The Ruling Class in New South Wales

The ruling class, which was to dominate colonial politics and the making of public opinion from approximately 1860 to 1890, emerged from the struggle for political leadership during the 1840's and 1850's. In this earlier period the urban middle class, composed of such elements as merchants, traders and professional men, challenged the existing ruling class, or the political leadership by pastoralists, landed interests, old government officials and other conservative elements. This struggle coincided with the movement by workers and artisans aiming at both taking part in the contemporary political process and at obtaining constitutional changes which would allow their continuing participation in politics in the future. The urban middle class, by acquiring the support of workers and artisans and giving them leadership, accomplished constitutional reform which enabled it to dominate colonial politics. Although the constitutional reform provided workers and artisans with manhood suffrage, it also imposed in practice effective restrictions upon their direct representation in parliament. While this reform deprived the pastoralists and landed interests of their dominant role in political decision making, it functioned to protect their economic interests from radical reformers. The constitutional reform together with other reforms during the 1850's thus laid the basis for a new alignment of the ruling class.

Having obtained a dominant political position, the urban middle class became conservative; it regarded the new constitutional arrangements as satisfactory and resisted further advances towards democracy. Radicals like Henry Parkes and
newspapers which had supported constitutional reform before 1856 became a bulwark of the status quo in the late nineteenth century. On the other hand the pastoralists and landed interests came to share common interests with the urban middle class within the new constitutional framework which not only protected the existing economic system, but also provided safeguards against further advancement of workers and artisans into the political arena.

The urban middle class and the pastoralists and landed interests, the rising class and the old ruling class, together gradually formed the new ruling class between 1860 and 1890. Although the pastoralists were often presented by liberals, representing the urban middle class, as the enemy of 'the people' over specific issues, there was no fundamental difference between the two with regard to basic economic and political principles; and therefore the faction system emerged and persisted for more than 30 years. Faction politics were based on the alliance of the urban middle class with the pastoral and landed interests in the formation of the new ruling class. The new ruling class at first was not a solid entity because of both the previous connection of the urban middle class with workers and artisans and their sharp attacks on the pastoralists. However it gradually consolidated itself after 1856 and its consolidation provided a secure basis for stable government despite personal rivalries of faction leaders such as Parkes, Robertson and Dibbs. These faction leaders acted within the political, economic and social framework set in the 1850's and this framework depended upon the consolidation of the ruling class for its existence. The faction leaders, while trying to solve economic problems and improve social conditions within the existing framework, attempted to thwart reforms leading to any disruption of the status quo and to
prevent movements challenging the hegemony of the ruling class.

How did the consolidation of the ruling class take place? It proceeded prominently in social relationships. The urban middle class eagerly emulated the life style of the upper class, or older members of the ruling class; Twopenny's *Town Life in Australia* vividly shows this process. Clubs, societies, informal associations, picnics, parties, balls, 'morning calls' and other social activities consolidated the ruling class as a social entity; at the same time they widened a cleavage between the ruling class and the subordinate groups. Numerous local movements, municipal politics and the activity of local committees for elections helped to create political ties and networks among the ruling class. Laissez faire liberalism and a belief in progress provided ideological cement. It is also important that the urban middle class monopolised the newspaper press and dominated the process of the making of public opinion through public meetings. This enabled the ruling class to reconcile various interests within it and to organize its opinion towards subordinate groups.

The economic crisis in the late 1880's and the depression in the 1890's eroded the unity of the ruling class. Within the ruling class groups like industrialists demanded protection for colonial industry and agriculture and sought the support of subordinate groups. This crack in the ruling class afforded subordinate groups a good opportunity for reforming the existing framework of society.

The ruling class, therefore, was an historical and changing entity which emerged and consolidated itself between 1860 and 1890 and whose components then fought each other for political
leadership in the 1890's.
Public Meetings and the Making of Public Opinion
in Late 19th Century New South Wales

A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts
of the Australian National University

by

Takao Fujikawa

December 1986
This thesis is my own work and all sources used here have been acknowledged.
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Introduction

Like most Australian institutions, the public meeting originated in Britain. Many readers might suppose that it was an old institution, if not so old as Magna Carta, at least as old as the English Revolution. However, the fact is that the public meeting was scarcely older than the French Revolution.

It is true that there were instances of meetings held by the people and of speeches being delivered very far back in British history, but they were only isolated instances and never constituted an institution. Henry Jephson said in The Platform: Its Rise and Progress:

"Down to the end of the seventeenth century the idea of any political influence being obtained or exercised by means of the Platform, does not appear to have been thought of by anyone. The Revolution of 1688 was effected without its instrumentality, or the slightest recourse to its aid, and during the reign of William and Mary, and of Anne, public political meetings, or public speeches, were practically unheard of."¹

The earlier half of the 18th century saw the great religious revival led by Wesley, Whitefield and a number of field-preachers. Thousands of religious meetings were held and great orators came into direct contact with large masses of the people. For the first time in British history, great masses came together over and over again to hear earnest speech and felt the fascination of the spoken word. These meetings, though confined to the sphere of religious teaching and enthusiasm, afforded a precedent for similar action in the sphere of politics. It is not important that the leaders of Methodism did not favour the participation of the lower classes in the political process. The essential fact is that Methodism made a great number of people used to assembling and familiarised them with combining in associations, making rules for their governance, raising funds and communicating from one part of the kingdom to another. Methodism afforded a precedent not only for meetings and speeches, but also for societies or associations which gave movements coherence and

¹H. Jephson, The Platform: Its Rise and Progress Vol.1, 1892, p.4. He used the platform as a much wider concept than the speech at public meetings. The platform included every political speech at a public meeting, a public dinner or a public banquet and even political lectures.
There was a similar phenomenon in the development of open-air meetings in Sydney. During the 1870s and 1880s people became used to assembling in the parks mainly for entertainment. Temperance orators and preachers were dominant at first, but, when once people acquired the habit of meeting regularly, such assemblies could turn into political meetings. Such a phenomenon seems to have taken place on a much larger scale in 18th century Britain.

If those religious meetings were thought of as a nursery for public meetings of the lower classes and the tradition of open-air meetings of subordinate groups, meetings of the principal people in the county may be regarded as a prototype for the legitimate public meeting. There was a practice in 18th century Britain that, when any emergency or crisis arose, a Lord-Lieutenant, who was the principal representative of government authority in a county, convened the magistrates, and sometimes the freeholders, in the county to consider necessary measures to be taken.

In connection with the existence of this formal procedure for convening a meeting, I want to explain the legal position of public meetings in those days. The public meeting had not been a part of the British constitution, so there was no law prohibiting a public meeting. However, it was commonly believed in the first half of the 18th century that no formal meeting could be held unless convened by the Lord-Lieutenant. This notion was gradually eroded by such agitations as that for maintaining the right and freedom of elections in connection with J. Wilkes and the movement for the reduction in exorbitant public expenditure after the War of American Independence in the latter half of the century. In these agitations public meetings were convened by the nobility, the gentry and other influential people. It came to be considered that public meetings could be held without the sanction of the Lord-Lieutenant, but it appears to have never been thought that public meetings could be held without the convening by these influential people until 1790.

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4 ibid., p.173.
Petitions had long been recognized in England as a legitimate means of expressing political opinion. To petition for the passing or repeal of any Act was regarded as an undoubted inherent birthright of every British subject, but there was the Act passed under the reign of Charles II which stipulated "that no petition to the King or either House of Parliament for alteration of matters established by law in Church or State (unless the matter thereof be approved by three Justices or the Grand Jury of the county) shall be signed by more than twenty names, or delivered by more than ten persons." This Act was rarely resorted to, but the calling of public meetings by commoners without superior authority was of doubtful legality in the late 18th century.\(^5\)

The latter half of 18th century saw the rise of public meetings as an institution for creating public opinion through many movements for Parliamentary reform and for or against government policies. Among the most important of these was that organized by the London Corresponding Society, the Constitutional Society and other reform societies between 1792 and 1795 for the purpose of achieving Parliamentary reform or drastic constitutional changes. The movement established the important precedent that commoners without authority could convene public meetings even if they did not have the specific intention of petitioning Parliament. The movement mobilized a large number of artisans and workers on an unprecedented scale and accustomed them to the use of public meetings. The Government, which opposed this movement or other popular agitations, also contributed to spreading the use of public meetings when it attempted to organize loyal associations to counteract the influence of this movement.\(^6\)

The public meeting seems to have been firmly established as an institution for expressing public opinion in this agitation. It already obtained at this stage all the features later to be seen in Australian public meetings and it became an institution which anyone could use if he wished to. However, no sooner had public meetings become so influential and prevalent than the Government prohibited "meetings of any description of persons, exceeding the number of fifty persons (other than and except county or borough meetings duly convened by the sheriff, or other local

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authority)" until 1799. But this prohibition could not root out public meetings. They were so firmly established as a means for political action that they revived immediately after the expiry of the prohibition, though they had to wait until the end of the Napoleonic Wars for their full recovery and further development.

Agitations against the new Corn Law and against the continuance of the Property Tax marked the beginning of the new era. From this time until the passage of the Reform Bill tens of thousands of public meetings were to be held under the leadership of the Whigs and middle class and working class reformers, though the governments attempted to suppress them by such methods as suspending the Habeas Corpus Act and by prohibiting any meeting attended by more than 50 people excepting meetings duly convened by the Lord Lieutenant or others in authority. After an assault on the Prince Regent, Parliament passed four Acts which virtually prohibited the holding of public meetings and severely restricted the right of freedom of speech between 1817 and 1818; after Peterloo six Acts were in force between 1820 and 1825, which were enacted to the same effect. Despite these prohibitive measures, this was the era in which the public meeting exerted the greatest influence in British history as a means for the people excluded from parliamentary politics to influence and reform Parliament.

It is instructive to note that the governments and loyalist gentry made a clear distinction between the legitimate public meeting and the informal public meeting. The former was the meeting convened by the Lord Lieutenant or by an application to a magistrate in the district; the latter was the public meeting and open-air demonstration of working men under the auspices of men of their own rank. In 1819 just after Peterloo, the Government was very watchful that the former should not be utilized by radical reformers, while it was enacting the six Acts in order to suppress the latter. On the 14th of October in this year a county meeting was convened by the High Sheriff of Yorkshire on a requisition signed by the Duke of Norfolk and others in authority to express their disapproval of the attack by military force upon a peaceful assembly in Manchester and asking Parliament to inquire into the matter. The Lord Lieutenant who signed the requisition for this

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7 See ibid., pp.256-259 and E.P. Thompson, op. cit., p.145.


meeting and spoke there was dismissed within a week.\textsuperscript{10}

Even if the government did not intervene, mayors, magistrates and High Sheriffs used their own arbitrary discretion to grant or to refuse the holding of public meetings. For example, in 1820 they often refused to comply with the requisitions to convene meetings, no matter how respectfully signed, in connection with petitioning Parliament against the Bill against the Queen. The King tried to divorce her, but she was extremely popular among the people. At Rochester the Mayor refused to convene a meeting; in Suffolk the application to convene a county meeting was unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{11}

Even jealously guarded county meetings, however, were not free from 'abuse' by English 'Jacobins', or reformers because of the existence of the sacred right to move amendments; any freeholder in the county had a right to move amendments at the county meeting. In 1822 when the Act prohibiting the informal public meetings was in force, the formal county meetings convened on the subject of agricultural distress drifted gradually towards Parliamentary reform. On the 11th June at one such meeting in Kent, William Cobbett moved an amendment which was carried by a great majority against the express purpose of the meeting. In 1823, at another meeting in Norfolk, Cobbett moved an amendment which a self-ordained 'reformer' considered "a mockery and farce, containing a mass of absurdities, a tissue of false statements, and a farrago of inconclusive reasoning." The reformer said "It went to a direct revolution in Church and State." But the amendment was passed and presented to the House of Commons.\textsuperscript{12}

Measures introduced by governments to repress public meetings were far from permanently effective. The more violent and repressive methods did governents adopt, the more determined and widespread became the cry for freedom of speech and assembling. Why did this happen? The essential reason for this was that the middle class and the working class were outside the pale of the constitution, or parliamentary politics; their only effective method of taking part in politics and more importantly, of changing the existing political structure, was holding public meetings. Suppressing public meetings meant suppressing the growing power of

\textsuperscript{10}ibid., pp.492-495.

\textsuperscript{11}ibid., p.561.

\textsuperscript{12}ibid., pp.572-577.
those classes. It was a policy impossible to maintain. The emerging power of the middle and working classes and their demand for participation in politics was the vital force for the growth and establishment of public meetings as an essential institution for expressing public opinion.

The co-operation between the press and the public meeting also commenced in this period. About this problem it seems to be useful again to cite a paragraph from Jephson's The Platform.

"From Prentice's History of Manchester we learn the beginning of the practice of publishing reports of meetings and speeches in an important part of the Provincial Press: 'To the occurrences of 1819', he says, 'the people of Lancashire owe the system of giving regular and full reports in their local newspapers of all important public meetings and law proceedings. Previously, subjects of great consequence were dismissed in a single paragraph. A town's meeting in Manchester would be noticed much as follows: 'A large meeting was held in the Bull's Head on Thursday last, for the resolutions of which see advertisement in our front page.' And he adds: 'The agitation kept up by the radicals, and the wanton stretch of power exercised by the Manchester magistracy, had excited so much attention that the conductors of the London Press thought it worth their while to send able reporters to the scene of action.' Thus the Press, with its growing power and widening circle of readers, was giving its help to the Platform, and the Platform profited to an incalculable extent both in notoriety and in influence."

When the Seditious Meetings Prevention Act expired in 1825, a new vigorous agitation was beginning in Ireland. The agitation resorted extensively to public meetings and ultimately achieved the emancipation of Roman Catholics. The agitation for Parliamentary Reform then started and in 1832 obtained the Reform Act. An interesting event took place during the former agitation. On the 28th of October in 1828 a county meeting was held at Penenden Heath in Kent to protest against Catholic Emancipation. At this meeting those who attempted to speak on behalf of Roman Catholics were interrupted, hissed or howled down by incessant and almost deafening clamour. This meeting was believed to have originated 'Kentish fire', which was widely used in New South Wales as a means of disrupting public meetings towards the end of the 19th century.

13 Ibid., p.547.


15 A prolonged and ordered salvo or volley of applause, or demonstration of impatience or dissent.
After the passage of the Reform Bill, the use of public meetings became enlarged and intensified; both the middle class and the working class, separately or in conjunction, demanded what they regarded as fundamental changes by holding public meetings as a means of mass agitation. The Chartist movement used public meetings and open-air demonstrations extensively, while the Anti-Corn-Law League also resorted to public meetings as one of the most important methods of its agitation.

In 1838 during the Chartist movement a new type of public meeting appeared on an extensive scale. It was inconvenient to hold repeated assemblages of the people by day because workers' means of living were too circumscribed to allow them to be absent from their work. There were no rooms to be obtained capable of holding a large number of people, and town halls were almost always refused. There was one way out of these difficulties. The holding of meetings by torchlight suggested itself, as being better suited to the people's convenience, both as regards time and expense. So large and numerous torchlight meetings were held and they assumed so formidable character that the Government, by a proclamation from the Queen, declared torchlight meetings illegal.

The restriction on the use of town halls and on the holding of public meetings in the open air existed as a method for the ruling class to control and dominate the process for generating public opinion. When Chartists applied for the use of town halls, 'properly appointed authority' refused permission. When Chartists resorted to open-air torchlight meetings, the government prohibited them. The system which existed in late 19th century New South Wales to control public opinion was milder and more subtle, but the basic principle was the same: in New South Wales the use of town halls was restricted and when subordinate groups held frequent and regular

16E.J. Hobsbawm. Economic History of Britain, p.77. A local history of Newport, Monmouthshire, says: 'The Public Meeting of Inhabitants, which had originated in the turbulent period before 1835, was used to discuss and decide so many administrative questions in the period 1837 - 1850 that no apology is needed for including it in this chapter. These meetings were used to discuss matters which were not strictly the Council’s concern or which needed a united public opinion before the Council would embark upon some new policy or project. The turbulent meetings and the widespread riots of 1839 had led to a temporary ban on processions and public assemblies. Such noisy meetings as that of November 1841 to approve an Address of Congratulation to the Queen showed that the prohibition was justifiable. Yet public meetings became increasingly frequent and were used for a variety of purposes.' B.P. Jones. From Elizabeth I to Victoria : Newport, Monmouthshire 1550 -1850. Newport. 1957, p.175.


18See ibid., p.113, p.119 and p.134.
meetings in the open air, the most important meeting place, Hyde Park, was closed against them.

There was another interesting incident in this period concerned with the anti-Corn-Law agitation as well as the Chartist movement. Chartists, believing that the Anti-Corn-Law League was stealing away the attention of the public from their cause, attempted to thwart the Corn-Law repealers in nearly every public meeting. Chartists attended public meetings convened by the Anti-Corn-Law League during December 1838 and January 1839. They moved hostile amendments and negatived the resolutions prepared by the promoters exactly in the same way as protectionists, labourites, socialists and anarchists did in New South Wales against the free trade or ruling class moulding of public opinion towards the end of the century. In response, R.G. Gammage said, the free traders "ticketted all their meetings, so as to exclude the Chartists from taking part in their proceedings": the free traders in New South Wales did the same thing in reaction to the challenge presented by subordinate groups from the late 1880s. "If a solitary individual of that party chanced to be admitted, and rose to express his dissent, the tools of these peaceful agitators generally treated him to physical force. Sometimes, however, even when they had taken the utmost precautions, the Chartists obtained possession of their tickets, and carried the vote against them." The counterpart in New South Wales to "the tools of these peaceful agitators" were 'committeemen', or hired bullies and prizefighters.19 What was the result? M. Hovell said "By the system of upsetting League meetings the Chartists accomplished little, and they only brought themselves into bad odour." History repeated itself in New South Wales.20 The public meeting was thus fully developed as an institution by 1840 not only in its procedure and mode of agitation, but also in its mode of control and suppression.

In this period the working class was not represented in Parliament at all and the middle class was not represented sufficiently in proportion to its social power. Both classes had to resort to extra-parliamentary agitations if they wished to realize reforms they deemed necessary because elections under a limited and unequal franchise would return a majority of members antagonistic to their demands. The public meeting was thus a means for them to co-ordinate their forces and to bring pressure on Parliament, the preserve of the privileged. It was an extra-


parliamentary, democratic institution mainly for those who were excluded from parliamentary politics enabling them to take part in the political process and to achieve parliamentary reform; the movement for Parliamentary Reform in 1832 and the Chartist movement heavily depended on public meetings. Even when the middle class obtained the suffrage, it still had to agitate against those capricious members who claimed independence of action on the pretext that they were representative of the people as a whole not of the electorate, and acted for their own self-interest despite their express pledges at election. The public meeting was a means to compel members of Parliament to act according to the principles they expressed to the electors.

In New South Wales a public meeting is known to have been held in Sydney in 1819. This meeting, consisting of landholders, merchants and other respectable inhabitants of the colony, passed a series of resolutions drawing attention to their main political, economic and social grievances. This was the first concerted action taken by the people of the colony to demand a change in the form of government and a removal of the disabilities under which they lived.21

In 1825 W.C. Wentworth and his friends requisitioned the Sheriff to call a public meeting in Sydney to frame a farewell address to the Governor who adopted liberal policies in respect of the emancipists. By calling this meeting they wanted to advance emancipists' causes and to make a show of strength against the exclusives. According to Wentworth this meeting was the first of its kind since the establishment of the colony and it was said to have been symbolic of the constitutional right of every British citizen to express his opinion in public. Wentworth stated at the meeting, "that the precedent which had been that day set would be followed on all future occasions; and that whenever any public measure was to be lauded or condemned, this, the only constitutional mode of giving vent to the public opinion, would be invariably resorted to."22 Public meetings seem gradually to have been adopted as a means of political agitation thereafter.22

During Governor Bourke's period in office a number of public meetings were held:


22 ibid., p.328 and A.C.V. Melbourne, op.cit., p.129.

the emancipist press editors were constantly stirring up public opinion, and the middle and upper classes in New South Wales were generally becoming highly politicised. In 1835, for example, public meetings were held for the purpose of obtaining a colonial political agency in London and to form the Australian Patriotic Association, which became an important lobbying group both in Australia and in London. In this period the notion still seems to have prevailed that public meetings should be duly convened by the Sheriff.

During the 1840s the use of public meetings expanded further. In 1841 a public meeting was held to protest against the proposal to subdivide the colony contained in Russell’s New South Wales Bill. In 1844 noisy public meetings were held with regard to the education question. In 1846 when news reached Australia of the famine in Ireland, public meetings were organized to raise funds for the relief of the distressed: this was the first assistance Australia offered to other parts of the Empire. In the same year numerous public meetings were held to protest against the British Government’s proposal to resume convict transportation. The issue had brought the unfranchised working men of the towns into Australian politics for the first time. By 1848 the fear of transportation had become influential in widening the circle of those interested in politics, particularly in Sydney. In 1848 at a public meeting held in the Victoria Theatre to denounce unpopular constitutional proposals Earl Grey had made, even so experienced an agitator as Richard Hipkiss felt he should apologize to the audience for speaking as ‘one of the humbler classes’.

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24 Iibid., p.440.

25 Ibid., p.480.


27 The public meeting convened by the Mayor of Sydney on the 3rd of September in order to promote a general system of education on the principle of Lord Stanley’s system of National Education for Ireland became uncontrollable and was adjourned by him. Though the adjourned meeting was held next day, this meeting was again disrupted by the decided opposition party and broke up in confusion S.M.H. 3 and 4 Sept. 1844.


But in 1849 small businessmen and tradesmen offered no apologies and conducted their own public meetings without the support of socially prominent speakers.31

Anti-transportation agitations both enlarged the circle of promoters of public meetings and greatly increased attendances thus firmly establishing public meetings as an institution for expressing public opinion. In June 1849, one such gathering called to coincide with the resumption of transportation and the arrival of the convict ship, the Hashemy, consisted of between 4,000 and 5,000 people.32 In September 1850 over 6,000 people gathered in the Barrack Square to establish a new organization, the Association for Preventing the Revival of Transportation.33

During the 1850s public meetings were used for many movements such as that opposing Wentworth's proposal to create a colonial nobility, that asking for financial assistance to a newspaper, The Empire, those expressing loyalty to the Queen and raising funds for the relief of widows of men killed in the Crimean War and those asking the Governor to dissolve the Legislative Council.34 Public meetings thus became more numerous and intensive by the late 1850s to the point that a merchant, William Westgarth, acclaimed the public meeting as 'the great vehicle of progress'.35 However, public meetings were not only used as 'the great vehicle of progress', but also as a means for disseminating and expressing virulent racial prejudice. In 1861, at one of the anti-Chinese meetings in Sydney, W.C. Windeyer, M.L.A., who, as the first speaker, expressed the view that the Chinese as a people were "so low in the mental and physical scale that they could never place themselves on an equality with the Anglo-Saxon race," was applauded by the densely crowded audience.36

In this period the urban middle class, which was to form a new ruling class together with the then existing ruling class, developed skills in organizing public

31ibid., p.52 and S.M.H., 19.20 and 21 Jan. 1848.


36S.M.H., 1 Aug. 1861. See also S.M.H., 5 Feb., 12 March, 20 July, 6 and 30 Aug. 1861.
meetings and establishing their leadership over them. In the following few decades it provided the promoters of public meetings for most political movements and its members became the main organizers of public opinion.

During the 1860s, the decade preceding the period under study in this thesis, public meetings were regarded and used as a common means of agitation. They were used both for promoting local interests and for discussing or agitating about issues concerning the whole colony. For example, such matters as the erection of a watchhouse on the beach, the formation of a Working Men's Institute and provision for municipal finance were dealt with at local public meetings. Public meetings could be used for a philanthropic purpose like that convened to raise funds for the relief of widows and orphans of those people who died in the shipwreck of the Cawara.

They were also convened about political issues such as the imposition of stamp duties and the passing of the Public Schools Bill. A public meeting held in connection with the former issue was a very noisy affair in which Martin Guest spoke against the declared object of the promoters. He was to become the most prominent speaker at open-air public meetings in the late 1870s. With regard to the second question, the Public Schools Bill, a large number of public meetings were held both in support of and in opposition to the Bill and were well reported in The Sydney Morning Herald. Even unemployed workers held public meetings in 1866 when they suffered from the distress of a temporary recession. On the 16th October between 2,000 and 3,000 of the unemployed of Sydney met in Hyde Park and prepared a petition asking the Government to start public works for their relief. This meeting was much larger than those in connection with the Public Schools Bill, but it was reported in only a quarter of a column in The Sydney Morning Herald while the paper sometimes reported some of the latter in the space of several columns.

37 S.M.H., 16 May and 18 May 1865 and 7 Aug. 1866.
38 S.M.H., 19 July 1866.
39 S.M.H., 24, 29 and 30 May 1865.
40 S.M.H., 25 and 26 Sept. 1866 and 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 22 and 24 Oct. 1866.
41 S.M.H., 16 Oct. 1866. See also reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 17, 18, 25 and 26 Oct. 1866.
The public meeting thus originated and developed in Britain as an essential institution for the making of public opinion. It was then transplanted to New South Wales in the first quarter of the 19th century and developed gradually in the second quarter of the century. Although its development in the colony was slow, it was firmly established as an institution for expressing public opinion during the 1850s and 1860s, just before the period this thesis will deal with. The following chapters are aimed at analysing public meetings and their function in the making of public opinion in New South Wales from 1871 to 1901.
Chapter I

Public Meetings as an Institution

L I. INTRODUCTION

New constitutional enactments have been enacted since the public meetings act of 1869. Public meetings are an important feature of all nations with an Anglo Saxon tradition and social background. The rise of Britain, the United States, and Australia, as they have assumed their role in the current and future of world politics. However, despite the fact that public meetings have been present throughout the political tradition of these nations, they were not a common practice until the 18th century. This paper aims to explore the historical development of these meetings and analyze the contemporary trends in these practices.

As I have already stated, in the 18th century, Britain, the United States, and Australia began to promote public meetings as part of their political development. The British government, especially the Whig Party, emphasized public meetings as a means to engage the populace in political discussions. In the United States, the Founding Fathers, particularly Thomas Jefferson, advocated for public meetings as a means to ensure that the people were informed and actively participating in the political process. In Australia, public meetings played a key role in the struggle for independence from British rule. The current paper will delve into these developments.
Chapter 1
Public Meetings as an Institution

1.1. Introduction

Few historians have asked questions about public meetings in Australia. Public meetings are a common feature of all countries with an ‘Anglo Saxon’ political and social background like that of Britain, the United States and Australia, so there has seemed little need to question the nature and function of public meetings. However, does the fact that public meetings have been practically universal in the political tradition of these countries do away with the need to ask question about them? It seems to me that public meetings played indispensable roles in constitutional developments of these countries. If so, they have to be critically examined when we attempt to analyse political history of these countries.

As I have already stated, in 19th century Britain the Whigs and middle-class reformers used public meetings as one of the most important methods of moulding public opinion with regard to the Reform Bill in 1832. The Chartist movement also largely depended upon public meetings; in 1838 the Chartist movement was formally inaugurated at a public meeting in the famous Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand; in 1839 Chartists collected 1,280,000 signatures at more than 500 public meetings in 214 towns and villages.² Across the Atlantic in New England, public meetings played a significant part in the American tradition of direct democracy and were the basis on which early theories of ‘public opinion’ took shape. They also played a key role in moulding and consolidating public opinion in the American Revolution. For example town meetings played an indispensable role in Boston from the outset of the protesting movement against British policies and just before the Boston Tea Party mass meetings attended by between 2,500 and 5,000 people were

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continually held in order to support the movement. In California in the second half of the 19th century, D. Kearney, one of the leaders of the Workingmen’s Party and of the anti-Chinese movement, exerted his influence by addressing the sand-lot meetings. All these different meetings had an important role in their respective historical context and they need thorough investigation if we are to fully understand the historical process of which they were a part.

Historians have usually quite uncritically accepted public meetings as a given factor to describe or explain historical events or situations. Humphrey McQueen, for example, when arguing that racism was the most important single component of Australian nationalism, cited a public meeting in which “The Mayor of Sydney was elected chairman, and surrounded on the stage by many of the best known public men and leading citizens.” The conclusion McQueen drew from this example was that hostility to Chinese overlapped class divisions. Why were class divisions blurred over the Chinese question? Some historians asked why the working class supported the middle class. Other historians asked why the middle class supported the working class. Historians usually answer such questions with ready made explanations such as the high degree of social mobility, rapid urbanization and concentration of the Chinese on the metropolitan areas, or they use the theory of the competitive type of race relations based on the work of Pierre L. van der Berghe as the apparatus for the explanation. Such explanations help us understand the anti-Chinese movement but they leave a certain unexplained gap between the questions and their answers. Before this problem can be properly solved, we have to understand the nature of public meetings in late 19th century New South Wales. If public meetings were normally presided over by a mayor and addressed by leading citizens as at McQueen’s meeting, McQueen’s meeting was not a special one and therefore the anti-Chinese movement did not have a distinctive feature. In this case it was not hostility to Chinese but the system of public


meetings that were chiefly responsible for the overlapped class divisions. On the contrary, if McQueen’s meeting was an exceptional one, the anti-Chinese movement had a distinctive feature in this aspect. Then we will have to find answers to the blurred class divisions over the Chinese question in the Chinese problem itself. Perhaps not only the anti-Chinese movement, but also any movement which had public meetings as an important component cannot be explained or analysed satisfactorily until we can understand the nature of public meetings.

I first got the idea of studying public meetings because of difficulties I faced when examining the anti-Chinese movement in New South Wales towards the end of the 19th century. No sooner did I begin research on public meetings than I found the scope of this subject much wider than that of the anti-Chinese movement. It included the relation between local agitations for roads and bridges and colony-wide agitations for imperialism and nationalism on the one hand and emerging working-class agitations on the other. Eventually I found that by studying public meetings I was asking questions about the ways in which public opinion was constantly being formed, stimulated, modified, ignored or suppressed. Here we will find quite a fertile field for historical research.

1.2. Public Meetings as an Institution

In studying public meetings, I have regarded them not so much as events but as an institution. Public meetings have been usually treated as an event or a cluster of events surrounding specific agitations and movements such as those against transportation, the Chinese or in favour of self-government, federation and so on. They have been considered as given factors to describe and to explain these movements or they have been referred to as obvious facts to enrich historical narratives dealing with such movements. Consequently, a particular public meeting, like that inaugurating the Chartist movement or a group of public meetings like those in connection with the Boston Tea Party, are familiar to many historians but very little is known about public meetings as such. This thesis, therefore, will not treat public meetings in the ordinary way as particular events. Although it will deal with a number of specific public meetings, they will be analysed only as a part of an institution of public meetings as a whole, or in other words as a system for the making of public opinion through public meetings. The thesis is concerned with public meetings as a whole - not with any particular one.

Though I mentioned 'public meetings as a whole' above, I will not examine all the
public meetings in countries with Anglo-Saxon political and social background. This is not only because it is practically impossible to make research into all these public meetings within the time-limit of the thesis, but also because it is meaningless to study all these public meetings as a sole entity or as a single institution, though it will be fruitful to study several countries to compare public meetings in each. I limit the scope of research to public meetings in New South Wales because the public meetings functioned as an institution within this political, social and geographical unit. I do not believe that this limitation will impose any restriction on studying public meetings as an institution. I also have to limit the period of study to the late 19th century between 1871 and 1901. This is chiefly because it is practically impossible to extend the period within the given time for writing this thesis.

Parliamentary democracy is composed not only of formal institutions like parliament, the ministry and the judiciary, but also of institutions like the press and the public meeting. If the former are compared to bones and sinews of parliamentary democracy, the latter may be thought of as its flesh and blood. The public meeting and the newspapers were indispensable components of parliamentary democracy as an institution for expressing public opinion in late 19th century New South Wales.

The importance of the newspapers was even then clearly recognized. Twopeny observed in *Town Life in Australia*

"This is essentially the land of newspapers. The colonist is by nature an inquisitive animal, who likes to know what is going on around him. The young colonial has inherited this proclivity. Excepting the Bible, Shakespeare, and Macaulay's 'Essays', the only literature within the bushman's reach are newspapers. The townsman deems them equally essential to his well-being. Nearly everybody can read, and nearly everybody has leisure to do so. Again, the proportion of the population who can afford to purchase and subscribe to newspapers is ten times as large as in England; hence the number of sheets issued is comparatively much greater. Every country township has its weekly or bi-weekly organ. In Victoria alone there are over 200 different sheets published. Nor is the quality inferior to the quantity. On the contrary, if there is one institution of which Australians have reason to be proud, it is their newspaper press."  

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The newspapers, as Twopeny asserted, exerted a great influence upon Australians and the press has accordingly received considerable attention from Australian historians among whom R.B. Walker may be singled out for his excellent book, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, which has placed the newspapers in the historical context of the 19th century. But, on the other hand, historians have perhaps paid too little attention to public meetings as an institution for making public opinion; public meetings have never, as far as I know, been the formal subject of historical research. If the press is recognized as a legitimate subject for historical research, then public meetings deserve similar treatment.

Both the press and the public meeting performed indispensable roles in forming and expressing public opinion and they clearly interacted with one another for that purpose. They may be thought of as the lungs of 19th century Australian society: the health of that society depended on the sound functioning of both lungs - the press and the public meeting. This thesis will examine the lung that has not yet had its X-ray, New South Wales public meetings towards the end of the 19th century.

1.3. Newspapers and Public Meetings

The press, with its regular circulation of newspapers and its permanent bases in the form of companies, was a more firmly established institution than the public meeting and was probably a more effective means of propaganda. However the views of a public meeting, when convened with legitimate procedure or attended by influential public figures, could be considered a real expression of 'public' opinion while the views of a newspaper were usually regarded as those of its editor or proprietor. Moreover, public meetings sometimes had a direct influence on political decisions by appointing deputations to call on influential politicians.

The ideas and opinions of editors and owners of newspapers, and to a much lesser extent those of readers of the newspapers, were transmitted through the papers to the readers at large. The press in this way was probably the most effective system for transmitting ideas and opinions. But, on the other hand, newspapers cannot be regarded as having been an effective organ for expressing the voice of the people. Although the contents of the press was undoubtedly influenced by the changing demands and expectation of its readers, the editors and owners of the press always

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had the right to decide what they would publish about any particular policy or event. The editors and owners were organizers and co-ordinators of opinions and ideas in the press while average readers were no more than passive receivers of what their papers gave them. The press, in short, was an influential distributor of the ideas of a limited number of people but it was not of itself an efficient organ to express what ordinary people were thinking and feeling.

Generally speaking public meetings were organized by people who wanted to start a movement or advocate a cause. While promoters of the meetings drew up resolutions to be discussed at the meetings, the participants usually had the right to consent, to amend or to reject these proposals. A public meeting in Balmain in 1885, for example, was intended to give support to the Government’s decision to send troops to the Soudan, but the majority of this meeting were opposed to the original purpose of the meeting and they turned the meeting into an assembly for expressing opposition to the expedition and to the Government. Although public meetings were a means by which their promoters could disseminate their opinions and influence political decisions, there was always the possibility that their proposals would be rejected by the participants. The process of forming public opinion through public meetings was thus a reciprocal process involving the promoters and the participants, even though the promoters usually exercised much more influence at the meetings than ordinary participants.

In theory anyone who wanted to start a movement or advocate a cause could organize a public meeting, though in practice the promoters were usually those people who had the time, the money and the political experience for such an undertaking. But even allowing for this, it is clear that the number of people who organized public meetings was much larger than the small circle of editors and owners of newspapers. In this sense public meetings were more democratic than newspapers. They breathed in the voice of the people more effectively and breathed it out more directly on decision-makers than did the newspapers which exerted their influence indirectly on politics by spreading propaganda to the people. Public meetings were the means by which the people formed and transmitted their opinions to politicians while the press by itself was an organ to distribute the views of a limited number of people to its readers. The function of public meetings was therefore different from that of the press, though both of them undoubtedly played an indispensable role in the making of public opinion by making up for their respective deficiencies.
Many public meetings were advertised in newspapers and many had their proceedings reported and commented in the press. Thus the opinions expressed at public meetings were often spread to a much wider audience than those attending the meetings. On the other hand people influenced by an editorial of a newspaper sometimes started a movement by convening a public meeting about the subject of the editorial. Such a movement was naturally supported by the paper. Although the press and the public meeting differed in function in several respects, they interacted with one another and played an indispensable role in forming and expressing public opinion in the 19th century.

1.4. Speeches and the Making of Public Opinion

Many historians tend to suppose rather uncritically that their written sources were more important than what people said, but is it true that public speeches were less important than newspapers, pamphlets and circulars? Did not speech, formal and informal, as a direct method of communication, have a place as important as written language in the formation of public opinion?

In the referenda for Australian federation, the influence of newspapers, especially that of The Daily Telegraph, to which contemporaries attributed great political influence, has been widely recognized. The Sydney Morning Herald published 160,000 copies of a special federation issue in 1898 and 273,000 in 1899. The Daily Telegraph published 300,000 copies of a special four page issue and despatched it to every elector in the colony, to which leading Federalists ascribed the failure of the 'Yes' vote to reach the necessary minimum 80,000 in 1898. At the same time speeches at public meetings also had great influence in moulding public opinion. They might, indeed, have been more powerful than the written language, as The Sydney Morning Herald speculated during the 1899 campaign.

"The colony is just now enjoying to the full an opportunity of hearing the best platform orators that New South Wales can produce. In every city and town and village gentlemen are vigorously engaged in describing as eloquently as they can the advantages of federation, of the alleged evils of federating under the Commonwealth Bill. The services of these gentlemen are so eagerly sought by the electors as to justify the presumption that, even in these days of cheap newspapers and gratuitous handbills and circulars, the power of the human voice in leading public opinion is fully admitted in all quarters. There is, of course, something in the personal contact between listener and speaker that is denied to the relationship

49 See ibid., pp.102-105.
between reader and writer... For instance, a person may read without the least quickening of his heart-pulses an article or a letter which, if read to an audience by a man who knows how to read, would spur him to enthusiasm. This being so it is easy enough to recognize the power which lies in the hands of an orator full of his subject, quick to see the effect of his words on his audience, and ready at any time to drive home the point which he sees to be best fitted for their conviction.  

There was a great increase in the circulation of the newspapers in New South Wales towards the end of the 19th century, but even so speeches at public meetings continued to be an essential means of leading public opinion. In the 1899 campaign over the Federal Bill, 436 meetings were advertised in The Sydney Morning Herald by the Colonists' Anti-Convention Bill League and 415 meetings were convened by the United Federal Executive. If 840 people on the average, attended each meeting, this suggests that well over 700,000 people listened to orators in favour of or against the Federal Bill. Though some no doubt attended more than one meeting, the total number of the attendances at all the public meetings during the campaign must have been even greater for there were many meetings convened by the Labour Party, by the Socialist League and by a number of other organizations. Individual politicians, too, convened meetings in order to express their views on this issue. There were also hundreds of meetings which were not advertised in The Sydney Morning Herald. Every day during the campaign reports of these meetings occupied a large space in the newspapers. In this way public meetings played a very conspicuous role in the federation campaign and they must have been important in other matters as well.

In 1901, the last year this thesis deals with, The Sydney Morning Herald commented on public meetings by saying:

"In spite of the power of the Press in voicing public opinion, it has not superseded the public meeting as a means of eliciting and strengthening the sentiments of the people on questions of national concern. At the present time we are about to largely avail ourselves of this medium of popular agitation in connection with the tariff proposals. Already in Melbourne a large and enthusiastic public meeting has spoken with no uncertain voice, and next week New South Wales is to be given the opportunity to do

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50 S.M.H., 10 June 1899.

51 S.M.H., between 24 April 1899 and 19 June 1899.

52 I obtained the average 840 from estimates of attendances at 120 meetings out of the 851 meetings convened by the United Federal Executive or the Colonists' Anti-Convention Bill League in The Sydney Morning Herald.
likewise. For some days after its announcement the tariff was received with mutterings of discontent, but the growing feelings of anger soon called for organized expression, with the result that throughout the State we are to have a series of public meetings of condemnation. Able speakers will clearly and forcibly set forth the thoughts that are stirring thousands of their fellow men, and the great gathering of listeners will give the stamp of their approval with that magnetic force which is peculiar to crowds moved by a single impulse. Then comes in a useful function of the press in recording the tense scene and passing it on to hundreds of thousands of readers throughout the country. The meeting serves the double purpose of kindling a great enthusiasm in a common cause, and in defining the exact ground of opposition by moulding the nebulous mass of public opinion into a concrete platform.  

This statement clearly describes the importance of public meetings in forming public opinion - an importance which went beyond merely conveying information. Public meetings could elicit and strengthen the sentiments of the people on questions of national concern by 'that magnetic force which is peculiar to crowds'. They could give an emotional stimulus to the people and 'kindle a great enthusiasm in a common cause'.

Public meetings, not only on questions of national concern, but also on small local matters, were very important in moulding public opinion. Perhaps on local matters public meetings were more influential than the press because in a small local community promoters could gather a large proportion of the inhabitants and could speak directly to the audience without the help of newspapers. This thesis, therefore, will pay considerable attention to meetings concerned with local issues as well as those involved in national concerns.

1.5. A Public Meeting and A Process of Generating Public Opinion

So far I have dealt with the public meeting in contrast with the press and described an outline of its role as an institution for the moulding of public opinion. In this section I will look more closely into the public meeting as such by examining one public meeting which was held in Balmain in 1889.

Public meetings, of course, were not independent phenomena: they were merely a part of movements which sought to mould public opinion and achieve certain objects, though they were a most conspicuous and important part. The movements which sought to form public opinion through public meetings usually consisted of

53 S.M.H., 26 Oct. 1901.
three stages: a preliminary stage, the public meetings themselves, and the after
effects and consequences of the public meetings. I will examine such a process in a
movement which sought to secure a park for Balmain in 1889.

Beginnings of movements were usually very obscure. Even contemporaries, except
a few interested people, usually did not know how movements were started. In the
case of the movement in Balmain in 1889 I could not trace the development of the
movement back to its very beginning, but I have obtained information about the
second preliminary meeting of people interested in the issue.

This meeting was held in McLachlan's Tattersalls Hotel on Monday evening, 8
July 1889, "to form a committee to devise ways and means for the purchase of
Pyne Park, as a Recreation Reserve for Balmain". Among those present were
Aldermen Swan and Easton. Alderman Easton took the chair. The minutes of the
previous meeting were read. Two letters were also read. One was an apology for
non-attendance from W.M. Burns, the former Mayor of Balmain, and the other was
from the owner of Pyne Park. W. Flood then moved that a public meeting be held
at an early date to appoint a deputation to the Government to urge them to
purchase the estate. He hoped that aldermen would support him in the matter and
argued that the more influential the deputation, the more weight it would have with
the Government. Then the committee was formed and W. Ferrier and a certain
Mr. McFarlan were appointed hon. secretary and treasurer respectively and
ultimately the meeting decided to hold the business over until the next meeting of
the committee. 54

A week later the committee met again and Easton took the chair. Burns
managed to attend this time and moved that "a requisition be sent to the Mayor
requesting him to convene a meeting of the ratepayers in the Town Hall, for the
purpose of urging the necessity of purchasing Pyne Park as a reserve." The motion
was seconded by Alderman J. Clubb and carried unanimously. It was further
resolved, on the motion of Flood, that "a petition be drawn up and signed, with a
view to presenting same to the Government as deemed necessary by the public
meeting." The secretary was instructed to prepare 250 post cards as invitations to
the public meeting. Several other people then joined the committee and the meeting

54 B.O., 13 July 1889. Flood was a promoter in other movements such as that demanding the
construction of a new bridge and that demanding the revision of the rates of the borough. Ferrier was a
member of the Eight Hour Demonstration Committee.
adjourned till the 22nd.\textsuperscript{55} On the 20th the Mayor, in response to the requisition from the ratepayers, convened a public meeting in the Town Hall of all those favourable to the Government placing on the estimates a sufficient sum to purchase Pyne Park as a recreation ground for Balmain.\textsuperscript{56}

This meeting was held on the 29th of July. The Mayor presided. Four members of Parliament sent apologies, Jacob Garrard, F.J. Smith, J.S. Hawthorne and George Clubb; there were also apologies from Alderman MacDonald and W. Russell. Alderman Easton moved the first resolution: "That in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable that Pyne Park should be procured for a recreation reserve for Balmain West, and that the Government be requested to place a sufficient sum of money on the estimates for the purpose named." Alderman Swan seconded the resolution which was duly passed. Alderman J. Clubb suggested that Henry Parkes, the Premier, be invited to visit the spot. Burns then proposed the second resolution: "That a petition be signed by all present and others interested, in furtherance of the object, and that a deputation be appointed from this meeting to wait upon the Government to lay the foregoing resolution before them, such deputation to consist of the members for the district, the Mayor and Aldermen and others." He did not consider deputations did much good unless other influence was brought to bear over the matter. He asked the members for Balmain to exercise their influence on the Government. Flood seconded the resolution. He thought that the deputation together with the petition would do something in persuading the Government to purchase the land. The Government had gauged the question previously by the lukewarm way the residents had took the matter up. He hoped that all who gave in their names for the deputation would attend it. Three cheers for the Queen terminated the proceedings.\textsuperscript{57}

On the 15th of August the deputation, introduced by Jacob Garrard, met the Premier, Parkes, and persuaded him to inspect Pyne Park. On the 24th Parkes arrived there accompanied by the Mayor and met local members of Parliament, 5 aldermen and a number of residents. After looking at the park, the company visited a workshop recently erected by W. Langley in his timber yard. They

\textsuperscript{55}B.O., 20 July 1889.

\textsuperscript{56}ibid.

\textsuperscript{57}B.O., 3 Aug. 1889.
proceeded to the top story, where Karl Schmidt, a well-known caterer, had everything prepared for an enjoyable 'tiffin'. As a result, Parkes promised to urge on the Government the need for purchasing the park and 3,500 pounds was placed on the estimates for this purpose.\(^5^8\)

### 1.6. Active Citizens

As already pointed out, a public meeting was not an independent phenomenon, but a part of a movement which sought to mould public opinion about a certain issue. In the example sketched above there were at least three preliminary meetings before the public meeting chaired by the Mayor and after that the deputation and the Premier's visit were arranged. The whole process took about 2 months. The following chapters will concentrate on public meetings but to understand them we must keep in mind the fact that they took place only after quite lengthy preparations arranged by committees and energetic citizens. We must be aware of an environment in which people were very gregarious, always ready to create, join, reform, reconstitute or divide committees and bodies for the improvement and welfare of mankind.\(^5^9\)

The acquisition of Pyne Park by Balmain depended on the voluntary services and contributions of the members of the committee. Alderman Easton was the originator of the movement. He was supported by other aldermen and the ordinary citizens on the committee who were prepared to go to the trouble of attending meetings, drafting resolutions, speaking to them, sending out post cards, advertising the public meeting, arranging for the Premier's visit and defraying the necessary expenses.

Politically active citizens, who in these ways were prepared to support a movement for the welfare of the community, were an essential part of the process by which public meetings came into existence. They took part in organizations and committees formed to promote a cause to advocate an interest, to express indignation or to publicise some injustice.\(^6^0\) Historians have largely ignored these

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\(^{5^8}\) B.O., 17 and 31 Aug. and 28 Sept. 1889.


\(^{6^0}\) *The Emergence of Australian Party System* edited by P. Loveday, A.W. Martin and R.S. Parker, Hale and Iremonger, 1977, p.9.
obscure but energetic citizens who were indispensable actors in the development of society. This thesis will throw light upon some of the activities of these people who died in silence without having their voices recorded in history.

The public meetings themselves were like the visible parts of icebergs above the surface of the water. Below the surface there were thousands of active, bold, often ambitious men who made the meetings possible by their drive, their organization and their capacity for sustained effort. The meetings which reflected the ambition, the desires and the will of the people were the fruit of their efforts. This thesis will examine the process by which public opinion was moulded by these active citizens.

1.7. Accessibility to the Ministry and Legitimacy of Public Meetings

The degree to which the ministry and other people in power were accessible to the public was another factor of considerable importance. Delegates from public meetings could usually meet the relevant minister or even the Premier when introduced by their member or members of Parliament. In the case of Pyne Park, the representatives of the meeting saw the Premier twice in a month or so and obtained what they wanted. Even a representative of the unemployed, a shoemaker, it was said, was able to have an interview with the Minister for Works, even though he had no introduction and despite criticism from *The Sydney Morning Herald*, in order to arrange employment for his fellow workers in road-making at the North Shore.61 Although the result of a deputation was not, of course, always as successful as in these two instances the mere fact that ministers were usually accessible to the public gave ordinary people a well founded hope that they could influence politics by deputations and so encouraged the people of each locality to be active in soliciting funds for local improvements. *The Balmain Independent* stated

"It is evident that the inhabitants of those districts which desire to obtain a fair share of public money, must be neither bashful nor inactive. They must push their demands with the energy and perseverance of such astute and veteran politicians as Mr. R.B. Smith, allowing nothing to damp their zeal, and never accepting a refusal ... We should recommend them in the language of Mr. Lucas to agitate the question till it 'boils over'."62

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61 *S.M.H.*, 10 Jan. 1871.

In local matters people seemed to think that the more patient they were, the less likely would their claims be considered.

It was not very difficult, even for ordinary people, to reach the centre of power in the small society of late 19th century New South Wales; certainly it was far easier then than it is for ordinary people to approach the Australian Government today. Although many deputations must have withdrawn disappointed, successful deputations like those I mentioned above inevitably encouraged the activities of those eager to get the largest share of the state pudding.

To increase their share local activists always tried to make their public meetings and deputations more 'representative' and 'influential'. It was for this reason that the committee concerned with Pyne Park was anxious to get the Mayor to convene and preside over the public meeting and to get as many 'influential' people as possible on its deputation.

The fact that a mayor called and presided over a public meeting gave credit and standing to the meeting. His participation often had financial benefits as well. If a public meeting was convened by a mayor, the municipality sometimes paid for its advertising in newspapers and with other methods. He also granted the free use of a town hall to a movement to which he or aldermen were sympathetic. If people could get a mayor or, better still, mayors on their side, they could generate public opinion at the least cost and with the highest plausibility. During the anti-Chinese agitation towards the end of 1878 a 'monster' demonstration planned by the Political Reform Union was set aside in favour of the public meeting convened by the Mayor of Sydney in the Victoria Theatre. The legitimacy given by the Mayor to the public meeting was thought to be of prime importance, even though this action rather took the initiative of the anti-Chinese movement out of the hands of the Political Reform Union.

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63 B.O., 2 Oct. 1886.

64 A. Curthoys, op.cit., p.501.
1.8. Permanent Organizations and Their Influence

Movements and agitations, when using chiefly public meetings for moulding public opinion, basically followed a process similar to the instance of Pyne Park. However movements which developed on a colony-wide scale had several different aspects from local movements.

Colony-wide movements were usually composed of many public meetings which had preliminary stages and outcomes similar to those of small local movements, but the former sometimes had permanent organizations as headquarters to promote and co-ordinate agitations on a large scale. Organizations such as local option leagues, temperance societies, protection leagues, free trade associations, labour leagues, trade societies, trade unions, early closing associations, the Trades and Labour Council and the Public Schools League could promote a colony-wide movement more systematically and easily, if not more successfully, than temporary committees and associations. However even temporary committees, like those for the dissolution campaign in 1886 and about the George Dean case in 1895, could organize colony-wide agitations without any support from such established organizations: the former was designed to persuade the Governor to dissolve the Legislative Assembly; the latter was intended to ask the Government to appoint a royal commission to reopen the case in which Dean was convicted of poisoning his wife and sentenced to imprisonment for life.

During the dissolution campaign in 1886 there does not seem to have been any distinct central committee of the movement, though W.F. Martin, Alfred Allen and a gentleman called Mr. Miller were regarded as its originators and organizers. Even if these people were wire-pullers behind the scene, most of the public meetings during the movement were in fact prepared and conducted by local residents. One such meeting was held in Balmain. This meeting was arranged entirely by a committee consisting of local gentlemen and presided over by ex-Alderman Gow. The Balmain Observer eulogized the meeting as a spontaneous and genuine expression of the desire and will of the people.

One report stated that the movement was composed of 50 public meetings and

65 N.M.H., 6 and 22 Nov. 1886.

66 B.O., 30 Oct. 1886.
that the petitions collected in support of the movement represented 16,000 electors; another observed that the opponents of the Government totalled 23,000 people, which represented 10% of the number of the electors on the rolls in 1885.67 34 among the 50 meetings were reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald* and the total number of attendances at 10 of these meetings was nearly 10,000.68 It does not matter here whether there were wire-pullers behind the movement or not, the point is that such a big campaign as this could be promoted and co-ordinated without any definite central body or any support from permanently established organizations.

This is true not only of political agitations, but also of movements such as that in support of the Bulli Colliery Disaster funds which was intended for the relief of the sufferers by the catastrophe in the Bulli colliery in 1887 and that in connection with the George Dean case. The latter movement was conducted by two central committees: one in North Sydney made investigation into the case and the other in the City organized the colony-wide agitation. This agitation was so widespread and effective that *The Sydney Morning Herald* stated ironically that it might not be superfluous to suggest that those who did not take part in it were not to be supposed for that reason to be actuated by a desire for the man's continued punishment.69 Lacking organizational bases, such movements entirely depended on the participation and co-operation of active citizens who were community minded and willing to create and join bodies for the improvement and welfare of society.

Movements which had permanent organizations to co-ordinate their activities could not promote effective an agitation without the support of ordinary citizens. The established organizations were simply not powerful enough to maintain effective agitations throughout the colony in the 19th century and some of them were, in fact, not very different from temporary committees. Free trade associations and protection leagues were often disorganized and sometimes dissolved or lapsed into inactivity after election campaigns. Some of the branches of the Labour Electoral Leagues were also somewhat ephemeral in the early 1890s. One of the most important factors of successful political movements in the late 19th century was their ability to obtain the positive participation of ordinary citizens.

67 *S.M.H.*, 20 and 22 Nov. 1886.

68 See *S.M.H.*, 21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29 and 30 Oct. and 1,2,3,4,5,8,10,12,13, 16 and 19 Nov. 1886, *N.M.H.*, 8 Nov. 1886 and *B.O.*, 30 Oct. 1886.

69 *S.M.H.*, 25 April 1895.
In order to obtain such support, colony-wide movements needed the co-operation of newspapers, even if it was an unwilling co-operation. During the dissolution campaign in 1886 *The Sydney Morning Herald* published four editorials criticizing the campaign on the one hand, and reported many public meetings advocating the dissolution on the other. In consequence, *The Sydney Morning Herald* helped the supporters of the campaign distribute their opinions despite the fact that the paper was opposed to the dissolution. This function of the Sydney dailies was essential to colony-wide movements. The close attention paid by the Sydney dailies to public meetings was an indispensable factor which made agitations possible throughout the colony in the age of small organizations and individual initiatives.\(^{70}\)

1.9. Propaganda

On first sight, the dissolution campaign in 1886 was not successful. The Governor immediately answered the deputation sent from the movement saying that he could not assent to the dissolution of Parliament for the Ministry was commanding a working majority therein. The movement was thus undoubtedly a failure in regard to the express object of the campaign.\(^{71}\) However it was successful in another respect from the point of view of a Balmain journalist who watched the course of events during and after the campaign and who believed the movement failed in its stated aims but succeeded in assisting the return of Henry Parkes.

"While there is yet time for breath, we think it is quite apropos to point out the adroit manner in which the Parkes movement has been engineered to a successful stage, if not to a successful conclusion. Sir Henry is going to the country on a straight free trade platform, and the issue of protection is to be fought to the bitter end. But on consideration does it not strike one that a large body of protectionists have been adroitly ‘worked’ to float the free-trade leader to his present position of vantage? At the now famous ‘spontaneous’ anti-government meetings particularly spontaneous feature of which was the identical wording of the resolutions proposed at the different meetings in different towns, it was distinctly stated that the purpose of the meeting was to give expression to the popular feeling against the government; it was politely requested that the question of protection or free-trade should not be introduced into the discussion; and it was stated that no clique or party were to be benefited, but the movement was in the interest of the common public good. But the meetings, non-partisan and non-political though they were, developed a strong popular feeling for Parkes. Stage the first. Next came the series of meetings convened to hear Sir Henry Parkes by invitation. More spontaneous expressions of

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\(^{70}\)*See footnote 68.*

\(^{71}\)*S.M.H., 22 Nov. 1886.*
popular belief in Parkes, a steady rising of the tide that floated him to power, but still, when protection was mentioned, Sir Henry, like the chancellor in Tennyson's poems 'smiling, put the question by'. At last comes the Dibbs-Jennings explosion, and Sir Henry 'comes to his own again,' with absolute power of dissolution in his hands ... At last we have the truth. Sir Henry stands out as the free trade champion ... When we come down to the hard fact of the case there is only this conclusion: a general popular outburst against the late government, protectionists and free-traders combined, has been adroitly used to bring Sir Henry prominently before the people again and now that he has climbed into power - down goes the ladder, and the protectionists have been very neatly done.\textsuperscript{72}

The campaign was a complete failure as a movement asking for the dissolution of Parliament, but it was a splendid success as propaganda for enhancing the popularity of Parkes and thus contributed to the decisive victory of the free traders in the general election in early 1887 despite optimistic views expressed by some of the protectionists' leaders.\textsuperscript{73} Colony-wide movements consisting of dozens of public meetings were a very effective method of propaganda. If their organizers promoted agitations adroitly so as to create the impression that they were working for the good of the general public, they could manipulate public opinion or obtain support from all classes of society. A permanent organization was often thought to be advocating a sectional and not the general interest; it therefore not only provoked antagonism from its opponents but aroused suspicion and unpopularity from uncommitted sections of the general public.

1.10. Safety-valve

Even if a public meeting was not successful in its express purposes or as propaganda, it served another useful purpose. The Sydney Morning Herald thought that as a safety-valve the public meeting exercised good.

"Is there an evil crying for redress, a public meeting of citizens is called. exemplary resolutions are passed, and the assemblage breaks up with a glow of satisfaction at having done its duty in calling attention to an anomalous state of things, and in having placed on record its condemnation thereof. It is a peculiarly British institution, and one that finds its stronghold in that freedom of speech which is a prized national possession.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{72} B.O., 29 Jan. 1887.

\textsuperscript{73} See B. Mansfield, op. cit., p.80.

\textsuperscript{74} S.M.H., 26 Oct. 1901.
The public meeting could thus let off steam. Even when unsuccessful, public meetings by their very existence and by the possibility that they might in future resolve grievances, prevented people from going to extremes. The people had a genuine belief that freedom of speech would eventually remedy social evils. The public meeting was a visible realization of freedom of speech. The discontented were confident that they would obtain the support of the majority and would carry out the reforms they were dreaming of because they believed that their causes were just and their objects would be achieved through freedom of speech. However, there was a variety of opinions about the concept of freedom of speech. We will examine this problem in the fourth chapter.

1.11. Public Opinion

We have to clarify what 'public opinion' means before proceeding to a systematic analysis of public meetings as an institution for making public opinion. Although it is impossible to put into words a precise definition of 'public opinion', it is indispensable to define words such as 'the public', 'publics' and 'opinion' to the extent that there is not any ambiguity which may prevent readers from understanding the analysis.

There has been little agreement among sociologists, political scientists and social psychologists on the exact meaning of 'public opinion'. The term has been loosely used in reference to widespread beliefs, climate of opinion, consensus, the mores and the more settled convictions of a group and the process of developing opinions. I define 'public opinion' as close as possible to the realities of late 19th century New South Wales. 'A public opinion' is the expression of attitude of a considerable number of people who are not composed only of members of one or a few established organizations in connection with an issue of general political significance in such intensity and consistency as to give rise to the probability of affecting action towards the object concerned.75

The most important problem concerned with the definition is the nature of the

public holding a public opinion. The public of a public opinion is a considerable number of people concerned with an issue of general political importance. The concept of the public adopted here was based on that defined by J. Dewey and developed by F.H. Allport, B.C. Hennessy and others. Hennessy stated "there are many publics, each of them consisting of individuals who together are affected by a particular action or idea. Thus, each issue creates its own public; and these publics will not normally consist of the same individuals who make up any other particular publics, although every individual will, at any given time, be a member of many other publics." Conversely many publics create many public opinions. It is not the sole abstract public that creates the one public opinion. We suppose that there are public opinions of publics: not that there is only 'the public opinion' of 'the public'. This helps us examine actual relationship, conflicts and struggles of groups in connection with a certain issue.

There is another but related problem of considerable importance which F.H. Allport has referred to as the personification of 'public opinion'. Allport maintained, "Public opinion, according to this fiction, is thought of as some kind of being which dwells in or above the group, and then express its view, upon various issues as they arise. ... The fiction arises through thinking of an expression given by a 'group' at one time and another expression given by the same group at another time, and then assuming a continuity of some sort of sole principle between the two expressions. It may be said, for example, that public opinion in 1830 favoured slavery, but in 1930 opposed it: and the daemon of the group is thus thought of as changing its mind." The personification of 'public opinion' and that of the public will become a fatal flaw to the analysis of a given phenomenon if they are used rather uncritically. These concepts will blur historical insights and will mystify historical realities rather than make them clear and distinct.

There is an idea that the public consists of all the members of a community: only one public exists in this sense. Public opinion is thought of as representing the opinion of this public. In a small and simple community this idea corresponds to the realities, but in a modern society a large gap exists between the idea and a public it is assumed to denote. The latter is merely a group of people interested in an issue. The discrepancy generates the situation that the concept of the public as

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the whole of the members of a community is applied to a section of the community. This leads to the personification of public opinion.

However this fallacy itself was in one sense a reality and perhaps continues to be so now. It was a reality in the sense that however inaccurately the idea might reflect realities, it was held by many people and influenced the activity of many people. The idea, therefore, had a historical force which influenced the course of historical events. There were numerous instances that the idea was used to justify a cause or to support a movement. We must keep this fact in mind. As I have already mentioned, mayors were asked to convene and preside over public meetings and influential politicians and citizens were invited to attend them so that the 'public' character or the legitimacy of representing the whole community would be given to them. Newspapers appreciated the fact that a public meeting represented all the strata of the society even if it did not have a large attendance. These are indicative of the influence of the false concept of the public on real historical processes.

The public of public meetings with which we are primarily concerned must be an open public so as to deserve the name of 'the public' that the contemporaries assumed it should be. Here we take account of the contemporary notion about the public. We do not consider that a group of people who belonged to one organization or a few like bodies by themselves constituted the public of public meetings, though they could be components of the public of public meetings or promoters of public meetings. These organizations were not the public to the contemporaries who believed that 'public opinion' should be the opinion of 'the community' or 'the people'. In the second chapter we will subdivide public meetings into three groups mainly according to this 'public-ness'.

1.12. Class Relations

The definition of the public of public opinion might be enough for a sociologist, but it is necessary for a historian to place it in its real historical context. This section aims at putting it in the historical setting of late 19th century New South Wales.

New South Wales was a class society in the sense that class relationships permeated most economic, political and social structures and phenomena. Class relations were often the most important determinants in economic conflicts, social
struggles and political changes. On many occasions in the making of public opinion, which was a form of struggle for power to achieve the objects of movements, class relations seem to have played a more important role than any other factor. It seems to have formed the basis of the structure for making public opinion, though the high degree of social mobility, vague class consciousness, relative economic prosperity, populist tendencies in radicalism, and the tactful political leadership of the ruling class contributed to concealing the basic structure until the late 1880s. During the 1890s the public meeting and the press became a battle field for the leaders of the ruling class and those of the working class to obtain support from those who had no connection with organized labour and who had no direct interest in the established order.

The core of the ruling class was distinguishable from subordinate groups in ownership of property, possession of and accessibility to power and a well-to-do lifestyle. The businessmen, the most important and active members of the ruling class, were the chief promoters of public meetings and they were the main force which enabled the ruling class to dominate the process of making public opinion. The third and fourth chapters will deal with this process.

The ruling class was powerful economically because of its concentrated wealth in the production and circulation of commodities. Their ownership of property was secured, endorsed and justified by the democratic institutions through which they obtained and exerted power over subordinate groups. They were ideologically armed with laissez-faire in economics, liberalism in politics, and a belief in progress in general. They used these ideological weapons to cope with or to exercise influence over subordinate groups without resorting to physical force.

The weakness of the ruling class was also inherent in these democratic institutions which endorsed and justified their dominance. They had to command the agreement of the majority of the electors despite their small numbers in the total population. The democratic institutions were the source of legitimacy to their dominance, but at the same time the source of their weakness. The ideological weapons were important in this respect for the process of social emulation worked in favour of the ruling class: able and ambitious aspirants from subordinate groups were always to be found willing to support and, hopefully, to join the middle and upper classes. Controlling the process of making public opinion, that is, controlling the press, the public meeting and other institutionalised systems was essential to the maintenance of the hegemony of the rulers over subordinate groups. They maintained their
hegemony by preventing subordinate groups from fully using the process of forming public opinion. Their domination was stable, so long as they could prevent effective formation of public opinion by subordinate groups or could take the leadership of movements originating in the latter by accepting some of the demands of discontented groups and dividing them into moderate elements and radical elements.

Subordinate groups, when endeavouring to form themselves into an opposing class, also attempted to control or share the process for moulding public opinion from the late 1880s. The public meeting, as it was a cheaper, more flexible and vulnerable institution than the press, became a battle field between the ruling class and subordinate groups, especially the awakening working class, over the control of the process of generating public opinion.

It goes without saying that studies in the class relationships and social structure of a society cannot be completed in a day. Persistent efforts to examine a theoretical apparatus, to dig out new information, and to accumulate a great amount of data are indispensable. The framework of the class relations adopted here is not, of course, the final version of the theoretical apparatus. It is a tentative attempt to draw a picture of the social structure of New South Wales in the late 19th century for the purpose of analysing public meetings and the making of public opinion in that society. This framework is inevitably vague because it is to be given its contents by the following chapters, but I hope that at least it is clear enough to show my standpoint from which I examine public meetings and the making of public opinion.

The second chapter will mainly deal with the activity of the ruling class. The third chapter will examine the development of informal public meetings of working men which the second chapter left out. The fourth chapter will deal with the struggle between the ruling class and subordinate groups over the control of the process of making public opinion. Women, Chinese and other minority groups will be treated occasionally, but I cannot analyse them sufficiently in this thesis partly because of the limited time for writing it and partly because of my limited knowledge about them. I believe that more systematic research should be made into these groups.
Chapter 2

A Statistical Analysis

2.1 Introduction

Understanding public meetings as a process for the governance of local politics
within public meetings related in late 19th century New South Wales. This is not
a way of understanding and defining the choice attempts to make use of the
way of understanding various aspects of the public meeting as an advocate
and by giving a general idea of the changing structure for the governing of public
meetings through public meetings.

Rather than studying a historical sequence of public meetings and providing
opinions or specific public meetings their role in this structured legislative
context of the local meeting by an example until to a degree of local meeting. By
doing this I have adopted a statement, written from various experiences by the
show of a narrative letters, letters to the editor to his newspaper, the
experiences of those, when events the discussion, however, this model identifies
these various experiences to present in the early printed newspaper experiences.

Our analysis is that there are the major points of view, their role, in these
events that the chosen letters, letters to the editor to his newspaper, the
experiences of these, when events the discussion, however, this model identifies
these various experiences to present in the early printed newspaper experiences.

The reason for this is that the named just the early printed newspaper experiences
are to be considered the case study because the letter to the editor, along with
various printed newspapers and their role in providing information to society.

We should not only focus on the letter to the editor, the role of this experience for
the purpose of letter to the editor, along with various printed newspapers and their
role in providing information to society.

The following printed experiences have a large number of public meetings from
the advertisements in the Daily Telegraph in order to an event without these printed
experiences.
Chapter 2
A Statistical Analysis

2.1. Introduction

If a structure of public meetings, or a structure for the making of public opinion through public meetings existed in late 19th century New South Wales, what is the best way of understanding and defining it? This chapter attempts to show one of the ways of understanding various aspects of the public meeting as an institution and of giving a general idea of the changing structure for the moulding of public opinion through public meetings.

Rather than erecting a hypothetical structure of public meetings and deducing aspects of specific public meetings from that, I have attempted to reconstruct aspects of the real structure by intensive study of a range of actual meetings. In doing this I have adopted a statistical analysis because intuitive synthesis in the form of a narrative history, such as I undertook in the first chapter about the purchase of Pyne Park, soon reveals its limitations. However we must first solve two crucial problems in order to deal with public meetings systematically.

One problem is that there are too many public meetings to deal with in the limited scope of this thesis. Hence it is necessary to adopt some way of sampling that allows us to collect enough public meetings to represent ideally their important features. The other problem is how we should define the public meeting. There are many meetings which can clearly be regarded as public, but there are others which we cannot judge definitely to be public meetings or not partly because of our limited information about them and partly because of their ambiguous character. We must lay down rules for defining the public meeting for the purpose of our analysis and rules for treating ambiguous examples on the boundaries of the definition.

The sampling method adopted here is to collect examples of public meetings from the advertisements in *The Sydney Morning Herald* for every second year from 1871
to 1901. About one fourth to two thirds of the public meetings reported in the newspaper were advertised in it; though during the federation campaign of 1899 this proportion was even nine tenths. Some public meetings not reported in the paper were nevertheless advertised in it. The data collected in this way represent a fairly large portion of the public meetings, certainly almost all the important public meetings, in 16 out of 31 years under investigation. This should allow us to generalize about various features of public meetings and to sketch their structure for moulding public opinion; although the advertisements were restricted to meetings in Sydney and its suburban areas.

It would be desirable to include Newcastle and country districts in the data but, despite the limitations of geographical scope, the data in the present study are sufficient to reveal the main features of the public meeting. The metropolitan areas played a decisive role in forming public opinion in colony-wide movements and the suburbs of Sydney shared many features with the country districts as a local community.

Newspaper reports had a tendency to reflect the movements of the ruling class more than those of subordinate groups. So did the advertisements, though to a lesser extent, because advertising was a voluntary activity of the promoters of movements rather than an activity of the newspapers. Although there were cases in which newspapers refused to publish advertisements opposing their standpoint, the refusal of advertisements convening public meetings seems to have rarely occurred. More important, in giving the ruling class easier accessibility to advertisement columns than subordinate groups, was the expense of advertising. In regard to this, I unfortunately do not have enough information. Nevertheless, it is possible to say that the cost of advertisement was not prohibitively high even for ordinary workers. In 1854 the cost of 2 lines of advertising was 1 shilling and in 1877 the treasurer of the Trades and Labour Council paid 10 shillings for 2 advertisements of 7 lines. In comparison with daily wages those figures cannot be said to be prohibitively high.

78 For example, the Mayor of Marrickville took in an advertisement criticizing the expedition to the Soudan, but for some reason newspapers refused to publish it. The advertisement was: "Soldiers for Soudan - Do you know what your mission is? To bolster up Dally at a cost of half a million to country, to make your children fatherless, to make your wives widows, to bring an unnecessary sorrow on your country, to cause Australia to be identified with England's quarrels, and thus bring a hostile army to your own shores. Do you think, old England is in a danger? You know right well she is not. Pause and think; these would-be aristocrats are only using you for their own selfish ends, taking care to remain behind with a whole skin" D.T., 4 March 1885.

The promoters of movements, however, had to pay not only for advertisements in the newspapers, but also for other expenses. For instance a local movement promoted by James Milne, which used a local oddfellows' hall as a place for meeting, cost him between 8 and 10 pounds. Fairly high total expenditure must have discouraged or prevented organizers of movements of subordinate groups like the unemployed from advertising in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Data collection through advertisements is perhaps weak in this respect, so we will treat movements of subordinate groups, especially those of the working class, in the third chapter in order to examine features of the structure which are not sufficiently revealed by this method.

Secondly the public meeting must be defined as precisely as possible for the purpose of collecting data from the advertisements. I set up three groups of public meetings for the purpose of analysing them as an institution. The first group (Group I) is composed of public meetings convened by a mayor, his wife (known as a mayoress) or a council clerk by order of a mayor or a council. The public meetings included in this group are the most legitimate public meetings in the sense that they were recognized as representing the public opinion of a given community.

The second group (Group II) is composed of all the meetings which were not included in Group I. Group II consists of all the public meetings ('public meetings' here means 'meetings held for the expression of public opinion to which any person interested is admitted') excepting the meetings enumerated below.

1. Election meetings
2. Personal political meetings of individual politicians
3. Religious meetings
4. Ceremonial meetings
5. Opening meetings of lodges
6. Temperance Meetings
7. Lectures

80 *The Balmain Independent*, 12 March 1881.

8. Public Meetings of a society, an association, a religious school where the participants are chiefly composed of the members of that body

9. Meetings of the political parties from 1887

We should note, however, that some temperance, religious and opening meetings of lodges are included in Group II because they achieved a general or public significance by demanding action from the government, parliament or the municipality. The third group (Group III) is one of the categories of public meetings excluded from Group II, that is, the public meetings of the political parties. I set Group III up separately because meetings in this category appear to have aimed at extensive political changes rather than limited political demands so that there was a possibility that they might change the existing structure for generating public opinion. There are some difficulties in defining this group of public meetings. It is sometimes the case that a meeting is not clearly either a party or an individual one. In other meetings it is not always clear whether the meeting is open to the general public or only to the members of a party. I collected only those meetings which were explicitly or implicitly meetings of the political parties and at the same time open to the public. This chapter will examine the data collected by the above-stated method and definition. The data include the number, time, day, season, place, purpose, attendance of the meetings in these three groups.

2.2. Number

What does the number of public meetings advertised in The Sydney Morning Herald reveal or suggest? Certainly it does not show the number of the public meetings actually taking place, but it at least illustrates the increase and decrease in advertising, one of the most important requirements for public meetings, and it is also indicative of changes in the general level of activity of such meetings. Furthermore as the fact that a meeting was called by public advertisement was a proof that it was a ‘public’ meeting, the number of the public meetings advertised

\[\text{\textsuperscript{42}}\] have excluded a score or so of meetings advertised in 2 lines in the press because their time, place and purpose were not clear; if, however, this information was available these meetings have been included.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{83}}\text{See the Appendix.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{84}}\text{See S.M.H., 15 April 1875.}\]
in the newspaper provides a barometer of the number of the public meetings which should be recognized as legitimately convened. In this section we will see the changing activities and influences of the public meetings through an analysis of their number.

Fig.1 presents the total number of all the selected public meetings (Group I, Group II & Group III) for every second year from 1871 to 1901. The number of the meetings increased until 1887, and after that it decreased. Three years' moving averages show a fairly rapid increase up to 1887 and a gradual decrease thereafter. The advertising of public meetings was at its peak in the late 1880s and perhaps so too was the level of intensity of the public meetings themselves. It seems that the importance of the role public meetings played in the moulding of public opinion increased until the late 1880s and diminished gradually after that. What are the reasons for this phenomenon? Clues to the answer to this problem are to be found in Fig.2 and Fig.3.

Fig.2 shows the number of public meetings for Group I, Group II and Group III respectively. The number of Group II meetings fluctuated throughout the period under study. The graph has four peaks (in 1879, 1887, 1895 and 1901), but it does not show any increasing or decreasing tendency. Fig.3-b makes this point clear. The numbers of the meetings for Group II during the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s are almost identical (1870s: 272, 1880s: 279, 1890s: 276). Therefore we do not have to take Group II into consideration with regard to this problem.

Fig.2 shows a rapid increase in the number of meetings of Group I, a sudden decline in 1889, and stagnation thereafter. The number of the meetings for Group I in 1887 was more than eight times that in 1871. This rapid increase for Group I is chiefly responsible for the general increasing tendency of the total number up to 1887. The public meetings of Group I, the reader will remember, are those meetings which were convened by a mayor, a mayoress or a council clerk who were in close touch with the activities of local communities in and around Sydney. These activities were stimulated and sustained by general economic prosperity and the growth and characteristic concentration of population in urban areas. This economic expansion was particularly conductive to municipal development. The growth in residential construction increased council revenues, particularly as rating was based on improved values.\(^5\) During the 1870s and 1880s economic expansion stimulated

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Fig.1  Number of Public Meetings
(1871 - 1901)

Number of Meetings

Year

1871  1881  1891  1901
Fig. 2  Number of Public Meetings  
( Group I, II, III )

Fig. 3-a  Number of Group I meetings

Fig. 3-b  Number of Group II meetings

Fig. 3-c  Number of Group III meetings
municipal development and activity within the local communities which led to the rapid increase of the number of public meetings convened by a mayor, a mayoress or a council clerk. Consequently it brought about the increase in the total number of the meetings during the period.

From 1889 the total number gradually decreased despite the advent of the party meetings (Group III). The decrease in the total number of the meetings during the 1890s was also caused by the change in the number of the meetings of Group I. Figs.3-a, 3-b and 3-c prove this point. The depression resulted in retrenchment in the municipalities and perhaps diminished municipal activities, which must have affected the number of the meetings convened under the auspices of the local authorities during the 1890s.

According to Fig.3-c the number of meetings of the parties increased slightly during the 1890s in comparison with the 1880s. But the graph must be read carefully. The number of the meetings for the 1880s represents 2 years: on the other hand that of the 1890s covers 5 years. Fig.2 illustrates a diminishing tendency in the party meetings, which contributed to the gradual decrease in the total number of the meetings. We cannot conclude that the general activities of the parties diminished during the 1890s, but if the activities of the parties through public meetings are accurately reflected in the graphs, their power of mobilizing ordinary citizens certainly decreased.

2.3. Day, Time and Season

History has a nuance, delicate differences of the taste of everyday life. However meaningless they might appear to passing spectators, such nuances have their own deep implications conveying messages of the past. A historian could easily ignore the time, day and season of a specific public meeting, but they also convey secret messages of the past that will be decoded if they are treated as a part of the messages the public meetings as a whole left for us.

Table-1 presents the frequency of the public meetings called for each day of the week with regard to Group I, Group II, Group III and all the public meetings respectively.
Table 1: Days When Public Meetings Were Convened

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group I %</th>
<th>Group II %</th>
<th>Group III %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the last category, it is conspicuous that the meetings held on Monday are nearly twice as numerous as those on any other weekday, that the meetings held on Saturday are almost half of those on any other weekday except Monday, and that very few meetings took place on Sunday. The fact that Sunday was a holiday and Saturday a half-holiday for many people may have accounted for the relatively small number of meetings held on those days. But why was Monday preferred to any other day of the week? Was this because Monday was 'Saint Monday' for many workers as it was so during the 1850s? R.N. Connell and T.H. Irving stated that during the 1850s

"The day labourers of Sydney are notoriously idle, drunken and dissolute. They work - four days, then drink and riot." Inevitably, when working-men organized, their political activities were unruly and spontaneous around the edges, and again the effect of work patterns was obvious. 'Monday, jocularly called by the labouring classes Saint Monday, because they often take a half-holiday on that day, was favoured for public meetings." 86

However it is doubtful that this statement applies to the period of the present study. The public meetings convened under the auspices of local councils, whose members were predominantly employers of labour, show a greater tendency to prefer Monday than do the meetings of the other groups (Group I: 30.0%, Group II: 24.7%, Group III: 29.2%). These people could not have encouraged the custom of 'Saint Monday' by convening public meetings on Monday. As for Group II and

86 R.N. Connell and T.H. Irving, Class Structure in Australian History, Longman, 1980, p.120. See also S.M.H., 18 Aug. 1853.
Group III, the time of day at which the Monday meetings were held seems to be helpful. Among 222 meetings held on Monday in Group II, only 10 meetings are known to have taken place in the afternoon before 6 o'clock, a practice which would have interfered with labour discipline. Among 80 meetings of the same in Group III, there is not one such a meeting. Even among the 10 meetings in Group II, the purposes of 6 meetings were not the concerns of working men.

It is wrong to suppose that Monday was favoured for public meetings during the period of this study on account of the practice of 'Saint Monday' or even for the convenience of working men. On the contrary, public meetings were organized rigidly outside working hours and so within the bounds of labour discipline.

Out of 1805 public meetings collected through the advertisements, there are 105 weekday afternoon meetings (Group I : 45, Group II : 60) which comprise only 5.8% of the total. Among 45 weekday afternoon meetings in Group I, hardly any meetings are concerned with working class interests, and with regard to 60 meetings in Group II there are 23 meetings directly or indirectly related to working class interests. But 17 out of 23 meetings are meetings of the unemployed who were not under any labour discipline. It is also interesting to note that among 45 meetings in Group I there are 19 meetings attended predominantly by 'ladies' who did not have to work in the strict sense of the word and 6 charity meetings which are also supposed to have been attended by many 'ladies'. Public meetings were promoted outside working hours and so within the limits of modern labour discipline and in this sense were incorporated into modern capitalist society.

There remains the question as to why Monday was preferred to any other day. It may have been because a custom produced by the work pattern of the 1850s was preserved only as a matter of form. The custom, without sustaining conditions, must lose its force. The proportion of Monday meetings to the total number of the meetings declined from 36.1% in the 1870s to 25.6% in the 1880s, then to 23.8% in the 1890s which is only 2.2% larger than the figure for the Friday meetings in the 1890s.

Table-2 shows the number of meetings held on Saturday and Sunday for Group I, Group II, Group III and the total for them during the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s respectively.
### Table-2: Public Meetings Held On Sunday And Saturday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1870s</th>
<th>1880s</th>
<th>1890s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group I</td>
<td>8 (5.8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10 (3.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group II</td>
<td>32 (11.8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>47 (16.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group III</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40 (9.8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>59 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage shows the proportion of Saturday or Sunday meetings to the total number of the meetings in each category. There are no Sunday meetings in Group I. The Sabbatarian code seems to have been strictly enforced by the local authorities. Even in Group II and Group III there are few Sunday meetings during the 1870s and 1880s. Observance of the Sabbath must have limited vigorous participation of workers who could otherwise most easily take part in public meetings on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. The sudden increase in Sunday meetings during the 1890s indicates more active participation of workers in public meetings and in a process of forming public opinion.

Why were there fewer meetings on Saturday than on any other day except Sunday? If there was a smaller number of meetings on Saturday on account of its being a half-holiday, why were there as many meetings on Saturday as on any other weekday except Monday in Group II?

A meeting against the proposed Federal Tariff took place at the Ashfield Hall on Saturday, the 2nd of November 1901. The Ashfield Advertiser observed about this meeting

"Prior to the arrival of the speakers from Sydney, the Ashfield Borough Brass Band played several selections in front of the hall, but Saturday nights being admittedly bad ones for public meetings, debarring members of the business people from attending, the hall was only about three parts full."  

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87 *The Ashfield Advertiser*, 9 Nov. 1901.
The local public meetings (Group I) seem to have avoided Saturday nights due to the inconvenience to the business people who were the chief promoters of the meetings and active participants in them. Perhaps some difficulty in obtaining school halls and civic halls was also responsible as such buildings were usually engaged for entertainment on Saturday nights. 88

In Group II Saturday afternoon meetings and meetings for the interests of working men at a place like the Haymarket reserve substantially increased the number of Saturday meetings. 33 Saturday afternoon meetings and 14 Haymarket meetings (one overlapping) constitute 40.4% of the Saturday meetings in Group II. On the other hand, there are only 6 such meetings in Group I.

Saturday meetings as well as Sunday meetings were convenient for working men to take part in, though they may have generally dedicated Saturday evenings to lighter pursuits than listening to addresses on political issues. 89 In adopting a rigorous Sabbatarian code pertaining to middle class culture and avoiding inconvenience to the business people, the local public meetings were held mainly on weekdays. This would have discouraged the participation of working men.

Problems discussed at public meetings or causes advocated at them do not appear to have been influenced by the season. Table-3, however, provides a different picture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table-3 : Seasons When Public Meetings Were Held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It presents the number of the public meetings for each season of the periods indicated and the total for all seasons. The ratio of the number of the meetings

88 B.O., 8 and 15 Aug. 1885.

89 D.T., 2 Sept. 1889.
held in summer to that of any of the other seasons is approximately 2 : 3. Evidently summer was not preferred for convening public meetings. There are reasons for this. The secretary of the Masonic Hall Company stated, "The summer months are not conductive to indoor amusements, and the hall has been but seldom used." The public meetings which were chiefly held in halls shared a feature with indoor entertainments like concerts, plays and lectures: high temperatures during summer were not favourable to the performance. You might be able to catch here, though it is faint, a hint of the public meeting as a form of amusement. Suburban municipal elections early in the year must have diverted many politically active citizens from preparations for public meetings into campaigns for aldermanic elections. Since aldermen and candidates for aldermanic seats were active promoters of public meetings, this seems to be an important reason for public meetings being held less frequently in summer.

2.4. Place

The place of meetings is closely connected with their nature. For example in the election campaign for Balmain for the Legislative Assembly in 1885, 44 meetings are known to have been held and 42 of these meetings were conducted at hotels. One reason for this is that each of the meetings consisted of a speech by a candidate which lasted for from half an hour to one hour only. It would be unnecessary to hire a public hall for the purpose of addressing electors for such a comparatively short time. Another possible reason is the fact that hotels were convenient to providing liquor. As one journalist ironically observed

"Nobody, of course, hired cabs during the election, or threw open public houses and provided gratis liquors for the free and independent. All these things were done by the individuals who provided them on purely patriotic grounds, 'without money and without price'. Not one of the candidates, of course, knew of such things being done."

Analysis of the places for holding public meetings will also help us understand the nature of the public meetings and their relation with other social phenomena and systems. This section examines the places for holding public meetings. Table-4

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90 The North Shore Times and Manly Press, 1 May 1886. See also S.M.H., 24 Aug. 1893.

91 B.O., 10 and 14 Oct. 1885.

92 The Balmain Independent, 2 Oct. 1880.
shows the number and the percentage of the meetings held at the indicated places. More than 98% of the public meetings were held at a public place like a town hall, a public hall, a school, a school of arts, a hotel and so on. This fact is not surprising at all. What I want to call to the attention of readers is that public meetings were usually held indoors. Prima facie, open-air meetings constituted only 6.5% of the total and all the open-air meetings, including some of the meetings at hotels, constituted at most 10% of the total. Convening indoor public meetings, especially at a place like a town hall, a civic hall, a hall in the school of arts, or a school hall was a more recognized style of public meeting than open-air meetings unless the latter were exceptionally large and attended by prominent politicians. Public meetings in the open air, such as those held in the Haymarket reserve, Hyde Park, the Domain and the like, were chiefly working class meetings and meetings of other subordinate groups usually to protest against Parliament and the policy of the government. Among 117 meetings held in these places, 105 were for purposes closely linked to the interests of subordinate groups. These meetings were not recognized as meetings of 'citizens' by the Sydney dailies, politicians or other influential people. They tended to give such meetings summary treatment.

Table 4: Places for Public Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. town hall, council chamber</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. school, school of arts, church, court house</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. temperance, masonic, protestant, oddfellows' and fellers' halls</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. other halls</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. hotel, inn</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. park, market</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. other places</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1799</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was not easy for subordinate groups, lacking substantial financial resources, to convene their meetings at town halls, civic halls and so on. There are two reasons for this. First the cost of hiring halls was considerable. Hiring the Centennial Hall (Town Hall of Sydney) cost 11 pounds in 1899. The charge for the use of the

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93 These meetings were held in connection with strikes, unemployment, assisted immigration, Chinese immigration, the closing of the Domain and other issues.
Town Hall at Balmain with a seating capacity of about 1,000 ranged between 3 pounds 3 shillings and 2 pounds in 1889. The charge of hiring the hall in the School of Arts in Balmain for two nights was 5 pounds in 1886.94

Secondly, free use of a town hall was rarely granted to subordinate groups without the support of influential citizens. Even if they were willing to pay the charge, they were sometimes not able to obtain town halls and other public halls. The unemployed movements asked for the use of the Centennial Hall, but they were often refused on the pretext of the Council having decided against granting the use of the Centennial Hall for any political meeting. There was a case, however, in which the Mayor, Alderman Ives, granted the use of the hall when he received an influential deputation consisting of a member of Parliament, a mayor of Paddington, aldermen of the City, local councilors and others, though "he could hardly see how this meeting could be called without associating politics with it."95 I shall return to this subject in the third chapter.

In 1886 a heated debate developed in the Balmain Council in connection with the application for the use of the Town Hall for the Irish National League. The Balmain Observer reported this debate.

"From Andrew M'Guire, Hon. Sec. of the Irish National League, asking for the use of the Town Hall next Monday, to hold a public meeting in to express sympathy with Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule policy. This letter stirred up a brisk and unexpected breeze. Ald. Garrard objected to granting the request, as the Home Rule question was one affecting another part of the Empire and entirely foreign to the interests of N.S.W. There were strong differences of opinion on the question, if one side was to express opinion the other side would have the same right, and he objected to introduce such an element of party bitterness into the borough. Ald. Cameron was also opposed to introducing such an element of strife into the borough, and would oppose letting either party have the use of the hall. Ald. M'Donald saw no harm in granting the hall for this as for any public meeting. Ald. Burns said he could see no reason why respectable citizens should not use the hall for meeting, and would grant it to either or both sides if desired. Ald. Buchanan said those interested in the meeting were respectable and orderly citizens, and he saw no reason to apprehend any unpleasantness from such a meeting. The Mayor protested strongly against any apprehension of disorder from such a meeting, judging from those of similar character that he had attended elsewhere. Ald. Clubb said the projectors of the meeting had been unable to get a suitable hall in

94 S.M.H., 5 May 1899; S.M.H., 30 March 1889; B.O., 13 March 1886.

95 S.M.H., 6 July 1897. See also D.T., 23 and 24 Aug. 1893 in connection with the use of the Town Hall.
Balmain. The request of the letter was then granted by the casting vote of the Mayor on a tie vote.  

Though in this case the use of the Town Hall was granted, the application was bitterly opposed. Had it not been for the sympathy of the Mayor and his supporters for Home Rule, the application would have been refused. Had the application been refused, the promoters could not have got a suitable hall in Balmain. Immediately after this decision a letter to the Editor appeared in The Balmain Observer criticizing the granting of the League's request. It stated:

"I enter my emphatic protest against our Town Hall being allowed for such purposes ... If the Irish National League desires to have a meeting let them hold it in the open-air. We have had quite enough of this Home Rule business in this colony, and the sooner it is allowed to die out the better."  

In other local councils and communities similar processes must have taken place with regard to the application for the use of a town hall from groups which were alleged to be pursuing purposes harmful to the maintenance of the status quo of the colony and the Empire.

In 1883 J.E. Redmond, a member of the British Parliament for Newross, who came to Australia as a delegate of the Irish National Land League to advocate its cause and to establish its branches.

"had met with some difficulty in obtaining a hall wherein to hold forth on the wrongs of his country ... he was to have delivered a lecture at the Masonic Hall this evening, but the directors have refused to grant him the use of the building ... Later in the day, Mr. Redmond, or his agent, dropped across Mr. Towers of the Gaiety Theatre, and engaged that place of amusement for tonight, at a fancy price."  

The following day, however, he found that he could not be permitted to have the use of the theatre. He then at last secured the Academy of Music, late Victoria Hall, for his meeting. The Sydney Morning Herald observed about this incident:

"Mr Redmond had some difficulty in finding a hall in which to deliver his speech, and of that he has no right to complain. The direct tendency
of his oratory is to stir up ill feeling between the English and Irish settlers in Australia. He comes here to accuse Englishmen of most of the sufferings and crimes of Ireland, and to hold up England’s greatest statesmen to popular detestation. Is it reasonable in him to presume that such things will always be tolerated with the most perfect equanimity? For our own part, we hope that they always will be, and that Englishmen will listen to torrents of abuse from Irish orators, and yet retain their calmness under the greatest provocation. But Mr. Redmond has no right to expect it, or that special facilities should be given to him for stirring up that animosity here which in Ireland has reached the point of the Phoenix Park assassination.”

Preventing the organizers of meetings from using town halls and other public halls, or letting them hold meetings in the open air was one of the methods used by the ruling class to suffocate a movement of subordinate groups.

Fig.4 presents the various locations of meeting places as a percentage of the total number of the meetings for the years under study. During the 1870s a town hall was merely one of the places for holding public meetings, but by the middle of the 1880s it had established predominant status over the other places, having taken over the roles played by provisional meeting places within a local community such as a church, a school, a school of arts and a court house. The predominance of town halls was brought about by the construction of new town halls during the 1880s and 1890s. Their construction was due to the great request for public halls “wherein public meetings could be held. - a place suitable for lectures or concerts and and sic other recreative purposes - a place that public worship could be held in on Sundays, instead of, as at present, in some open shed or private house.”

This request was based most importantly on the growing demand for evening entertainments such as drama, concerts, balls and dancing, and because of the general repugnance to the management of the existing halls and the high charges they demanded. Secondly, a spirit of community, pride in the locality stimulated by competition between boroughs was also important. A third possible reason, as Parkes stated, was “the growth of public discussion, the desire to propagate and

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100 The Miner’s Advocate, 5 Sept. 1874.

101 See B.O., 13 March 1886.
Fig. 4 Places for Public Meetings (1871 - 1901)

- a, town hall, council chamber
- b, church, school, etc.
- c, temperance hall, etc.
- d, other halls
- e, hotel
- f, park, etc.

Year: 1871 1881 1891 1901
widely diffuse public opinion." 102

All of these contributed to the increase not only in town halls, but also other public halls in general. 103 The rapid increase in new halls from the mid 1880s can be seen in Fig. 4. The increase in the number of halls seems to have resulted in a reduction in charges for hiring halls. 104 This must have had the effect of allowing a larger number of promoters with moderate financial resources to hold public meetings in public halls so far as charges were concerned, though the increase in the share of town halls as places for public meetings might militate against this.

The diminishing use of temperance halls, masonic halls, oddfellows' halls and so on, seems to suggest that friendly societies became less and less important in general cultural activity and as knots in the social networks of the people. Hotels were not very important as a place for public meetings except in the early 1870s. The public meetings we are dealing with were very sober and serious in comparison with election meetings which tended to be associated with 'gratis liquors'.

The public meetings held in the Haymarket reserve, Hyde Park, the Domain and similar places were connected with agitations of subordinate groups, especially of the working class. There was a tendency on the part of the Sydney dailies and politicians to discredit and ridicule such meetings as I have already pointed out. The percentage of this type of meeting in Fig. 4 must be an underestimation except in 1877 and 1879 when the Working Men's Defence Association vigorously advertised its meetings, because meetings of subordinate groups of poor means would advertise in The Sydney Morning Herald less frequently than the wealthy. The method we have adopted in this chapter does not cover this type of meeting sufficiently. The third chapter will deal with these meetings. One thing I want to point out here is that the number of these meetings appears to be correlated to economic conditions, particularly the rate of unemployment. In Fig. 5 the left-vertical axis presents the number of the meetings and the right-vertical axis the unemployment rate among

102 S.M.H., 3 June 1887.

103 See The Balmain Independent, 5 March 1881; B.O., 20 Feb. 1886 and 2 Oct. 1886; S.M.H., 9 Nov. 1889 and 29 Oct. 1901.

104 The charges for using the large hall of the Balmain Town Hall were reduced from 3 pounds 3 shillings to 2 pounds 0 shillings B.O., 30 March 1889.; at the half yearly meeting of the Masonic Hall Company one director stated, "Another hall has recently been opened in St. Leonards which has offered considerable competition", the directors therefore determined upon a general reduction of charges; The North Shore Times and Manly Press, 1 May 1886.
Fig. 5 Number of Open-air Public Meetings and Unemployment Rate (1871 - 1901)
the members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Though the number of meetings is not perfectly correlated with the unemployment rate, it reacts to the unemployment rate sensitively and shows a trend similar to that of the unemployment rate. Unemployment had a significant influence on the number of meetings and it provides one of the clues to understanding those meetings.

Table-5: Places For Group I Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a, town hall, council chamber</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>69.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b, school, school of arts, church, court house</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>17.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c, temperance, masonic, protestant, oddfellows’ and foresters’ halls</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d, other halls</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e, hotel, inn</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f, park, market</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g, other places</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table-5 shows the number and the percentage of the local public meetings (Group 1) for the indicated meeting places. It is readily understandable that almost 70% of the meetings were held in town halls or council chambers as they were convened by a mayor or a person in a similar position. The point is that there were no meetings held in parks or markets and only 3 meetings were held in hotels. This endorses the view that meetings held in the open air were usually informal.

2.5. Purpose

This section will examine what problems were discussed at the public meetings and what were not, then go on to consider what implications they would have had for various social relations. Changes in the composition of the problems discussed will throw light upon the changing attitudes of the people towards public interests and upon changing social relations. All of these help to open the door to an understanding of the reasons for the existence of the public meeting as an institution for the formation of public opinion.

Table-6 presents the percentage of the purposes for which the public meetings were held for the 1870s, 1880s, 1890s including 1901, and the total of them. The most ordinary questions discussed at public meetings were those concerned with local issues like facilities for transportation, the construction of public buildings and the elimination of nuisances. Though their relative importance declined with the passage of time, they continued to be the most common questions for the whole period. In fact the number of the meetings held for these questions did not decrease continuously (See Fig.6). On the contrary it increased during the 1880s by nearly 30% and then declined during the 1890s. Meetings concerning nuisances, health problems, sewerage and water supply were especially outstanding. They more than doubled during the 1880s and even during the 1890s they were almost twice as numerous as during the 1870s. This illuminates another side of urban development. With the rapid urbanization the people had to face more and more urban problems during the 1880s and 1890s. While the demand for urban development receded, the cry for the removal of nuisances and concern about hygienic problems increased.

Local problems occupied an even larger share of the meetings convened by a mayor or a person in a similar position (See Table-7). Local issues constitute 58.4% of the total and, considering that category-f: celebrations, personal testimonials, sports and music, were in fact local matters in many cases, they comprise well over 60% of the total. If we turn our eyes to the 1870s, local questions including category-f constitute more than 70% of all matters discussed at the local public meetings.

In a sense the suburban areas and, to a lesser extent, even the City itself, were not a city in the late 19th century. These communities were struggling to become a city which was provided with the facilities usually then associated with urban life. The people did not have means of public transportation to the City. Even if they had, such transportation was slow and expensive. Roads were not lit by street lamps; nor were they often metalized. Houses did not have gas or electricity. Sometimes there was no post office in a borough, no school of arts, no park and no town hall. The first meetings of municipal councils were held at such places as a private room, a cottage or a school room. To the people of the late 19th

Table 6: Purposes Of All Public Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>1870s</th>
<th>1880s</th>
<th>1890s &amp; 1901</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a, transport</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b, nuisance, health, sewerage, water supply</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c, public buildings and utilities</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d, other local matters</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of the local matters</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e, imperialism, racism, nationalism</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f, celebration, personal testimonial, sports, music</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g, legal</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h, charity</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i, labour, social</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j, temperance, education</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k, Irish</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l, woman's suffrage</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m, political</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n, party</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o, other issues</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>1870s</td>
<td>1880s</td>
<td>1890s &amp; 1901</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. transport</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. nuisance, health,</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sewerage, water supply</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. public buildings and utilities</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. other local matters</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of the local matters</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. imperialism, racism,</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nationalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. celebration, personal</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>testimonial, sports, music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. legal</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. charity</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. labour, social</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. temperance, education</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Irish</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. woman's suffrage</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. political</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. party</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. other issues</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8: Purposes Of Group II Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>1870s</th>
<th>1880s</th>
<th>1890s &amp; 1901</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. transport</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. nuisance, health, sewerage, water supply</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. public buildings and utilities</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. other local matters</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of the local matters</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. imperialism, racism, nationalism</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. celebration, personal testimonial, sports, music</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. legal</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. charity</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. labour, social</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. temperance, education</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Irish</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. woman's suffrage</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. political</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. party</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. other issues</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
century especially during the 1870s and 1880s, there was scarcely anything available which one might expect from urban life. If people desired to enjoy some sort of 'urban life', they had to agitate, whether for a road, a bridge, a tramway, a railway, ferry communication, an adequate water supply or street lighting. It would be easy for us to ridicule road and bridge politics, but it was a product of the basic necessities of life. Local public meetings, especially suburban meetings, were born mainly from agitations for public facilities, basic facilities for 'urban life'.

Why could various kinds of people with different creeds assemble and discuss a problem at such public meetings for generating public opinion? The single most important reason lay in the fact that in an age of rapid progress people had to cooperate with others in a municipality in order to provide themselves with basic public facilities and to cope with problems presented by development. The need for basic public facilities provided a common arena for various persons with divergent opinions to get together and discuss matters. It was the material basis on which communal public meetings, which are supposed to be possible only in a more simple rural community, could continue despite the existence of a developed and complicated society composed of groups with divergent and almost irreconcilable economic interests and social demands. It was there that the people could cooperate with each other.

The public meetings requested by ratepayers and convened by a mayor, that is, the meetings convened by the most legitimate procedures, wherein all members of a community were presumed to be present to discuss matters, were necessitated or were enabled to continue by various local matters raised by urbanization and development. These meetings in turn set the ideal pattern for public meetings to which even public meetings dealing with controversial matters had to conform in terms of their providing a common arena for opposing parties to get together and discuss problems. The crisis of the public meeting as an institution would come when the material basis was eroded, when the necessity of coping with urbanization and development diminished not only comparatively but also absolutely (See Table-6 and Fig.6) during the 1890s.

From the argument presented above meetings of subordinate groups in the Haymarket reserve, Hyde Park and the Domain are to be excepted. They had another existence linked to the life of subordinate groups, which cannot be examined in this chapter. In Table-6 labour and social problems are often connected with such meetings.
Fig.6 Number of Public Meetings for Each Purpose

The index taken 100 for 1870s
Fig. 7 Number of Public Meetings for Each Purpose

The index taken 100 for 1870s

1870s 1880s 1890s + 1901

f, celebration, etc.

g, legal

h, charity

i, labour, social

j, temperance, etc.
The public meetings convened by a mayor and similar local public meetings, while voicing the needs of a local community, produced a pseudo-communal feeling which overrode economic and political differences and provided a nursery for nationalism, racism and imperialism. Table-7, presenting the meetings of Group I, gives 18.1% of the meetings being held for such purposes; on the other hand, Table-8, presenting the meetings of Group II, gives only 8.5% for the same. Pseudo-communal mentality found a strong affinity with racism, nationalism and imperialism at the local public meetings in the sense that they all emphasized the organic entity of a community, a nation or a race regardless of conflicting class interests and interior social tensions.

The network of councils sometimes played a key role in promoting nationalism, racism and imperialism. In 1877 the Mayor of Sydney issued a circular calling upon the country mayors to assist the Indian Famine Relief Fund. This was a fund to relieve sufferers from famine in India, but it was given the symbolic meaning of confirming the unity of the Empire. In response to the request of the Mayor at least 19 meetings were convened in the suburbs of Sydney alone starting at the Oddfellows' Hall in Ashfield. In the anti-Chinese movement in 1881 at least 5 meetings were convened by mayors in and around Sydney. In 1885 in connection with the expedition to the Soudan at least 14 meetings were convened by mayors in the metropolitan area. Letters were sent from the central committee of the Patriotic Fund, of which the Mayor of Sydney was a member, asking for the sympathy and co-operation of the country borough councils in forming local branches. In response public meetings were convened at such places as Albury, Singleton, Windsor, Young, Uralla, and Grafton. No sooner had the movement


108 One alderman said, "In Britain the contributions are such that we may feel proud of belonging to the British nation, and no doubt that result will make the people of India feel that we feel for them as though they were part of ourselves". S.M.H., 24 Oct. 1877.

109 See reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31 Oct., 1, 7, 8 and 30 June; 1 and 19 July; 16 and 24 Sept. in 1881.

110 See reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 23 and 29 April; 6 and 7 May; 23, 25 and 30 June; 1 and 19 July; 16 and 24 Sept. in 1881.

111 See reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 Feb.; 3, 7, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 24 March; 8, 10, 16, 17 and 18 April in 1885.

112 S.M.H., 13 and 20 March 1885.
ended than a movement to organize volunteer corps began in the wake of morbid fear of a Russian invasion. At least 7 meetings about this problem were called by mayors in the suburbs of Sydney. 113 In 1887 for the celebration of Queen’s Jubilee and in aid of the Queen’s Fund 18 meetings were convened by mayors and mayoresses in the metropolitan area. 114 In 1893 a movement against the influx of the 'Asiatics' was carried out under the auspices of the Bourke municipal council with the co-operation of other local councils in the western part of New South Wales. 115 In 1897 the Ballina Council decided to hold a public meeting with a view to persuading the Government of the urgency of a restrictive law prohibiting a further influx of the 'Hindoos' into the district. They also decided to invite other councils and progress associations on the Richmond River to co-operate with them. 116 In the same year 16 public meetings were convened under the auspices of local authorities by the advertisement in The Sydney Morning Herald for the purpose of celebrating the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. The first meeting was held at the Town Hall of Sydney. The chair was taken by the Mayor and the first resolution was moved by Lord Hampden. Seven other meetings are also known to have been called by mayors and mayoresses about the same matter in the suburbs of Sydney and 26 similar meetings were held in the country. 117 In connection with the Boer War in 1899, a public meeting was convened by the Mayor of Sydney to inaugurate the National Patriotic Fund. This was followed by at least 11 meetings convened by mayors and mayoresses and 6 meetings of similar character in Sydney and its suburbs. 118

Jingoism, racial prejudice and imperialistic feeling were sustained, supported, advocated and distributed systematically through the medium of the public meetings under the auspices of the local authorities. The reports of the meetings were

113 See reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 21 and 26 March: 16,22,27 and 28 April: 1,5,9 and 15 May: 2 June in 1885.

114 See reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 13,16 and 17 May: 3,4,9,10 and 16 June: 9,13,14,16,18,20,21,23,25,27 and 30 July: 2,3 and 6 Aug. in 1887.

115 S.M.H., 6,24,25,27 and 31 Oct.; 4,6,7,8 and 14 Nov. 1893.

116 S.M.H., 26 June 1897.

117 See reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 15,20,22,26,27 and 29 April: 28 and 29 May: 1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,15,16 and 17 June; 17 July; 26 and 28 Aug. in 1897.

118 See reports and advertisements in S.M.H., 27 and 31 Oct.; 3,13,15,16,20,21,22,25,27,28 and 29 Nov.; 2,4,7,9,11,12,14,16,19 and 20 Dec. in 1899.
published, commented and enlarged upon in newspapers, and so distributed further afield. The public meetings also had their own effects in celebrations, demonstrations and door to door collections for various funds. Similarly the reports of these were published, commented upon and distributed by the newspapers. This process took place not only in a particular event, but in almost all the events concerned with nationalism, racism and imperialism; thus it was built into the structure of making public opinion.

Another feature of the meetings under the auspices of the municipal authorities is that labour and social problems were rarely treated, and that political problems were not often taken up (See Table-7). Those problems which had the possibility of disrupting the harmony of the local community or of the nation seem to have been carefully avoided. This is conspicuous in the Irish problems and the woman’s suffrage question which had never been taken up by any mayor or mayoress. The meetings were almost exclusively held for the maintenance of the status quo, the ‘peace and order’ of the society. It may be argued that the intention of the mayors and aldermen was not to be involved in ‘sectional’ movements as is shown in the case of temperance movements and secular education movements (Compare the figures of the j-columns in Table-6, Table-7 and Table-8). Mayors did not normally convene public meetings for such movements perhaps because they were usually promoted by established organizations like local option leagues, temperance societies and the Public Schools League. Whatever might have been the intention of the mayors and aldermen, the local public meetings in fact eschewed polemical issues which might disturb the harmony of the community or of the nation and thus contributed to the maintenance of the hegemony of the ruling class in the formation of public opinion.

Table-9 presents the purposes of the meetings held at town halls within Group II. If we compare Table-9 with Table-8 (about the whole of Group II), we will be able to discern several features of the use of town halls. They were used most often for meetings in relation to celebrations, personal testimonials, sports, music and charity. This is not surprising. The point is that, despite the statement that the Town Hall should not be used for political purposes and despite objections to introducing party bitterness into the borough,119 town halls were generally used for political purposes as frequently as the other places. However they were not used so frequently as the

119 See Section 2.4 pp.55-56.
Table-9: Purposes (Town Hall Meetings in Group II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. transport</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. nuisance, health, sewerage, water supply</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. public buildings and utilities</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. other local matters</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of the local matters</strong></td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. imperialism, racism, nationalism</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. celebration, personal testimonial, sports, music</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. legal</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. charity</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. labour, social</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. temperance, education</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Irish</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. woman's suffrage</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. political</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. party</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. other issues</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
other places for labour and social questions and not at all concerning Irish problems. Generally speaking restrictions seem to have been imposed by the municipal councils on the use of town halls very rigidly as regards the Irish problems and to a lesser extent with regard to labour and social problems.

I wish to conclude this section by looking at chronological changes in the number and the composition of the purposes of public meetings (See Table-6 and Fig.7). The meetings held for celebrations, personal testimonials, sports, etc. maintained a fairly constant share (1870s: 6.7%, 1880s: 6.8%, 1890s: 6.0%). The share of the meetings for charity increased during the 1880s and was stable during the 1890s (1870s: 1.7%, 1880s: 4.7%, 1890s: 4.8%). The actual number for the former increased by 75% during the 1880s, then decreased by about 20% during the 1890s. The actual number for the latter increased by more than 300% during the 1880s and decreased by 14% thereafter. On the other hand, the share of the meetings held for temperance movements and education questions diminished from 9.4% during the 1870s to 5.3% during the 1880s and again to 2.0% during the 1890s. The actual number also diminished constantly (1870s: 100, 1880s: 95, 1890s: 31).

These results seem to reflect the changing attitudes of the ruling class towards the working class. The ruling class shifted their ground gradually from moral persuasion and instruction of the working class, such as temperance movements to cultural activities, sports, celebrations and charities, in order to cope with social problems which became more and more critical in intensity, complication and dimension. During the 1890s the rulers seem to have been compelled to face more directly the social problems and the demands of the working class. The increased proportion of labour and social questions during the 1890s does not necessarily mean intensified activities among subordinate groups alone. It also includes the reaction of the ruling class to a new situation. The attitude and the reaction of the ruling class towards subordinate groups were far from simple. They changed flexibly according to the needs of the period. The ruling class, while rejecting and suppressing the demands for radical changes in the existing social and political systems, tried to cope with new situations in their own way.

Public meetings in connection with legal matters increased in proportion as well as in the actual number (1870s: 2.0%, 1880s: 2.1%, 1890s: 3.0%: 1870s: 100, 1880s: 175, 1890s: 219). This seems to suggest increasing dissatisfaction with and vacillating reliance on the verdicts of judges and the existing order of the law. Then came the 1890s when the forces of subordinate groups were more liberated
from the dominance of the ruling class. Woman's suffrage became an issue of public discussion (Table-6-1) and labour and social questions occupied a more important status in the process of making public opinion (Table-6-i, Table-8-i and Fig.7-i). The liberation of the new forces was another cause for crisis in the structure for making public opinion through public meetings which had served for the maintenance of hegemony by the ruling class during the 1870s and 1880s. A new rule was demanded for public meetings in defiance of the ruling class. This will be treated in the fourth chapter. The advent of the party-meetings with their large share of the total number of meetings (1880s : 17.1%, 1890s : 22.2%) also eroded the basis on which the earlier style of public meeting had existed.

Meetings of political parties were held for specific purposes, for the expression and dissemination of their principles and opinions. They were not held with the object of discussion either in reality or in formality. The parties sometimes issued tickets for attendance in order to exclude those who opposed the purpose of a meeting and refused individuals the right to propose amendments to the resolutions. In consequence, many of the meetings of the parties were tinged with a semi-public or semi-private character. The result was that they eroded the premise that a public meeting was open to the people in general and spoke for a community. It also swept away public meetings' legitimacy by destroying the illusion that a public meeting was representing a community and expressing the voice of the people. Public meetings denuded of the illusion of 'the personification of the public' became battlefields for opposing parties and powers. This was also a cause for the crisis in the process of making public opinion together with the decrease in local public meetings and the liberation of subordinate groups during the 1890s.

2.6. Attendance

We cannot know exactly how many people attended a public meeting as we have only rough estimates of attendance by the reporters of newspapers. It is often impossible to know attendance at a public meeting even roughly because the reporters, instead of estimating the number, only give us information in terms of 'large' meeting, 'crowded' meeting, 'well-attended' meeting, 'fair attendance', 'poor attendance', 'representative' meeting, hall being 'filled', and so on, or failed to state anything about the attendance. In this section I want to give a rough idea of the size of the attendance at public meetings from the limited data the reporter provided us with. I will also consider what implications it had in relation to the formation of public opinion and class relations.
Estimates of attendance are available to us of approximately 16.5% of the public meetings under examination. These data were obtained not only from *The Sydney Morning Herald*, but also from *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Empire*, and several suburban newspapers. The number of meetings for which an estimate is available is 298. 127 of these belong to Group I, 137 to Group II, and 34 to Group III. They constitute approximately 20%, 15% and 12% of the total number of the meetings in each group respectively. I suppose that the number of meetings is too small to make reliable generalizations in regard to Group III. In discussing this group we are on less sure ground than with the other groups.

I calculated the arithmetic averages of estimated attendances for all the meetings, Group I, Group II and Group III. They were 770, 500, 1140 and 250 respectively. These figures are somewhat misleading and deceptive if one presumes that public meetings were commonly attended by between 700 and 800 people. In fact public meetings with an attendance of between 700 and 800 people were fairly large ones with which most conveners would presumably have been very satisfied. The arithmetic averages were inflated by a small number of exceptionally large public meetings comprising more than several thousand people. If we remove the largest 10% of the meetings and the smallest 10% from the original data, the arithmetic averages become about 240 for all the meetings, 100 for Group I, 370 for Group II, and 200 for Group III. These figures seem to be still large for typical public meetings.

Fig. 8 shows the distribution of participants at all the public meetings. The arithmetic average was about 770, but in Fig. 8 more than 70% of the meetings were attended by less than 250 people. The median is about 110. and if you had attended a public meeting in the late 19th century, it was likely that you would have found fewer than 50 people there. An ordinary public meeting was far too small to consist of a large proportion of the community. It was usually in the hands of a small number of people.

Figs. 9, 10 and 11 present the distribution for Group I, II and III respectively. More than 80% of the meetings in Group I, approximately 60% in Group II and approximately 70% in Group III had an attendance of less than 250 people. The medians for Group I, II and III are approximately 80, 140 and 150 respectively. The public meetings under the auspices of local authorities had smaller attendances than the other public meetings. At the local public meetings a small number of people controlled this formation of public opinion. Less than 50 people formed the
Fig. 8 Attendance of Public Meetings
(All Public Meetings)
Fig. 9 Attendance of Public Meetings

( Group I )
Fig. 10 Attendance of Public Meetings

( Group II )

Number of Meetings

Attendance
Fig. 11 Attendance of Public Meetings

( Group III )
formal public opinion of municipalities at about 40% of the local public meetings. Fewer than 100 people formed the expressed public opinion of municipalities at nearly 60% of them.

The public meetings convened by a mayor, a mayoress or a council clerk were usually in the hands of aldermen, businessmen and other influential people who promoted and organized them and defrayed the expenditure. It was mainly these people who constituted the public at local public meetings, who controlled the process for making public opinion and who purported to express the voice of the community.

For example, on 16th March 1871 in Newcastle a public meeting was held for the purpose of petitioning the Governor to remove the Industrial School for girls, which in fact was a gaol for the unruly. About 50 gentlemen were present and the resolution for the above purpose was carried by 22 to 15. A deputation consisting of the Mayor, a member of Parliament and two others went to Sydney and had an interview with the Colonial Secretary. In this instance 22 people formed 'the public opinion' of Newcastle and succeeded in removing a 'nuisance' from the locality. 120

A public meeting of citizens was called by the Mayor of Sydney in the same year in compliance with a requisition signed by 102 people to devise a means of providing a remedy for the current disordered state of affairs in the Fiji Islands. There were about 150 people at the meeting including a large number of gentlemen engaged in the commerce of the city. The meeting was convened primarily for the purpose of urging the British Government to annex the Fiji Islands. A committee was appointed to draw up a petition to the Governor and both Houses of Parliament. The meeting place was offered free of charge, and a collection was made to defray the expense of advertising at the meeting. In this case 150 people constituted 'the public opinion' of Sydney with regard to the annexation of the Fiji Islands. 121

A deputation from the meeting, purporting to represent the opinion of the majority of the public, despite the fact that the meeting consisted of only 150 people, had an interview with the Governor on this issue. The Governor promised

120 S.M.H., 20 and 29 March 1871.

121 S.M.H., 14 April 1871.
to send the petition and a copy of the report of the proceedings of the interview to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This instance may be referred to as an example of peripheral imperialism, but we must be aware of the fact that a small number of people were involved in this movement and moulded 'the public opinion' of the colony very effectively.\textsuperscript{122}

There are more numerously attended meetings in Group II than in Group I (Meetings attended by more than 1,000 people constitute 5.5\% of Group I and 18.2\% of Group II). In Group II open-air meetings of subordinate groups, especially of working men, tended to have larger attendance than the other meetings.\textsuperscript{123} The subordinate groups exceeded the ruling class in their capacity to mobilize manpower in Sydney. However the problem is that this was not reflected proportionately in the process of making public opinion. The reason for their inability to generate effective public opinion was the lack of the support of the Sydney dailies and the lack of such legitimacy as public meetings convened by the Mayor of Sydney had in voicing opinions. The subordinate groups often provoked even antipathy and mockery from the newspapers.

Another problem is that, even if the subordinate groups could mobilize a large number of people in Sydney and could, by force of numbers, assert that they represented 'the public opinion' of Sydney, they could not claim that they represented 'the public opinion' of the colony if they were not supported by public meetings in the country. A gathering of 3,000 or 5,000 people in the Domain could be easily dismissed as a sectional movement, being reported only in a half column, if it were not followed by many public meetings in the suburbs and in the country that could most effectively be organized by local councils. The latter were also be able to give a movement legitimacy for they were supposed to represent 'the public opinion' of local communities.

The data do not allow us to draw any definite conclusion in relation to the public meetings of the parties. But it is fairly certain that the parties did not possess any special machinery for mobilizing manpower. From the point of view of organization, the parties seem to have inherited most of the characteristics of temporary

\textsuperscript{122}S.M.H., 26 April 1871.

\textsuperscript{123}Among 25 meetings attended by more than 1,000 people in Group II, 8 meetings were held in the Domain. 2 meetings at the Queen's Statue. 3 meetings in a reserve or a park and 5 meetings at other places in the open air.
committees for various movements and did not have the distinct features which we associate with political parties today.

Generally speaking during the 1870s and 1880s public meetings as a whole were in the hands of a small number of people with property and power. They promoted and organized movements and dominated the process of making public opinion. They acquired recognition as representing the community by expressing their opinions through public meetings with limited attendance. This structure would be brought to a crisis when determined subordinate groups attempted to express themselves at public meetings during the late 1880s and 1890s.

2.7. Women

The advertisements and reports in *The Sydney Morning Herald* rarely mentioned the presence of women at public meetings. In only about 160 meetings, or approximately 8.9% of the total number of public meetings under study, women's attendance was referred to in the advertisement or in the report. 60 of these meetings are in Group I, 93 in Group II and 7 in Group III. We exclude the 7 Group III meetings from the data and restrict our argument to Group I and Group II, because the data available to us about Group III are too small to make any generalization.

Before analysing the data, it is necessary to make some general statements about the attendance of women at public meetings since silence at more than 90% of the public meetings about the presence of women should reveal more about the nature of the women's participation than the data to be analysed here. During the 1870s and 1880s women were not allowed to attend a local public meeting or a public meeting of political character unless there was some special reason that necessitated their participation in a movement. There was an iron code, a rigid social code against the attendance of women at public meetings before 1890. Some promoters explicitly precluded women from attending local public meetings by convening ratepayers only, though they could not prevent male non-ratepayers for there were no effective ways of distinguishing the ratepayers from the other male participants.124 Other local public meetings, though they did not explicitly debar women in the advertisements, seem to have precluded their attendance implicitly.

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There was an exceptional case in which women attended a local public meeting without any special necessity for their presence. But even the exception proves the rule. In 1893 a public meeting was held at the Aquarium in Manly to arrange for the maintenance of communication between Sydney and Manly in view of the termination of the contract with the Port Jackson Steamship Company. The attendance "was perhaps the largest they had ever had at a public meeting in Manly Beach". The meeting was favoured with the presence of a few ladies. Yet they were a mere handful among an audience of about 1,000. The recognition of the few ladies among the audience of about 1,000 seems to indicate, in general, the absence rather than the presence of ladies at such meetings. 125

In 1871 allowing ladies to be present even at a political banquet was a novelty. This novelty did not manifest itself in New South Wales, but at Geelong in Victoria. 126 Before the 1890s women were not supposed to be fit for political struggles and their attendance at political meetings was exceptional. They were not expected to play any roles in politics.

In 1893 two opposing deputations waited upon the Premier with reference to the establishment of a diphtheria ward at the Children’s Hospital. The first deputation, mainly gentlemen, represented the local residents of Glebe and the second was composed largely of ladies. The Premier received both deputations together, ranged on either side of the table in the Executive Council Chamber. Bruce Smith, who represented the deputation from the residents of Glebe, was hotly indignant at the arrangements by which the Premier had invited a number of ladies into the room. He stated "that when he came there he had no idea that he came to take part in a debating society with a number of ladies." His view was that the "ladies who were present perhaps did not take the serious view of social questions which men had to take." 127 The attitude Bruce Smith assumed would be more prevalent before the 1890s, though there were exceptions like the more liberal opinions of Henry Parkes.

The unexpressed social code precluding women from attending public meetings was so rigorously enforced that women did not appear at one public meeting, even when men expected their presence there. In 1883 a public meeting to promote the

125 S.M.H., 18 and 21 Nov. 1893; D.T., 21 Nov. 1893.

126 S.M.H., 10 Sept. 1871.

127 S.M.H., 15 July 1893.
drapers' early closing movement was held at the Protestant Hall, Castlereagh Street. There was a very large attendance. The chairman, George Dibbs, stated:

"he had been looking round to see if he could, in commencing his address, say 'Ladies and gentlemen,' but he regretted exceedingly to find that there were no ladies present, because, as that movement affected them to a very large extent, he would have been very glad to have had their presence to aid in so worthy a cause. That movement was intended not only for the benefit of men, but also for the benefit of women."\textsuperscript{128}

During the 1890s the participation of women in public meetings increased and they also organized public meetings for themselves in order to obtain woman's suffrage. Here let us return to the data as the presence of women will be revealed far more clearly in the data than their absence.

Table-10 presents the purposes of the meetings attended by women. I have added the distribution of the purposes of the meetings in Group I and Group II to the right of the table for reference. First, we shall examine the chronological change by comparing the 1870s and 1880s with the 1890s and 1901. There is a marked difference between the two periods in the number of the meetings with regard to local issues. (i) labour and social. (j) temperance and education. (l) woman's suffrage and (m) political questions. The increasing incidence of (i) labour and social matters and the decreasing incidence of (j) temperance and education questions correspond to the general trend of all the public meetings we have already observed. Women's attendance had peculiar features in connection with local matters. (l) woman's suffrage question and (m) political matters. There were no political meetings or woman's suffrage meetings and there were only 3 meetings about local matters in the former period. These confirm the general statement I made above. The social code was broken during the 1890s when women demanded the suffrage for themselves and attended various kinds of political meetings. Even local public meetings then could not exclude women completely any more. The increased participation of women during the 1890s was a part of the crisis of the existing structure for forming public opinion. But at the same time it was the result of the disintegration of the circumstances which had sustained the structure: the decrease in local public meetings and in local matters discussed at public meetings, the advent of public meetings of the parties and the increase in social and labour matters dealt with at the public meetings on account of the depression. There was also a coincidental erosion of the mentality which had sustained public meetings.

\textsuperscript{128} S.M.H., 21 July 1883.
Table-10: Public Meetings Attended By Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1870s &amp; 1880s</th>
<th>1890s &amp; 1901</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Groups I, II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of the local matters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e, imperialism, racism, nationalism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f, celebration, personal testimonial, sports, music</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g, legal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h, charity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i, labour, social</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j, temperance, education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k, Irish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l, woman's suffrage</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m, political</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n, party</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o, other issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let us consider the problem of the attendance of women in general. Table-10 shows the comparatively high participation of women in public meetings concerning (e) imperialism, racism and nationalism, (f) legal issues, (h) charity, (j) temperance and education questions and (l) women's suffrage. It is self-evident that women more frequently attended meetings concerning woman's suffrage, so we do not deal with this problem. How can we interpret the other matters. They appear to be inseparably connected with the role women were expected and obliged to play in the existing class relations. The women who attended the public meetings in (e), (h) and (j) were mainly from the ruling class. They were expected to play a role in the public arena similar to the role they played in the household which was the basic unit of male-centered capitalist society. The matters assigned to women were religion, moral education, charity, domestic affairs and the bringing up of children, all of which were linked to maintaining the existing social order and reinforcing the reproduction of the existing society.

In connection with imperialist causes the women's role is intriguing. Women were linked to expansionism into the Pacific through the medium of missionary activities and 'humanitarianism'. The imperialist causes were not usually accepted without incurring strong opposition in the late 19th century. For example, in the expedition to the Soudan and in the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee, a number of people resolutely objected to these as imperialist causes and overturned public meetings convened for their benefit. The participation of women introduced humanitarianism into the imperialist cause. Women's attendance militated against those men who opposed the imperialist causes in terms of power politics. It was more difficult for such men to criticize imperialist causes when they were combined with charity and 'humanitarianism'. Women with humanitarian roles were the buffer between the opposing forces. They protected the imperialist causes from the political attacks of the anti-imperialists. Their inability to take part in, or rather their exclusion from, politics was of great advantage in thwarting political attacks. They were not responsible for politics; therefore they were not susceptible to political attacks.

In temperance causes and charitable activities the women's role was to mitigate the 'moral degradation' and economic and social distress in the colony which, of course, were the effect of the social and political system controlled by the male.

129 I will deal with this problem in the fourth chapter.
ruling class. So the ruling class dealt with the social problems it had produced, and for which it refused to accept responsibility, indirectly through the philanthropic activities of women. If those who dominated the social and political system had had to take the responsibility upon themselves for coping with social problems, the failure to solve or at least mitigate them would have led to a questioning of the legitimacy in their domination. By introducing women into the area where they were compelled to deal with problems emanating from the system under their control, the ruling class could partly cope with the problems while not taking ultimate responsibility for them. Here as well women's a-political role provided the ruling class with a buffer for preventing direct attack upon their dominance.

Women attended public meetings in relation to legal matters for such meetings were often concerned with the reprieve of condemned men. Women played an important role here because women’s participation gave the demand for reprieve a humanitarian character. If woman had not been present, the demand for the reprieve would have amounted to a kind of challenge against the existing order of the law. Dissatisfaction with the order of the law was converted into humanitarian sympathy with condemned men by way of the participation of a-political women.

In social and labour problems women appear to have played an important role, but the figure was inflated by their frequent attendance at public meetings about early closing movements. Shopping was regarded as women's domain and their participation was encouraged at the earliest stage of the movements. In local matters 8 out of 11 meetings were concerned with problems about a school, a playground, a hospital or the St. John Ambulance Association. These issues were also thought of as women's domains.

Generally speaking women were not allowed to take part in public meetings, particularly local public meetings and political public meetings during the 1870s and 1880s. The social code against women's attendance appears to have been rigorously enforced. During the 1890s they started to attend political meetings and local public meetings, but it was a period of transition, not of revolution. The restriction of women's role in the public sphere was still strong. The public meetings attended by women had a tendency to serve the interests of the ruling class. Women's presence prevented direct political attack against the ruling class and a crisis in the legitimacy of its rule.

130 10 of these meetings were concerned with early closing movements.
2.8. Chinese

Let a small minority group, the Chinese, ring down the curtain of this chapter. I want to give a little space to them, although the collection of the data through the advertisements gave me only one example of their meetings. I have supplemented these data with other sources not only from New South Wales but also from other colonies.

The Chinese have been watched in history books, but they have remained silent about themselves. It is strange that Australian historians have rarely recorded the voice of the Chinese in describing the development of the White Australia Policy or the anti-Chinese movements. They have been very eager to document the arguments presented by the white settlers for and against Chinese immigration, but have tended to turn a deaf ear to the Chinese as if the structure for the making of public opinion in the late 19th century still remained intact in historical writing in 20th century Australia.\textsuperscript{131}

Did the age-old Confucian training in obedience and orderliness prevent them from resorting to a praiseworthy British tradition of democracy, the public meeting? Is it true that they could not or would not understand a democratic institution like the public meeting because of a desire to avoid being embroiled in the strange affairs of Europeans?

In 1857 the Victorian goldfield at Castlemaine saw a meeting of the Chinese at the Mechanics' Hall in protest against the imposition of a tax of 1 pound per month on each Chinese. Between 1,200 and 1,800 Chinese were present. After a resolution was submitted to the meeting by Chu A Luk, Pou Ra

"complained of the encroachments which the Chinese suffered from European diggers; and dwelt upon the general poverty of his countrymen, and their consequent inability to pay additional taxes. He said that the Chinese would be perfectly willing to bring their wives with them, but the small feet of Chinawomen disqualified them for travelling over the colonial roads. Moreover his countrymen observed the existence of so much distress among European women and the endurance of so many hardships by the softer sex that (the Chinese) shrank from exposing their wives and daughters to so much misery. His countrymen were invited to come hither by shipping agents at Hong Kong and elsewhere, and English captains took their money. When the Chinese migrated hither, they scrupulously obeyed

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the laws, and ought not to be harshly and unjustly dealt with by those who made the laws."\(^{132}\)

The petitions against the taxation were unanimously adopted. A headman was appointed to communicate with the Chinese in other districts and, if necessary, to collect subscriptions to enable them to be represented by counsel at the bar of the Assembly. When the proceedings closed with three cheers for the Queen and the press, a man called McDonogh harangued the European bystanders. "It was a disgrace, he said, that Chinamen should be permitted to meet in any place and he regretted the unfortunate state of things which tolerated such a meeting."\(^{133}\)

In 1879 just after the termination of the seamen's strike, a meeting of Chinese was convened by the leading Chinese at St. Philip's Schoolroom in Sydney with the object of speaking to their countrymen upon the subject of the charges made against them by Europeans. Nearly 300 Chinese were present.\(^{134}\) In 1887 Way Lee defended the Chinese at a public meeting in the Town Hall in Adelaide. In 1888 a meeting of the Chinese of Ballarat East took place to consider the restriction of Chinese immigration. In the same year at Bulli a meeting of the Chinese was held to confer on the current political situation. In 1895 a meeting of the Chinese resident in Sydney was held to consider the question of raising memorials to those who lost their lives in the recent massacre of the missionaries at Ku-Cheng. The chair was taken by Quong Tart.\(^{135}\)

As early as 1857, then, the Chinese employed a celebrated British tradition, the public meeting, to express their views in opposition to the anti-Chinese policy. But the structure for the making of public opinion worked against them. It functioned to ventilate anti-Chinese feeling and race prejudice on the part of the white colonists regardless of the views expressed by the Chinese. In the so-called Chinese puzzle the Chinese must have formed one of the most important parties and their views should have been given due consideration in the public sphere where public opinions were formed. However the view from the other side of the racial frontier was not heard.

\(^{132}\) The Argus, 4 and 7 Aug. 1857.

\(^{133}\) The Argus, 4 and 7 Aug. 1857.

\(^{134}\) S.M.H., 18 Feb. 1879.

\(^{135}\) The South Australian Register, 25 Nov. 1887; The Age, 9 May 1888; S.M.H., 22 May 1888; S.M.H., 14 and 15 Aug. 1895.
The point is that the structure for forming public opinion in the late 19th century systematically disregarded and ignored opinions of small minority groups like the Chinese, and that historical works tend to be written on the basis of the information produced through the structure. Historians cannot free themselves from the documents of the past, but understanding the structure which produced the documents will allow them to be conscious of the danger involved in the treatment of those documents. It will be extremely regrettable if small minority groups are to be watched only from outside as they were by the contemporaries trapped in the structure of the formation of public opinion.
Chapter 3

The Open-air Public Meeting

3.1. Introduction

Subordinate groups, especially those of working men, constantly held public meetings in the open air in such places as the Haymarket reserve, the Domain and Hyde Park. The Sydney dailies usually did not pay sufficient attention to these meetings considering the numbers attending. The promoters of open-air meetings would have been glad if the editorials of the newspapers had criticized their meetings seriously; they would not have complained had the meetings been reported briefly or even ridiculed for the Sydney dailies usually ignored open-air meetings so completely that most people hardly knew about them.

Have historians paid more attention to these meetings than the contemporary newspapers? The Whig view of history, which accepts the present society uncritically and traces a continuous line of progress from the past, has disregarded as insignificant informal gatherings of subordinate groups and small political groups active in open-air meetings. As far as I know, no systematic approach has ever been adopted towards an understanding of such informal gatherings of subordinate groups which were inseparably connected with the everyday life of ordinary people. These meetings would certainly be insignificant to those who are only concerned with the main stream of history flowing into the present society. They were a dying tradition giving way before the development of the Labour Party, advancing technologies and sophisticated means of communication. The voice of open-air meetings was not effectively reflected in the contemporary newspapers and the system of forming public opinion worked against them, so that these open-air meetings do not appear to have influenced contemporary politics or the kind of historical development with which Whig history is primarily concerned. I believe that these informal meetings must be re-examined thoroughly because their opinions, like Chinese opinions, were usually ignored both by the contemporary newspapers and historians.
Underestimation of the importance of open-air meetings by newspapers is a historical problem. It was prescribed by existing class relations on the one hand, and it reinforced and maintained the class relations on the other. Since this underestimation by the press must have contributed to the underestimation of their significance to contemporary politics, the real influence of the meetings on the political process also becomes a historical problem. Movements of subordinate groups, which were largely dependent on open-air meetings for generating public opinion, must be understood in the light of both class relations and the structure of fashioning public opinion.

The Whig view of history needs to be re-examined as well. The means of communication have advanced technologically very quickly, while the political system, with its acquired stable party structure and highly organized bureaucracy, has become very sophisticated. But is the current system of politics and communication really better than that of the late 19th century? This question cannot be answered without reservation. Although the means of communication of our time can distribute information and ideas to a large number of people effectively, the receivers of an enormous body of ideas and information cannot communicate their opinions systematically in return. Technologically advanced means of communication serve for nothing more than 'one way' communication. Being deprived of the means of mutual communication and of opportunities to take part in making public opinion, we have become spectators of political drama performed in parliamentary and bureaucratic theatres. The political system needs periodical confirmation of the legitimacy by the spectators, but real politics goes on without much connection with the will of the people. Late 20th century people have much less opportunities to take part in politics than those of the late 19th century.

In the late 19th century people took part in making public opinion by attending public meetings at which mutual, although imperfect, communication was achieved between promoters and participants. At open-air public meetings fuller mutual communication took place between the speakers and the audience than at indoor public meetings. The open-air public meetings also enabled ordinary people to take part in or to 'interfere with' the political process more than the formal indoor public meetings.

This is perhaps one of the most important reasons why open-air meetings were systematically underestimated. They were, in a sense, an anti-thesis to the
developing systems of communication, the opinion-making processes and the political structure. This anti-thesis existed without official recognition so Whig historians may well dismiss it as irrelevant to our present society and system of values. Today a historian must decide whether he is to stand on the side of those ordinary people who organized and participated in the open-air meetings or whether he will listen only to the voice of Whig history and the chorus of those extolling the present day dominant ideology. Perhaps only consciousness of a crisis and injustice in our social and political system would enable him to stand for the subordinate groups and their unrealized values. This is the position I want to adopt following the example of a Chinese historian who started 70 biographies in Historical Records with a description of two 'insignificant' brothers who died of hunger in the mountains.\textsuperscript{136}

In this chapter I shall examine a living tradition of informal gatherings among subordinate groups in the late 19th century. I shall also examine not only relations between movements based on these meetings and those based on legitimately convened public meetings but also the relations between subordinate groups and the ruling class by looking at anti-Chinese and unemployed movements.

3.2. Open-Air Meetings

The Domain and Hyde Park present an innocent look to us nowadays as if they had never known a radical adolescence characterised by anti-Chinese meetings, anti-immigration meetings, unemployed agitations and strike meetings in the late 19th century. On Sunday afternoon the Domain still sees some hundred people addressed by several speakers, their fiery eloquence reminiscent of such orators as George Perry, H.Brown, Ninian Melville, R.C. Luscombe and E.W. O'Sullivan. The Domain and Hyde Park are now places for amusement, for promenading, having a picnic, playing sports, enjoying the sunshine and so on. However, they had another function as the people's town halls in the late 19th century. From the Domain and Hyde Park processions went forth to Government House, Parliament House and the

\textsuperscript{136}This historian is Ssu Ma-chien, who appreciated the virtue of the brothers who protested against the establishment of the Chou dynasty because of their creed. They were ashamed to become subjects of the new dynasty which overthrew the former dynasty by 'revolution'. The brothers were not commanders or influential politicians. But he appreciated their virtue, ineffective though it was in a given political situation. He saw an expression of the eternal value of humanity in the brothers. All the real politics of those days has died out in the passage of more than 3,000 years; however, the unrealized virtue of the brothers is still revived in the minds of readers of Historical Records. Whig history is tied up with the value system of the present society. We must be aware of the danger of its historical relativism. I firmly believe that true history is on the side of a man like this historian who provided a way out of historical relativism.
Colonial Secretary's Office. Prince Albert's Statue, Captain Cook's Statue and in particular the Queen's Statue saw different platforms or 'stumps' holding numerous meetings around them in the late 19th century.

As Hyde Park and the Domain were in the centre of the City and close to Parliament House and government offices, they were especially suited for political agitations to bring pressure to bear upon the government. Agitations were a continual source of nuisance to the government. Meetings in the Domain are now completely domesticated but open-air meetings in the late 19th century were not entirely tame. They could turn wild once conditions were favourable. They were dangerous animals that needed to be watched carefully. The fact that the agitations were always deprecated and castigated by the Sydney dailies proves the importance or the danger of the agitators whose opinions could not be accommodated within the dominant ideas about politics and political structure.

3.3. 1870 - 1880

Although there are not many sources for the early 1870s, several pieces of evidence show that meetings of working men were already being held in parks in this period. In 1870 unemployed mechanics and labourers held a meeting near the pedestal of Captain Cook's Statue in Hyde Park. They demanded that public works should be proceeded with so as to give unemployed workers "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work". The deputation from the meeting had an interview with the Minister for Works and announced the result to another meeting in Hyde Park. In 1871 the unemployed surrounded the chambers of the Premier, James Martin, and obtained an interview with him. Afterwards they marched in a body to Hyde Park. Two meetings in connection with temperance movements were held at the Haymarket reserve in the same year. One of them was a torchlight meeting which must have attracted many working men. This evidence seems to indicate that Hyde Park and the Haymarket reserve were becoming, or already were, meeting places for subordinate groups in the early 1870s.

From the mid 1870s Hyde Park was clearly a place for informal meetings of all

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137 *The Empire*, 18, 21 and 22 Oct. 1870.

138 *The Empire*, 11 Jan. 1871.

139 See reports and advertisements in *S.M.H.*, 2, 15 and 20 Dec. 1871.
sorts. These ranged from religious meetings, preached to by D. Allen, a Protestant pastor, to political assemblages of working men.\textsuperscript{140} In 1875 the Sydney Labouring Men's Association convened a meeting in Hyde Park and another on Flagstaff Hill. The one in Hyde Park which was held by the side of Captain Cook's Statue was attended by some three thousand people. The other was attended by between 2,000 and 3,000 people. Regular meetings of working men from 1877 could be traced through the advertisements of the meetings of the Working Men's Defence Association appearing in \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}. The meetings were held in places such as Hyde Park, the Haymarket reserve, Flagstaff Hill and also in the suburbs. Amongst them the Bathurst Street column in Hyde Park became the place for regular Monday evening meetings of the Association.\textsuperscript{141} In December the Association split into two bodies: the New South Wales Political Reform Association and the Working Men's Defence Association.\textsuperscript{142} Moreover early in 1878 the Political Reform League (or Union) was formed by drawing some members from the above associations. While the Working Men's Defence Association continued regular Monday meetings at the Bathurst Street column during 1878, the Political Reform Union organized a large anti-Chinese agitation at the Haymarket reserve and Hyde Park as well as in other parks and civic halls from November 1878 to January 1879.\textsuperscript{143}

In 1879 the Working Men's Defence Association continued meetings at the Bathurst Street column and the Political Reform Union held the usual Saturday night meeting at the Haymarket. The League also convened meetings in the

\textsuperscript{140}S.M.H., 12 March 1878. See also S.M.H., 15 Feb. 1879.

\textsuperscript{141}See reports and advertisements in \textit{S.M.H.}, 9,11,14,16,18,25,26 and 30 June: 3,7,13,17,20,28 and 30 July: 3,4,6,7 and 21 Aug.: 8,10,11,17,24 and 25 Sept.: 3,9,11,13,16,19,20,29 and 30 Oct.: 12,14,19,20,26 and 28 Nov.: 10,12,17,24 and 30 Dec. in 1877.

\textsuperscript{142}See \textit{S.M.H.}, 13 Dec. in 1877 and 16 and 19 Jan.: 30 April: 5,14 and 16 May in 1878.

\textsuperscript{143}About the Working Men's Defence Association see reports and advertisements in \textit{S.M.H.}, 7,14,15,21 and 28 Jan.: 4,5,18 and 28 Feb.: 4,18 and 28 March: 1,8,15,22 and 29 April: 6,13,20 and 27 May: 3,10 and 24 June: 22 and 27 July: 5,12,20,21,26 and 27 Aug.: 2,9,16 and 23 Sept.: 7,14,21 and 28 Oct.: 4,11,18 and 25 Nov.: 2,9,16,23 and 30 Dec. in 1878. About the Political Reform Union see those in \textit{S.M.H.}, 9,16,23,24,30 and 31 Jan.: 14 and 15 May: 24 and 26 Aug.: 7,9,17 and 24 Sept.: 1 and 15 Oct.: 18,19 and 25 Nov.: 2,4,6,7,9,14,25,28 and 30 Dec. in 1878 and 3,6,9,11,17 and 20 Jan. in 1879.
Domain and Hyde Park. The Trades and Labour Council held meetings of the unemployed at the Haymarket on the 26th, 28th and 29th of July. Another meeting of the unemployed was held on the 5th of August at Governor Bourke's Statue. In November unemployed agitation surfaced again and meetings were held at the Haymarket reserve and Belmore Park. There is no doubt that by the late 1870s working men were accustomed to meet and agitate in parks and reserves.

The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph were critical of working class open-air meetings and tried to minimize their significance. The numbers at the meetings were constantly underestimated. The opinions expressed there were patchily reported and spiked with the prejudiced comments of the reporters. Those who attended the meetings were regarded not as citizens but as idlers. However there was an exception, a meeting called by the Trades and Labour Council which The Daily Telegraph believed deserved attention.

"The meeting of the unemployed which was held on Saturday afternoon deserves, and will probably receive, more attention than the ordinary run of open-air gatherings. The two resolutions submitted were of themselves evidence that the meeting was called by men who were fully satisfied that a most unsatisfactory state of things existed, and who sought to bring about an alteration for the better by reasonable means. So far as the responsible promoters of the demonstration were concerned, there was a marked absence of those extreme opinions ... those connected with organization are not political agitators who have either personal or party purposes to serve."

The document implies that ordinary open-air meetings did not deserve attention because they were promoted by irresponsible political agitators who were not satisfied with the state of things of the society. Even this exemplary meeting was not acceptable to The Sydney Morning Herald, which criticized the meeting severely because one of the speakers said:

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144 About the former see reports and advertisements in D.T., 29 July and 14 Oct. 1879 and in S.M.H., 27 Jan.: 2, 10, 17 and 24 Feb.: 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31 March: 2, 7, 14, 21 and 28 April: 5, 17, 19, 26 and 30 May: 2, 16 and 23 June: 14, 21 and 28 July: 4, 11, 15 and 28 Aug.: 1, 8, 15 and 29 Sept.: 6, 13, 20 and 27 Oct.: 3, 10, 17 and 24 Nov.: 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 Dec. in 1879. About the latter see those in D.T., 14, 24 and 26 July 1879 and in S.M.H., 14 and 17 March, 26 and 28 April and 14 July 1879.

145 See D.T., 28 July and 6 Aug. 1879 and S.M.H., 26, 28, 29 and 30 July and 1 and 5 Aug. 1879.

146 See D.T., 21 Nov. and 4 and 5 Dec. 1879 and S.M.H., 29 Nov. and 3 Dec. 1879.

147 See D.T., 14, 22 and 26 July 1879 and S.M.H., 15 and 17 Jan. and 30 March 1878.

148 D.T., 29 July 1879.
"Mass meetings had always been a terror to Governments, especially in large cities, for such meetings were always the indicators of which way legislation should go. He was, therefore, glad to see such a large meeting, as it must influence the Legislature. It appeared to him that the legislators of New South Wales knew nothing of the working men's social condition: but he would tell them that the laboring population were the backbone of a nation."149

and another speaker urged "his hearers to agitate by the holding of such meetings as this and rest not until they obtained what they wanted, or know the reason why".

*The Sydney Morning Herald* abhorred the influence of mass meetings on politics.

"the assertion that mass meetings point out infallibly and peremptorily the course of future legislation (and that is the meaning of the words above quoted) is altogether beyond acceptance ... The basis of legislation, too, should be laid in the interests of the community as a whole, not in the interests of a single class."150

Meetings held by the Working Men's Defence Association, the Political Reform Union and the Trades and Labour Council probably reflected a part of the general surge of informal open-air meetings of subordinate groups in the late 1870s. Small political organizations certainly contributed to the increase in informal gatherings, but these were made possible by the general rise in informal meetings. In the evening many groups collected in various parts of Hyde Park to listen to sermons or harangues or to argue about religion and other matters. These gatherings were considered a nuisance by the ruling class because, if unorganized, they could cause a disturbance in the heart of the City; or, if well organized, they could potentially interfere with the political process.151

On the 10th of March in 1878 one of such meetings developed into a disturbance in which about 5,000 people were engaged in. D. Allen, a Protestant pastor, had been in the habit of using violent language to deeply wound the susceptibility of Roman Catholics. The animosity generated by his frequent use of expressions derogatory of Catholicism culminated in an attack by some Catholics on his

149 *D.T.*, 28 July 1879. See also *S.M.H.*, 28 July 1879.

150 *S.M.H.*, 1 Aug. 1879.

151 *S.M.H.*, 11 March 1878.
meeting. This attack gave rise to the general melee involving about 5,000 people.\textsuperscript{152}

This was followed by a more serious disturbance on the 17th of March. Notwithstanding the threatening aspect of the weather, an immense number, perhaps 15,000 or even 20,000, of people assembled in the afternoon in Hyde Park. The 'larrikins' were in great force and there were also many rough-looking men among them. Between 5 and 6 o'clock a few men, apparently Irish, who 'could not repress those patriotic sentiments which generally rose in their breasts on St. Patrick Day', marched down Liverpool Street, wearing the orange colours in as conspicuous a manner as possible in order to taunt the Protestants. They were followed by between 2,000 and 5,000 people, who turned into Castlereagh Street and made for Allen's home. The street became absolutely impassable. At this moment some stones were thrown at the police who immediately started to clear the streets with their batons assisted by mounted troopers. The crowd eventually gave way but 2,000 to 3,000 people still milled about the neighbourhood. At 8 o'clock there were many thousands in Castlereagh and Liverpool Streets.\textsuperscript{153}

Every precaution was taken to repress any attempt at rioting. All the chief officers of the police were present at Hyde Park and probably about 150 policemen were there; many detectives were also employed in plain clothes. A large number of policemen were in reserve, under arms, at the central police station, to be called out in case of emergency. The military were also in readiness to support the civil authorities.\textsuperscript{154}

On the following Sunday more than 10,000 people were in Hyde Park and between 2,000 and 3,000 'larrikins' assembled around Allen's house. On the 31st of March another disturbance took place and 'a mob of about 3,000 or 4,000' entirely blocked up Liverpool Street. \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} stated 'Seldom have there been so many 'larrikins' congregated in the park as there were yesterday.'\textsuperscript{155}

In 1879 three successive meetings were held in the Domain for the purpose of

\textsuperscript{152}S.M.H., 11,12 and 16 March 1878.

\textsuperscript{153}S.M.H., 18 March 1878.

\textsuperscript{154}ibid.

\textsuperscript{155}S.M.H., 25 March and 1 April 1878. See also S.M.H., 12,16,21,22, 29 and 30 March and 1 and 3 April 1878.
urging Parliament and the Lieutenant Governor to reprieve the prisoners under sentence of death for the crime of rape. The attendances were estimated to be over 3,000 people. Before the second meeting commenced, the Metropolitan Brass Band, accompanied by a large number of people, marched along the main streets of Sydney, announcing that a mass meeting of citizens would be held at Governor Bourke’s Statue in the Domain. Shortly before 7 o’clock the deputation appointed at the previous meeting left the assemblage in the Domain and proceeded to Government House, but on arriving they found the gates closed against them and a strong guard of military behind them. 156

Although the deputation had an interview with the Lieutenant Governor, they did not receive a definite answer from him. The deputation had then to consider how to appease the large crowd who were anxious to hear a definite answer from the deputation. After some consultation they decided that Dr. Wilson, one member of the deputation, alone should explain the result of the deputation to the meeting, and "that everything should be done to prevent disorder." 157

The fact that the deputation was "received by soldiers with loaded arms" reveals an anxiety on the part of the Government that there might be a popular intervention in the political process. This view was endorsed by the precautions the deputation thought it wise to take to prevent a disturbance among the crowd waiting for them. The crowd composed of 'laboring men, youths and boys' were far from tame and there was a real possibility of violence. Though the newspapers usually blamed 'larrikins' for such disturbances, actually an ordinary crowd of people could be turned into 'a disorderly mob'. Ordinary citizens were often labelled as 'larrikins', 'loafers' and 'scum of the society' when a riot took place.

Immediately after the disturbances at Hyde Park, the authorities commenced to take steps to prevent the holding of meetings in parks. Members of the Hyde Park Improvement Committee, including the Mayor of Sydney and the Inspector-General of Police, had an interview with J.S. Farnell at the Land’s Department. They asserted that "it was necessary, in the interest of the public, that their power, which was now merely that of spending money, should be enlarged, so that they might be able to frame by-laws, and exercise such an efficient control over the park.

156 S.M.H., 9, 10 and 11 June 1879.

157 S.M.H., 10 June 1879.
as their existence as a committee impliedly vested in them.¹⁵⁸

In Parliament James Hoskins, Secretary for Lands stated “the proper thing to do was, that the Government should give the trustees power to prevent crowds gathering in the park.” John Robertson, representative of the Government in the Legislative Council, stated that the trustees had more power than the Government to deal with such a disturbance, and supported the appointment of trustees for Hyde Park. Hyde Park was eventually dedicated to the public formally, that is, the trustees obtained the right to manage it. The result was as could be expected. Rules and regulations for the management of Hyde, Phillip and Cook Parks were framed by the trustees in February of 1879. Through regulation 6 “a much needed and necessary reform is to be effected.” said *The Sydney Morning Herald.* “No public meeting of any kind, or assemblage of persons together to the number of twelve or more, for any purpose, in any of the parks shall be allowed.”¹⁵⁹ The parks were now under the control of the trustees in the name of improvement, but actually they were controlled by the trustees for the purpose of prohibiting public meetings.

*The Sydney Morning Herald,* an ardent supporter of the measure, distinguished liberty of speech from the licence of open-air meetings, and maintained that open-air meetings should be placed under the proper management of the trustees. The trustees then could decide what gatherings were in accordance with the objects for which the parks had been set apart.

“The parks had been set apart by the liberality of the State, not for the purposes of public gatherings ... but for those of public health and recreation ... The objection to the new regulations, on the ground that they interfere with the liberty of speech, is not a serious one. The privilege of saying what we like, where we like, is not a necessary ingredient of liberty. In the end this privilege becomes the boon of one class at the expense of another, which is the very essence of tyranny.”¹⁶⁰

A movement was organized against this measure. In Parliament John Davies, ardent supporter for temperance movements and Protestantism, and John Roseby.


¹⁵⁹*S.M.H.*, 6 Feb. 1879.

¹⁶⁰*S.M.H.*, 14 Feb. 1879.
advocate of temperance and charity, criticized the regulations to prohibit public meetings. 161 A meeting was convened at the Temperance Hall to protest against the new regulations for Hyde Park. The hall was filled to the doors, J. Mills, the chairman, stated:

"For fifty years the people of Sydney enjoyed the right to meet in Hyde Park and other parks to discuss political and social questions without let or hindrance, and a dozen gentlemen by the strokes of their pens had taken away the power to exercise that right from thousands of persons. It was a pity this had occurred ... The object of making parks was that the people might use them, and there was no place in Sydney where there had been so much intellectual occupation amongst the people as in Hyde Park during the last thirty years." 162

A deputation was set up which had an interview with the Colonial Secretary on the subject a week later but it could not obtain a favourable answer. 163

The ruling class, or the 'respectable' public, and The Sydney Morning Herald sided strongly with the trustees. They believed that open-air public meetings should be controlled or suppressed in order to prevent disturbances, and asserted that the parks had to be improved as a safe resort for the gentle citizen and his children instead of being abandoned to larrikins, goats, prostitutes, fools and drunkards. 164

The trustees were heavily backed by the Government and the city authorities. According to Parkes, Colonial Secretary, the regulations did not interfere with the right of public meetings at all.

"Take the case of large English cities, where the people had erected through their municipal authorities, or by other means, great town-halls which were very temples of that popular force which gathered at a public meeting. The use of those halls must be obtained from some properly appointed authorities. There was no instance throughout the United Kingdom where you could obtain the use of any of these great town-halls, built expressly for the holding of public meetings, without getting permission granted by some properly constituted authority; and these two regulations, as he read them, meant no more than this, that anyone could obtain possession of this place for public meetings by obtaining permission

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161 S.M.H., 8 Feb. 1879.
162 S.M.H., 15 Feb. 1879.
163 S.M.H., 22 Feb. 1879.
from the persons appointed by law to take care of the parks." 165

The Colonial Secretary’s words clearly expressed the purpose of the regulations. It was for making the parks like town halls. It was for controlling open-air public meetings by some ‘properly constituted authority’ as if they were held at a town hall.

Meetings at the Haymarket reserve were also affected by a similar measure adopted by the City Council. On the 26th of July a meeting of unemployed was held at the reserve. Although the gates were open when one of the speakers entered the ground, they were closed as the people began to assemble, presumably to prevent the further holding of the meeting. 166 This measure became quite obvious in October when the Political Reform Union could not hold open-air meetings at the Haymarket reserve. 167 It was allowed to use the Haymarket reserve again on Saturday evenings in 1880 but at least it had to stop regular open-air meetings for a while.

Throughout 1880 the Working Men’s Defence Association continued its regular evening meetings at the Bathurst Street column in Hyde Park in defiance of the regulations. 168 The column was exempt from the regulations because of its location in the park. The National Anti-Chinese League was formed probably in close connection with the Association in April. The former held public meetings at the Bathurst Street column in the evening and in the Domain on Sunday afternoons. 169 The League succeeded in persuading the Mayor to convene a public meeting at the Guild Hall with the cooperation of other anti-Chinese agitators. But the Mayor ‘treated the meeting very scurvily’ by not appearing. ‘Respectable’

165 S.M.H., 22 Feb. 1879.

166 D.T., 28 July 1879 and S.M.H., 28 July 1879.

167 D.T., 16 Oct. 1879.

168 See reports and advertisements in D.T., 6 and 20 Jan.; 16 and 30 March; 6 and 15 April; 11,18 and 27 May; 10 and 24 Aug. in 1880 and in S.M.H., 5,12,19 and 26 Jan.; 2,9,16 and 23 Feb.; 1,8,15,22 and 29 March; 5,12,15 and 26 April; 3,10 and 17 May; 7 June; 9,16,23 and 30 Aug.; 6 Sept.; 11 and 18 Oct. in 1880.

169 See reports and advertisements in D.T., 21 April, 6 May and 1,19 and 24 June 1880 and in S.M.H., 16 April, 12,19,21,26 and 31 May; 1,2,9,16,18,19 and 30 June; 5,10,17 and 24 July in 1880.
citizens were not in support of the meeting as they had been in the late 1878,\textsuperscript{170} so that the League had to ask those attending the second meeting in the Guild Hall to assist in paying the expenses of the meeting. This included rental for the hall and advertising costs.\textsuperscript{171} Although the League intended to hold meetings “not only in the suburbs of Sydney, but in the provincial towns,” such a movement could not succeed without ample financial resources or the support of influential citizens.

When the National Anti-Chinese League applied to the Redfern borough council for the use of the Town Hall, a resolution to grant the free use of the Town Hall was promptly negatived, and finally it was resolved that the League be allowed to hold their meeting upon the usual charge being paid in advance. One alderman argued that the grant of the free use of the Town Hall to such a body would merely give the larrinkins an opportunity for congregating. As the League failed to extend the movement into the suburbs, its only activity continued at the Bathurst Street column and in the Domain. By July even that had dissipated.\textsuperscript{172}

By April of 1880 the Political Reform Union resumed its Saturday night’s meetings at the Haymarket reserve. The Union held a meeting attended by more than 1,000 people at the Haymarket reserve to revive the anti-Chinese movement. The Union organized meetings at the Haymarket reserve, the Bathurst Street column and other places. It turned its attention to such matters as the Electoral Bill and the Licensing Bill by the middle of June.\textsuperscript{173} The Trades and Labour Council also attempted to organize an anti-Chinese movement. The Anti-Chinese Association of New South Wales was inaugurated at a meeting called under the auspices of the Trades and Labour Council. But the Association never really got of the ground as far as popular agitation was concerned.\textsuperscript{174}

In September the trustees of Hyde Park eventually erected a railing at the head of Bathurst Street so as to include within its boundaries the open space on which the

\textsuperscript{170}D.T., 6 May 1880 and S.M.H., 6 May 1880.

\textsuperscript{171}D.T., 1 June 1880.

\textsuperscript{172}D.T., 19 June 1880.

\textsuperscript{173}See D.T., 7, 9, 14 and 19 April, 21 June, 1 and 28 Sept. 1880 and S.M.H., 5 April 1880.

\textsuperscript{174}See D.T., 4, 7, 13 and 27 May 1880 and S.M.H., 27 April, 17 June, 8, 9, 15 and 16 Oct. 1880.
Bathurst Street column stood. The column was closed for holding public meetings. *The Sydney Morning Herald* read:

"The space thus enclosed has heretofore been a sort of no-man's land, being free from the jurisdiction of the Park authorities, and at the same time without the pale of the law which applies to the streets ... The authorities have lately been greatly distressed at the freedom of expression indulged in by these Hyde Park orators, and accordingly have been moved to put up the fence in question."  

Although a meeting was convened at the Temperance Hall to protest against the extension of the Hyde Park regulations to preclude an assemblage of people at the Bathurst Street column, it had no effect. The meeting even provoked the indignation of the president of the Trades and Labour Council, who protested that a liberty had been taken with the name of the Council, by inserting it in the advertisement convening the meeting.  

By early 1881 both the Working Men's Defence Association and the Political Reform Union had disintegrated and Hyde Park was completely closed against public meetings. The economic recovery can partly explain the disintegration of these early working men's political organizations, but the enforcement of the regulations with regard to the parks was certainly also responsible for the disintegration.

### 3.4. 1881 - 1888

By 1881 regular political gatherings of working men were a thing of the past. This was reflected in the anti-Chinese movement. Although the anti-Chinese movement had originated in open-air meetings of working men in mid 1878 and working men had supported and maintained it during 1879 and 1880, the initiative of the movement was taken out of their hands in 1881. Even the Trades and Labour Council had to give way to the aldermen of the City and other influential citizens. In May an anti-Chinese meeting was convened by the Mayor of Sydney at the requisition of influential citizens. Trade societies joined the requisition afterwards.  

The Trades and Labour Council considered

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175 *D.T.*, 14 Sept. 1880.


177 *D.T.*, 29 April 1881 and *S.M.H.*, 29 April 1881.
"If the Mayor of this City intended calling a public meeting, and they could rely upon its being done, it would be unwise on the part of the Trades and Labour Council to take special action on their own account, because the question did not affect them alone, but the people of the colony." 178

After the meeting convened by the Mayor, the Trades and Labour Council called its own meeting in the Domain on the Queen’s Birthday which was attended by between 12,000 and 15,000 people. 179 At first it asked for the use of the Garden Palace, but it had to give it up because the Premier, Parkes, believed that it was not appropriate to grant the building for any strictly political purpose. 180 This was the only meeting organized by the Trades and Labour Council.

On the other hand the ruling class acted more vigorously. Anti-Chinese meetings were convened and chaired by the suburban mayors at Newtown, Camperdown and Redfern. The Redfern Council had actually rejected the free use of the Town Hall to the National Anti-Chinese League the previous year. 181 Anti-Chinese meetings were presided over by a mayor at country towns such as Windsor and Yass. The mayors and aldermen in and around Newcastle organized vigorous anti-Chinese agitations. 182 Finally the Mayor of Sydney called and presided over another meeting of citizens of Sydney at the request of the Protection and Political Reform Union to protest against the amendments of the Chinese Immigration Restriction Bill. 183

The anti-Chinese cause or the anti-Asian cause became the tool of the ruling class to confirm the racial unity which overrode class interests and to assure workers of the superiority of the basic principles of Australian society. The ruling class were prepared to allow working class involvement as long as it did not endanger the normal political process. The cause was particularly useful as it had originated in purely working class agitations and finally came under the control of the ruling class because of the disintegration of the small political bodies of the working class.

178 D.T., 21 April 1881.


180 S.M.H., 6 May 1881.

181 See S.M.H., 7 May, 30 June and 1 July 1881.

182 See N.M.H., 30 April and 6, 9, 11, 12, 16 and 17 May 1881 and S.M.H., 19 May 1881.

Although public meetings were prohibited at Hyde Park, open-air meetings of subordinate groups did not die out completely in the City. They continued in the Sunday afternoon Domain. By early 1883 popular 'stump orators', such as Peter Campbell, George Perry and Daniel Smith, spoke to large audiences on Sunday afternoons. For example on the 20th of May, 1883, when "the Domain looked particularly bare at the usual hour of the meeting yesterday afternoon," about 2,000 people were present at Osmond Day's meeting, while Perry seems to have gathered a large crowd as well. In fact Perry alone was able to gather an audience of some 2,000 people. In 1885 thousands of people gathered in groups ranging from a couple of dozen to 1,500 in the Domain. Each group stood around an orator such as Perry and W. Richardson.

Meetings which attracted several thousand people every Sunday were far from insignificant in terms of the scale of normal public meetings. When the City had a population of less than 100,000, the Domain could attract several thousand people mostly male adults. This would mean that about 10% of the male adult population in the City attended gatherings in the Domain on Sunday afternoons.

The people perhaps did not go to the Domain simply to hear insipid moralizing or arid political speeches, but rather for free entertainment. For example, Perry, a temperance orator, entertained his audience with a thrilling narrative of his sixteen years' hard drinking, the endless varieties of sprees he had enjoyed and all kinds of alcohol, from rum-shrub to 'sarsaparilla', which, he said, was sold in Sydney as 'deadly' as brandy. H. Brown spoke about the protection question with a view to showing that it was intimately connected with 'the drink traffic', and 'told funny stories about ladies' fans being made of Chinamen's ribs. Disruption of speeches, throwing rotten oranges, and knocking an orator about sometimes gave amusement.

184 George Perry and others held weekly temperance meetings in the Domain on Sunday afternoons. Their meetings were advertised in S.M.H., 29 and 11 July, 20 Aug., 10 Sept., 1881.


186 D.T., 21 May 1883. See also D.T., 9 July and 27 Aug. 1883.


188 S.M.H., 22 Sept. 1883.

189 D.T., 26 Feb. and 30 April 1883.
to the crowd. However, political problems were also vehemently discussed. In 1883 there was a large meeting in which the audience was harangued on the Irish question by two opposing parties "according to ancient Domain custom". Even after the termination of the meeting, "the crowd divided into little groups, and argued until they got tired or thirsty". Although the crowd might have been there mainly for entertainment, they also listened to various opinions about social and political questions.

Open-air informal meetings hardly drew the attention of newspaper reporters, so opinions expressed there were rarely reported. The assemblage in the Domain was not 'the public' of a public meeting from reporters' point of view. I referred to a process in which opinions expressed at public meetings were transmitted to the people at large through newspapers in the first chapter, but the process failed to function in connection with open-air meetings. The process was reversed in the Domain. The reports of social and economic conditions, political situations and parliamentary debates and the standpoints of newspapers were cited, explained, interpreted and criticized by orators. The Domain audience obtained information about these problems from the orators and also discussed the problems "until they got tired or thirsty". Most of the audience, we may suspect, would rarely trouble to buy a newspaper and read lengthy reports of parliamentary debates.

In 1883 working class political activity became also expanded and intensified. The Protection and Political Reform League held 'the first of a series of open meetings' at the Temperance Hall on Sunday evening in late January, while R.C. Luscombe, the secretary, and W. Richardson, the vice-president, held open-air meetings in the Domain on Sunday afternoons. At its third public meeting on Saturday evening J.B. Douglass "suggested that the Haymarket or some other central position was the proper place to address the public, where some 3,000 could be got together". The Trades and Labour Council called anti-immigration meetings at the Masonic

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190 See D.T., 15 and 16 Jan., 21 May, 9 July and 17 Sept. 1883.

191 D.T., 26 Feb. 1883.

192 S.M.H., 29 Jan. 1883.

193 S.M.H., 12 Feb. 1883. See also S.M.H., 26 Feb. and 5 March 1883.
Hall and at Circular Quay in March. The Working Men’s Defence Association was also revived. On the 21st of July a meeting of working men was held in the Haymarket square on Saturday afternoon for the purpose of reorganizing the Working Men’s Political Defence Association. The following Saturday a large meeting of the Association was held at Belmore Park. In August J. Gardiner, who played a prominent part in reorganizing the Working Men’s Defence Association, called a meeting at the Haymarket on Saturday evening with a view to forming a Radical Association. The Radical Association convened a meeting at Circular Quay on Saturday afternoon in September to protest against assisted immigration. In October a meeting of working men was held for the purpose of uniting all classes of labour. Perry occupied the chair. The meeting was addressed by Flower and Doran, organizers of the Radical Association; H. Brown, a Domain orator and an organizer of the Working Men’s Political Defence Association; E.W. O’Sullivan, a journalist and protectionist politician.

Informal meetings of subordinate groups were revitalized in 1883. People became accustomed to gathering in the open air on Saturday and Sunday to listen to speeches. While the audiences perhaps expected to be entertained in these meetings, they often obtained information about political and social problems. It would be futile to argue whether these audiences were entertainment-seeking or whether they had political interests: clearly they served both an entertainment and a political function. Processions usually preceded or followed large open-air political meetings. Decorated horses, bands, vans, fire brigades, friendly societies and trade unions took part in the parades. The parades were sometimes torchlight processions which attracted large numbers of spectators. The nature of the crowd depended largely on the situation in which they found themselves. The political potential of the crowd manifested itself in critical situations such as the visit of the delegates of the Irish National League or the arrival of Chinese, alleged to be suffering from smallpox. The increase of unemployed workers also politicised the crowd. The nature of the crowd was not so important as the fact that people developed the habit of meeting together in large numbers regularly. This sort of crowd could become extremely

194 See D.T., 9 and 14 March 1883.
195 See D.T., 23 and 30 July 1883 and S.M.H., 14 and 21 July and 1 and 4 Aug. 1883.
196 See D.T., 21 Aug. and 17 Sept. 1883.
197 D.T., 22 Oct. 1883.
political if stirred up at a critical juncture. 198

Revitalized informal meetings of subordinate groups could not help attracting the attention of some members of the Legislative Assembly. On the 26th of October, R.H. Leven, solicitor and determined protectionist, asked the Colonial Secretary to take up the matter in reference to "the disgraceful scenes which occurred in the Domain on Sundays." 199 Angus Cameron, who was attacked repeatedly by Domain orators, 200 stated that Mr. Brown and Mr. Perry "had held up caricatures of members to a mob of ruffians of their own cast, and had exhibited diagrams supposed to represent some members' stomachs in a distasteful state ... Let any man go into the Domain, and he would find just such a state of things as used to exist a few years ago in Hyde Park ... he denied that the parks were for the use of demagogues, who did no good whatever, but simply revelled in the sound of their own voices ... He hoped the Minister for Lands would take steps to vest the Domain in trustees, so that it might be brought under regulations similar to those which had been made for Hyde Park." 201

On the 30th J.S. Farnell, Minister for Lands, answered Cameron and Leven in Parliament and said that trustees would be appointed and that they would have the authority to stop 'the disgraceful scenes' in the Domain. 202

The situation in 1883 was more favourable to Domain orators than that in 1879. Trustees had not been appointed to the Domain and the people could see clearly from what happened in Hyde Park that the appointment of trustees would virtually amount to a prohibition of open-air public meetings. As soon as it was known that the Government intended to appoint trustees to the Domain, the Domain orators and others acted quickly to protest against this proposal. Although The Sydney

198 This is also true of Domain orators. G. Perry and H. Brown who had the lion's share of the attendance in the Domain became speakers at the anti-immigration meeting held at the temperance hall D.T., 8 and 12 Nov. 1883.

199 New South Wales Parliamentary Debates Vol.10. 220.

200 He was one of the trustees of Hyde Park and considered G. Perry the biggest loafer in the colony. He was once the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council and backed by it for his election at West Sydney in 1874. He received a salary from the Council until 1876, then gradually drifted away from representing the interests of the working class. He was to be defeated at the election in 1885.

201 New South Wales Parliamentary Debates Vol.10. 222-223.

202 ibid., 440.
Morning Herald again supported the restriction of public meetings, The Daily Telegraph was opposed to the restriction immediately after Farnell made clear the intention of the Government. The editorial stated:

"Viewed in its higher and greater aspect, we may almost go the length of asserting that the supression of 'Domain oratory', whilst giving a certain sense of relief to those who dislike occasional vulgarity and coarseness, and object to the disgraceful scenes caused by the larrikin element, would be a positive evil, when judged by the right of the people to freedom of meeting and freedom of speech in places belonging to them."

The protesting movement was better organized than in 1879. Domain orators obtained the support of the Mayor of Sydney and several members of Parliament. On the 3rd of November they held a meeting in the Domain to protest against the appointment of trustees. This meeting appointed the Mayor, these members of Parliament and several Domain orators as a deputation to the Minister for Lands. On the 4th and 11th of November several meetings were held for the purpose of protesting against restrictions on the liberty to speak publicly.

It was fortunate for the Domain orators that at this moment Parliament was concerned 'solely and wholly' with the new land bill, for which Farnell, Minister for Lands, had prime responsibility. It seems that the deputation, composed of 5 M.L.As. and the Mayor and aldermen of Sydney, was strong enough to prevent Farnell from proceeding with the matter with which the Government was not very much concerned. Trustees were not appointed and the Domain remained in the hands of the people. Informal meetings of subordinate groups were to continue in the Domain without any interference from the Government for about 10 years.

In 1884 an organization of working men grew out of an informal public meeting in the open air. An anti-immigration meeting was held at Prince Albert's Statue, near the entrance to Hyde Park, on the 29th of January. There were over 3,000 people present. The immense assemblage marched to Parliament to present a petition. All

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203 See S.M.H., 8 Nov. 1883.
204 D.T., 2 Nov. 1883.
205 See D.T., 12 Nov. 1883 and S.M.H., 5 and 12 Nov. 1883.
206 S.M.H., 17 Nov. 1883.
available standing room inside the iron fence was occupied, and outside, the street was packed with men who had also taken part in the meeting. The deputation from the meeting presented the petition to A.G. Taylor, M.L.A. and journalist, then the assemblage wended its way back to the statue. A second meeting was then held there and the Democratic Alliance was formed at the suggestion of E.W. O’Sullivan. The meeting decided that the Alliance should meet at the Statue every Tuesday to advocate liberal principles. The Alliance maintained energetic activity in February and March. It held 17 public meetings in Sydney and the suburbs, and meetings at the Prince Albert’s Statue attracted several thousand people.

A movement of unemployed started in April. Since the beginning of this movement, the problem of unemployed had become one of the most important issue dealt with at open-air meetings. I want to examine this movement in detail because the succeeding movements of the unemployed followed, more or less, a similar course to that of this movement. The unemployed held meetings at the Prince Albert’s Statue to petition the Government for work. On the 29th of April the unemployed, who had assembled at the Statue, proceeded in a body to the gates of Parliament. The mass of the demonstrators remained in Macquarie Street, while a deputation consisting of G.A.G. Gee, A. Patterson and N. Cradick presented a petition. The deputation, introduced by Ninian Melville, influential protectionist politician and leader of many agitations of workers, had an interview with the Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Works. The Government then recognized the deputation as representatives of the unemployed. The three delegates of the unemployed accepted the rate of wage the government offered and selected workers for jobs arranged by the Government.

The Democratic Alliance, however, took the leadership of the movement out of the hands of these three delegates on the 5th of May. The Alliance maintained that the Government should arrange and offer jobs to the unemployed at a fair remuneration and they advised the unemployed not to accept the wages of 5


210 See D.T., 25 and 30 April and 5 May 1884.
shillings a day. An awkward situation developed: while the Government regarded Gee and Patterson, who were willing to accept the Government's terms, as representing the unemployed, the unemployed themselves had chose to be represented by the Democratic Alliance who took a stronger attitude towards the Government.

The Democratic Alliance formed processions of unemployed which marched through the principal thoroughfares of the City and held meetings at the Statue. On Sundays the unemployed moved their meetings to the Domain, where speeches and a collection were made for the movement. The subscription was used to provide the destitute with supper and a bed for the night. On the other hand, Gee and Patterson obtained free railway passes and jobs for the unemployed from the Government and formed gangs for public works. Although the Government did not recognize the Democratic Alliance, it had to provide a meal and shelter for the destitute at the old police barracks because of the strenuous efforts by the Alliance to make the public aware of the distress among the unemployed.

G. Gee was able to meet the Minister for Works easily, but the real delegates of the unemployed had great difficulty in meeting him. The unemployed, therefore, decided not to ask Gee to do anything for them or accept anything through his mediation. The Government, seeing that the unemployed agitation was not abating and recognizing that Gee was discredited in the eyes of the unemployed, decided to stop providing jobs for the unemployed and affording temporary relief to the destitute. The Government asserted that it took this action because it could not persuade unemployed workers to accept the jobs it offered and alleged that the unemployed refused work at remarkably high wages.

The leaders of the unemployed became more radical as a result of these measures.

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211 See D.T. 6 and 7 May 1884.
212 See D.T. 8 May 1884.
213 See D.T. 9, 10, 13, 15 and 19 May 1884.
214 See D.T. 12 and 14 May 1884.
215 See D.T. 15 and 16 May 1884.
216 See D.T. 17, 19, 20 and 21 May 1884.
but the rank and file listened to inflammatory speeches only "in a half-hearted uninterested way". On the 20th of May the unemployed marched to Parliament to apply for the reopening of the barracks. When a few delegates entered the precincts of the House, the crowd was dispersed by a strong body of the police. Lacking any effective means of bringing pressure upon the Government, the movement of the unemployed vacillated between a strong stance and a weak one. Thomas Walker, secularist spokesman and 'larrikin' populist campaigner, took part in the movement at this juncture and admonished the unemployed against violent language. The leaders of the unemployed attempted to separate 'bona-fide working men' from 'loafers' with the assistance of police. They also decided to appoint certain 'trustworthy' agents to collect subscriptions on behalf of the unemployed and to petition the Mayor of Sydney to grant the use of the Town Hall for a public meeting. A few days later, however, the leaders again denounced the Government in very strong terms.

The Government did not assist the unemployed or receive a deputation from them because the Democratic Alliance, a radical group from their point of view, was leading the movement of the unemployed. The unemployed were too weak to withstand this situation for a long time. On the 2nd of June the Alliance lost the leadership of the movement when the rank and file of the unemployed decided to choose representatives from among themselves. They acted on the advice of Daniel O'Connar and Melville, members of Parliament. Accordingly six working men were selected from the unemployed to call on other members of Parliament and ministers. The movement of the unemployed was thus divided again. The Minister for Works then met the six delegates and promised to find temporary work for genuine, honest, hard-working men. He expressed his satisfaction at the removal of 'the agitators' from the movement. The unemployed movement continued for a while, but it could no longer maintain its vitality.

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217 D.T., 21 May 1884.
218 See D.T., 20-22 and 23 May 1884.
219 See D.T., 27 and 28 May 1884.
220 See D.T., 3, 4, 5, 7 and 12 June 1884.
221 See D.T., 13, 14, 17, 23 and 27 June 1884.
The Government, concerned mainly to lessen agitation by the unemployed, strove constantly to divide the movement. They were especially anxious to remove 'the agitators', or the Democratic Alliance from the movement. No sooner had the agitation lost its energy than the Government stopped its efforts to find work for the unemployed. The Government did not regard relief of the distress of the unemployed as their duty. The unemployed problem was solved in the Government's terms when the agitation was over.

Lacking sufficient financial resources, the unemployed had to fight an uphill battle not only against the Government but also against the newspapers which always reported the movement unfavourably. So the battle was destined to be lost. When the agitation was over, the distress of the unemployed remained almost as severe as it had been. However the unemployed movement was successful in two ways. Firstly, the Government was obliged to adopt several measures to lessen the unemployed problem. Even if these measures were adopted chiefly for the purpose of diminishing the agitation, they had the effect of relieving some of the unemployed. At the very least, in the second place, the precedent was established that the Government should deal with the problem of the unemployed. The precedent would encourage succeeding unemployed movements and give them some justification for demanding relief work from the Government. The Government now realized a possible effect that might flow from assisted immigration. Assisted immigration would supply employers with labour on the one hand, but it might, on the other, cost the Government more in the form of unemployed agitations.222

In 1885 the place for political meetings of working men moved from Prince Albert's Statue to the Queen's Statue at the top of King Street. In March several thousand people assembled at the pedestal of the Queen's Statue to protest against the action of the Government in their Soudan policy.222 Between 5,000 and 8,000 people assembled there in July to petition the Government for the reprieve of a condemned man. "The people for the most part seemed to belong to the artisan class."224

222 The Democratic Alliance continued its activity at least until 1890, but perhaps without great influence. See S.M.H., 6, 10 and 17 April 1885, 3 March and 6 Nov. 1886 and 8 Nov. 1890.

223 D.T., 19 March 1885 and S.M.H., 19 March 1885.

224 S.M.H., 17 July 1885.
Another unemployed agitation started in March of 1886 which also held meetings by the pedestal of the Queen’s Statue. This agitation continued for about a month and terminated because of the measures adopted by the Colonial Secretary 'with remarkable promptitude'. However, the Government was at first determined not to provide the unemployed with any meal, accommodation or relief work because they believed that this action would only lead to the growth of the number of the unemployed and their agitation in Sydney. Some ministers "were inclined to believe that it was largely fermented by professional politicians"; another expressed the opinion that "it was not the function of Government to assist them." A large number of the unemployed then marched to the residence of Alfred Stephen, Lieutenant-Governor, in College Street and sought his intervention with the Government on their behalf. This demonstration by the unemployed forced the Government to adopt several measures to alleviate their problems. This movement was more successful than that of 1884.225

In October another unemployed movement started. Domain orators such as Perry and Richardson took charge of the agitation.226 Perry convened a meeting of the unemployed at the Queen’s Pedestal. About 1,500 men assembled. They marched down to the Colonial Secretary’s Office and the deputation had an interview with George Dibbs. Colonial Secretary, and Patrick Jennings. Premier. The Government opened the 'Carrington Relief Depot’ at the Hyde Park Barracks for the relief of the unemployed and placed it under the control of Melville, M.L.A. and Perry.227

In 1887 the Domain and the Queen’s Statue saw various agitations: an anti-immigration meeting, meetings for the Bulli Disaster’s Relief Fund, a meeting against the extra excise duty on tobacco, meetings against the closing of theatres on Sunday, a meeting against the Irish Coercion Bill228 and numerous meetings of the

225 See D.T., 9, 10, 12, 16 and 26 March 1886 and S.M.H., 6, 9, 10 and 11 March 1886. During the agitation by the unemployed a meeting was to have been held in the Town Hall under the auspices of the Trades and Labour Council and the Democratic Alliance to protest against assisted immigration. The Mayor granted the use of the Town Hall several days before the meeting. When the promoters of the meeting went there, they found the doors barred against them. They were told that the hall had been furnished for a banquet to be given by the Mayor the following day. They had to hold the meeting outside the Town Hall. Between 1,500 and 2,000 people attended it. S.M.H., 9 March 1886.

226 See S.M.H., 10, 26 and 27 Oct. and 6 Nov. 1886.

227 See S.M.H., 2, 10 and 12 Nov. and 1, 6 and 8 Dec. 1886.

228 See D.T., 17 Jan., 4 April, 28 June and 11 July 1887 and S.M.H., 17 Jan., 21 June and 11 July 1887.
unemployed. The agitation by the unemployed was resumed in February. It became the longest and most intensive unemployed movement during the 1880s.229

In 1888 perhaps the largest public meeting was held in the Domain to protest against Chinese immigration. The crowd numbered between 50,000 and 60,000, which was nearly half of the population of the City.230 Such a large crowd was very dangerous to the government unless dealt with cautiously. It had the potential to influence political decisions or to cause a serious disturbance.231 The open-air meeting thus gradually developed during the 1880s and prepared the way for subordinate people to take part actively in various movements during the 1890s.

3.5. 1889 - 1901

The open-air meeting had three important features in the 1890s: the Trades and Labour Council, trade unions and other labour organizations became progressively involved in open-air meetings and moulding public opinion; socialists played an important role in advocating the causes of subordinate groups; agitations by the unemployed became very frequent and the unemployment problem became a predominant cause for unorganized working men.

The Trades and Labour Council already resorted to open-air public meetings during the agitation in support of the London dock-labourers' strike in 1889. It organized two large meetings in the Domain on the 7th and 14th of July in order to gain the support of the general public. The Trades and Labour Council was not willing to call a public meeting in the open air in connection with the anti-Chinese movement in 1881, but the Trades and Labour Council and trade unions now called mass meetings in the Domain without hesitation. However, they did not entirely accept the practice of the Domain meetings. They held demonstrations and meetings on Saturdays rather than on Sundays. At this stage they still seem to have hesitated to challenge the practice of the ruling class by calling the meetings

229 See D.T., 1.2.3.17 and 21 March; 15.18.20.22.23.28.29 and 30 April; 4.6.9.10.11.12.18.19 and 28 May; 20 July; 8.9.12.15 and 18 Aug. in 1887 and S.M.H., 11 Feb; 1.5.7 and 14 March; 28 April; 29 June; 16 July; 6 and 8 Aug. in 1887.

230 S.M.H., 4 June 1888.

231 For example, during the anti-Chinese agitation in 1888, Parliament House was nearly invaded by the excited crowd who proceeded there after the termination of an anti-Chinese meeting at the Town Hall (S.M.H., 4 May 1888).
on Sunday afternoons according to the practice of the Domain meetings.\textsuperscript{232}

Socialists also appeared in the Domain. The Socialist League convened a large and enthusiastic meeting on Sunday, the 1st of September, to express sympathy with the strikers. The second resolution was:

That this meeting recognizes that this strike is only a forerunner of greater battles that will have to be fought ere the workers of the world are emancipated from their present industrial slavery.\textsuperscript{233}

The socialists themselves were to fight for the emancipation of the workers of New South Wales in the 1890s.

From the very beginning of this movement, Domain assemblages were very sympathetic to the strikers. This sympathy is vividly described in an account of one meeting addressed by H. Varley, who was not necessarily in favour of the strike:

"After dealing directly with his subject 'The Fall of Man', reference was made to the London dock-labourers' strike, on which topic he found very ready listeners, so enthusiastic did the meeting become that a resolution was unanimously passed expressive of sympathy with the dockmen in their struggle, and it was decided to send this message to London without delay. In order to meet expense attendant upon forwarding the cable, the hat was taken round and in a very brief period the sum of 12 pounds 4 shillings was collected."\textsuperscript{234}

The Trades and Labour Council and trade unions superimposed themselves entirely on the custom of the open-air meetings of subordinate groups during the strike directed by the N.S.W. Labour Defence Committee in 1890. The N.S.W. Labour Defence Committee organized meetings at such places as Darlinghurst Skating Rink, Prince Alfred Park, the Domain, Flagstaff Hill, the Haymarket and Belmore Park.\textsuperscript{235}

Domain assemblages were earnest supporters of the strike. 13 collections were made in the Domain during September and October, which amounted to almost 200
pounds. At one of such meetings in the Domain about 5,000 people assembled. Speakers were loudly cheered for their 'revolutionary sentiments', and when it was proposed that a deputation be sent to ask the Legislative Assembly to allow them to speak at the bar of the House, the meeting grew quite enthusiastic. Several policemen in the assemblage hurried away to Parliament House to warn the authorities of what the crowd intended to do. The deputation was appointed and they walked up to Macquarie Street, followed by a large number of workers. They were met by the police drawn up in line at the gate of Parliament. A scene developed similar to various mass demonstrations during the 1880s. A large crowd assembled in the Domain and marched to Parliament House so that their case should be heard at the bar of the House while a strong body of the police guarded the gates of the building.

From 1891 to 1893 the Trades and Labour Council and trade unions called public meetings in the Domain for such purposes as expressing sympathy with Queensland shearsers on strike, opposing the scheme of General Booth, criticizing a proprietor in connection with the strike by launderesses, enlarging The Australian Workman, protesting against the importation of coloured labour into Queensland, counteracting the action of the National Association, welcoming the released Broken Hill strike leaders and expressing sympathy with seamen on strike. They also held meetings at the Queen's Statue and Flagstaff Hill. When established labour organizations began positive efforts to generate public opinion on political problems concerned with labour, they joined force with those informal gatherings of subordinate people which had developed gradually during the 1870s and 1880s. Subordinate people, unorganized workers, the unemployed and short-lived small political organizations who defended, maintained and developed habitual meetings of subordinate groups, prepared for large labour demonstrations in the early 1890s. The Trades and Labour Council, which had not been concerned with freedom of speech in public parks, benefited when the Council took a positive attitude towards politics.

Socialists became active in the Domain and at the Queen's Statue during the

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236 See The Australian Workman, 20 Dec. 1890.

237 See The Australian Workman, 1 Nov. 1890.

1890s. The Socialist League promoted an unemployed movement in 1891. M. Healey, a bricklayer by trade and a Roman Catholic by religion, was instrumental in organizing the agitation. The Sydney Morning Herald read:

"Gatherings, ostensibly of unemployed, have been rather frequent in the vicinity of the Queen’s Statue during the last few days. For the most part they are held under the auspices of a member of the socialist fraternity, who daily hoists a red flag on the railings, and declaims on such subjects as appear suitable to his audience."

Mr. Gardiner, an Irishman, 65 years of age and once a merchant in Druitt Street, started an unemployed movement in 1892. The Trades and Labour Council sent a delegate, W. Lee, to support the movement. The first deputation of the movement to the Premier included a socialist among the four members of the deputation and socialists like W.H. McNamara soon took the lead among the unemployed. From 1893 to 1894 the Active Service Brigade had great influence among the unemployed. We shall return to this subject in the following chapter.

The Australian Socialist League organized May Day demonstrations during the 1890s. For example, on the 1st of May 1892, "a crowd of about 3,000 assembled around the drag from which the speeches were delivered. A number of red flags were displayed, one bearing the inscription 'Work for all and overwork for none', in addition to the banner of the General Labourers' Union." In November of 1892 the League prepared a meeting at the Queen’s Statue to protest against sentences upon the Broken Hill strike leaders. It collected money to defray its expenses, advertised the meeting in newspapers and through the distribution of handbills and arranged speakers. When the League knew that the Trades and Labour Council had taken up the matter, it decided to allow the Council to take the initiative and asked the Council to co-operate with it. But the Council ignored the original organizers and excluded what they contemptuously called the 'Domain crowd'.

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239 See D.T., 7 and 9 May 1891 and S.M.H., 5 and 7 May 1891.

240 D.T., 8 May 1891.

241 See The Australian Workman, 27 Feb., 19 and 26 March and 2 April 1892, D.T., 3.4 and 5 Feb., 19 March and 1 April 1892 and S.M.H., 26, 27, 29 and 30 Jan. and 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Feb. 1892.


243 S.M.H., 2 May 1892. See also D.T., 2 May 1892.
However, before the meeting dispersed, L. Petrie, one of the speakers arranged by the Socialist League, started to sing the Marseillaise and a good many around joined lustily in the chorus.244

An incident in 1893 shows the socialists' power to mobilize supporters. A public meeting was held at the Protestant Hall to protest against the influx of 'Asiatic' and European pauper aliens. J.C. Watson, president of the Trades and Labour Council, presided. Three resolutions were moved, but all of them were lost. Instead amendments moved and seconded by socialists were carried amid loud and prolonged cheers. The amendment to the second resolution was :-

"That the undesirable persons in Australia are not those of our fellow-men who happen to be of foreign birth, but the plutocratic politicians who attempt by side issues to throw the workers off the right track."245

The Government again attempted to interfere with open-air meetings. For example, when the Socialist League held a meeting at the corner of Crystal Street and Parramatta Road, Leichhardt, the police broken in upon the gathering and ordered the promoters to stop the proceedings at once, although there were at least a dozen other meetings being held at the same time in the road. This place had been used for holding open-air meetings on Saturday nights for years past. The police also occasionally stopped unemployed meetings and dispersed them at the Queen's Statue and other places.246

In 1892 the Government made clear its intention virtually to forbid the public meetings at the Queen's Statue by resorting to the municipal by-laws in concert with the Mayor of Sydney. This attempt was not successful perhaps because the municipal by-laws did not directly prohibit public meetings. The laws did, however, prohibit obstruction of the traffic by public meetings. People continued to hold public meetings at the Statue despite occasional attempts of the police to disperse the crowd.247 The Australian Workman probably represented the sentiment of the people who continued to assemble there.

244 See The Australian Workman, 5 Nov. 1892 and S.M.H., 1 and 2 Nov. 1892.

245 S.M.H., 1 Feb. 1893. See also D.T., 1 Feb. 1893.

246 New South Wales Parliamentary Debates Vol.61, 2615.

"There is no earthly reason why the Statue meetings should cease, except that it would please the coercive tyranny of a discredited and non-representative Government. To that coercion the citizens of Sydney will rightly refuse to submit ... the directors of the Workman Co. will organise a meeting, to be held at the Statue, and will then see whether the Government will dare to arrest ten thousand citizens, and if they do, whether they will be able to throw them in the existing gaols. We do not, however, think that any arrests will be made, or attempted. There is no law in existence to justify such action." 248

In 1894 the Government again attempted to place the Domain under the control of the Government or trustees in order to regulate public meetings. The Premier, Dibbs, stated when he was asked in Parliament if the Government had taken any steps to curtail the right of freedom of speech in the Domain on Sunday:

"The Government have a duty to perform in regard to blackguardly expressions which are used in the Domain on Sunday afternoons ... There are no means of exercising control over it until it is dedicated to the public, and belongs to them. I propose to introduce a bill to dedicate the Domain and the Botanic Gardens to the use of the public for their recreation and enjoyment: and in that Bill I propose to ask the House to grant to the Government and Executive Council the power to regulate any proceedings which may take place there, so that nothing may occur which may shock the orderly and peaceably disposed portion of the community." 249

The Daily Telegraph immediately objected to such a measure as it did in 1884.

"What the Premier is understood to suggest is a real danger to popular liberties, and must be resisted and rejected. It appears to be an insidious attempt to interfere with the absolute right of men of every shade of belief to engage in lawful discussion in the Domain on any subject they may feel interested in. The Domain orator must observe the same decorum of language that is demanded from any other public speaker, but he must not be partially gagged by any Government censorship." 250

This time even The Sydney Morning Herald was opposed to it, though the same paper had been supporting the appointment of trustees for the purpose of regulating public meetings even if it virtually meant the prohibition of public meetings.

"Everyone is free to express his opinions in writing or print without the control of an official of the Government, though subject in certain

248 The Australian Workman, 17 Dec. 1892.

249 New South Wales Parliamentary Debates Vol.67, 820.

250 D.T., 19 Feb. 1894. See also D.T., 20, 21 and 26 Feb. 1894.
directions to a legal responsibility for what he writes if he indulge in blasphemy, sedition, obscenity, or attacks upon private character. Public speaking is subject to similar rules, which are, however, less stringently enforced, because the spoken word may pass away without effect, where the written or printed word remains for good or evil. The Domain is a place for public speaking of all kinds. The practice, if not a right by prescription, has by long usage merged into a right. It is a recognized place for the elaborate declaration of opinion and expression of faith, or for controversy on matters of social, political, or religious interest. This being the case, it would be a grave mistake to suppose that the justification of efficient control implies the imposition of a censorship on this varied speech. No official can be appointed to dictate what men shall say or what they shall not say.  

It was understandable that the Government gave up introducing the bill for the purpose of restricting public meetings in the Domain, considering that such a conservative paper as *The Sydney Morning Herald* was opposed to it, and that the bill would not greatly benefit the Government. But why did *The Sydney Morning Herald* change its standpoint? It is perhaps because it realized that the Domain meeting had been a safety valve against disturbance rather than a spark to touch it off. The Domain meeting seems to have lost its violent power while freedom of speech in the Domain was recognized as a right.

"It is even expedient, within limits, to recognize the exhaustive effect of violent talk, which often, though it produced a temporary excitement of feeling, is followed later on by a collapse, and lessens the chance of active disturbance, as in an overcharged steam boiler by letting off the steam."  

The Domain and the Queen's Statue and other places such as Victoria Park, the corner of Crystal Street and Parramatta Road were still used for holding open-air meetings towards the turn of the century. In 1899 Perry with socialists like McNamara and R.S. Rosa held a public meeting at his stump in the Domain in order to support the action of the Legislative Council in regard to the Federal Enabling Bill.

The unemployed, socialists and labour organizations persistently agitated for the

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251 *S.M.H.*, 20 Feb. 1894.

252 Ibid.

253 See *S.M.H.*, 19 June, 1 and 2 July and 1 and 4 Oct. 1897: 3, 18, 20, 25 and 27 March and 20 and 21 July 1899; 11 June, 20 and 22 July, 7 Sept. and 23 and 25 Nov. 1901.

254 *S.M.H.*, 20 March 1899.
solution of the problem of the unemployed. The movement became the most conspicuous agitation of working men from the mid 1880s to the late 1890s. I would like to conclude the present chapter with this important problem. It is of course beyond the scope of this thesis to trace or examine the development of the movement in detail. What I propose to do here is to consider the relation between the agitation of the unemployed and the ruling class with regard to the making of public opinion by examining problems surrounding the use of the Town Hall.

Two unemployed movements existed side by side in October of 1886: one was organized by Domain orators such as Perry and Richardson; the other was promoted by protectionists. The Mayor of Sydney, J. Young, granted the use of the Town Hall to the latter on condition that no 'stump' orators should be allowed to speak. The meeting at the Town Hall became very disorderly as it turned into a sort of protectionists' demonstration. The first resolution was "that, while the Government should at once provide temporary relief for the unemployed, more permanent unemployment should be secured by the encouragement of native industries". At the close of the meeting, Perry, who was not allowed to speak at the meeting, announced that he would address the meeting outside. After cheers had been given for the Queen and others, the audience flocked outside to hear his speech.255

The Mayor granted the use of the Town Hall for the unemployed movement because he sympathized with protection. Though he declared that he was personally a freetrader, he clearly spoke as a protectionist at the meeting. The Mayor did not acknowledge the grass-roots agitation by the unemployed which Domain orators promoted. This is clear from the fact that he refused Domain orators the right to address the meeting. The Mayor asserted that the "meeting must not be considered to be a political one," because it did not allow Domain orators to speak, though actually the meeting was undoubtedly a highly political one.256 Mayors of Sydney were to use such arbitrary discretion in deciding whether they should grant the use of the Town Hall for unemployed meetings during the 1890s. The decision was alleged to be based on consideration of the political character of the meetings.

In 1892 the Mayor of Sydney granted the use of the Exhibition Building to the Executive Committee of the unemployed "on condition that no Socialists were


256Ibid.
allowed to speak, and that Agitator Lee was not to deliver an inflammatory speech."257 The unemployed movement was split immediately. Socialists and W. Lee who had been leading the movement were excluded from the new committee which was recognized by the Labour Bureau as the executive to collect money.258 The new committee acted on the advice of a few labour members and eventually handed over the leadership of the movement to the citizens' committee composed of such men as the Mayor, J. Creer, superintendent of the Labour Bureau and T.J. Houghton, a member of Parliament.259 The citizens' committee functioned for no more than two weeks, then deserted the unemployed for lack of funds.260

The unemployed tried to revive the agitation, but they could not recover fully from the split. The Government, the Labour Bureau and the police co-operated to suppress the revival of agitation. When a few agitators endeavoured to organize a meeting and unfolded a banner bearing the words 'Work or Bread' in Prince Alfred Park, Creer took it down at once. A well-known individual then endeavoured to orate, but the police prevented him from speaking. Creer subsequently interviewed the leading malcontents, and gave it plainly to be understood that any further attempts to create discontent or otherwise disturb the working of the Bureau would be promptly and severely dealt with.261

In 1893 the Mayor granted the use of the Town Hall to the Trades and Labour Council and other labour organizations "on condition that he was previously shown the resolutions to be submitted, and a list of the names of the speakers."262 The Trades and Labour Council obtained the use of the Town Hall again in February of 1894 when agitation at the Statue had ceased. However, the terms of the engagement precluded speakers from referring to political matters. The Trades and Labour Council, therefore, decided "that no reference was to be made to the people

257*The Australian Workman*, 26 March 1892.

258See *The Australian Workman*, 2 April 1892, *D.T.*, 1 April 1892 and *S.M.H.*, 30 March 1892.

259See *D.T.*, 8 April 1892 and *S.M.H.*, 8 April 1892.

260See *The Australian Workman*, 23 April 1892, *D.T.*, 16 and 23 April 1892 and *S.M.H.*, 23 April 1892.

261See *The Australian Workman*, 23 April 1892, *D.T.*, 22,23 and 29 April 1892 and *S.M.H.*, 23 and 29 April 1892.

in high position who were responsible for the astounding position at the present time."263 In September J. Medway Day failed to secure the Town Hall on the subject of the shearsers' strike and had to hold a meeting on the Domain.264

Towards the end of 1894 a vigorous unemployed agitation started. J. Jones, P. Tennant and J. Barnett formed 'the New Unemployed Labour Organization of New South Wales'. While they called a mass meeting attended by between 2,000 and 3,000 people in the Domain, they wanted to keep the agitation alive by securing the use of various town halls to hold public meetings. Such public meetings would bring pressure to bear upon members of Parliament and, through them, upon the Government to provide public works.265

In January of 1895 a meeting of the Socialist League passed a resolution to the effect that the whole of the unemployed of New South Wales should concentrate themselves in Sydney in order to force Parliament to act immediately. Harry Foran, one of the unemployed agitators, proposed to a section of the unemployed the formation of an Australian Knights of Labour. He then requested the Mayor to grant the use of the Town Hall for a public meeting in connection with the New Labour Organization. Though the Mayor, S.E. Lees, at first promised to lend the Town Hall, he subsequently withdrew his promise as he considered that the resolutions submitted had a political character. Foran changed the expression of the resolution in order to meet the demands of the Mayor, but the Mayor persisted in his decision, contending that the meeting would in reality be a political one.266

The Sydney Morning Herald stated in support of the decision:

"it may be said that applications for the use of the Town Hall should be considered impartially and dealt with liberally, and that the object of making the hall servicable in the fullest legitimate degree as a place for the expression of public opinion and the initiation or promotion of great public movements should be kept constantly in view ... It can hardly be denied that they raised some questions of the widest public interest: but those questions were approached from a sectional point of view, and for a

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263 S.M.H., 10 Feb. 1894. The Sydney Morning Herald considered many speeches at this meeting "were reminiscent rather of the Statue and Domain than of the Centennial Hall."


265 See S.M.H., 23, 28 and 31 Dec. 1894.

266 The Australian Workman, 12 Jan. 1895, D.T., 7 and 8 Jan. 1895 and S.M.H., 7 Jan. 1895.
sectional purpose. They (or, rather, the one that gave character to the rest) contained the inflammatory element, thinly veiled... It was a mockery to ask for the use of the Town Hall for the purpose of ventilating the wild schemes of the Domain orator ..."267

The Sydney Morning Herald considered that Domain orators should not be allowed to speak at the Town Hall. It was not an important matter whether the meeting was political or not. The point was not what subject was to be discussed, but who was to speak at the meeting.

On the following day M'Lean, Griffiths and Hughes, delegates from the New Unemployed Labour Organization, asked that the question of granting the use of the Town Hall might be reopened. They disclaimed any connection with Foran and his views. The Mayor suggested that they could make an application to the City Council on the matter. The Organization obtained about 50 signatures of prominent citizens for this purpose, but they failed to secure the Town Hall. The unemployed movement split once more soon after this incident.268

On the 29th of January the annual convention of the Labour Electoral Leagues decided to convene a conference to consider the unemployment problem. The conference was composed of delegates from the Labour Electoral Leagues, the Active Service Brigade, the Australian Socialist League and other labour bodies. The conference decided to hold a mass meeting of citizens and a deputation was appointed to wait upon the Mayor to ask for the use of the Town Hall. However the City Council refused the request and notified the secretary of the conference that the Hall could not be lent free of charge or let for a meeting of the unemployed. The Centenary Hall people also refused to either lend or let that hall for the meeting. The fact that socialists and anarchists took part in the conference would have been sufficient reason for its refusal.269

Another agitation of the unemployed commenced in August. Its leader was D.E. Black, who acted in connection with various local bodies of state socialists. A committee of the unemployed was formed, which extended its branches into the City

267 S.M.H., 8 Jan. 1895.

268 See D.T., 9 and 23 Jan. 1895 and 9 and 10 Jan. 1895.

and suburban electorates. The committee then organized an unemployed conference on the basis of this network in February of 1896. "The business-sheet of the conference evidences or effects a remarkable state of organization", and the Premier, G.H. Reid, promised to receive and consider suggestions from the conference for dealing with the unemployed. 270

The conference decided, among other things, to apply to the Mayor, I.E. Ives, for the use of the Town Hall on an early date the following week for the purpose of placing the platform of the Unemployed Organization before the public, and of passing resolutions dealing with the unemployment problem. The Mayor refused the application because he was not able to disassociate the movement from political matters and on the grounds that the Town Hall was not to be granted or let for political purposes. The unemployed committee therefore raised funds and rented the Temperance Hall for a public meeting. When Reid received a deputation from the meeting, he said "that the programme put before the meeting was one every word of which he heartily concurred with". The Daily Telegraph had to appreciate the proposals of the deputation, though it had sneered at the participants in the unemployed conference before. 271

In March, however, a section of the unemployed 272 expelled the original leaders from the movement, and they decided to send men with requisitions round to the ratepayers of the City to ask the Mayor to grant the use of the Town Hall for holding a public meeting to ventilate the question of the unemployed. They asked Alderman Jessep to take the position of treasurer in order to inspire the confidence of the citizens. 273 When a deputation from the new unemployed committee met the Mayor, they asked the Mayor to take charge of the meeting and select the speakers if he liked. They also said that if the Mayor thought it necessary, there would be no unemployed in the building. The Mayor granted the use of the Town Hall distinctly on condition that the speaking be confined to those whose names had been

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272 One of the leaders is a man named H.P. Griffin, who was not in favour of socialism or socialist agitators S.M.H., 6 Feb. 1896.

273 S.M.H., 19.20 and 21 March and 14 April 1896.
mentioned to him, unless it was shown that there was some reason why some other person should speak. He also laid it down as a rule that the people who would come should behave in an orderly manner.\textsuperscript{274}

He consented to take the chair and to become a treasurer of the fund which was to be established at the meeting. The meeting was a dire failure. The sum of only 3 pounds 11 shillings 6 pence was collected and J. Steadman paid 3 pounds 3 shillings on behalf of the unemployed organization in settlement of an account. Seeing this result, the expelled leaders organized the Surplus Workers' League which led the unemployed movement from 1896 to 1897.\textsuperscript{275}

In August of 1897, labour members, members of the Surplus Workers' League and others called on the Mayor to secure the use of the Town Hall for holding an unemployed meeting. The Mayor, I.E. Ives, refused the application on the pretext that the Council had passed the resolution forbidding the use of the Town Hall for political purposes. He stated:

"The council were keeping on all the men it was possible to employ, and he knew that in the case of some private employers they were keeping on hands who had been with them for many years, because they were unwilling to add them to the ranks of the unemployed. It would simply come to this, that the meeting would pass a resolution calling upon the Government of the day to find an outlet for the unemployed labour in the city and suburbs. They must bear in mind the fact that in all large cities it was inevitable that there should always be a certain number of unemployed. He was quite prepared to admit that there was a certain amount of distress, but there always would be. The only way out of the difficulty, and the only outcome of the meeting which they desired to hold, would be to decide upon approaching the Government. That step could be taken quite as well without holding any meeting at all as it could by holding a meeting."\textsuperscript{276}

The last remark of the Mayor would apply to most of the meetings held in the Town Hall. The resolution of the Council was used as a pretext for preventing meetings the Mayor and other influential citizens were opposing. The Town Hall was used for political meetings. For example, the Freetrade and Liberal Association

\textsuperscript{274}S.M.H., 28 May 1896.

\textsuperscript{275}See D.T., 1 April 1896 and S.M.H., 11 and 14 April 1896.

\textsuperscript{276}S.M.H., 21 Aug. 1897. See also D.T., 21 Aug. 1897 and S.M.H., 20 Aug. 1897.
held a meeting at the Town Hall in 1901 to protest against the Barton Tariff. This meeting was nothing but a political one.

The *Australian Workman* protested against the restriction on the use of the Town Hall.

"the point must be insisted on that the Town Hall is primarily a public forum for the citizens, and that it is for the citizens to direct its use, the function of the Mayor or any other civic official being merely to so regulate its occupation as to avoid confusion and to see that it is really occupied for public purposes. It is not in the province of the Mayor to grant the use of the hall as a favor to the citizens ... The Mayor has no more, no other right in respect of the Town Hall for granting or withholding it than the chairman of a public meeting in the fullest sense has in respect of granting or refusing 'the floor'." \(^{278}\)

The use of the Town Hall was not easily granted to the unemployed movements. When it was granted, socialists and Domain orators were not allowed to address the meeting. Nor were jobless workers allowed to express their views at the Town Hall, though they were most directly and deeply concerned with the problem. The opinions of influential people only were acceptable at the Town Hall.

Mayors of Sydney were able to take the leadership of the unemployed movement from so-called agitators or divide the movement by using the right to grant the use of the Town Hall to alternative and more moderate 'leaders'. They were also able to influence the management of the meeting at the Town Hall. \(^{279}\)

The unemployed themselves lacked firm solidarity. Some of them tended to expect that 'respectable' citizens would take charge of the matter and relieve their distress. The unemployed were easily split when the ruling class brought pressure to bear upon them and coaxed them to expel 'agitators' in exchange for some concessions.

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\(^{277}\) See *S.M.H.*, 29 Oct. 1901. The *Sydney Morning Herald* commented on this meeting: "The great Town Hall has been the scene of many memorable meetings in the freetrade cause, but in its history it has witnessed none more impressive, vast, and united than that of last night." The Town Hall was used for "many memorable meetings for freetrade cause", but it could not be used for political purposes on account of the City Council's resolution.

\(^{278}\) *The Australian Workman*, 28 Aug. 1897.

\(^{279}\) In Melbourne a similar practice existed. In 1889 the Mayor of Melbourne refused the granting use of the Town Hall for a meeting in support of London dock strikers on trivial technical grounds *The Age*, 3 Sept. 1889. In 1895 a meeting was held for the purpose of discussing the evil attending the practice of sweating at the Town Hall. When the audience did not allow the Mayor to take the chair, the Mayor and influential citizens retired from the meeting. The police were then called in and it cleared the platform and closed the meeting forcibly *The Age*, 10 and 11 Sept. 1895."
Freedom of speech was guaranteed to every one abstractly, but the freedom of speech was limited to influential people, mainly members of the ruling class, for the purpose of forming effective public opinion. In the following chapter I shall consider the problem of freedom of speech when dealing with the public meeting in crisis.
Chapter 4
The Public Meeting in Crisis?

4.1. Introduction

The first chapter made a case for seeing the public meeting as an institution rather than an event or a cluster of events and it also examined from various angles the role of the public meeting in fashioning public opinion. The second chapter revealed important features of public meetings inductively by adopting a statistical method. Two distinctive types of public meetings existed in late 19th century New South Wales. Although the second chapter largely covered the indoor public meeting promoted mainly by the ruling class, it did not deal with the open-air public meeting organized by subordinate groups. The scope of investigation was limited to the former because of the method adopted and the nature of sources. The third chapter aimed at dealing with this neglected part by examining in close detail and in chronological order open-air public meetings. It also attempted to examine the relation between the open-air public meeting and the formal indoor public meeting. In this chapter I shall examine the assumptions of the people who promoted and attended public meetings and the power structure which maintained the process of making public opinion. These assumptions and this power, normally submerged in routine meeting procedures, rose to the surface when the contemporary practice of public meetings was challenged by subordinate groups from the late 1880s to the early 1890s. The fourth chapter deals with this critical period when the structure of formal indoor public meetings came to a crisis. In this sense this chapter is more directly connected with the second chapter than with the last. However, when we think of the causes of the crisis, the relation between this chapter and the last becomes clear. Those who organized and addressed open-air meetings and those who attended them were the people who challenged the prevailing practice at the formal indoor public meetings. They were the people who brought the latter meetings to a critical juncture.

I am not so much concerned with the crisis itself as with the attitudes and
assumptions of people about the public meeting and the power structure behind the process for the making of public opinion which were brought to light by the crisis. The crisis itself would become the leading theme of this chapter if the structure of public meetings had broken down through this crisis. But this was not the case. The structure was paralysed for a while, but equilibrium was restored in a relatively short time. The practice of public meetings had to be adjusted in the light of a changed situation, but the system of forming public opinion through public meetings itself did not undergo any radical change. The ruling class succeeded in defending the points against which subordinate groups protested. I have already examined several aspects of the ideas about freedom of speech and the public meeting when dealing with problems related to the use of town halls and parks for holding public meetings. Differences of opinion existed between those who demanded the use of these places for public meetings and those who attempted to restrict it. This chapter aims to analyse the ideas of these people and the power structure behind the process of making public opinion.

Towards the end of the 1880s there were two distinct bodies of free traders and protectionists in Parliament and they vigorously engaged in organizing supporters in the electorates. Numerous public meetings were held either for the cause of protection or for the cause of free trade in Sydney and its suburbs. In this contest public meetings convened by free traders were frequently interrupted or disrupted by certain protectionist elements. The Sydney dailies and the free traders blamed the protectionists as a whole for these interruptions but leaders of the protectionists denied the allegation and maintained that they were blameless. The free traders adopted counter-measures against the interruptions. They restricted the attendance of the general public by issuing tickets and denied the right to move amendments to resolutions at their meetings. The protectionists were critical of these methods, but they also had to adopt similar measures or give up holding public meetings in the City when they were faced with labourites' and socialists' challenges in the early 1890s.

After the 1890's strike socialists and working men challenged the contemporary procedure of legitimate public meetings. They were no longer content with public meetings managed by promoters belonging to the ruling class. They demanded the right to elect a chairman and move amendments at these meetings. This was a crisis for the ruling class who had dominated the process of making public opinion through public meetings without any serious opposition from the subordinate groups. However the crisis did not last long. The ruling class retained the right to manage
public meetings and dominated the process of opinion making as before, though they had to make some concessions and had to adjust public meetings to the new environment. Women were allowed to take part in public meetings, although as members of an audience, not as speakers apart from a few distinguished women like Rose Scott. The Labour Party and labour organizations took part in the process more frequently than before, but they were not able to achieve the transformation of the structure for creating public opinion. Public meetings increasingly became gatherings only of supporters of specific causes for which the meetings were convened rather than those of the general public for discussing various matters. They became a means of propaganda for the promoters rather than places for discussion.

The collapse of the free traders' policy of development, due to the depression, was behind this crisis. The collapse brought about the formation of the protectionist party and then the formation of the Labour Party. It affected municipal activities and eroded the pseudo-communal feeling on which the public meetings largely depended. The unemployment problem also arose out of the collapse. The unemployed were prevented from enjoying any of the privileges of the ruling class: ownership of means of production and circulation, possession of or accessibility to political power and respectable life-style. They were in a position in which they became keenly aware of defects in their society. When they started agitation for the solution of the problems of the unemployed, they became aware of injustice in the contemporary system for moulding public opinion. They constituted the rank and file members of those who challenged the contemporary procedure of public meetings. When the colony recovered from the depression, pressure for the transformation of public meetings diminished considerably because of the decrease in unemployed workers who were at the opposite pole to the ruling class in the society. The Labour Party was not able to change the process of making public opinion drastically because it tended to use the existing systems for the cause of labour without changing the nature of the systems. The Labour Party itself represented a process of bureaucratization of society and it was more concerned with the intervention of the state into economic and social spheres of the society than with the participation of ordinary people in political decision-making.
4.2. Protectionist Challenge

Public meetings called by free traders were frequently interrupted by protectionists towards the end of the 1880s. Although the Sydney dailies accused the protectionists as a whole of responsibility for the disorder at public meetings, only a portion of the protectionists took part in these disorderly proceedings. Leaders of the protectionists disclaimed any responsibility for the disorderly public meetings and declared their disapproval of interruptions to public meetings.

There seem to have been no organized attempts on the part of the protectionist organizations to disrupt public meetings. The interruptions took place rather spontaneously and without any definite object. The protectionist movement was not directed against the system of society as such, but against the fiscal policy of the colony within the contemporary system of colonial society. The protectionists accused the Sydney free trade dailies of not treating the protectionist movement fairly, but they did not question the basis of the system for making public opinion.

Those who interrupted public meetings were called protectionists by the Sydney free trade dailies because the Sydney dailies then saw every political question in terms of free trade versus protection. Seeing disorderly proceedings at free trade public meetings, the Sydney free trade newspapers concluded that the protectionists, the only category at hand, were responsible for them. But were those who disturbed public meetings really protectionists? Were they people who aimed at changing the fiscal policy of the colony? Probably they were not. These interrupters seem to have been unable to control their dissatisfaction with the existing social system. It was the latter rather than the fiscal policy of the colony to which they were opposed. Without strong leadership as a means for expressing their opinion, this group was contained in the protectionist movement. But the group was not controlled or organized by the leaders of the protectionists. It moved about and disrupted public meetings, without any apparent purpose.

I shall examine a few disorderly meetings and the reactions of both the free traders and the protectionists to them. From late August to late September 1889 public meetings convened by free trade organizations were interrupted allegedly by protectionists: examples included a public meeting on the first day of the free trade conference, a public meeting held under the auspices of the South Sydney branch of the Free Trade and Liberal Association and the second annual meeting of the Free Trade Association.
Disruption at the first of the above three meetings was not so serious as some of the free traders subsequently alleged. The *Sydney Morning Herald* clearly stated that the meeting had been as united as it had been earnest despite some slight interruption towards its close.\(^{280}\) Disruption at the second meeting was more serious than at the first one. However protectionists did not intend to disrupt the meeting systematically. J.H.M. Carruthers, a principal speaker, was not interrupted at the outset of his speech, but when he elicited cheers from free traders by comparing the protectionists with an inefficient municipal council, the protectionists offered emphatic opposition. Then he provoked further opposition by denouncing the interrupters scathingly. He said:

"Protection in America had done little else than raise millionaires, more millionaires than any other country in the world. (Cheers and uproar.) He was not surprised at the gentleman objecting to that statement, being anxious to plunge this country into a millionaire-making policy, but still it was the first time that he, as an Australian native, had heard any section of an Australian audience cheer for millionaires."\(^{281}\)

Protectionists responded to these remarks with 'a chorus of time'. Carruthers then asked free traders to give three cheers for the working men of Australia. The free traders rose in a body and gave tremendous cheers which were met with boos, howling, yelling and general uproar from the protectionists. At this point the disturbance became unprecedented. Carruther was very provocative and the free traders were as demonstrative as the protectionists. The tumult reached its height when the motion was carried after a person failed to move an amendment to the resolution.\(^{282}\)

The interruption was not organized beforehand. The protectionists responded to provocative statements and dubious figures uttered by Carruthers by groans and their opposition reached a climax when they were refused permission to move an amendment. Their reaction may have been excessive, but they did not blindly obstruct the proceedings of the meeting. The protectionists were simply reacting to the remarks of the speakers and the management of the meeting.

With regard to the question of who the obstructionists in the meeting were, the account in *The Sydney Morning Herald* is helpful.

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\(^{280}\) S.M.H., 27 Aug. 1889.

\(^{281}\) S.M.H., 24 Sept. 1889.

\(^{282}\) ibid.
"The proceedings and the uproar terminated by cheers being given for the Queen, and for the chairman; but some of the obstructionists, who by this time had wormed their way to the vicinity of the reporters' table, were overheard to utter anything but patriotic sentiments towards her Majesty."283

The protectionists seem to have contained 'radical' and 'republican' elements.

The third of the three meetings confirms the view that those who interrupted these meetings of free traders reacted to the proceedings of the meetings rather than conspired beforehand to disrupt them. A large number of protectionists, who were alleged to have invaded the meeting for the purpose of disturbing the proceedings, listened to the chairman reading Wise's lengthy letter and Reid moving the adoption of the annual report 'with remarkable patience and good order', although the subsequent speakers were interrupted.284

It is instructive to examine some opinions about these disorderly meetings. With regard to the public meeting on the first day of the free trade conference, The Daily Telegraph maintained:

"If there be any answer possible on the part of those who create these unseemly disturbances it is that where a meeting is public they are as much entitled to express their dissent as are the sympathisers with its objects to express their approval. They will pretend that groans are the correlative of applause, and that assent without dissent would give an unfair impression of the views of the meeting. There might be something in the plea if the meeting were one in which the opinion of the populace was invited upon a policy ... The meeting of Monday was the meeting of a Freetrade Association, open to the public only in the sense in which a church is open to the public --- intended primarily for the benefit of those who belong to a particular faith, yet admitting all on the surely reasonable condition that they behave themselves with common decency. It was desired to gather together the adherents of a fiscal or political faith, to confer upon the best methods of advancing their cause, to lay before the rank and file of the party a statement of the principles, and to do what might be done to promote the understanding and furtherance of them. A disreputable crowd of their opponents "rushed" a certain portion of the hall, shouted down by noise what they must evidently have been unable to meet by argument --- since they would otherwise have adopted a civilized means of giving expression to their views by way of reasonable amendment of the proposals --- and did their best to prevent anything like fair

282 S.M.H., 24 Sept. 1889. See also D.T., 24 Sept. 1889.

284 S.M.H., 27 Sept. 1889.
discussion of the questions before the meeting.\textsuperscript{285}

The free traders who had dominated both politics and the process for moulding public opinion adopted a new procedure for public meetings when they had to face the protectionist challenge. Instead of opening the doors of a hall to the general public, they issued tickets to sympathizers and attempted to pack the hall. For example, 3,500 tickets were issued for this meeting alone. On the one hand, the free traders contended that this meeting was a semi-private public meeting, yet they advertised explicitly that it was a public meeting on the other. They asserted that the protectionists had no right to participate in the proceedings of the meeting because of the 'semi-private' character of the 'public' meeting and they blamed the protectionists for un-English strangulation of the right of free speech. A new practice and a new notion of the public meeting were invented here. The meeting was a 'semi-private public' meeting, a public meeting held for a special purpose. The audience had to be sympathizers with the purpose and had no right to protest against speakers.\textsuperscript{286}

This notion was linked to the notion of the right of using a hall hired by the promoters for a special purpose. With regard to the second meeting, The Sydney Morning Herald stated that free traders had engaged the building for a special purpose and were therefore entitled to the use of what they had paid for, uninterrupted by protectionists.\textsuperscript{287}

The free traders also maintained that they were fighting not only for free trade but also for freedom of speech. They used these disorderly meetings as evidence that the protectionists were opposed to freedom of speech, arguing that the latter's position must be inherently flawed, as would be disclosed if the free traders were allowed to speak without interruption.\textsuperscript{288}

Leaders of the protectionists denied responsibility for these disorderly meetings and criticized the interruption \textit{per se}. but they did not fail to find fault with the free

\textsuperscript{285}D.T., 29 Aug. 1889.

\textsuperscript{286}See D.T., 27 and 29 Aug. 1889 and S.M.H., 28 Aug. 1889.

\textsuperscript{287}S.M.H., 24 Sept. 1889.

\textsuperscript{288}See D.T., 24 Sept. 1889 and S.M.H., 24 and 26 Sept. 1889.
traders. For example Edmund Barton, later Australia's first Prime Minister, expressed regret that some disorder had occurred at the earlier proceedings of the free trade conference. He maintained that their cause could not be injured by free speech and that fair play would win the day for them. However, he did not fail to point out that the free trade party had resorted to the ticket system long before the disorder had taken place, which betokened its strong tendency to despair, accompanied with resignation.²⁸⁹

W.J. Lyne, who was to become Premier of New South Wales in 1899, refuted the accusation made against the protectionists of having disturbed a free trade meeting. He asserted that the free trade press, which had been dormant so long, not only attempted to shut the mouths of the protectionists, but they practically did so by refusing the publication of speeches of the protectionists in detail.²⁹⁰

David Buchanan, barrister and radical politician, said that no ruffianism was so abhorrent as the ruffianism which had distinguished itself by noisy interruptions of public speakers, and hoped that the good sense of the people would discriminate and not blame the protectionist party for the noisy blackguardism of a few boys. He contended, however, that the statement of Carruthers about free trade and protection was "absolutely and palpably false" and he asked "who could listen to a monstrous statement of this kind without anger and vehement interruption."²⁹¹

R.C. Luscombe, secretary of the Protection and Political Reform Union, asserted that all interruptions or disorders at free trade meetings had been called forth 'by unwarrantable and insulting language of free trade speakers.' He maintained that Carruthers had delivered his speech in so insulting a manner that the individual indignation of protectionists present had caused a spontaneous outburst of dissent.²⁹²

A certain Mr. W. Blanket criticized the management of 'public' meetings of free traders.

"To start with, you distrusted the people, and by taking excessive


²⁹¹S.M.H., 25 Sept. 1889.

²⁹²Ibid.
precautions defied all opponents. Your 'liberal' trust was not only 'limited', but banished by prudence. You packed your 'public' meetings so as to silence all objection, rational or otherwise. Policemen, I am told, were appointed to guard the entrance to the Protestant-hall and 'chuckers-out' were in readiness in the gallery. Your 'public meetings' were hole and corner affairs where opponents might not venture and the voice of natural objection might not be heard. And many of your orators made it their business to abuse the conduct and slander the motives of their opponents. You refused to trust the public or to credit any of your opponents with honesty and intelligence.  

The protectionists maintained that the audience had the right to protest against statements made by speakers, and that the free trade press was unfair in refusing to publish in detail speeches of the protectionists. They also asserted that the management of free traders' public meetings was based on distrust of the people, and that 'public meetings' of the free traders were 'hole and corner affairs'. On the other hand, the free traders argued that the right of freedom of speech was sacred, and that public speech should not be interrupted. Their argument was clearer and stronger than that of the protectionists because the protectionists had to recognize the right of freedom of speech, that is, the basis of the argument of the free traders. The protectionist needed more complicated explanation to attack the free traders, so their argument was more complicated and weaker than that of the free traders. The free traders succeeded in making themselves martyrs to the right of freedom of speech with the help of the powerful free trade newspapers despite the fact that they attempted to make public meetings semi-private ones by excluding the general public.

The free traders supported and implemented the prohibition of public meetings in parks, the prohibition of lectures in the theatres on Sunday and the restriction on the use of town halls and other public halls. They cried for freedom of speech within this subtly organized web of restrictions on freedom of speech.

The free traders considered that freedom of speech at public meetings meant the right of the speakers on the platform to address the audience without interruption. However, on a more general view, the audience at any public meeting, so long as it was convened as a public one, had the right to take part in it, by definition, at least by expressing assent to or dissent from the opinions expressed at the meeting. The Daily Telegraph was conscious of this point, but evaded it by maintaining that

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293 D.T., 27 Sept. 1889.
the meetings of the free traders were 'semi-private public meetings'. W. Blanket was also aware of this. He blamed these meetings for the 'hole and corner' management, but this point was not developed further at this stage.

4.3. Closing of Theatres

Despite the fact that the ruling class had a virtual monopoly over the process of moulding public opinion during the 1870s and 1880s, the process itself appeared democratic because the ruling class invited the general public to public meetings without restriction and seemed to accept majority decisions. This appearance was strengthened by the way in which the real restrictions on freedom of speech were subtly disguised and by the careful management of the whole process of convening and organizing public meetings, but power was essential to maintaining the monopoly though normally hidden under the garment of the democratic institution. The power structure behind this process showed itself when the ruling class was faced with strong opposition from subordinate groups. This section aims to reveal the power structure and the tacit assumptions behind the process for making public opinion by examining events in connection with the Queen’s Jubilee celebrations in 1887.\footnote{294}

The people in New South Wales were not so enthusiastic as those of the other colonies about celebrating the Queen’s Jubilee in 1887. The \textit{Daily Telegraph} observed that New South Wales was passing through a strongly marked phase of anti-imperialist sentiment partly as a reaction to the enthusiastic impulse which had dictated the Soudan expedition, partly as recoil from previous subserviency to Downing Street. All celebration proposals encountered a good deal of opposition or at least a dose of cold water. There was "a majority or strong minority" who objected to any expenditure of public money for this purpose. There was not merely apathy, but strong and decided opposition to the celebrations which often expressed itself "in language that used to be the fashion to call disloyal".\footnote{295}

The Mayor of Sydney, A. Riley, failed to persuade the Council to spend money on inviting all the school children of the metropolis to a grand fete. He had to

\footnote{294}I used reports of \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} as the major source for this section but it must be said with care because its accounts were sometimes inconsistent and personal comments by reporters and leader writers were not always in accordance with the facts. I also used \textit{The Bulletin}, \textit{The Daily Telegraph} and \textit{Parliamentary Debates of New South Wales} to amplify the story.

\footnote{295}D.T., 31 May 1887. See also \textit{S.M.H.}, 20, 24 and 27 May and 10 June 1887.
convene a preliminary meeting of citizens at the Town Hall on the 30th of May in order to ask for the citizens' support for his proposal. The meeting adopted the Mayor's proposal and requested him to call a public meeting for this purpose. Preparations went smoothly and on the 3rd of June the public meeting was held in the Town Hall. About 150 people were present and the Mayor presided. The Mayor and the promoters themselves had little doubt as to the likely success of the meeting, though they were to find that most of the people in the meeting came there to defeat its declared object. After the first resolution was moved and duly seconded, secularists, republicans and socialists succeeded almost unanimously in carrying an amendment which was completely opposed to the purpose of the meeting.

The following day The Sydney Morning Herald stated that those who attended the meeting did not represent at all the feeling of the people of Sydney and that in no sense was the meeting the voice of Sydney. It called for 'the citizens of Sydney' not to let that record of the previous night's meeting go forth as the will and action of the colony, and appealed to them for their support to neutralize the effect of the meeting by attending another public meeting convened by the Mayor at the request of Lady Carrington.

The Daily Telegraph maintained that the acts and speeches of the opposition majority were not so important as the fact that an opportunity had been given to them for expressing their opinion as the voice of Sydney on the important occasion of a citizens' meeting.

But how came this opportunity to be afforded them? How was it that a section of about 150 persons, as they are estimated by our reporter, were allowed the chance of prohibiting a particular form of Jubilee celebration and of carrying a resolution expressing their sentiments as the sentiments of the people of Sydney in public meeting assembled? How is it that very probably the London papers this morning will contain a telegram stating, and truthfully stating, that at a public meeting of Sydney citizens.

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296 The Mayor convened this meeting personally by issuing about 200 circulars and inviting the public by advertisement.

297 S.M.H., 1 June 1887.

298 See D.T., 4 June 1887 and S.M.H., 4 June 1887. The amended resolution was: "That in the opinion of this meeting, the proposal to impress upon the children of this colony the value of a Jubilee year of a sovereign is unwise and calculated to injure the democratic spirit of the country."

299 S.M.H., 4 June 1887.
convened and presided over by the Mayor and held in the Town Hall, it was resolved by an overwhelming majority that a celebration of the Royal Jubilee was not in accordance with the principles of democracy? These questions bring into prominence the really significant side of last night's proceedings.  

In the past, the ruling class had organized public meetings convened and presided over by the mayor and held in the Town Hall without opposition from subordinate groups. They had been able to express their opinion at these meetings as the voice of Sydney or as the voice of the colony. This process, in which a small number of people had represented the public opinion of Sydney, had been considered perfectly normal and proper until subordinate groups took part in this 1887 meeting. Once the subordinate groups expressed their opinion in the same way as the ruling class, this process was suddenly questioned and the meeting was called a most extraordinary one and was considered not to represent the citizens at all. The process for forming public opinion was exactly the same as before. What was extraordinary to the ruling class was the fact that the subordinate groups were allowed to use the same process to oppose the interests of the ruling class.

The Daily Telegraph also called on the citizens to counteract the effect of this public meeting. It maintained that, if the 'Sydney public' considered itself misrepresented by the proceedings of this meeting, they should make the next move to rescind the resolution passed there.  

On the 8th of June a very large and influential deputation called upon the Mayor in order to request him to convene a further meeting with a view to considering the advisability of celebrating the Queen's Jubilee. Alfred Stephen, the former Chief Justice, introduced the deputation. He stated:

"He had no doubt that the absence of the more respectable and influential portion of the community on the occasion referred to was owing to the prevailing opinion that there would not be, and scarcely could be, any opposition to the proposition. (Hear, hear.) Nothing else could account for the fact that a number of insignificant persons - insignificant in point of numbers, and still more so in point of station and character and intelligence - were able to carry a resolution of the character he had referred to. It caused him to look upon it with a feeling almost of

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300 D.T., 4 June 1887.

301 D.T., 6 June 1887.
horror.  "

The Mayor, who had already called upon the Colonial Secretary and asked him "to take steps to counteract any impression which might be given in England, at any rate, that meeting had represented in any way, shape, or form the feelings of the citizens of Sydney", gladly promised to carry out the wish of the deputation. He hoped "that the circumstance would teach a lesson to the small miserable minority in their midst not to attempt a similar action again." Although the Mayor called those who carried the amendment "the small miserable minority", the fact was, as The Daily Telegraph admitted, that there was "a very strong anti-imperialist and republican sentiment growing in this community." 

The second public meeting was convened by the Mayor in the vestibule of the Town Hall on the 10th of June in order to overrule the 'disloyal' amendment carried by 'an insignificant minority' at the first public meeting. Promoters of the second meeting determined that the platform and the part of the vestibule immediately in front of it should be occupied by those whose sympathies were with them. They therefore issued a number of invitation cards, the holders of which were to be entitled to admission into the building some time before the general public were allowed to enter. In other words the promoters attempted to pack 'a public meeting of citizens' with their sympathizers. However this 'somewhat novel, yet most promising method of securing a public meeting', failed for the reason that it was not properly understood. The ticket-holders did not think it necessary to come early to the police-guarded gates while the general public failed to comprehend why the principal entrance was closed when a citizens' meeting was in progress. The result was a bitter disappointment for the promoters. Anxiously expected Jubilists did not come, but anti-Jubilists did. Finding the gates locked against them, the people broke through the barriers and inundated the vestibule before the scheme for packing the meeting could be successfully worked out.

The platform and the few rows of the chairs in front of it were occupied by

302 S.M.H., 9 June 1887.
303 ibid.
304 D.T., 4 June 1887.
305 The Bulletin, 18 June 1887. See also D.T., 11 and 13 June 1887 and S.M.H., 11 June 1887.
several ladies and a number of leading colonists who held genuine cards of invitations, but anti-Jubilists, republicans, freethinkers and socialists commanded an overwhelming majority in the body of the vestibule and outside the Town Hall. The crowd must have numbered at least 5,000. Before the commencement of the meeting, about half a dozen loyalists ejected F. Jones from the platform, though, or rather because, he was the mover of the amendment at the first public meeting. The meeting became uncontrollable when the man was forcibly ejected who, more than any other, should have been entitled to address the meeting called to override his amendment. Then arose cries of "No meeting here unless you put Jones back." Attempts to sing the National Anthem were practically frustrated by a storm of hisses and other discordant sounds. The opposition faction was strong enough to drown any expression of loyal sentiment. It was clear that the majority of the audience were opposed to the object of the meeting. Probably they did not wish to disrupt the public meeting, but they cried out against a small group of people when the latter tried to manage the meeting of citizens in opposition to the will of the citizens assembled. Seeing that his supporters were a small minority and would not be able to manage the meeting as they had intended, the Mayor adjourned the meeting to the Exhibition Building the following Wednesday under the pretext that the present building was not nearly large enough to hold the meeting. This announcement was greeted with cries of "No; we will have the meeting here." Most of the audience refused to move an inch, notwithstanding the Mayor's threat to have the gas put out.  

Inspector-General Fosbery was driven to the necessity of calling in the major portion of the police on street-patrol, and it was only by this means that the hall was cleared after a great deal of difficulty. An hour was passed in this way, and many of the more rowdy were forcibly ejected.  

Evidently the audience wanted to continue the meeting because most of them were opposed to the object of the meeting and they were sure that they would be able to defeat resolutions so long as the meeting was managed impartially. On the other hand, the Mayor and the promoters had to stop the proceedings because, had it been continued, the meeting would have carried a disloyal resolution by a large majority. Such a result would have meant an irretrievable defeat to the ruling class, so no sooner had the Mayor taken the chair than he adjourned the meeting.


307 ibid.
The Sydney Morning Herald summed up by saying

"There was an organized system of disorder, headed apparently by persons who had obtained possession of the platform by means of forged tickets. This end having been gained, it was easy to obstruct and defeat the meeting by organized rowdycism. Last night's affair was the triumph of a small and violent minority over an orderly majority ... Here was a gathering convened for a purpose with which the vast majority of the public are in thorough sympathy, but it was brought to nothing by a turbulent, disorderly, and insignificant faction."\textsuperscript{308}

The platform must have been taken possession of by 'rioters and law-breakers'. However, the same paper reported in the same issue.

"Those on the platform were the leading citizens of Sydney, including members of both Houses of the Legislature, aldermen, clergymen, magistrates, barristers, bankers and merchants. & C."\textsuperscript{309}

In fact, those on the platform were a 'small and violent minority' who ejected F. Jones from the platform and John Norton from the hall and eventually all the audience by the use of 'physical force' of a large body of the police. The Sydney Morning Herald tried hard to 'forge' a false impression of the meeting by misrepresenting the real majority and even resorting to false reports. A so-called turbulent, disorderly and insignificant faction actually numbering almost 5,000 completely overwhelmed 'the vast majority of the public' at the meeting.

The Daily Telegraph criticized 'anti-Jubilists' as 'a disorderly and rowdy faction, representing no principle or political opinion of any kind.' who took upon themselves "the task of interrupting and disturbing the meetings of citizens." It appealed to every sense of loyalty, of patriotism, of public liberty, of general self-respect of citizens to make the next meeting a great overwhelming demonstration "on the side of order as against disorder, and of law against lawlessness."\textsuperscript{310}

The Daily Telegraph failed both to state that the overwhelming majority of the audience were opposed to the object of the meeting and to mention that the meeting was held to override the amendment which was duly carried at the first public meeting of citizens duly convened and presided over by the Mayor. It forgot

\textsuperscript{308}ibid. See also S.M.H., 13 and 14 June 1887.

\textsuperscript{309}S.M.H., 11 June 1887.

\textsuperscript{310}See D.T., 11.13.14 and 15 June 1887.
that it had stated about a week before that the opponents of the celebration had the right to participate in the proceedings and that the proceedings of the opponents were not irregular or disorderly at the first meeting.\textsuperscript{311}

The Mayor and influential citizens held a meeting in the Mayor’s reception room immediately after the adjournment of the second public meeting and adopted declaration of loyalty and indignation at ‘the riotous conduct of a disloyal minority’.\textsuperscript{312} The Chief Justice of New South Wales, F.M. Darley, stated in this meeting that

‘he was happy to think, and proud to believe, that outside the city of Sydney there could not be found ten men in the colony who would act as the insignificant minority whose conduct was witnessed in the hall below that night. (Hear, hear.) He was sure the feeling was confined to the city of Sydney, and the sooner it was removed the better. He ascribed it very much to one thing, and that was the improper use and desecration of our theatres. (Loud and long-continued applause and cheers.) He repeated it, the desecration of our theatres, because he looked upon the theatres as places of public instruction, and not places where immorality and abuse of laws both human and Divine should be inculcated. (Loud applause.) (A Voice: ‘It’s absolutely true.’) He would go further, and say, what right had these men to use our public parks - (Applause) - for the purpose of disseminating doctrines which were odious to the people of this country? (A Voice: ‘Filthy doctrines.’) What right had they in the exercise of their liberty to interfere with his liberty by using the public parks in the way they did? They had no right to do so, and that sort of liberty must be stamped out. (Loud applause.)’\textsuperscript{313}

L.F. Heydon, protectionist M.P., said that

‘those moral forces which must always be in the majority would now band themselves together as one man to stamp out the wretched minority which had reached the small height that it had reached. (Cheers.) They had been allowed to rear their miserable heads simply because of the laxity and carelessness with which they had been treated in the past.’\textsuperscript{314}

Alfred Stephen said that these disloyal people had to be put down by the strong hand and arm of power. The Premier, Parkes, considered that they were in fact

\textsuperscript{311} D.T., 4 June 1887.

\textsuperscript{312} See D.T., 11 June 1887 and S.M.H., 11 June 1887.

\textsuperscript{313} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{314} Ibid.
common enemies of society and said that they were the professors of lawlessness and hatred to everything that was higher and better than themselves. 315

This meeting also appointed a committee to carry out the wishes of the meeting and make arrangements for the adjourned public meeting the following Wednesday. Being overwhelmed again by the vast majority at the second public meeting, the influential citizens in a small private meeting decided to stamp out 'the insignificant minority' 'by the strong hand and arm of power'. The Bulletin said that the ferocity of those words indicated a desire and a firm resolve to crush, by brute force, people who had merely exercised their unquestionable British liberties. 316

Next day, Saturday, Parkes immediately gave instructions to prohibit the holding of meetings, concerts or entertainments at the theatres on Sunday evenings. Verbal notice was conveyed by Sub-Inspector Anderson to the managers of the theatres. Its purport was that unless these men closed their places of entertainment on Sundays, their licences would be forfeited. 317

It was the orators in the Domain who first cried out against this measure. On the next Sunday afternoon most of the speakers violently denounced the action of the loyalists at the Friday night meeting, and condemned Parkes for closing the theatres on Sundays. 318 In the evening a large crowd assembled outside the Theatre Royal, where Thomas Walker's lecture was to be held, but found the entrances of the theatre guarded by a large force of constables. Word was passed round that an open-air meeting would be held at the Queen's Pedestal and thither the people accordingly walked. The crowd filled the whole space from Macquarie Street to St. James' Church, and extended round the other side of the Pedestal towards Hyde Park. Thomas Walker, M.L.A. and lecturer, John Norton, unionist, protectionist and journalist, and others who played prominent roles in opposing the Jubilee celebrations, addressed the assemblage which was composed of between 6,000 and 8,000 people. In the meeting the following resolution was passed:

"That in the opinion of this meeting, numbering upwards of 10,000

315 ibid.

316 The Bulletin. 18 June 1887.

317 D.T. 13 June 1887 and S.M.H. 13 June 1887.

318 D.T. 13 June 1887."
citizens of Sydney, the action of Sir Henry Parkes in stopping all liberty of speech at public meetings on Sunday evening is a direct infringement of the liberty of the people, and this meeting pledges itself by every constitutional means in its power to resent this tyrannical usurpation of power.\textsuperscript{319}

The meeting also appointed a deputation to call upon Parkes on this subject. After the deputation had an interview with Parkes on Monday, another large open-air meeting was held at the Queen's Pedestal to consider the Premier's answer. The meeting passed a resolution criticizing this answer and resolved to meet again the next Saturday.\textsuperscript{320}

The action of the Premier affected not only anti-Jubilists but also a large section of the loyalists and it was also so obvious an exercise of arbitrary power that some of the loyalists could not help protesting against the action. For example \textit{The Daily Telegraph} criticized the closing of the theatres as "the worst form of tyranny and intolerance" and considered that this measure had "made heroes of demagogues and martyrs of mountebanks" and had brought "the blush of shame to the strong loyal Liberal majority of Australians" who would find themselves forced to stand up with these men in contending for freedom of conscience.\textsuperscript{321}

\textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} was not opposed to the prohibition of Sunday lectures on principle, but it considered the act of the Premier a tactical blunder in dealing with the opposition against the Queen's Jubilee celebration.

"The proceedings of Friday evening should have shown him that the duty immediately before the Government was to take measures for the defence of liberty of speech, and that nothing should be done at such a time to give even a colourable excuse for the assertion that freedom of speech was likely to suffer by the exercise of a doubtful Executive authority. He should have foreseen the risk of driving away hundreds of people upon whose support he might have calculated in a simple defence of freedom of speech, and tempting them to take sides with the enemy."\textsuperscript{322}

A meeting had been called for the 13th of June by the Mayor at the request of Lady Carrington for the purpose of inaugurating the Queen's Fund for the relief of

\textsuperscript{319}See ibid. and \textit{S.M.H.}, 13 June 1887.

\textsuperscript{320}\textit{D.T.}, 14 June 1887 and \textit{S.M.H.}, 14 June 1887.

\textsuperscript{321}\textit{D.T.}, 14 June 1887. See also \textit{D.T.}, 13 and 15 June 1887.

\textsuperscript{322}\textit{S.M.H.}, 14 June 1887. See also \textit{S.M.H.}, 13 June 1887.
destitute women in New South Wales. But this meeting was postponed and merged with the adjourned public meeting despite the fact that a leader of the opposition expressed approval of it. The Mayor and the promoters of the third public meeting thus acquired the viceregal assistance for their meeting. By this tactic they also added another cause to their original objective. This new cause was more unassailable partly because it was initiated by a woman who was not directly engaged in politics and partly because it was concerned with a mission of charity for unfortunate women. If anyone interfered with such a cause, it was quite easy for the promoters to denounce him as a coward and as a man totally lacking humanity. The *Sydney Morning Herald*, being aware of the strong opposition to the meeting, cited this new object as the first purpose for the public meeting at the Exhibition Building.323

On the 15th of June the third public meeting was held at the Exhibition Building. *The Sydney Morning Herald* described the meeting in its editorial in the following terms:

"Last night's demonstration at the Exhibition Building has had no parallel in Sydney. The meeting was enormous, enthusiastic, and well nigh unanimous ... There was neither disorder nor bad blood. The meeting was somewhat noisy, but the noise was the noise of enthusiasm ... It was this overflow of enthusiasm, and the inability of more than a fraction of those present to hear the speeches, that made it desirable to compress the proceedings, and gave an air of restlessness to the meeting ... There were a few hundred dissentients, but their numbers were so small in comparison with the vast assemblage of loyal citizens that they were overwhelmed. They felt their utter powerlessness, and they quietly accepted the situation. They looked on, but made no sign, excepting to hold up their hands against the chief resolution, in doing which they exposed more effectually than they could have done in any other way their thoroughly insignificant numbers ... the disappointed faction ... cannot truly say that the meeting was 'packed', in the ordinary sense of the term. There was organization, of course, and it was needed. It was a meeting of loyal citizens, and the loyal citizens had a right to the best places if they chose to claim them. They did claim them, and - coming not in hundreds but in thousands - they made the meeting what it was." 324

*The Daily Telegraph* eulogized the meeting as "a victory for law and order and for the rights of free speech". It maintained that this victory had been attained by the

323 *D.T.*, 13 June 1887 and *S.M.H.*, 15 June 1887.

324 *S.M.H.*, 16 June 1887. See also *S.M.H.*, 17 June 1887.
enthusiastic demonstration of "numbers all swayed by one powerful feeling" 325

It is hardly possible to take these descriptions at face value. Why were the proceedings compressed despite the fact that the meeting was almost unanimous? Were the opponents really insignificant in the meeting? Who were the loyal citizens that demanded the best places? I would like to answer these questions by closely examining the proceedings and to reveal their true nature.

The meeting "was not packed in the ordinary sense of the word". The meeting was packed with the help of the Government on an unprecedented scale and with a provocative demonstration of power. Before the general public were admitted to the Exhibition Building, about 150 undergraduates of the University entered under the direction of Professor Anderson Stuart. Professor Gurney cautioned them not to be carried away by their emotion: but "if any one near them gave vent to the horrible expressions, by all means turn him out." 326 The protection of the front of the platform was committed to them. Orangemen were admitted by pass word in hundreds at the southern door. They occupied the centre of the room in front of the platform. Members of the Primrose League rolled up in large numbers to keep order at the meeting. About 400 footballers and perhaps between 40 and 50 prizefighters were gathered as well. More than 300 police were stationed on each side of the platform and beside the gates of the hall. 13 members of the mounted police were present under Sub-Inspector Thompson. The whole of the Lancers rolled up by order of their commanding officer, Major M'Donald. The Naval Brigade, the Volunteer Naval Brigade and the Newtown Reserves were also mobilized. The galleries were reserved for about 200 ladies who held special tickets. A large number of musicians were gathered to prevent the National Anthem from being drowned by cries and hisses as in the second public meeting. All of these people, who numbered more than 3,000 in total, entered the Exhibition Building and occupied vantage points before the general public were admitted. 327

At a quarter to 8 o'clock the Mayor rose to address the meeting, but several minutes elapsed before he could make his voice heard amid the great hubbub made

325 D.T., 16 June 1887. See also D.T., 17 June 1887.

326 D.T., 15 June 1887.

up of mingled cheers and hooting. His voice was drowned amidst the confusion and he soon resumed his seat. Parkes moved the first resolution and Barton seconded it. However their voices were hardly heard by those within a few feet of them. When L.F. Heydon addressed the audience, the barrier line consisting of the undergraduates and footballers between the audience and the platform was broken. The people in the body of the hall seemed to threaten the platform. Immediately the first resolution was put to the meeting by means of the semaphore, or 'a signal hoisted on a strange gallows-like erection' and it was declared to be carried. A calico banner was then unfurled and it intimated that the meeting resolved itself into one for the establishment of a fund for the relief of the destitute women of New South Wales. The hoisting of this banner was the signal for a general disturbance. Almost in a moment the meeting became thoroughly disorganized. An uproar ensued which baffled all description. The undergraduates and footballers retreated to the platform. A number of exciting hand-to-hand combats took place between the occupants of the platform and those who were endeavouring to gain a position on it. The police and citizens were mixed up in a general melee, which extended along the whole front of the platform. Some of the prominent citizens left the platform at this moment, though Lord and Lady Carrington had not yet arrived. The centre of the platform was the scene of the most exciting portion of the struggle and time after time assaults were made at that point. All the tables on the platform except that used by the reporters were broken. People scrambled to take possession of the reporters' table and a number of the audience succeeded in gaining a position in front of the platform. After an interlude provided by a short speech from Lord Carrington, the meeting became completely uncontrollable and the Mayor declared that the second resolution was carried without even a formal call for votes on it. Then the police, forming in line across the hall, endeavoured to force the crowd towards the southern door. But as fast as they cleared an open space, it was filled in again from the flanks. A good many people were roughly handled. A member of the Naval Brigade was crushed in the crowd and a footballer was fatally injured in the fight. Both men were taken to the hospital. During the meeting a number of people were ejected violently. Norton, who sought admission to the platform, was summarily ejected and the written amendment which he handed to the chairman was immediately suppressed.328

This was the so-called 'orderly, enthusiastic, and unanimous meeting'. The

promoters with 3,000 supporters at vantage points backed by a large number of the police were able to defend the platform from the angry audience only for about 20 minutes, then another 20 minutes of fighting over the platform made them decide to have the hall cleared by the police. These facts suggest that the promoters and their sympathizers were again in a minority at this meeting.

The Exhibition Building became a battlefield for those excluded from the platform against the privileged. The meeting was far from unanimous or orderly. The noise of the meeting was not that of enthusiasm, but that of protest against the object of the meeting.

Both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph not only published distorted accounts of this meeting, but also shut out any protest against it. The co-operation of the newspapers was indispensable to the cause of making this meeting appear as if it had been unanimous and democratic.

Faced with the strong opposition of the subordinate groups, the ruling class revealed their real nature of their hegemony over the process of public opinion making. They mobilized all available resources to repress the opposition. They used institutionalized force such as the police, the naval brigade and the volunteer forces, and utilized institutionalized power such as that of the Mayor, the Premier and Parliament. They also mobilized the organizational power of the Loyal Orange Lodges, the Primrose League, the University and the football clubs. The ruling class imposed their opinion as the voice of the colony on the majority by the exercise of these powers. The newspapers were essential to give the appearance of legitimacy to this brutal process. They created an impression that this violent exercise of power had been for the sake of liberty of speech and democratic representation of the voice of the people.

The ruling class had a basic assumption that public meetings were to be managed by their promoters consisting of their own members and that the audience were to have no right to take part in the proceedings except when giving consent to the resolutions. If the audiences wanted to have their representatives speak at the meetings and to move amendments against the resolutions, the ruling class called such intentions disorder. If the audiences got angry at their opinion being completely ignored and refused to proceed under such undemocratic management, the ruling class considered it a denial of freedom of speech. This assumption was the basis on which the packing of the public meeting was organized. This logic was
The Bulletin summed up the proceedings and commented on them:

"The meeting of 15th June was summoned by advertisement as a 'public' one, and the leaders who secretly packed the hall with their friends prior to the admission of the public thereby turned their own words into nonsense. Furthermore, by refusing to accept an amendment from the representative of an influential body of citizens, Mr. Riley not only degraded his position as chairman, but finally destroyed any semblance of a public character which the gathering, under ordinary circumstances, might have possessed. A meeting must be either public or private; there is no medium between the two. There can be no public meeting with a qualification such as 'those favourable to'. & C., inasmuch as a public meeting is a meeting to which all are entitled to admission at one time and on one set of terms, and at which all may obtain a hearing. But despite this, last week's alleged demonstration will be described as representative of the nation, and the resolution which did not arrive at, but which, by a shameless perversion of facts, is laid at its door, will be treated as the untrammelled decision of the people." 329

The Sydney Morning Herald, after speculating about freedom of speech and fair play for both sides in a controversy, arrived at the following conclusion:

329The Bulletin, 25 June 1887. The movement against the closing of the theatres still continued after the third public meeting. The People's Rights Defence League was formed for that movement. The Daily Telegraph supported this movement while The Sydney Morning Herald reduced the matter to simple legality of the measure. The Government allowed the managers to use the theatres for concerts but not for lectures on Sunday in order to lessen the pressure against their action. The Government also warned the speakers at meetings held at the Queen's Pedestal that they would be fined or imprisoned if they obstructed the traffic. The matter fell into abeyance by the middle of July [D.T., 18.20.21.22.23.25 and 27 June and 2 and 7 July 1887 and S.M.H., 18.20 and 25 June 1887].
"There are some compensations in submitting to an aristocracy of race and talent and virtue, but there are none whatever in submitting to an oligarchy of howlers. If manners do not mend in Sydney, and if public meetings are continually interrupted, there will be no alternative but to make such interruption penal, and to give the police the right to take into custody any disturber pointed out by the chairman."

In reality "an aristocracy" was those on the platform and "an oligarchy" constituted the audience who wanted to take part in the proceedings.

4.4. Labour and Socialist Challenge

After the 1890's strike workers in Sydney became more militant than during the 1880s. Militant workers left the fold of the protectionists and hooted down conservative politicians at public meetings whether they were free traders or protectionists. Conservative politicians such as Bruce Smith, William M'Millan, Edmund Barton and Daniel O'Connor were their principal targets. Meetings of these politicians were frequently interrupted or disrupted before and during the general election of 1891. Socialists were usually leaders of the excited audiences, but they themselves were not able to control fully the behaviour of the audiences at meetings of conservative politicians. The socialists wanted to have the conservative politicians speak and then they could have denounced what they had said and passed nonconfidence votes against them. However the anger of the rank and file of workers towards these politicians was so great that they did not listen to the admonitions of the socialists and hooted down the politicians. Although The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph, as usual, considered the disorderly public meetings organized plots, the disruptions seem to have resulted from the spontaneous reaction of the audience against the speakers. The socialists did not have any plots for the disruptions. If they did have some plot, it was also partly thwarted by the excessive reaction of the workers. They did not wish to cause a disturbance but to have an opportunity to refute the arguments of their opponents.

A meeting of Bruce Smith, Minister for Public Works, in the Glebe Town Hall shows clearly the nature of these disruptions. Smith and M'Millan, Treasurer and deputy leader of the free traders in Parliament, were announced as speakers in a meeting of Smith's constituents there on the 17th of February in 1891. The hall was densely packed throughout. The chairman and Smith tried to obtain a hearing

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330 S.M.H., 21 June 1887.
for about 20 minutes, but their voices were drowned by hisses, groans and continuous uproar. During this uproar R.S. Rosa, a member of the Socialist League, ascended the platform. Quiet almost at once prevailed. "Let these men be heard," said he, "our cause is strong enough, and just enough to refute the fallacies of these capitalistic politicians." He appealed for a fair hearing and fair play. There were some cheers at this, but they were instantly drowned by a storm of howls. Then G. Horkings, a member of the West Sydney Democratic Alliance, appealed to the audience to give Smith an opportunity to speak. But he also failed to obtain a hearing for Smith. W.P. Crick, a protectionist, took a stand upon the platform. He also appealed for fair play, but the audience was determined not to hear Smith's address. Smith and his supporters retired from the platform as it was impossible for them to get a hearing. Immediately C. Lindsay, a member of the Socialist League took the chair, with the approval of the meeting, and the resolution calling for the resignation of Smith and M'Millan was carried with only one dissenter. 331

The socialists did not intend to cause disturbance or disrupt the meeting, though they were perhaps prepared to do so if they were not allowed to move an amendment. The boos and uproars which prevented Smith from addressing the meeting were a spontaneous reaction of workers against him. However the socialists were not blameless because they availed themselves of the opportunity for expressing their opinion. Not only did they refrain from criticizing the behaviour of the audience, but also they continued the meeting for themselves after the retirement of Smith and his party. They construed this disorderly meeting "a recorded protest on the part of a free people against the aggressive apostles of anarchical and physical force government. 332 A socialist, referring to another disorderly meeting, remarked:

"There are times when the right to liberty of speech can be refused on the grounds of moral right and justice, and the evening of Mr. M'Millan's meeting was one of them. When the criminal at the bar has received his death sentence his mouth is closed, and the majority of the public having passed a political death sentence on Mr. M'Millan they are perfectly within their rights in refusing to hear him. That gentleman has done certain acts which have rendered him obnoxious to the majority of the electors, and therefore that majority have decided that no passive opposition to him on their part shall be construed into approval by what they believe to be a

332 The Australian Workman, 21 Feb. 1891.
one-sided and biassed press. “333

The Daily Telegraph regarded this event as a “violent suppression of free speech and of the people's right to discuss politics with their Parliamentary representative” while The Sydney Morning Herald described it as “a scene of mob tyranny”. Both of them used this event to prove that the awakening labour movement was the enemy of freedom of speech and of personal and public liberty. 334 Letters to the editor appeared to protest against 'organized ruffianism', 'insensate blackguardism', 'brutal tyranny', 'hoodlums and scum of society' and so on. 335 This sensitive reaction or overaction of the free trade dailies presented a striking contrast to its complete disregard for the prohibition of the free lectures at the Royal Standard Theatre by the Australian Socialist League.336 Despite the fact that the audience resorted only to boos, there being no violence or free-for-alls: the free trade dailies attempted to make capital out of this affair by getting up an "empty blatant cry" "about the freedom of speech being in danger”. Under the circumstances that 4 out of 5 Sydney dailies were in the hands of the free traders, the protest of the audience in howling down the conservative politicians only resulted in strengthening the campaign against the labour movement in general.337

The disruption of public meetings became more serious after this meeting. In April Barton had to hold a public meeting in Manly because he believed that he could not get a hearing in Sydney. In May M'Millan's meeting was disturbed as was Barton's 4 days later in the City. In June even a trial at the Water Police Court was disturbed by the public.338 Political disruption culminated in the use of flour balls, rotten eggs, oranges, stones and blue metal at election meetings. For

333 D.T. 15 May 1891.


336 See The Australian Workman, 10 Jan. 1891.

337 The Australian Star 20 Feb. 1891, while denying any sympathy with the disorderly conduct at the meeting, reminded the readers that the free trade morning dailies had not "exploded in virtuous indignation" when protectionists' public meetings had been interrupted. It stated "What measure you mete to others shall be meted to you again" is a true proverb, and there is no probability that the law embodied therein will ever be altered."

338 See D.T., 13,14,15 and 19 May and 3 June 1891 and S.M.H., 25 April and 13,15 and 19 May 1891.
example O'Connor suffered an injury to his arm when a large lump of blue metal was thrown into the window of the cab immediately after one of his meetings in West Sydney. Meetings held by Labour Electoral Leagues suffered from disturbance when the Labour Party split over the fiscal question. At one of their meetings T.J. Houghton, M.L.A., had to conclude his speech abruptly as 'a shower of decayed hen fruit and other effective silencers' was hurled at him.

Workers would not have become so aggressive, had it not been for the use of violence on the part of the promoters of the meeting. For example, at M'Millan's meeting in May about 300 'committeemen' were gathered to keep 'law and order'. When a worker rose to make a point of order, protesting that 'Sandy' Ross, a pugilist, was among the committeemen, he was smashed to the floor and ignominiously dragged out from the hall. He appeared again, however, with blood trickling from a cut on his forehead. One of 'the committeemen' ejected 5 or 6 people within the space of 2 minutes. In the meeting M'Millan referred to 'the rabble who interfered with freedom of speech', but someone reminded him that he had introduced 'hired assassins' into the hall. This remark was vociferously applauded by the audience.

The Australian Star, a protectionist Sydney daily, called the attention of M'Millan to the fact that no public meeting would tolerate the employment of roughs and blackguards to keep it in subjection, and maintained that any minister who countenanced such a proceeding did not deserve holding offices or obtaining a fair hearing at public meetings.

The disruption of public meetings in 1891 did not represent a systematic attempt to change the existing procedures for public meetings. It was mainly a spontaneous reaction of militant workers against several conservative politicians. The militant workers took up arms against individual politicians not against public meetings as an institution. In this sense the disturbances were not a serious threat to the ruling class. On the contrary, the ruling class were able to make capital out of them.

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339 See D.T., 12 and 13 June 1891.


341 D.T., 13 May 1891 and S.M.H., 13 May 1891.

342 The Australian Star, 13 May 1891.
They blamed the labour movement as a whole for its lawlessness because of several disorderly meetings. They asserted that the democracy advocated by the labour movement was based on the denial of freedom of speech to all those who were opposed to its purpose.

In 1893 radical free traders, radical protectionists, socialists and the Active Service Brigade challenged the contemporary practice of public meetings. They demanded more democratic management of public meetings, or more participation of the audiences in proceedings. They demanded for an audience the right to elect a chairman and to move amendments at any political public meeting. This provided a real threat to the ruling class. If such reform had been accomplished, the carefully organized system for making public opinion would have been taken out of their hands. However the demand was identified with 'the anarchy' of the Active Service Brigade by the Sydney dailies, so that many supporters of the demand were gradually alienated from the cause. Moreover the demand was inseparably mixed up with the uncontrollable expression of workers' anger towards individual politicians. Such a disorderly element was magnified by the Sydney dailies and the cause of democratic management of public meetings was greatly damaged. The Active Service Brigade itself seems to have been shortsighted in its objects, perhaps excusably so as it was directly engaged in relieving the unemployment problem. The Brigade was not so much concerned with the transformation of the process of making public opinion as with obtaining the right to express its views at specific public meetings. It won many battles with its supporters, but victory at several public meetings produced more damage to its cause in the long run than any lost battle. The ruling class successfully repelled this challenge, and the problem posed by the challenge has remained unsolved.

People did not suddenly come to demand persistently the right of electing a chairman and of moving amendments. Nor was there any conspiracy beforehand. A high level of unemployment, the forcible suppression of strikes, irritation at fruitless discussion and obstruction in Parliament and the artificial moulding of public opinion by those who were responsible for these were preconditions for a movement demanding democratic procedures for public meetings. Finally, unfair rulings from the chairmen at several public meetings convinced people of the need to reform the management of these meetings.

343 A group of socialists and anarchists who played an important role in leading the agitation of unemployed and also helping destitute unemployed by providing cheap meals and accommodation.
On the 2nd of March 1893 a public meeting was held in the Masonic Hall in support of the Government. The chairman gave assurances that every opportunity would be provided for anyone to move an amendment, but he ignored a man who rose in the body of the hall and expressed his intention to move an amendment when the chairman put the resolution to the meeting. Soon after this incident people in the body of the hall took complete control of the meeting.344

On the 1st of May the British Empire Defence Association and members of the Loyal Orange Lodges held a public meeting to protest against the granting of Home Rule to Ireland. After the first resolution was duly moved and seconded, E.T. Walsh, Alderman of Waterloo, mounted the platform and asked the chairman to allow him to move an amendment. The chairman refused to accept any amendment and ordered him to withdraw from the platform despite his protest. He was jostled off the platform by some of the promoters. This meeting was one of the so-called packed meetings. The gates of the hall were not only locked, but also guarded by a number of stalwart men, including several policemen.345

On the 3rd of July the Mayor of Sydney convened a public meeting of citizens in the Town Hall for the purpose of forming an Australian Federation League. The Mayor presided over the meeting and between 2,000 and 3,000 people were present. There seemed to be deep-rooted distrust of the rulings of the chairman among the audience by this time. Before the meeting began, W.G. Higgs, president of the South Sydney Labour Electoral League, asked the chairman whether he would allow him to move an amendment. The Mayor refused to answer this question at first, but he subsequently had to promise that anyone who desired to move an amendment would get 'fair play' as the audience prevented the meeting from proceeding by interjections until the right to move an amendment was confirmed. One of the audience shouted to the Mayor, "Who elected you chairman? You are a self-constituted chairman." These remarks brought loud cheers from the audience. Barton moved the resolution and M'Millan seconded it. Then Higgs moved an amendment to the resolution seconded by George Black and supported by W.A. Holman. When the Mayor put the amendment to the meeting, it appeared to be carried by a majority of two to one. However, the Mayor declared that it had been lost by a small majority. This announcement gave rise to groaning and great

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344 S.M.H., 3 March 1893.

345 S.M.H., 2 May 1893.
uproar and all sorts of epithets were hurled at the Mayor and those on the platform. The other resolutions were carried on the platform without speech or without being submitted to the meeting. When the promoters left the platform, socialists moved a motion that "the whole conduct of the chair has been grossly unfair," but before it was put to the meeting a number of police arrived and cleared the platform.\textsuperscript{346}

\textit{The Daily Telegraph} stated that the turbulent element which rendered this meeting practically abortive did not count for much and asked all sections of the community to join in the work of hastening federation. Although \textit{The Daily Telegraph} called socialists and republicans a "perverse and noisy element" whose presence, the paper believed, was a synonym for interruption and disturbance, its reaction to this meeting was fairly cool.\textsuperscript{347}

\textit{The Australian Star} became a little hot. It began its editorial with the sentence: "In the name of freedom a number of citizens interfered with the freedom of the other citizens who had assembled in the Town Hall last night for the purpose of considering a proposal to form an Australian Federation League." This sentence set the tone of the editorial and was followed by vulgar sarcasms and denunciations against the socialists.\textsuperscript{348}

\textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} was driven into frenzy as if its dearest daughter were being tortured by a band of rogues.

"It will be for the orderly citizens of Sydney to say whether they will consent to hold their right of public meeting for the discussion of public questions at the mercy of a small propaganda of anarchy and disorder, and will be content to allow a petty section to silence by senseless clamour the lawful expressions of public opinion made at a meeting of citizens in the civic hall of Sydney ... The proceedings of last night were not merely an outrage on good taste and the right of free speech. They were considered in the light of reason, self-contradictory and ridiculous. We have had people

\textsuperscript{346}D.T., 4 July 1893 and S.M.H., 4 July 1893.

\textsuperscript{347}D.T., 4 July 1893.

\textsuperscript{348}The Australian Star, 4 July 1893. The editorial predicted that a man like Higgs would not be able to become a leader under any system of government. The editorial was right in the prediction in that he did not become Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia. But he became treasurer of the Commonwealth; Black became colonial secretary of New South Wales; Holland became leader of the Opposition in New Zealand. He led the Labour Party for 8 years until his death. These socialists in the body of the hall were to become leaders in the coming century. The 'idlers' in the body of the hall had much better foresight than the editor of \textit{The Australian Star}.\textsuperscript{348}
occupying political positions of greater prominence than that of membership of a labour electoral league declaring that they were in favour of federation, but only as an independent State under its own flag. All such talk as this, if seriously meant, is but unmeaning puerility.\textsuperscript{349}

The basic idea on which this editorial depended was that, even at a meeting of citizens, people in the body of the hall had no right to oppose resolutions. When they attempted to move an amendment, they became a petty section of anarchy and disorder, the enemy of freedom of speech. This idea was always latent in the editorials of \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} when they dealt with the right of public meetings. It was also implied in those of \textit{The Australian Star} and \textit{The Daily Telegraph}, though perhaps to a lesser extent.

The three editorials discussing this meeting failed to point out the fact that the chairman declared the amendment lost though it was in fact supported by a majority of two to one. If the audience had accepted such a ruling from the chair, then its behaviour in doing so should have been against the 'good taste and the right of free speech'. These papers were concerned only with securing freedom of speech for the promoters of public meetings, so that they shut their eyes to any blunder on the part of the promoters and the chairman.

On Monday, the 21st of August, the Freetrade and Liberal Electoral League held a meeting in the Protestant Hall of Newtown. The Mayor of Newtown, W. Rigg, took the chair. There was a great deal of interruption throughout the proceedings, though the meeting consisted of free traders except for two protectionist opponents. Single taxers, although opposed to tariffs, were chiefly responsible for the interruptions. They adopted this tactic which at one time threatened to reduce the proceedings to complete disorder. \textit{The Daily Telegraph} stated that if this meeting were to be accepted as a criterion, free trade meetings were likely to be exposed to a danger from within worse than the old danger from without. However \textit{The Daily Telegraph} entertained no "doubt as to the absolute honesty of the motives which actuate the single taxers." It did not believe that there was a more distinguished, more earnest, or more intelligent body of political thinkers than the members of the single tax party. The attitude of the paper towards the disturbers of public meetings was evidently influenced by its political standpoint. Freedom of speech was a relative value which changed its importance greatly according to the people to

\textsuperscript{349}S.M.H., 4 July 1893.
whom it was applied.\(^{350}\)

The cause of the interruption at this Newtown meeting was similar to that of the meetings in which socialists played prominent parts. 'The underground engineering' resorted to by the promoters of the meeting together with the arrogant attitude of the chairman and his refusal to allow anyone to move an amendment were responsible for the disorder.

W.E. Johnson, who moved an amendment from a chair in the body of the hall, declared:

"To claim that the meeting was for a 'special purpose' was a wretched and lame subterfuge for refusing the right of discussion. Every public meeting is for a 'special purpose' more or less. The cunning subtlety of the wording of the advertisement was a transparent dodge to shelter political dodgery. In striking contrast to Monday's meeting was that of last night, which was also called for a 'special purpose'. Unlike Mr. Rigg, however, the chairman declared at the outset for fair play and free speech to all alike. Result - a most orderly meeting, questions freely asked and as freely answered, and every facility and latitude given to the mover and seconder of a hostile amendment. Had the chairman or any of the speakers attempted to gag the audience, as was the case on Monday night, it is certain similar consequences would have resulted ..."\(^{351}\)

Had the promoters of public meetings adopted his advice, there might not have been so many disorderly meetings as there were in this year. I suppose that his view represented those who objected to 'semi-private' public meetings and those who demanded the right of discussion or freedom of speech for the audience.

On the 6th of September 1893 a meeting of people favouring the formation of a branch of the Freetrade Electoral League was held in the Masonic Hall. The principal speaker was again M'Millan. It was evident from the outset that the audience was opposed to the purpose of the meeting. Three meetings including this one were held in September where M'Millan was a principal organizer and speaker while the Active Service Brigade and socialists were the principal opponents. People discussed the problem of freedom of speech in respect to these meetings and it is useful to examine their opinions closely.

\(^{350}\)D.T., 22 Aug. 1893. See also S.M.H., 22 Aug. 1893.

\(^{351}\)D.T., 28 Aug. 1893. He referred to another meeting held in the Newtown Town Hall by the Freetrade and Land Reform Electoral Committee. See D.T., 24 Aug. 1893.
It is impossible to ascertain what really happened at the meeting on the 6th of September as the newspapers lacked reliable information about several important aspects of it. The promoters and the newspapers, except for *The Australian Workman*, ascribed the disturbance to organized ruffianism the sole object of which was to destroy the right of free speech by brute force. On the other hand, socialists and *The Australian Workman* ascribed the commencement of the disturbance to the refusal of the chairman to permit any amendment to be moved. Whatever the cause of the disturbance might have been, it was a fact that the speakers were howled down and that the chairman did not allow any amendment.

*The Sydney Morning Herald* said that it was bad enough for organized ruffianism to have suppressed the right of holding a public meeting and free speech: it would be infinitely more serious if socialists and anarchists could triumph at the elections and take possession of powers of the State.\(^{352}\)

*The Australian Star* held a similar view of the meeting. It was surprised at the fact that "several hundred working men should have allowed themselves to be humbugged by the few socialists." and advised working men that the socialists were enemies of the working class and the worst leaders for them to have.\(^{353}\)

The contention of *The Daily Telegraph* at this stage was similar to those it expressed in 1891 and in the late 1880s. Socialists were not referred to in its editorial. It simply maintained that those who were opposed to M'Millan should stay away and that they had no more right in M'Millan's hired hall than they would have in his private house.\(^{354}\)

In denouncing the disturbers, a number of letters to the editor, in addition to M'Millan's, argued that the meeting was not a public meeting pure and simple. It was a public meeting for a special purpose, that is, a semi-private meeting. Therefore any chairman who understood his duty would not allow any amendment that was not fairly relevant to the subject under discussion. With regard to hiring a hall, if the combined disturbers of the meeting were not able to hire a hall, they had nothing to lose by protection and nothing to gain by free trade. They would

\(^{352}\) *S.M.H.*, 7 and 8 Sept. 1893.

\(^{353}\) *The Australian Star*, 7 Sept. 1893.

\(^{354}\) *D.T.*, 7 Sept. 1893.
come under the category of people having no visible means of support, so they would not deserve a public audience.\textsuperscript{355}

*The Australian Workman* stated that it did not support any systematic howling down of speeches at any public meeting, but it was quite sympathetic to those who drowned out M'Millan. It blamed “the class prejudice of the Plute press” for its unfair treatment of the worker. It maintained that “the Plute press” did not object to disorder *per se*, but only to “workers whom wrongs had goaded to disorder”. According to the *Workman* the worker wished in some way to show his detestation of political foes, and if the method which he adopted was crude, it was because human nature was not yet perfect. The disorder was to a large extent M'Millan’s fault. Not only was his past record bad, but his present manner was ungracious.\textsuperscript{356}

A correspondent to *The Sydney Morning Herald* argued that M'Millan’s meeting had been a political one: it would certainly have been held to be a public meeting in Britain; if so, the right of an adverse motion should have been allowed as a matter of course. The correspondent advised M'Millan to allow opponents to move amendments if he wished to put a stop to disorder at his meetings. The same correspondent also pointed out the workers’ inability to hire a hall to hold their own meetings.\textsuperscript{357} H.D. Douglass, a member of the Active Service Brigade, contended that a large majority in the audience, being disgusted with M'Millan’s political conduct, justly refused him a hearing. He also asserted that the chairman precipitated matters by refusing to allow any discussion on the motion before the meeting. A majority opinion at a public meeting and the right to discuss resolutions and to move amendments were vitally important to those who challenged the existing procedures of public meetings. Thomas Dodd, another member of the Active Service Brigade, maintained that the real cause of such disturbance was ‘slow starvation’. He ascribed it to the fact that men were compelled to work at a mere starvation wage, and the fact that they had nothing to fall back on when they were out of work.\textsuperscript{358}

\textsuperscript{355}See *D.T.* 8 Sept. 1893 and *S.M.H.* 8 and 9 Sept. 1893.

\textsuperscript{356}*The Australian Workman*. 9 Sept. 1897.

\textsuperscript{357}*S.M.H.* 8 Sept. 1893.

\textsuperscript{358}*D.T.* 22 Sept. 1893 and *S.M.H.* 8 Sept. 1893.
The labour rank was far from unanimous on this matter. J. M'Lachlan, who had supported the workers' conduct at M'Millan's meeting in 1891, expressed as a socialist disgust and contempt "for the conduct of those persons calling themselves Socialists" and called for the assistance of "the respectable portion of the community" against "the blind, unreasoning tyranny of the savage, brutalized mob".

Francis Cotton, single taxer, was more consistent than J. M'Lachlan. He described the meeting, as he had in 1891, as embodying the cowardly and undemocratic practice of silencing a political opponent by brute howling. But his conduct was subsequently questioned by a 'Striker':

"Why didn't Mr. Cotton rush into print and condemn the unruly conduct of certain gentlemen at a public meeting held at Newtown a short time ago. It is because they were prominent Single Taxers who took part in it? and is it because this is attributed to the Socialists that Mr. Cotton is so eager and so emphatic in condemning it?" 359

There was also an opinion that booing and howling down would only result in making a conservative politician a martyr in the democratic cause of freedom of speech, and thus supplying their enemies with ammunition. The Paddington Labour Electoral League expressed its sympathy with M'Millan and expressed the view that freedom of speech should be allowed to all parties, because the workers could gain emancipation only by this method. 360

On the other hand the North Sydney Labour League adopted the resolution to the effect that at all public meetings the chairman should allow amendments to be moved when notice was given beforehand in order to prevent such disgraceful occurrences as had happened at M'Millan's. 361 H.C. Cato, president of the East Sydney Labour Electoral League, stated that that body took no part in the proceedings, but denied the allegation of The Australian Star that those who drowned down M'Millan were only the Domain loafers and the other human scum of the metropolis. He attributed the disorder to the intense feeling of antagonism generated by the 1890's strike. 362

359 *The Australian Workman*, 16 Sept. 1893.


361 Ibid.

M'Millan and his supporters decided to hold a second meeting on the 19th of September, while the Premier, Dibbs, ordered a number of plain-clothes constables to attend the meeting in order to secure the orderly conduct of the meeting notwithstanding a protest from M'Millan. M'Millan maintained that the comparatively small number of people who desired to destroy all that was best in their institutions could well be dealt with by honest and fearless men instinct with the spirit of British freedom who would roll up in numbers to wipe out the stain of the previous week. As these honest and fearless men were in reality prizefighters, the Premier was compelled to send the police to prevent a general melee in the meeting. *The Sydney Morning Herald* deplored the situation. It said that liberty of speech maintained by the presence of police was but a second-rate liberty.  

*The Australian Workman* commented critically on the preparation for 'maintaining law and order' at the second meeting.

"the object - to show to the disorderly classes of the community that they cannot with impunity stifle the right of free speech. In truth, it is a much needed lesson. Only the orderly classes of the community possess the privilege to stifle that right. To distinguish between the two classes is easy: to find the reason for the differentiation of their rights is harder ... Law, in the august person of Sir George Dibbs, Colonial Secretary, has ordered that the police force is to make it a special duty that M'Millan's speech shall not be stifled. Order - in the shape of a committee, acting on whose responsibility or initiative we do not care to say, has organized a band of thugs and bullies - hired pugilists and professional rowdies to crush all attempts at opposition. The watch-dog and the wolf will thus cooperate."  

*The Workman* predicted 'a glorious victory' for this combination, but it failed to attain the expected result. The promoters admitted ticket-holders only by the side-entrance and carefully disposed 'their adherents' in various parts of the hall. However, all these precautions were largely discounted by socialists and workers who poured into the hall when the front doors were finally thrown open to the general public. The promoters were able to pass the resolution, but the speech of M'Millan was again drowned by interjection and songs. Only Reid, leader of the Opposition in Parliament, secured a hearing when he protested, in the name of the all classes, against the action of the Premier in forcing the police upon a public meeting. Socialists were allowed to move an amendment, but they were in turn interrupted.

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363 S.M.H., 15 Sept. 1893.

364 *The Australian Workman*, 16 Sept. 1893.

\textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}, as a supporter of M'Millan, not only denounced the howling mob, but also accused the good citizens of apathy about the cause of order and freedom. But an East Sydney elector retorted that it was too much to expect the respectable electors to attend as 'chuckers-out' when M'Millan attempted to hold a meeting in and out of season to the annoyance of a very undesirable class, though he had nothing new to speak about. \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} ascribed the failure to both the mismanagement of the meeting and the feeble attempt of the police to preserve order. It considered that the restriction of admission and the presence of police only augmented the excitement of an angry crowd who had been waiting outside for a long time and who eventually were allowed by mismanagement to enter the hall. It contended that it might be necessary to put aside the question of protection or free trade for a more convenient season lest the organizers of disorder should prevail in the election and destroy "all guarantees of law, of order, of liberty, of the safety of life and property".\footnote{D.T., 22 Sept. 1893 and \textit{S.M.H.}, 20 Sept. 1893. See also \textit{S.M.H.}, 21 Sept. 1893.}

\textit{The Daily Telegraph} was not so enthusiastic as its contemporary because it supported a more progressive section of the free traders than M'Millan. It was critical of "boy economists, Domain orators, and turbulent unruly persons", but it considered that the preparations and the manner in which they were paraded were chiefly responsible for the scandalous and deplorable proceedings.\footnote{D.T., 20 Sept. 1893.}

\textit{The Australian Star}, indignant at the accusation by Reid against Dibbs that he had sent police to the meeting, ascribed the disorder to the tactical blunder of trying to pack the meeting. It said that it was difficult to determine on which side, the free traders or the socialists, lay "the balance of unruly, shockingly disgraceful conduct".\footnote{The \textit{Australian Star}, 20 Sept. 1893.} The introduction of party hostility by Reid thus created discord among the Sydney dailies about the disorderly meeting.

Undeterred by the second disorderly meeting, M'Millan announced that he would
hold a third meeting on the 25th of September. But this time he decided to convene the meeting by himself and to ask no aid from secretaries or from any organization of any kind. He invited nobody onto his platform, and he asked the meeting to appoint a chairman.369

Cotton considered M'Millan's determination "a much more honorable course than to attempt to manufacture public opinion by means of alleged public meetings" which only ticket-holders were able to attend. Norton rather sarcastically praised M'Millan for the courage and determination to convene a genuine public meeting "without the adventitious aids of a previously packed hall, platform claquers, hired bullies, and police" to which M'Millan had been used to resort.370

On the third meeting M'Millan at last succeeded in getting a hearing from the audience. At the outset of the meeting he said that he would not put any resolution, but that he would allow anyone to move any resolution. Then he asked the meeting to elect a chairman. An individual called Flowers was elected to take the chair and asked for a fair hearing for M'Millan. He declared the victory of the people:

"When any public man comes out to speak on a public platform in the future he will have to get a truthful chairman. (Cheers.) Another thing we have done is this: We have demanded the right of free speech by moving amendments. (Cheers.) Mr. M'Millan has bowed his knee to the voice of the people - (laughter and cheers) - in this respect, and he is therefore entitled to a fair hearing."371

M'Millan obtained a fair hearing and a resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority declaring that he had lost the confidence of the people. However, in proposing a vote of thanks to the chairman, he appreciated the fair hearing the audience had given him and trusted that that meeting would inaugurate a new era in the history of Australia.372

Reactions to this new style of public meeting were as divergent as people's

369 D.T., 21 Sept. 1893.


371 D.T., 26 Sept. 1893.

372 S.M.H., 26 Sept. 1893. See also The Australian Star, 26 Sept. 1893 and N.M.H., 26 Sept. 1893.
political opinions. *The Australian Star* asserted that, though M'Millan's mock heroism had secured him a hearing, he had outraged the right of public speaking more grievously than any other politician in that colony; what M'Millan had acknowledged at that meeting had been the absolute right of those whom he and his friends had called foulers and blackguards to completely control the meeting.\(^{373}\)

*The Daily Telegraph* said that the third public meeting was more fortunate only in one respect: M'Millan obtained more of a hearing than he had in those which preceded it. It was very critical of the procedure adopted at the meeting.\(^{374}\) It published a letter from a correspondent who stated that it was difficult to decide which was the most disastrous to the cause of freedom, the meeting at which M'Millan had been hooted down, or that at which he had bowed his knee to the tyrants of society.\(^{375}\)

*The Sydney Morning Herald*, by contrast, considered that M'Millan achieved a signal victory as a result of his tact, courage and persistancy. Although it was reluctant to concede to 'the party of disorder' the right to elect a chairman and to move an amendment, it believed that the adoption and success of a new procedure for public meetings would inaugurate a new era in public speaking in Sydney.\(^{376}\)

*The Australian Workman*, while acknowledging M'Millan's pluck, said:

"On Monday last, he threw himself on the mercies of the electors of East Sydney, at a truly public meeting, was accorded a perfect hearing, and an almost unanimous vote of want of confidence. At this meeting, there were no specially instructed police, no hired pugilists, no packed body of friends and supporters. The gathering was open to all, and the people showed their appreciation of Mr. M'Millan's fairness and courage by hearing all that he had to say."\(^{377}\)

The hopeful new era of public meetings did not last a week. On the 28th of September a protectionist meeting was held in the Protestant Hall. It was arranged

\(^{373}\) *The Australian Star*, 26 Sept. 1893.

\(^{374}\) *D.T.*, 26 Sept. 1893.

\(^{375}\) *D.T.*, 3 Oct. 1893.

\(^{376}\) *S.M.H.*, 26 Sept. 1893.

\(^{377}\) *The Australian Workman*, 30 Sept. 1893.
that Alderman Kippax was to take the chair, but this arrangement was abandoned in deference to the wish of a large number of the audience. It was decided to elect a chairman and S.B. Douglas was chosen. He was supported by the Active Service Brigade. However he could not secure a hearing for protectionist speakers, so W. Willson, ex-president of the Trades and Labour Council, replaced him in the middle of the proceedings. But he also failed to secure a hearing for the speakers. The protectionists not only failed to get a hearing even by acceding to the demands of the audience for the election of a chairman, but also had their resolution defeated by this same act. 378

If the audience had listened to the speakers without interjection, a new era of public speaking might have come to Sydney. But this disorderly meeting under the elected chairman gravely injured the cause of the new procedure. The fact that this new procedure was now identified with the Active Service Brigade, that is, the tyranny of mob rule, was also injurious to the cause. The democratic practice of this new procedure came to be considered an attempt of the Active Service Brigade to control public speech for its own political purpose.

The Australian Star demanded that the police should immediately put down 'the scum of the society' and 'disease germs in the body politic'. The Daily Telegraph denounced the Active Service Brigade as a body attempting to destroy 'the deliberate expression of public opinion'. Even The Sydney Morning Herald considered now that the adoption of the new procedure would lead to the total disuse of public meetings: any speaker would be discouraged from holding a public meeting because he would have an adverse audience devoted to disorder both in theory and in practice: and because he would have to accept a hostile chairman who would limit him as to time and method and allow him to be assailed with brutal insults and have a hostile resolution passed against him. 379

The Sydney Morning Herald also argued that the speech in a public hall was not addressed to a chance audience grouped in the hall, but to the whole public of the country. The public meeting was a formal means of securing circulation through the newspapers and reaching the community at large. The essential reality was the dissemination of the speech through the press to every household in the country. In


this sense some substitute for public meetings as a means of addressing the whole public might be discovered without detriment to the political process. But the paper objected to the usurpation of the right to hold public meetings by organized and intolerant violence.\textsuperscript{380} The prediction of \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} was to come true in the 20th century. The right of public men to address the community at large was to be secured and served more efficiently by the invention of radio and television and the rapid expansion of the circulation of newspapers and magazines.

The Active Service Brigade and other people continued to demand the right of the audience to elect the chairman of a meeting and to move amendments. Their demand was accepted on several occasions until early 1894, but their movement was not successful in the long run.\textsuperscript{381}

Several reasons can be given for this failure. There was a conscious effort on the part of the Government and promoters of public meetings to prevent any 'organization aiming at the reconstruction of society' from reconstructing public meetings. The Government arrested and imprisoned socialists and members of the Active Service Brigade for various reasons. Perhaps their engagement in movements of the unemployed also made them targets of the police. The promoters depended more and more on the method of packing a public meeting. They frequently resorted to the method of admitting only those holding a special ticket to secure a favourable public. The presence of police and 'chuckers-outs' became an ordinary scene at public meetings.

The split in the political movement of the working class was another reason for the failure. Socialists, the Labour Electoral Leagues, the Parliamentary Labour Party and single taxers were suspicious about each other and jealous of the others' achievements. The right to elect a chairman and to move amendments was suspected of being a method used by one group to overturn another. Consequently there was no united support for this right. Probably such a right was no less dangerous to the leaders of the Labour Party than to the leaders of the protectionists and the free traders.

There were many blunders on the part of those who demanded this right. People in the body of the hall, when they were allowed to elect the chairman of a meeting and to move amendments, sometimes failed to give speakers a fair hearing. Thus they made themselves true intruders upon the right of freedom of speech. Socialists might not be responsible for this, but they were responsible for their cause as they were not able to control the people for whose benefit they struggled. They were too lukewarm about the disorderly conduct of their supporters when they were given the right they had hoped for. Under the circumstances in which most of the people recognized the supreme right of freedom of speech, such intrusion, for which hardly any excuse could be found, was fatal to their cause. The disorder was identified with the new procedure of public meetings and was denounced persistently by the Sydney dailies.

Structural changes, technological advancement and the development of society presented unfavourable conditions for ordinary people to take part in the forming of public opinion. Technologically advanced systems of communication, the isolation of individuals from the community, the development of large permanently established organizations, the bureaucratization of all spheres of politics and social and economic systems, and the enlargement of society itself by which an individual became more and more powerless in the affairs of society, all were unfavourable to the cause demanded by these people.

I would like to conclude this chapter by speculating briefly on the concept of freedom of speech in the late 19th century. Freedom of speech was not an absolute value in the existing political situation. It was a relative value subject to long term or short term political ends. It was given a special meaning in certain political circumstances. Freedom of speech became a method or a pretext for achieving some political purpose when people in reality applied this concept to a specific situation. This was not only true of the protectionists and the free traders, but also of the labourites and the socialists. In abstract terms and in theoretical speculation almost all the people agreed on the supreme right of freedom of speech: however, once the concept was applied to reality, it was used to justify the specific interests of a certain group. The people lacked any idea of creating a system, or perceiving a system, in which freedom of speech and freedom of communication could be guaranteed to the general public. The period in which they lived imposed restrictions on their thoughts and mentality. They were all practical men both in a good and a bad sense. The problems of freedom of speech, freedom of communication and the making of public opinion were not solved by them. The problems remained and they have still been unsolved practically or philosophically.
Chapter 5
Conclusion

This thesis has aimed at revealing the nature of public meetings as an institution in late 19th century New South Wales and the process by which they helped to make public opinion especially in connection with class relations in the same period. Although I have to admit that this research is far from complete in many respects, I trust that I have succeeded at least in showing that the public meeting and its influence on public opinion are an important and fertile area of historical research.

These matters form an area of research from which labour history, social history and urban history kept themselves aloof except for occasional references to specific public meetings. Few Australian historians have ever dealt with these problems because they have been concerned with the developments of an organization, a geographical area, a technology, a social phenomenon or, recently, with some particular conditions of society such as poverty and unemployment. However, people in the late 19th century experienced various developments of organizations, of a growing government and bureaucracy, technological progress, a considerable measure of poverty, unemployment and the development of suburbs and localities all at the same time. These developments and phenomena were related with each other in the experience of the people. The people were participants in public meetings, committees and the small organizations for the development of society and localities, or for the welfare of the unemployed, children, poor women and the general public. When we see historical development from the point of view of these active citizens, we will be able to see many historical phenomena in quite a different light from that cast by ordinary historical interpretations.

For example, Robin Gollan, in his Radical and Working Class Politics, cited the Working Men's Defence Association as an example of attempts to establish a working class political organization at the 1877 election. The Association together with the Trades and Labour Council ran three candidates for the West Sydney seat, but none was returned. Gollan recognized the organization to be 'an important
incident in the evolution of working class politics. Considered as part of the evolution of working class politics and in terms of the advance towards more democratic institutions, the Working Men's Defence Association was 'important' but only as 'an incident'. However it was far from simply an incident when thought of as a stage in the evolution of the meeting habits of working men. It was a component part of the general surge of informal open-air meetings of working men which had been going on since the mid-1870s, as already mentioned in the third chapter. It represented the structural development of working class political culture.

In Parliament, Factions, and Parties several attempts were made to integrate the activities of small organizations and groups into the analysis of the political structure, but the work focused on the manoeuvring of faction leaders and organizational activities in connection with the disintegration of faction politics. For example the Democratic Alliance was viewed as an incipient protectionist 'movement'. E.W. O'Sullivan was given a prominent position as a man who took the lead in founding as twin radical bodies the Democratic Alliance and the Land and Industrial Alliance. However O'Sullivan alienated himself from the Democratic Alliance within a few months when he found that he could not utilize it for his populist alliance of farmers with the workers in the city. The Democratic Alliance responded to the immediate necessity of workers, that is, the need to cope with unemployment, rather than complying with protectionists' manoeuvres. The Democratic Alliance was a son of the growing informal open-air meetings and it was faithful to its origin rather than bowing down to the demand of the godfather. O'Sullivan was considered a betrayer of the cause of the working class as he was by the Labour Party during the 1890s. The Democratic Alliance was the consummation of the intensive activity of working men's political meetings from 1883 of which the protectionist movement was only a part. It might be a short episode as a visionary populist alliance dreamed of by O'Sullivan, but it was an outburst of the energy of informal working men's meetings which had been continuing since the mid-1870s and which was to be continuing into the 1890s and beyond.

However limited their treatment might be, many historians have dealt with


working men's political activity. But few historians have attempted to deal with the unorganizational activity of the ruling class, though we have to understand it in order to explain the dominance by the ruling class, the relation between the ruling class and the emerging working class and the class structure in the late 19th century. *Class Structure in Australian History* took up the task of class analysis of Australian society and designated the period from 1840 to 1890 as the period of the mercantile bourgeoisie. But it failed to deal with the unorganizational activity of the mercantile bourgeoisie, though it paid attention to organizations such as 'Chambers of Commerce', 'Companies' and 'State machineries'. Without analysing the dominance by 'the mercantile bourgeoisie' over the process for moulding public opinion, how one could assert that one was making analysis of the hegemony by 'the mercantile bourgeoisie'? This lack of analysis greatly weakened the analysis of the activity of working men. Was it true that the 'working men' developed the ward by ward political mobilization from the late 1840s to the late 1850s? Did the number of public meetings increase greatly, especially on 'Saint Monday'? Did sites for informal spontaneous meetings - the Eastern Markets in Melbourne, the Queen's statue in Sydney - develop in this period? All of these questions are doubtful. A systematic study of public meetings needs to be extended into this period before anything definite can be said about these questions.

It is true that no one can claim his point of view is value free, but too much specialization and too easy elimination of relevant areas seem to have a tendency to limit the possibility of improving half-truths that specialized historical studies are digging out. If a historian wants to understand fully a particular historical phenomenon, he necessarily has to limit his scope of research to a small area. I have no objection to such specialization which is necessary to produce fruitful research. What I object to is that the historian too often does not endeavour to make up the gaps between his specialized area of research and other branches of history except for general observations about the society he is studying or observations about economic or social theories he devotes himself to. The public meeting and the making of public opinion are such gaps yet to be filled.

I do not claim my assumptions to be free of value. Neither do I assert that 1

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385 See Chapter 1, p.18.
have not specialized in a particular topic of historical research. What I maintain is
that the area of study in which I have specialized is one capable of interrelating and
uniting other areas of historical research. It is also an area to which few historians
have ever paid attention or attempted systematic research. What, I believe, I have
done in this thesis is to present a perspective and a method of studying public
meetings and the making of public opinion which may serve as an introduction to
further research into this subject.

Although this section is the conclusion of the present thesis, it is far from the end
of my research into public meetings. I regard the thesis as only the very beginning
of such research. Many propositions, assumptions and even facts that are given
meaning in this thesis are half-truths yet to be examined, reconsidered and realigned
by extended research. In view of these considerations I wish to present the public
meeting in the political context of New South Wales and to make this a starting
point for my future research.

During the 1840s and 1850s the public meeting in New South Wales played a
similar role to that in Britain, reflecting the age when the majority of the people
were completely excluded from the political process in the colony and had no direct
influence on political decision making. It was a means for those outside the
political process to co-ordinate their forces and bring pressure upon the government
and the legislature. The urban middle class used public meetings for the several
movements in support of responsible government and land reform and against
transportation and Wentworth's scheme to create 'a colonial aristocracy'. Working
men and artisans took part in these movements and obtained nearly what the
People's Charter had demanded under the leadership of the urban middle class. The
result was that the urban middle class, which was to form a new ruling class
together with the then existing ruling class, developed skills in organizing public
meetings and establishing leadership over them, while working men and artisans lost
for a generation a valuable opportunity to organize their own political movements.

After 1860 working men and artisans could not find an opportunity to organize
political movements or to hold their own public meetings because they did not have
any substantial focal point for agitations: manhood suffrage and other constitutional
reforms had been obtained: general economic prosperity did not provide any
important opportunity for agitations. Lacking any experience of organizing
agitations and any substantial focal point to contend for, workers and artisans were
divided into interest groups or reduced to silent individuals. On the other hand,
the new ruling class, which had acquired the technique of and leadership over political agitations, could easily dominate the process for making public opinion. Faction politics was a system based on these conditions.

*The Emergence of the Australian Party System* says of the period between 1860 and 1890 that despite the existence of plural voting, multi-member constituencies and variation in the sizes of electorates which undoubtedly contributed to the failure of some interests or social groups to win direct representation in parliament, "the members of the parliaments provided representation which ... seems in practice to have been satisfactory to most sections of the population for the best part of 30 years." The reason for this is that the members were drawn from three broad groups in society: the pastoral and landholding section, the professions and trade and commerce; these groups were middle class only in the most general sense because they were very heterogeneous; this heterogeneity, their personal experience and sympathies, their connection with particular interests and the immediacy of their contact with the electorates generated satisfactory representation.386

However, did the parliament, consisting of members of the urban middle class and the pastoral and landholding section, really provide ‘satisfactory’ representation ‘to most sections of the population for the best part of 30 years’? It seems to me that the total lack of political experience and organizational work by workers and artisans, the lack of a political focal point to contend for, the dominance and careful control of the process for moulding public opinion by the ruling class and general economic prosperity sustained the unsatisfactory system of representation for nearly 30 years. Why was payment of members of Parliament not introduced in this period? Why were plural voting, multi-member constituencies and so on not abolished? They were necessary to maintain the unsatisfactory representation. Elections for the Legislative Assembly were not held simultaneously. When faction leaders such as Parkes and Dibbs were defeated in urban electorates, this system enabled them to sneak into Parliament through country electorates.

Perhaps the public meeting, the petitioning and the deputation made the

386*The Emergence of The Australian Party System* edited by P. Loveday, A.W. Martin and R.S. Parker, Hale and Iremonger, 1977, pp.11-12. The authors of the book seem to assume that those who rapidly attained a middle class position as a result of good fortune, hard work and wise investments, self-education for a profession or the choice of an appropriate occupation would feel sympathy with workers and artisans by their personal experience. However, it can also be assumed that such mushroom middle class could have looked down upon workers and artisans who failed to raise themselves to a middle class position and could have regarded them as idlers. When these people assumed a conservative attitude against workers demands, they tended to assert their working experience as a subterfuge.
unsatisfactory representation more endurable to many people who were disgusted with the faction politics. However, this method of approaching the centre of power was jealously guarded in a very subtle manner as shown in the previous chapters and the leadership of political movements originating in workers' and artisans' demands often came into the hands of the ruling class.

We now return to our main theme, the public meeting. What function did the public meeting perform between 1850 and 1890. It certainly lost its great role of reforming the constitution. Nor did it play any substantial part in compelling members of Parliament to act on principle in accord with the wish of the electorate. The public meeting survived chiefly as a means of demanding roads, bridges, railways, parks and so on.

After obtaining a satisfactory political system, the urban middle class turned its attention to the development and progress of local communities. They used public meetings to present their grievances and demands to Parliament and the government. Those who led large political movements during the 1850s now became leaders of local political agitations. Not only was there a subtly organized web of restrictions and control over the means for making public opinion, but also the active participation of the middle class in local agitations provided the basis for the dominance by the ruling class over the public opinion making process. Though I have emphasized and focused on the former, for Australian historians tend to disregard it, the latter, the positive activity of the ruling class, cannot be too much emphasized. In the absence of major political issues, those who took care of local problems were recognized as leaders. They led local politics, helped the election of members of Parliament and sometimes themselves became members of Parliament.

However, subordinate groups gradually became used to holding their own public meetings and acquired the habit of assembling regularly, while the faction politics became more and more unbearable because of waning economic prosperity. The dissolution campaign in 1886, which was supported by both free traders and protectionists, evidently showed the disgust of most sections of the people towards the representation provided by 'independent' members. The movement was one which apparently aimed at electing members who would act in accord with the express wish and will of the electorates. Parkes, who was quick to read the situation, made himself the guardian of politics based on an express principle, that is, free trade, rather than on the caprice of independent members. In the following election campaign the free trade party and the protectionist party emerged and they
put an end to the faction politics. But the end of the faction politics did not immediately lead to a new political order.

After the election in 1887 the leadership of the protectionist movement within Parliament fell into the hands of conservative politicians and Dibbs became the leader of the party. On the other hand, Parkes, as Premier and leader of the free traders, continued to dominate. Outside Parliament, however, the polarization of colonial politics and the split in the ruling class afforded good opportunities for subordinate groups to take part in politics. They not only organized their own public meetings, but also attended public meetings convened by the ruling class and demanded the right to elect a chairman and to move amendments. I reiterate no more of this process as I have described it in detail in the previous chapter.

The period of transition thus began. Both colonial politics and the public meeting went into a turbulent period from the late 1880s. People resorted to public meetings in order to achieve constitutional changes such as a more democratic constitution. They also demanded and attempted to achieve the democratization of extra-parliamentary institutions such as the press and the public meeting.

I have now to conclude this section and this thesis because my research ends with the dawn of the new century. I want to close with some personal remarks. Institutions for creating public opinion, such as the public meeting and the press, were a double-edged sword. While they could serve as a machinery for ordinary people to express their opinions and to take part in politics, they could be made use of by the ruling class, by privileged people or by the government, both to control the expression of opinions by the people and to generate an artificial public opinion. Even the most democratic means of forming public opinion, the public meeting, was never free from this abuse.
Appendix A

The Dates of the Advertisements

The dates of the advertisements of public meetings in the "The Royal Morning Herald" which I have used as data for the second chapter.
Appendix A

The Dates of the Advertisements

The dates of the advertisements of public meetings in the *The Sydney Morning Herald* which I have used as data for the second chapter.

1871.

Jan. 23.

Feb. 2, 3, 8, 16, 17, 21.

Mar. 10, 14, 21, 24, 25, 27.

Apr. 3, 10, 17, 22.

May. 5, 6, 13, 19, 20, 26, 30, 31.

Jun. 3, 14, 15, 30.


Aug. 5.

Sep. 9, 28.

Oct. 3, 10, 19, 30.

Nov. 15, 18, 20, 25.

Dec. 2, 5, 12, 15, 26.

1873.

Jan. 16
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<td>Apr. 5, 8.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May. 13, 17, 24, 29.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun. 2, 5, 7, 10, 18, 26, 28.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul. 2, 3, 4, 9, 19, 30.</td>
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<td>Aug. 5, 9, 14.</td>
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<td>Sep. 8, 20, 29, 30.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 15, 21, 28.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 1, 3, 5, 8, 17, 18, 26, 28.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 4, 6, 8, 11, 24, 31.</td>
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1875.

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<tr>
<td>Mar. 9, 31.</td>
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<td>Apr. 12, 24, 27, 28.</td>
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<td>May. 8, 13, 14, 20, 24, 29.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun. 2, 5, 8, 10, 14.</td>
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<td>Jul. 8, 9, 14, 19, 20, 22, 31.</td>
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Oct. 5, 6, 7.

Nov. 8, 9, 12, 18, 22, 24, 26.

Dec. 9, 11, 14, 15.

1877.

Jan. 1, 5, 8, 11, 13, 20, 22.

Feb. 8, 10.

Mar. 8, 13, 28.

Apr. 7, 17, 18, 19, 24, 28.

May. 1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 15, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30.

Jun. 4, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 25, 29, 30.


Aug. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 21, 22.

Sep. 8, 10, 17, 19, 22, 24, 25.

Oct. 3, 4, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 31.

Nov. 1, 3, 13, 20, 22, 24.

Dec. 4, 19, 31.

1879.

Jan. 3, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 20, 27.

Feb. 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 24.

Mar. 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 22, 26, 29, 31.

Apr. 1, 8, 25, 26.
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<td>Jul.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>2,5,9,12,15,26,27,28,29,30.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep.</td>
<td>2,4,6,25.</td>
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<td>Oct.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
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<td>Dec.</td>
<td>1,3,4,8,13,17,29,31.</td>
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<td>1881</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar.</td>
<td>3,8,21,28.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul.</td>
<td>15,20,21,26,27,28,30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6,11,13,17,18,19,22,27,31.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep.</td>
<td>1,2,3,7,9,12,16,19,22,26,27.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>6,12,14.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>5,7,26.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>6,9,27.</td>
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</table>
1883.

Jan.  4,5,13,18,19,20,27,29,31.

Feb.  8,16,17,19,22,24,27.

Mar.  1,3,5,8,9,10,12,20,21,28,31.

Apr.  3,5,11,13,19.

May.  3,5,10,17,19,24.

Jun.  11,20,21,26,30.

Jul.  14,21,28.

Aug.  2,9,16,17,20.

Sep.  1,6,8,13,14,15,17,19,20,25,27.

Oct.  3,6,10,11,27,31.

Nov.  2,9,10,21,22,23,26,30.

Dec.  6,11,12,18,22.

1885.

Jan.  8,10,13,17,26,28,30.

Feb.  7,17,18,19,20,21,25,26,28.

Mar.  4,7,11,14,16,18,21,30.

Apr.  4,8,10,16,17,18,21,22,27,28.

May.  1,4,5,9,20,21,22,28.

Jun.  1,2,4,6,17,20,26,27.

Jul.  10,11,20,23.

Sep.  1,2,12,16,19,24.


Nov.  3,4,12,17.

Dec.  2,5,11,17,18,19.

1887.

Jan.  1,8,12,18,19,24,25,29.

Feb.  9,16,23,26,28.

Mar.  1,7,12,15,19,25,26,28,29,30,31.

Apr.  1,2,5,6,8,13,16,18,20,23,27,30.

May.  2,5,6,7,11,12,13,16,19,21,25.

Jun.  1,2,4,8,9,14,17,20,25,28.

Jul.  1,6,7,8,9,11,13,14,16,19,20,23,25,29,30.

Aug.  1,3,4,5,6,8,10,11,12,13,17,20,26,27,29,31.

Sep.  1,7,8,10,13,17,19,26,30.

Oct.  4,5,8,10,15,17,19,20,21,22,24,26,27,28,29,31.

Nov.  1,3,8,9,10,12,16,17,19,21,24,26,30.

Dec.  1,3,6,10,21,22,27,31.

1889.

Jan.  3,10,17,18,21,28.

Feb.  16,23.
Mar. 7, 8, 11, 14, 15, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

Apr. 4, 11, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30.

May. 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 31.

Jun. 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 27.

Jul. 4, 10, 13, 15, 18, 20, 26, 27, 30, 31.

Aug. 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31.

Sep. 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27, 28.

Oct. 1, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, 29.

Nov. 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 23, 29, 30.

Dec. 7, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18.

1891.

Jan. 6, 10, 15, 20, 26, 27.

Feb. 12, 14, 21, 23, 25.

Mar. 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 19, 20, 24, 30.

Apr. 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, 29, 30.

May. 5, 12, 13, 14, 21, 22, 23, 30.

Jun. 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 20, 25.

Jul. 1, 8, 11, 16, 20, 23, 29, 30.

Aug. 5, 10, 13, 15, 18, 19, 26, 29.

Sep. 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 17, 19, 23.

Oct. 1, 2, 16, 22, 24, 30.
Nov. 9, 13.

Dec. 1, 15, 16, 17, 19.

1893.

Jan. 10, 13, 14, 27, 28.

Feb. 2, 6, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 24, 25, 28.

Mar. 1, 4, 11, 14, 20, 24.

Apr. 21, 25, 28.

May. 5, 11, 13, 19, 20.

Jun. 2, 3, 7, 14, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30.

Jul. 1, 3, 7, 8, 15, 17, 20, 21.

Aug. 4, 5, 8, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30.

Sep. 1, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 25, 29.

Oct. 5, 7, 10, 16, 18, 21, 24, 26, 27, 30, 31.

Nov. 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28.

Dec. 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 21, 23.

1895.


Feb. 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 21, 23, 25.

Mar. 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 16, 18, 21, 23, 28.

Apr. 3, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

May. 1, 3, 9, 10, 15, 18, 20, 29.
Jun.  5,7,8,10,13,21,26,27.

Jul.  5,6,27.

Aug.  1,2,7,9,13,15,22,23,24,28,30.

Sep.  6,7,10,12,13,14,16,17,19,21,23,27,28,31.

Oct.  4,9,14,16,18,21.

Nov.  4,5,16,18,25.

Dec.  5,11,13,17,18,19,20,23.

1897.

Jan.  6,9,12,13,15,18,21,23,28.

Feb.  2,4,5,6,10,23,27.

Mar.  8,9,15,16,18,22,26.

Apr.  5,12,15,20,24.

May.  8,15,21,22,26,28,29,31.

Jun.  1,2,3,4,7,8,9,10,14,16,19.

Jul.  1,2,5,6,10,12,17,23,27,31.

Aug.  2,5,11,21,23,26,28.

Sep.  4,8,17,20,22,23,30.

Oct.  1,23.

Nov.  5,11,13,16,29.

Dec.  7,8,9,11,13.

1899.
Jan.  10,16,23.
Feb.  11.
Apr.  6,12,19.
May.  24.
Jun.  26,30.
Jul.  19,20,24,25.
Aug.  2,9,12,15,23,24,26,28,29,30.
Sep.  6,14,16,21,22,30.
Oct.  7,12,14,20,21,26,27,31.
Nov.  13,15,20,24,25.

1901.

Jan.  11,15,30.
Feb.  6,13,20,22.
Mar.  2,6,11,13,16.
Apr.  3,5,10,15,18,20,24,27,29.
May.  1,2,3,8,9,11,15,16,17,18,21,22,23,25.
Jun.  1,4,6,12,14,20,25,26.
Jul.  9,17,20,29.
Aug.  3,7,12,13,14,15,19,20,21,24,29,31.
Sep.  2, 7, 13, 14, 20, 24, 25.

Oct.  16, 19, 22, 24, 29, 30, 31.

Nov.  1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16, 21, 23, 27, 28, 30.

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