the scientific attitude' to the new world.

Since this attitude allowed a simpler and more direct involvement with that world, colonial men of science laboured with more success and less despair than the artists whose involvement could not be translated into diagrams and whose attitudes never held any important social significance or uses. Yet neither scientists nor artists found their situation easy, nor did they receive the financial or social support which would have facilitated their efforts. Though their contributions were the ones which might have set the seal on the hoped-for civilization of the South, their fellow citizens had little time or interest in occupations not obviously constructive or useful. Mental achievements
were regarded as secondary embellishments, and the real tasks, of good government, clean living and decent education, involved the majority far more extensively. In this emphasis the citizens of Melbourne revealed themselves as people of the frontier; and in their willingness to depend on England for their cultural sustenance, rather than concerning themselves deeply - beyond providing buildings, and institutions - with the mental efforts of the few, revealed themselves as colonial.
APPENDIX

1. Table indicating the extent to which the Melbourne and Victorian Reviews drew strength from the vitality of political discussion in Melbourne during their early years, and their reliance on literary articles during their decline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1879</th>
<th>1885</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.R.</td>
<td>V.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Local political, economic and social discussion</td>
<td>13^2</td>
<td>23^3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Australian and international affairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Music, theatre and art</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Science</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Religion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. General intellectual</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Topical (serials, travelogues etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Literature</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Legal matters</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of articles</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The first volume of the Victorian Review covers November 1879-April 1880, while the Melbourne Review is bound in annual January-December volumes, and the volume referred to contains January-December 1879.

2. This includes educational questions.

3. This does not include educational questions. Hence the total of 11 articles is added below.


5. The Melbourne Review was a quarterly publication, the Victorian Review a monthly, hence the different number of articles within one volume.

6. The smaller number of articles also indicates the decline of the Victorian Review.
2. Discussion showing the decreasing number of articles on politics in the individual Reviews.

As the Melbourne Review was a quarterly and published a relatively small number of articles, it is almost pointless to make quantitative comparisons between its earlier and later political content, and it has been dealt with as a block of articles. The Victorian Review, on the other hand, being a monthly and publishing up to twenty articles per month, can be used to show quantitatively shifts of political interest through a comparison of its content in 1879-80 and in 1885-6.

(1) The Melbourne Review (1876-86) contained:

A. 26 Articles on parliamentary government and constitutional problems with direct reference to Victoria. 12 were written between 1878-9. The total includes 2 historical articles, 2 political biographies, 2 on jurisprudence and 2 on 'the morals of politics'. None were written after 1883.

B. 28 articles on socio-economic questions, including 15 on land, and taxation, written almost entirely between 1877-79, and also 1 on law, 1 on irrigation, 1 on the Chinese, 7 on fiscal questions.
C. 16 articles on Australian affairs, including 9 (by E.A. Petherick) on European enterprise in Australasia. The rest dealt with federal questions and appeared after 1881.

D. 12 articles on European affairs.

(2) The Victorian Review (1879-86) contained:

A. 21 articles on parliamentary government and constitutional problems with direct reference to Victoria in 1879-80, and no articles on this subject 1885-6.

B. 16 articles on socio-economic questions between 1879-80 and 6 articles on this subject 1885-6.

C. 6 articles on Australasian affairs between 1879-80 and 15 articles on this subject 1885-6.

D. 17 articles on European (and American*) affairs 1879-80, and 13 articles on this subject 1885-6**.

* These often overlap with articles categorized in section C.

** A diminution more apparent than real, since interest shifted from abstracted information articles to specific and more involved ones.
Appendix B

Some Typical Institutions

1. The Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery.
2. Government House.
3. Town Hall.
4. Town Hall organ.
5. Scots Church.

[Taken about 1870; by courtesy of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria]
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1. Official Publications
   (a) Government
   (b) Semi-government and private organisations and institutions

2. Books, pamphlets and articles

3. Newspapers and periodicals

4. Manuscript sources

II. Later Works

1. Books and articles (general)

2. Books (Australian)

3. Articles (Australian)

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