<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>page note line</th>
<th>for</th>
<th>read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>393</td>
<td>23 seen</td>
<td>seem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>4 stories</td>
<td>stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>403</td>
<td>3 Greathead</td>
<td>Greatheart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>417</td>
<td>7 starting</td>
<td>startling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>418</td>
<td>9 addition</td>
<td>the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>419</td>
<td>2 Chinese:</td>
<td>addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>422</td>
<td>20 mirror</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>423</td>
<td>22 or</td>
<td>mirrors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>430</td>
<td>18 Purient</td>
<td>nor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>432</td>
<td>91 whom</td>
<td>Prurient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>457</td>
<td>5 explaining</td>
<td>who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>487</td>
<td>20 than</td>
<td>explaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>492</td>
<td>18 Gavin</td>
<td>than in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>496</td>
<td>2 a</td>
<td>David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>519</td>
<td>7 unimpaired</td>
<td>an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>537</td>
<td>9 statesmen</td>
<td>unimpaired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>545</td>
<td>9 called</td>
<td>statesmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550</td>
<td>1 Authors</td>
<td>called</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>551</td>
<td>19 predeliction</td>
<td>Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>554</td>
<td>3 A bushmen</td>
<td>predilection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>570</td>
<td>10 is the</td>
<td>A-bushman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>574</td>
<td>7 Greathead</td>
<td>is as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>586</td>
<td>20 minutae</td>
<td>criticisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>594</td>
<td>6 or</td>
<td>Greatheart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>595</td>
<td>1 Canadian</td>
<td>minutiae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601</td>
<td>17 whom</td>
<td>nor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>602</td>
<td>12 stilll</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>607</td>
<td>9 as 'a</td>
<td>warns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>611</td>
<td>20 Darwin</td>
<td>who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>613</td>
<td>13 Australian</td>
<td>still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>644</td>
<td>2 to</td>
<td>as &quot;'a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>664</td>
<td>27 Autobiographies</td>
<td>Darwin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Brion Grover*
Aspects of
LITERARY NATIONALISM IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
with Special Reference to the Bulletin, 1880-1900

Tales are related, of local interest and familiar fame, more weird and wonderful, and more tragically realistic than any ever woven round the recital of knightly search for Holy Graal.... Who will tell the tales?

by

BRUCE NESBITT

Volume II

Being a thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Australian National University

Canberra

1968
STORY-TELLERS

Tales are related, of local interest and familiar fame, more weird and wonderful, and more tragically realistic withal, than any ever woven round the recital of knightly search for Holy Grail.... Who will tell the tale?¹

The Bulletin, according to the "traditional image" of Australian literature, has long been associated with the emergence of a new form of literary nationalism in the 'nineties. The paper became "the focus of new movements in Australian writing, that were generally in reaction against the Anglo-Australian school. The new literature of the nineties was democratic in temper, positive in its use of indigenous...

¹ Bulletin, 3 September 1881, p. 2. The Bulletin is hereafter cited as TB.
material, and confident in its hopes for the Australia of the future." But as we have seen, the Bulletin's "bush poetry" clearly failed to achieve "a decisive independence of the English tradition", nor was it a "dominant form of verse." Perhaps, then, this version of literary nationalism has been derived from the short story, the prose counterpart (according to the "traditional image") of the Bulletin's "bush poetry".

The influence of the traditional image of the 'nineties in Australian literary criticism is revealed in references to "the Bulletin-type writer, working within what may be called the convention of bush realism", and obviously different from "the writer of colonial fiction in the romance convention". Yet

\(^2\)G.A. Wilkes, "The Development of Australian Literature" in C.D. Narasimhaiah, ed., An Introduction to Australian Literature ([Brisbane, 1965]), pp. 31, 30. Dr. Wilkes' summary of the "tradition image" of the 'nineties is cited here because it is both concise and accurate, although the part of his article in which it occurs is devoted to the proposition that "the underestimation of the nineties generally has been aggravated by the failure to pay sufficient attention to the features of the period that do not harmonise with its traditional image."

\(^3\)Ibid.

\(^4\)John Barnes, "Australian Fiction to 1920", op. cit., p. 160.
the debate of the 'nineties demonstrated that Lawson's arguments for "bush realism", far from being conventional, were vigorously attacked because they undermined literary nationalism.

On the evidence of the debate alone, it would appear that the association of literary nationalism and "bush realism" is not far from a variety of literary Marxism. The Bulletin, one politically-minded commentator claimed in 1966, had as its policy "Australia for the Australians"; because it advocated a policy of tariff protection for Australian industry, together with the "natural corollary of Protection for Australian thinking against the omnipresent British imperialist propaganda", it must therefore have been "a journal devoted to nurturing a typically Australian ideology and literature". That is, the Bulletin published

the efforts of a largely native-born school of writers of democratic and realist outlook breathing into their work the healthy Australian Nationalism that came to fruition with the federation of the Colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia.5

---

But literary nationalism in the *Bulletin* was not essentially "realistic", nor was "bush realism" a convention. Who, then, was "the *Bulletin*-type writer" whose short stories in the paper represent "in a way...a second literary discovery of Australia"?  

---

i. "Short Australian or Other Stories"

"*The Bulletin*, one of the paper's editors proclaimed in 1880, "is devoted to the entertainment and social improvement of the people." 7 "The public eye rejects as uninteresting more than half of what is printed in the publications of the day. It is only the other half which will be found in *The Bulletin*." 8 Fiction, whether for "entertainment" or "social improvement", was apparently not intended to be part of this

---


7 *TB*, 10 April 1880, p. 4.

other half, for the Bulletin printed only thirteen short stories during the next three and a half years.

The first short story published by the Bulletin - "The Stranger", in its third issue\(^9\) -- did suggest that the paper's readers would be treated to "vigor, freshness, and geniality".\(^{10}\) "The Stranger" was a clumsy but spirited satire on public taste and the worst conventions of popular Victorian fiction. But "entertainment" sold newspapers, not "pure" or "high Art"; the rest of the Bulletin's fiction published in its first year - two humorous sketches (one a tall story, and the other in Scots dialect), together with two sentimental melodramas about theatrical life - indicated the directions its fiction would take for the next two decades.\(^{11}\)

"Social improvement", however, was another matter, even if it meant doing violence to the reason

---


\(^{10}\) *Ibid.*, 31 January 1880, p. 1: "the aim of the proprietors is to establish a journal...unsurpassed in the vigor, freshness, and geniality of its literary contributions."

given by the Bulletin for the paper's initial success. The reason, it said, was that "everything in it is original", yet the paper's main fictional offering in 1880 was a serialised novel of social reform reprinted from an English publication: Adrienne: A Love Story of the Lancashire Cotton Distress. Unlike the first five stories published in the paper in 1880, Adrienne failed to mention Australia even passingly. But by reprinting Adrienne, the Bulletin's editors gave their first indication that they were prepared to let fiction serve the ends of their editorial columns.

When the editors claimed that the Bulletin "knows the measure of most men - especially little men", they were referring to small minds, not social under-

---

12 Ibid., 28 February 1880, p. 4.

13 A search of lists for the period 1862-1880, including the English Catalogue, has failed to reveal the author of Adrienne or its existence as a separate publication; the Bulletin's source, undoubtedly a periodical, has yet to be located. Adrienne appeared in the Bulletin between 6 March 1880 and 26 February 1881, in 36 instalments.
dogs. Unusually for Australian journalism of the time, they were prepared to denounce any individual, institution, or ideology which they believed subverted their determination to foster "national sentiment", and to form "a heart at least in the people of this great country." Adrienne doubtlessly appealed to the editors for its passing attacks on the "tawdry tinsel" of novels set "in the ancestral halls of dukes and earls", or on the "follies and weaknesses of the governing classes", and on the class structure of English society.

Adrienne's title refers to the disruption to English cotton mills in 1861 and 1862 caused by the American Civil War. The clash of interests between labour and capital has brought together Myles Heywood, an intelligent young worker, and Adrienne Blissett, the half-German niece of a mill-owner who himself pro-

14 TB, 26 June 1880, p. 2.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., 13 March 1880, p. 7; 27 March 1880, p. 7.
fesses "radical" sympathies. A kind of reverse Sybil, and another of the numerous mid-Victorian investigations of the growing economic disparity between classes, Adrienne is closer to the romance of Charlotte Bronte's Shirley than the didacticism of Charles Kingsley's Alton Locke. Appropriately enough, Myles keenly reads Jane Eyre for its "burning radicalism". 17

The theme of Adrienne, however, is Myles' gradual conversion to the principles of "reason" from unthinking adherence to the rightness of his working-class viewpoint: a premonitory chronicle of the Bulletin's own disenchantment with the Australian Labor Party in the 1890s. Not even the blossoming of radical love could sustain Myles' and Adrienne's laborious discussions on social justice, and the serial was discontinued unfinished. Nevertheless the Bulletin felt Adrienne's fictional propaganda important enough to justify running the novel for exactly a year. 18

17 Ibid., 5 June 1880, p. 10.

18 The Bulletin, the editors said in 1896, "never prints serials. It loathes them. Once it printed several instalments of a continued-in-our-next story, but after a few weeks it felt that it had a load on its chest, and it dropped that story right there. And to the best of this paper's belief no one ever enquired what had become of
If anything, fiction published in the Bulletin during the next two and a half years was even less auspicious than it was in 1880: only eight more stories appeared before the middle of 1883.\(^{19}\)

But on 23 June 1883 the Bulletin published its first notice directly soliciting short stories "of colonial interest, not exceeding one Bulletin page".\(^ {20} \) Writers responded immediately: over the next three weeks the paper received "several short tales", undoubtedly the result of its promise to "pay liberally" for those the rest of the tale" (TB, 18 July 1896, p. 11).

\(^{19}\) Two Gothic horror stories, including one by Ernest Favenc ("The Dead Hand", ibid., 16 April 1881, p. 14, signed "Dramingo"; "Beheaded", 22 October 1881, p. 10, unsigned); four stories of violent love and death (24 December 1881, p. 10; 7 January 1882, p. 14; 21 January 1882, pp. 14-15; "Bulletin Supplement" to 21 January 1882, pp. 7-8); one story modelled on Bret Harte's work, considered below (4 November 1882, p. 14); and Victor Daley's first Bulletin story, a humorous and morbid sketch on the practical uses of corpses (10 February 1883, p. 14).

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 23 June 1883, p. 19.
accepted.²¹ Before this appeal, the Bulletin had printed only thirteen short stories; after the appeal, twelve appeared during the next six months alone.

Despite Archibald's equation of the bush and the Bulletin's Australian "ideal", only half of the 161 short stories of the 'eighties published after the appeal concerned the outback and its people. And of the other half, only three even remotely reflected the paper's editorial policy.²² Stories "of colonial interest" meant stories familiar to millions of readers of popular Victorian periodical literature: the detective story, and the love entanglement. Frequently the two were combined. Australian taste for exciting fiction was insatiable, and the Bulletin was unexceptional in catering to it. While the editors inveighed against "cheap imported fiction", they

²¹Ibid., 14 July 1883, p. 2.

²²A humorous piece of social protest (ibid., 22 December 1888, p. 8) and two stories of convict life, including one by Frank Donohue (25 February 1888, p. 18, signed "Arthur Gayll"; 20 April 1889, p. 20, signed "Mudie": author unidentified).
printed contributions written in Australia whose quality was identical with that of the detested imported article. Francis Adams' first contribution to the paper, for instance, was a detective story ostensibly set in the United States; earlier, at least, an anonymous sketch saw the murderer loose in Australia. Forced humour, ghost stories, attempts to satirise melodrama which were as melodramatic as their subjects: the Bulletin published them all.

The paper's eclectic interests in fiction are perhaps best suggested by Lady Anne Wilson's seven contributions in 1885, one-quarter of the total printed that year. A thoroughly professional author, Lady Wilson ("Austral") was caught between several pairs of worlds. An Australian married to an Englishman and living in New Zealand, she wrote of Australia, England, and France; a woman, she took care in her short stories to speak as if she were a man; and an upright member of the colonial aristocracy, she was

23 Ibid., 6 July 1889, p. 8; 24 January 1885, p. 20.
irresistibly drawn to "the sex question" in her fiction.24

Lady Wilson's first contribution to the Bulletin was a description of "an Ouidian heroine" in Paris, at the same time as the paper was castigating Ouida's work for its "immorality". And murder may have been too exotic a theme for her tastes, but in "The 'Seamy Side'" the possibility that women have sexual urges was explored more explicitly (if no less tritely) than in her two later novels. Her most characteristic pose, however, was to describe the reappearance in the colonies of a former English acquaintance, whether a young girl or an embezzler. While England may not have been "Home" to Lady Wilson and several other authors whose mannered stories of drawing

24 "An Ouidian Heroine", ibid., 25 July 1885, p. 22; "Over the Garden Wall", 1 August 1885, p. 22; "My First and Only 'Mash'", 22 August 1885, p. 7; "The 'Seamy Side'", 5 September 1885, p. 24; "A Queer Acquaintanceship", 12 September 1885, p. 22; "The End of a 'Hero'", 3 October 1885, p. 22; and "A Curious Adventuress", 17 October 1885, p. 18. All are signed "Austral". Anne Wilson's husband, James Glenny Wilson -- one of whose uncles founded the Economist -- was knighted in 1915, forty-one years after they moved from Victoria to New Zealand. Lady Wilson published two volumes of verse in 1889 and 1901, and two novels: Alice Lauder (London, 1903) and Two Summers (London, 1900).
room love were published in the *Bulletin*, an English or French setting gave their work a veneer of sophistication they felt lacking in Australia.

The first striking indication that the short story was taken seriously by the *Bulletin* - as a form of art, or as an aid to circulation, or both - occurred on 21 December 1889, when the special Christmas number of the paper was composed almost wholly of short stories and verse. Between 1880 and 1888 122 short stories had been published in the paper. Between 1890 and 1900 the *Bulletin* printed an average of 130 stories annually. The transitional year was 1889: of fifty-two stories published, sixteen appeared in the Christmas number. More than with any single short story published by the *Bulletin* before Christmas 1889, the development of the short story as an integral part of Australian literature began on 14 December 1889. On that day the *Bulletin* published its new "Notice to Artistic and Literary Contributors", promising, as it did in 1883, to pay for "*Strictly Original* matter", but specifically requesting "short Australian or other stories, up to, say, 3000 words. About half that length, or even less,
will be preferred." The Christmas issue tested the popularity of a policy of making short fiction a regular feature of the paper, and the policy was implemented in 1890.

By requesting Australian "or other" stories, the Bulletin was simply confirming its practice of the 'eighties. "Social improvement" went the way of "high Art", and "entertainment" over-rode literary nationalism. As for stories treating the "real" Australia, less than one-third of the Bulletin's contributions of the 'nineties dealt with the bush and its inhabitants. Nearly half of the fiction published by the Bulletin in the 'nineties, in fact, was precisely the sort calculated to appeal to popular taste: exciting melodrama full of domestic intrigue, violent death, humour and pathos.

The remainder was made up of three unusual 'cycles' of short stories: about convicts, published

---

25 That is, approximately 480 of the 1454 stories published from 1890 to (and including) 1900.
between 1890 and 1892; the Pacific islands and Java, in 1893 and 1894; and contributions from New Zealanders, between 1895 and 1899. Not unexpectedly, the Bulletin's eight most prolific contributors -- each of whom published more than 25 short stories in the paper during the 'nineties -- both reflected and created the main themes of Bulletin fiction. And with the exception of the authors of "bush stories", none of them worked so single-mindedly (and single-handedly) towards the identification of Australia as William Astley: "Price Warung".

26 Of the 71 convict stories published in the 'nineties, 24 appeared in 1890, 29 in 1891, and 18 in 1892. The second cycle, 106 Pacific island stories, began in 1893 with 26 sketches (although two had appeared in 1890), continued in 1894 with 25, and rapidly declined thereafter: 1895 (9); 1896 (10); 1897 (6); 1898 (14); 1899 (8); and 1900 (6). A total of 149 stories by New Zealanders or written from New Zealand experience appeared as follows: 1890 (7); 1892 (11); 1893 (9); 1894 (9); 1895 (17); 1896 (28); 1897 (24); 1898 (19); 1899 (13); 1900 (12). None were printed in 1891. This third cycle is considered in ch. 8 below.

27 Warung, Dyson, Favenc, Montgomery, Lawson, Rudd, Becke, and Dorrington: see above, n. 54 to ch. 5.
Price Waring was the Bulletin's most prolific short story writer during the 'nineties, and virtually all his contributions owed their publication to the paper's editorial policy. Three of his four volumes of "Tales" of convict life in early Australia were first published in the Bulletin between 1890 and 1892, and his first collection, Tales of the Convict System, was published as a separate volume by the newspaper in 1892. The Bulletin had anticipated Waring's "Tales" by serialising Frank Donohue's "History of Botany Bay" in 1887 and 1888. The reason for publishing Donohue's history was explained clearly: it was to teach "Young Australia" that these colonies will never get rid of the taint of a squalid officialdom, built up by the exercise of gaolers' authority over a herd of cruelly abused wretches whose crimes were out-

---

28 Twenty-five "Tales of 'The System'" were printed between 24 May 1890 and 10 January 1891; this title (and the numbering of the tales) was not adopted until the fourth story, "Absalom Day's Promotion", on 9 August 1890. The nineteenth through twenty-second tales were misnumbered. Waring's fourteen "Tales of the Old Regime" and thirteen "Tales of Old Sydney" appeared alternately between 21 February 1891 and 5 December 1891: both series became misnumbered in the course of their publication in the paper. His fourth series of convict stories, seventeen "Tales of the Early Days", was published between 13 February 1892 and 24 December 1892.
weighted by their expiation, until the Imperial connection which rivets the past on the present for us becomes an exploded myth, and these colonies of ours form federated states under an independent Australian flag. 29

Donohue's history undoubtedly aided the enthusiastic reception of Warung's stories two years later, and was acceptable to the editors of the Bulletin on the same grounds that prompted them to include Marcus Clarke in their literary canon of the 1880s: the Bulletin valued all three for non-literary reasons.

Just as the "History of Botany Bay" was intended to sweep away the "deadweight of the Past", 30 Warung's stories were meant to demonstrate what the Bulletin once called England's "original sin against the destinies of the Australias". 31 "This virgin continent", the Bulletin's editors exclaimed in an unusual burst of theological fervour, "a paradise in its promise of freedom and felicity to the groaning


30 Opening chapter of the "History of Botany Bay", ibid., 19 November 1887, p. 6.

31 Ibid., 14 March 1891, p. 6.
millions of Europe, was defiled - consciously and of malice aforethought defiled - by the 'greatest nation under the sun'. The publication of Warung's work was the clearest attempt by the Bulletin in the 1890s to use literature to "organise the Australasian sentiment". So seriously did the editors view their mission that two-thirds of the short stories published by the paper in 1891 were written by Warung.

Convict life was not a new theme for Australian literature: from Henry Savery's *Quintus Servinton* in 1830 (the biography "true in its general features" of a convicted forger transported to Tasmania) to Marcus Clarke's *His Natural Life*, which had been issued in at least five editions before Warung's first stories appeared in the *Bulletin* in 1890. And even before that, short episodes of the history of convict times had occasionally appeared in newspapers; James Calder, the author of one series published in the Hobart *Mercury*, considered Clarke a "damned scamp" for "stealing" the

---

32 Ibid.
results of his research into early convict records. 33

33 Calder published many notes on early Tasmanian history in (among other places) the Australasian (1872), Mercury (1872-3) and Tasmanian Tribune (1875). In 1881 he gave Sir George Grey one of his clipping-books, "Scraps of Tasmanian History", including an article on "The Piratical Seizure and Wreck of the Frederick" from the Tasmanian Tribune for 14 February 1876. In the article he noted that since 1872, when he had first introduced an early account of the Frederick's seizure, "but in quite a new dress, a writer in another colony, I understand, has seized on the topic and printed it; but like most dealers in second-hand wares, without attracting much attention to it, at least here." The "writer", he added in an MS note in the scrapbook, was "Mr. Marcus Clark [sic], as I have heard". Clarke, of course, had actually serialised His Natural Life in the Australian Journal before Calder's articles, but Calder felt that his own work had been plagiarised. He implored Grey not to let the scrapbook get "too much out of your own hand, for there has been a good deal of pirating already from articles first contributed to the public by me, notably Mr. Marcus Clark [sic], lately dead." He complained about his "severe and unremitting work...and then to have these damned scamps of writers stealing from them, and then giving them to the world as their own, is not pleasant. Mr. M. Clark [sic] in particular, was a very nice sort of fellow for this work. He has more than once visited Tasmania, and during these trips borrowed, and then stuck to, the only two perfect copies of our old almanacs that I ever knew of. So I beg of you, if ever you lend the vol. in question it will not be to any of your literati" (Auckland Public Library, Grey Papers, Calder to Grey, 2 November 1881). Warung published an account of Calder's complaints to Grey (TB, 31 January 1891, p. 8, signed "W"), perhaps obtained from Grey himself. Correspondence in the Grey Papers shows that this account is inaccurate.
The popularity of His Natural Life possibly encouraged John O'Reilly to write The Golden Secret (1887), as it may have led Charles White to compose his Early Australian History: Convict Life in New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land (1889).

Clarke's prologue to His Natural Life claimed both historical authenticity and a social purpose for the novel. In order to prevent the recurrence of a system divorced from "the wholesome influence of public opinion" and subject to the rule of capricious jailers rather than the rule of law, Clarke warned that he would portray "tragic and terrible" events. "But I hold it needful to my purpose to record them, for they are events which have actually occurred." So too Warung and the Bulletin. The political motive behind the paper's publication of his stories demanded that they be founded on fact. The editors felt obliged to add a note after "Convict Ruddé's Proposal of Marriage" that

although, in the course of publishing this series of "Tales of 'The System'", the fact has been frequently stated implicitly that each narrative was founded on actual incidents, the particular conditions reflected in this story are of such a scandalous nature as to
demand from us a more direct assurance. We may, therefore, inform our readers (1) that every one of the material circumstances interwoven with the "Tale" is authenticated by official testimony of one sort or another; and (2) that the conversations which have been introduced to link historical occurrences together are little more than paraphrases of either officially-recorded speeches, or, of the remarks (noted in diaries and other papers to which "Price Warung" has had access) made by persons who are the originals of the characters in the story. When our contributor has deviated from fact, he has done so in the interests of decency.34

Warung was not dismayed by his editors' unwillingness to admit the role of the creative imagination, for he went on to write three more series of "Tales" over the next two years. And the Bulletin was fully prepared to overlook the sentimentality, stylistic infelicities, and ponderous moralizing of Warung's stories because the editors felt that he was writing social history, not literature. It would seem that the only sort of realism understood by the Bulletin was authenticated "fact", and that only when the "facts" corresponded with an editorial bias.

Yet Warung certainly considered himself an author, not a reporter. The Bulletin was ideally suited for his talents: the fragmentary nature of his sources lent themselves to the elaboration of a

34TB, 6 December 1890, p. 22.
specific incident or character, and the editors gave him as much space as he needed. "The Commandant's Picnic Party", for instance, was over 8000 words long. That Warung possessed considerable narrative talent is obvious from his few stories about that instrument of convict freemasonry, "The Ring". Yet Warung failed as an author where Henry Lawson did not, a failure that marked the difference between literary realism and fictionalised social history. Incapable of letting his material speak for itself, Warung constantly intruded where he was least required: to make a self-evident point. An inability to dissuade authors from self-conscious rhetoric proved to be the characteristic deficiency of the Bulletin's literary editors throughout the 'nineties.

Warung's was a significant failure nevertheless, for it doubly emphasised Lawson's achievement. Lawson's concern was the realism of literature, not the "fact" of social history. When Warung turned away from his carefully-read historical sources, he foundered on the

\[^{35}Ibid., 30 August 1890, pp. 22, 24.\]
same conventions of sentimental melodrama that J.H. Greene accurately diagnosed in 1896. The cause of melodrama in the Bulletin's fiction, Greene suggested, was the paper's dependence on a fictional deus ex machina. Warung's Bulletin stories not dealing with convict history or his own experiences in the Riverina district all depend on death, murder, or disaster for their climaxes. Even his series of eight "Tales of the Riverine" rely on similar devices, with one notable exception: "The Incineration of Dictionary Ned".36 In this story Warung

36 See "The Last of the Wombat, Barge", ibid., 20 December 1890, pp. 20-21; "A Study in Heredity", 28 November 1881, pp. 21-22; "Brothers Twain", 19 December 1891, p. 21; "Gowrie's Last Joke", 2 January 1892, pp. 21-22; "Vesper", 6 February 1892, p. 22; and "At the Feet of His Fame", 14 April 1894, pp. 23-24.

adopted the wry humour of Mark Twain and earlier bush yarns of the 'eighties, and engagingly described how "Dictionary Ned"'s coffin and body were used as fuel in a steamboat race. But otherwise the shaping imagination of the fabulist deserted him, and with it his opportunity for literary fame.

With the publication of Warung's seventeenth tale of Australia's "Early Days" in the Christmas issue for 1892, the first of the Bulletin's three cycles of short stories ended. Curiously enough, just as Warung's convict stories emphasised Lawson's achievement, so the second Bulletin cycle accented the literary nationalism of both Warung and Lawson. The editors of the Bulletin had little reason to praise the principal authors in this second cycle - Louis Becke and Alexander Montgomery - for their Australian "atmosphere". Becke wrote almost exclusively about the South Sea islands, and Montgomery was best known for his tales of the Malay archipelago. But their praise did demonstrate how closely the tastes of the Bulletin's editorial staff were based on (and were shaped by) those of their readers: tastes essentially unrelated to any "traditional image" of "bush realism".
Becke, like Warung, did not introduce a new theme into Australian literature. Loloma, a picturesque romance of Fiji, was published by Henry Britton in 1883, and five years later Hume Nisbet set the first of his forty novels and collections of short stories in the "Papuan Gulf". 

Becke, however, was one of the first writers of English fiction to treat the islands of the south Pacific from sound personal experience. In the 1890s the area was still popularly imagined as either a palm-fringed paradise or an anthropophagoric hell. Becke's contributions to the Bulletin showed that it could be both and neither of these, and although he was called a "colonial Stevenson", he probably contributed more to the popularisation of the south Pacific as a field for fiction than Robert Louis Stevenson, who did not settle in Samoa until 

1890.39

A.G. Stephens was so impressed by one of Becke's collections of stories, *The Ebbing of the Tide* (1895), that he suggested that its appearance marked Becke as "the leader of an Australian literary renaissance" in prose.40 Becke's "transcripts of South Sea Island life", Stephens wrote, gained their importance because "Nature is everything, and the narrative art is confined to the recital of his vivid emotional impressions."41

---

39 In *TB*, 11 April 1896, "Literary Notes", A.G. Stephens objects to Becke's being called a "colonial Stevenson": the same review in which Stephens claimed that "the story is the thing to consider". Becke's first certain contribution to the *Bulletin* was "'Bully' Hayes: the Pirate of the Pacific" (4 February 1893, pp. 22-23, continued in 18 February 1893, p. 21, both unsigned). According to Becke, Ernest Favenc first suggested that he "write some tales of island life and send them to the Sydney *Bulletin*" (quoted in *ibid.*., 22 February 1896, "'The *Bulletin*' Book Exchange"); the result was Becke's twenty-one contributions during 1893 which formed the basis of his *By Reef and Palm* (London, 1894). See also A. Grove Day, *Louis Becke* (Melbourne, 1967).


41 *Ibid.*., 13 February 1897, "Red Page".
Sixteen years later Stephens had second thoughts. While acknowledging that Becke's stories "contributed greatly to making the reputation of the Sydney Bulletin", and that Becke had "a natural gift for story-telling", Stephens complained (as he had about Lawson) that Becke's work was "all episodes... detached from the main current of life."  And when Alexander Montgomery's *Five Skull Island and Other Tales of the Malay Archipelago* appeared in 1897, Stephens chose to compare him with Becke as a narrator. Montgomery, Stephens found, was a "scienced" story-teller: making infallible point after point, and clinching all in a dexterous climax - as opposed to a natural story-teller like Becke, with his transcripts of South Sea Island life in which Nature is everything.... Montgomery knows more: Becke has felt more. With Montgomery it is the telling that most excites admiration: with Becke it is the tale.  

Stephens appears to have been misled by his own love of aphorism, for closer reading would have shown

42*Bookfellow*, 1 March 1913.

43TB, 13 February 1897, "Red Page". Stephens was using "scienced" in the older sense of "skilled" or "artful": a reflection of the slightly pedantic vocabulary of the self-taught man. Even in a hastily-written minute to Archibald, Stephens carefully marked a diphthong in "caesuras": see above, n. 143 to ch. 5.
him exactly the opposite. The difference between Beeke and Montgomery, in fact, was the difference between an accomplished author of fiction and a slick magazine-writer. Montgomery's stories - with titles like "A Man of Prey and a Woman of Action!", "A Third in the Game", and "Her Father's Head: A Bornean Nightmare" - were peppered with exclamation marks, lost treasure, cunning natives, and murder: all the ingredients calculated to appeal to the tastes of the Bulletin's readers. 44 And so despite his objections to Montgomery's flawed art (as he understood it), Stephens continued to accept Montgomery's work at a rate which made him, after Price Warung, Edward Dyson and Ernest Favenc, the Bulletin's most prolific contributor of the 1890s.

Stephens' second thoughts about Beeke's work ("all episodes") were fallacious, for he was simply

attacking the nature of the short story, not Becke's short stories. His earlier emphasis on the "natural" was instructive, however, for it demonstrated one connection between the bush yarn of the 1880s and the short story of the 'nineties: "fact". Becke's descriptive realism had its source in his personal experience, just as Warung's source was documented history. Stephens was more interested in Becke's "recital" of "vivid emotional impressions", which he considered to be the whole of Becke's "narrative art". Hence Lawson had no "art"; the story, after all, "was the thing to consider", even if the telling failed to be "scienced". But "scienced" story-telling was what the Bulletin's editors wanted for their readers, so long as it was "strictly original". As a result, both Price Warung and Louis Becke were "Bulletin-type" writers -- the one an unmistakable nationalist and the paper's most frequently-published short-story writer, the other the "leader of an Australian literary renaissance" -- yet neither could be called a "bush realist". If the Bulletin's editors, as they said, were determined to form "a heart at least" in the people of Australia, was its true literary source the bush at all?
The Gardin of Eadin

In 1891 the Bulletin accurately identified its "usual return" of bush stories as "10 per cent. bush township; 25 per cent. bullocks, 45 per cent. noble bushman; remaining 20 girl and flood." Ten years earlier, however, the Bulletin's first indirect appeal for short stories was ominously phrased as an invitation for Australian writers to model themselves on Bret Harte. Commenting on the discovery of a solitary "digger"'s body in Northern Queensland, the paper claimed:

Goldfields civilization is a product indigenous to itself, and its prevailing types of character are distinctive and peculiar. Bret Harte has done much to individualise these as they showed themselves on the Sacramento, in the early days; and his idylls of Red Dog, and his prose epics of Sandy Bar, are true enough to nature to be fairly descriptive of the same class among ourselves.... It may well be doubted if any romance of olden days - of chivalrous quest or wild amour - ever wreathed itself about incidents and scenes of peril and adventure more thrilling than those illustrating the struggles of the colonial race for wealth. Tales are related, of local interest and familiar fame, more weird and wonderful, and

\[45\] Ibid., 17 October 1891, p. 17.
more tragically realistic withal, than any ever woven round the recital of knightly search for Holy Grail. Greathead, the Pilgrim, finds his posthumous type in the sun-bronzed, bearded miner; and the legends of fancy and romantic story are replaced in our practical day by the more tangible, if not less starting, realities of the lust for gain. Who will tell the tale?

A somewhat muted answer came fourteen months later, with the anonymous publication in the Bulletin of "The Tombstone in the Garden: a Fiction Founded on Fact". The "fact", despite the story's apparent Australian setting, is not Australia but the American West, and the story is not Bret Harte acclimatised but Bret Harte appropriated. The Bulletin had discovered the "local colour" school of the American West and Midwest; it needed only a competent Australian to combine American frontier humour, American "realism", and Australian nationalism to satisfy twentieth-century literary historians that a "Bulletin school" of short

46 Ibid., 3 September 1881, p. 2. Cf. ibid., 22 June 1895, p. 11, in which a correspondent's story is rejected, and he is advised to read Harte's "Dow's Flat".

story writers existed. No such combination emerged in the 'eighties.

Nevertheless in 1883 John Farrell pointed to the accomplishment of the 'nineties when his sketch "The Ghost" was published in the same issue as "How He Died". After satirising Eton ("where loafing and squatting are taught in all its branches") and the glories of the Australian bush at night ("the deeply, darkly, beautiful blue sky above, the stately eucalypti around, and quite a number of empty gin-bottles in the foreground"), Farrell's sketch soon develops into an authentic tall story. A swagman, denied food and lodging in a shepherd's hut, attacks the shepherd with a saw:

Mick was soon reduced to about half his proper size. Still he fought bravely on, until the stranger, by a dexterous back-hander, removed the best part of his spine, and hung it up on a nail behind the door. Then, as Mick's life gave out, he gave in, and commenced spitting blood - always a bad sign. Straightening himself as well as he could...
could after his grievous loss, he simply remarked, "You've got me backbone, but me money's all right." Then he sat down on the handle of his axe and expired.  

This tall story, followed by others about a gigantic mosquito, a flaming drunk mistaken for a comet, and an improbable aboriginal courtship, was one of the earliest indications that the Bulletin would become as valuable a repository of nineteenth-century Australian humour as the New York Spirit of the Times is for that of the United States.  

The literary form of this humour, however, was that of the reported "bush yarn", which almost invariably had a moral, an ostensible narrator, and a tale based on fact. And although both the tall story and most reported bush yarns originated in oral story-telling, Victor Daley would have to supply the literary link between them.  

Daley, whom A.G. Stephens called a humourless Irishman, is an unlikely choice as the Bulletin's first

49 Ibid., 21 July 1883, p. 20.

50 Ibid., 24 May 1884, p. 19; 19 December 1885, p. 7; 4 September 1886, p. 12.
moral allegorist. Yet his "Christmas Island" is a sustained exploration of the nature of man, masquerading as the ramblings of a drunken country doctor. After a long and superficial introduction - which later gains point when Daley confesses that he has been intentionally delaying his story - the "Doctor" is introduced. Daley becomes part of the audience while the Doctor begins to tell the story of man's true ancestors, in whose kingdom Art and Song were born, and whose pride in writing "the wonderful and terrible Epic of Man" was tempered only by their willing acknowledgment that they were inferior to animals. This acknowledgment, in fact, is both the height and end of their culture, which was engulfed by a flood; the Doctor, who lived with these people, simply packed up his carpet-bag like a mythological Yankee pedlar and walked away when the waters rose. Then the doctor


52 TB, 27 December 1884, pp. 11-13.
tells how he once found himself lost in the bush - although he knew the track well - and as the sun began to set how he felt himself reuniting imaginatively with his former tribal fellows. He captures for a moment a vision of his childhood, and his dream begins with elements reminiscent of the *Romance of the Rose* and *Ulysses*. A magic dugout canoe carries him to a land of golden sands, perfumes, and music, where he discovers

a padlocked gate with one hinge, beside which was a placard bearing the following legend: -

**THIS IS THE GARDIN OF EADIN:**

Trespasers will be porsekewted akordin to the stricktist rigger of the Lor.

Man's passion for identifying but not understanding himself extends even further into Eden, where the Doctor finds another sign:

**THISS IS THE TREE OF NOLLIDGE**

Whoossoever eats of the Froot of thiss Tree Shall shoorly di.

After further explorations - mixed with some undergraduate humour - and a conversation with the Serpent, the Doctor enters the "kingdom" of animals, waiting to inherit the earth. Here he meets the President of
the animal republic (a wombat), the Minister of Education (an emu, who is deposed because she has been caught reading a book), and a Professor of Natural History (whose one glass eye falls out and is eaten by the emu). He also learns that although the learned men of the republic are irreparably split into pro- and anti- evolutionary factions, they all agree that Man can have no soul. As a final, and perhaps unintentional vision in this allegory of the dehumanisation of man, the Doctor learns that the Professor of Natural History has explained man's movement by reconstructing some bones he found on a beach. He fixed up missing Adam "with one leg and one arm in the air, and the other arm and leg on the ground, and explained that man progressed over the ground whirling in the manner of a wheel": the form of both St. Andrew's Cross and the swastika. The Doctor wakes up on being told that the higher animals have evolved from man.

The editors of the Bulletin clearly missed the point of Daley's story, thinking it was merely another tall tale. The only other allegory of sorts published...
by the paper before 1890 undoubtedly appealed to them for a different reason: Randolph Bedford's first story, "Jepson's Fortune", was an attack on the hypocrisy of organised religion.\textsuperscript{53} Daley connected the fantasy of the tall story and the "reality" of the reported bush yarn by introducing the literary device of an internal narrator, telling his story to an audience. The tone of the internal story, in the meantime, was being set by a group of five literal fables.\textsuperscript{54} Their unknown author, some Australian Aesop, spoke like an Australian country farmer: colloquially, humorously, and easily. It was a style of narrative that would be repeated in hundreds of short contributions from country readers, tiny delightful episodes of Australian life, the unconscious nationalism of a people being itself: pathetic, maudlin, informative, and usually humorous. At one time many of them may have been yarns - rambling, inconclusive,

\textsuperscript{53}\textit{Ibid.}, 21 December 1889, pp. 9-10.

\textsuperscript{54}"The Dog in the Manger: A Fable", \textit{ibid.}, 24 May 1884, p. 19; "Androcles and the Lion", 29 November 1884, p. 20; "The Dingo and the Opossum: A Fable" and "The Old Man and His Ass", 17 January 1885, pp. 20, 22; "The Magpie and the Cat", 11 July 1885, p. 18. All are unsigned.
and interminable, but with a clear series of anti-climaxes - related in a Melbourne "pub" or around a Queensland camp fire; their transcription and reporting in the Bulletin frequently ensured that many more of them would be repeated again as the personal experience of the paper's reader.

The first of these reported oral bush yarns to be dignified with a sub-heading, "Bridget's Burial", was published in 1884 as a short story. The narrator moves naturally and illogically from poetry to heaven and beer, and ends up (after many disapproving editorial interjections from "ED.B.") with a story of how the wife of a bush miner escaped being buried alive by her husband. Despite a slight stiffening of style, the rhythms of Australian speech are easily heard when the narrator dryly touches on "heaven":

No one would stay there who had been much about New South Wales - particularly Hay or Albury way. The change wouldn't be gradual enough. They would be for getting back: they would choose rather annihilation than a beerless futurity with no visible off-end to it.55

55 Ibid., 14 June 1884, p. 19.
The same spirit had been caught by a *Bulletin* correspondent as early as 1880, in the first of a series of impressionistic sketches of small Australian bush towns. Describing a deserted goldfield, "Vaurien" had commented that "the creek which meanders through the town would be a pleasant one if it had any water, and if there were not so many dead dogs watching stones in the middle of it." (It was, possibly, another "Wattlegum", one of whose newspaper editors, a bankrupt shoemaker, "became country correspondent for several newspapers, and ultimately started the *Stiffener* with a time-payment plant, and had systematically disapproved of Gladstone's foreign policy ever since." But the first *Bulletin* contributor to raise the yarn to the status of a coherent short story was Ernest Favenc, writing as "Delcomyn", in his series "People I have Met". His three sketches, significantly, all centred in the humorous downfall of experienced rural figures: bullockies, bushmen, and


sundowners, collectively the pharmakos of Aristophanes and the archetypal scapegoat of Australian literary mythology. 58

The brief reported yarn did not gain a certain place in the Bulletin until 1887, when the form was institutionalised in the newly-founded "Aboriginalities" column. Occasional short sketches before 1887 shared the yarn's humour and loose structure, but the humour tended to be forced and the structure unable to follow the interior logic of a smoothly-told oral piece. Appearing irregularly for many years under Alexander Montgomery's direction, the "Aboriginalities" column gave an unrivalled picture of life in rural Australia as the Bulletin's readers experienced it. Letters from correspondents brought verse, hints on survival in the bush, sidelights on native customs, and unbelievable stories of the vicissitudes of outback life. One of the more interesting contributors, Philip Mowbray ("Scotty the Wrinkler"), became an institution in himself. Once described by the editors as "an original

58 Ibid., 26 February 1887, p. 15; 26 March 1887, p. 14; and 3 March 1888, p. 18.
writer, who has paid for his experience, and who, in turn, is paid for what he writes", Mowbray wrote with consummate knowledge of rural Australia. So deeply rooted in his experience were his yarns and stories that it is occasionally difficult to distinguish between fiction and description. In "Red Gum", for instance, he combines social commentary with his story of sawyers: "they help one another; they are not tied down to class or clannish prejudices." But in "The Race Across the Flat", "The Wrinkler" is purely an observer as he describes the social stratification of inland riverside life. Whatever his role, "Scotty the Wrinkler" enjoyed considerable popularity with that majority of Australians who lived in cities, simply because he was an articulate spokesman of bush life.

---

59 Ibid., 7 December 1889, p. 7.

60 Ibid., 13 July 1889, p. 20.

61 Ibid., 14 September 1889, p. 8. See his The Swag: the Unofficial Flute of the Sundowners and Other Colonial Vagrants; with Which is Enfurcated the Bush Marconi and the Whaler's Telegraph (Melbourne, n.d.)
The significance of these yarns should not be underestimated, for many of them represent the first halting attempts to present facets of Australian experience objectively and without undue distortion. One narrator was quick to point out that the life of his kangaroo-hunter was not romanticised as the American Indian had been romanticised: "the halo of romance encircling the head of the lifter of human hair is not for him". 62 This sort of self-consciousness in the name of descriptive realism gradually robbed the Bulletin's bush yarns of their spontaneous humour. By the end of the 'eighties, with the exception of Philip Mowbray's work, contributors of yarns had confined themselves to simple description of exciting events: the shooting of an educated Aboriginal, or the capture of the bushrangers "Three-fingered Jack" and "Bunya Bill". 63 The wry humour of the bush yarn continued in the more consciously literary short story

62 "Scalp-hunting in Australia", ibid., 27 July 1889, pp. 8-9, signed "Bosso". Author unidentified.

63 Ibid., 21 September 1889, pp. 8, 13; 12 October 1889, p. 8.
of the 'nineties, while the yarns themselves were simply used as occasional paragraphs in the regular columns of the *Bulletin*.

The association of humour, a variety of descriptive realism, and country life was not accidental. Laughter, after all, was the truest response of man to a country where he could grow rich by sieving the very earth, and be ruined as quickly by the collapse of a bank he had never seen. And if Archibald was right in saying that the countryside bred a more authentic Australian type than the cities were able to produce, then it only required an Australian to describe the outback as it really was for a distinctively Australian literature to emerge, or at least a literature informed by a distinctively Australian spirit.

The connection was established immediately after the *Bulletin*'s first appeal for short stories in 1883; the two stories published in the following month were headed "Back-block Photographs" and "Far Western Photographs". The developing science of

64 *Ibid.*, 7 July 1883, p. 9; 14 July 1883, p. 10.
photography gave a new dimension to the concept of realism, an idea that led Ernest O'Ferrall to call himself "Kodak". But the humour of these two early sketches, and of many to follow, was derived solely from the stereotyped character: the confirmed bachelor and the canny Scot. Bush yarns had gained their spontaneity because their humour was the result of a unique incongruity of character or event. And the theme of love in the outback yielded a few heavy-handedly humorous sketches, as did small town life; despite descriptions of the foibles of the local bank clerk, druggist, or newspaper editor, no Stephen Leacock was forthcoming from Australia in the 1880s. The limited range of humour in these rural sketches, moreover, is reflected in the circumscribed geography of their settings. Aside from James Edmond's wry description of waiting for a steamboat on a "northern" river, the overwhelming majority were set on the stations, mines, and bush country of New

65 Although O'Ferrall did not begin contributing short stories to the *Bulletin* until 1901, in 1896 an anonymous sketch "Darby and Joan" was subtitled "A Kodak" (8 August, p. 27).

66 *TB*, 24 December 1887, p. 16; 29 December 1888, p. 8; 9 November 1889, p. 8.
South Wales and Victoria. 67

Autonomous comic figures were equally limited. The Australian anti-hero - the solitary country worker, Archibald's "ideal" - was essentially a creation of the fiction of the 1890s. 68 The Aboriginal, either as hero or butt of jokes, never attained the literary status of the American negro in the nineteenth century. Only one humorous short story touched on the place of the Aboriginal in Australia; appropriately enough, the object of a story (a young boy escaping a diligent truant officer) never appears. 69 The major stereotyped comic figures in the Bulletin of the 1880s, in


68 Writing in 1907, Archibald noted that "public sentiment is ever sound in the long run, but the voice of the people -- the voice of the cities -- is not, in the first place, 'the voice of God'; it is often of the devil. The Bulletin ...ever bethought itself of the unruffled and compassionate atmosphere of the outback camps. Careless of what the venal cities thought, it addressed itself to its ideal -- The Lone Hand" ("The Genesis of 'The Bulletin'"; Lone Hand, I, 1 [May 1907], 54).

69 TB, 21 June 1884, p. 19.
fact, are the Chinese, whose presence in Australia exposed virulent racism as the ugliest aspect of Australian nationalism.

Six stories before 1890, all in the vein prescribed by the Bulletin's editorials, included Chinese characters. Five, (two of them by Edward Dyson) were relatively gentle, portraying the Chinese as objects of humour because of their miserliness, hypocrisy, or addition to opium. The sixth, Dyson's "A Profitable Pub", became better known as "A Golden Shanty", the title story of the paper's anthology published in 1890. Its immediate source of humour, the clash between thieving, greedy, and cunning Orientals and an Irish bush publican, has less appeal now than Dyson's description of the pub and family themselves. Similarly his occasional moments of laconic realism help redeem much of his grotesquely formalistic description, and the grim seriousness that

underlies Dyson's half-satiric epithets directed against the Chinese: ("squalid", "gibbering", and "pestiferous heathen") can be forgotten. The final irony of Dyson's depersonalisation of the Chinese could perhaps best be appreciated by an Australian economic historian; it was their industry in gradually dismantling Michael Doyle's pub from under his feet that resulted in his sudden wealth. 71

Nevertheless "A Profitable Pub" gains its somewhat limited stature as one of the two finest short stories published by the Bulletin in the 1880s because of its description of the debilitating effects on a man and his family of living in Australia's semi-arid outback regions. Wry humour was one defence against the geography of Australia, but it was not enough. A hostile neo-animistic Nature frequently produces the literary figures of the lost child and drowned man, figures which appear remarkably infrequently in the Bulletin of the 'eighties. When they

71 Ibid., 24 December 1887, pp. 5-6, signed "E.G.D."
do, the figures are less signs of noble tragedy than objects of sentimental pathos. One author attempted a sketch of brutal realism describing "A Nigger-Hunt in Northern Queensland", but "Banjo" Paterson's first Bulletin story about a vicious dog illustrates the limited aims and talents of the majority of outback authors. Most of their stories were simple murder mysteries set in the bush or on the diggings, and love stories illustrating either the ruin of a manly hero by a scheming woman, or a delicate woman by a bestial brute. Sentimentality, the quality most appreciated by the Bulletin's readers, was the hallmark of the relatively few serious short stories to deal with the "real" Australia before 1890.

---


73 Ibid., 25 December 1886, p. 21, signed "Bushman". Author unidentified.

74 "Hughey's Dog", ibid., 2 November 1889, p. 8.
A fictionalised attempt to glamorise life in the bush appeared very shortly after the Bulletin's first appeal for short stories in 1883. For the author of "Miss Kissie Gouvernante", as for J.F. Archibald, the "free bush" was a place where men drink and swear among cattle, where the sun is hot and the air is fresh, where the murky suspicions of an over-sensitive refinement have no place, where men don't believe a bit in the inherent depravity of the human heart. For Henry Lawson, however, this simplistic concept of rural Australia was essentially false. His "Story of Malachi" certainly echoed both the sentiments of "Miss Kissie Gouvernante" - the hero of Lawson's story saves the life of the squatter's daughter, who was abandoned at the critical moment by a "Sydney exquisite" - and the sentimentality of the bush melodrama: the hero dies leaving a widowed mother and blind brother. The story's humour is clearly only a foil to its heavy pathos. But Lawson had already caught a central aspect of his vision of Australia in his first Bulletin

75 Ibid., 18 August 1883, p. 22.
76 Ibid., 22 June 1889, p. 20.
story six months earlier, in 1888.

"His Father's Mate" was the awkward work of a young man of twenty-one, and its ending is apparently as contrived as that of "The Story of Malachi". The version of "His Father's Mate" published by the Bulletin, however, was the most rigorously and artistically structured attempt to investigate the meaning of Australia that had yet appeared in the paper.77 "His Father's Mate", as it has been reprinted, appears as a simple and sentimental picture of an accident in a dreary worked-out mine. Whoever edited the story - and it may have been Lawson himself - removed several essential passages that give the story a thematic importance far beyond its literary merit.

Above Golden Gully, Lawson remarked in the opening of his story, "ran a line of wattle-trees in full bloom, and the contrast between their bright yellow and the other sombre growth was typical of this land of contradictions." The gold of the wattles on one side of the gully mirror the gold of three pines

---

77 Ibid., 22 December 1888, pp. 18-19.
illuminated by the setting sun on the other; over all is spun the faded lustre of the "Land of Promise" which once shone for Tom Mason "in all its golden glory". "This land of contradictions": between the two hills is Golden Gully, "golden in name only" since man's presumption and greed tore open the "tortured earth". And the surrounding wilderness of dark bush was only slowly "reclaiming its own again", just as a dark pit claimed young Isley Mason. The balance between gold and gloom, and between hill and hill, created a sense of uneasy expectancy:

The "predominant note" of the scene was a painful sense of listening, that never seemed to lose its tension, a listening as though for the sounds of digger-life, sounds that had gone and left a void that was intensified by the signs of a former presence.

The "predominant note" of Australia, that is, was not Marcus Clarke's "Weird Melancholy", but the tense irony of "this land of contradictions". Australia deserved neither the negative pessimism generated by her past or the equally negative optimism of an heroic future; she was balanced between both in a creative stasis that included both, in a silence so intense that it could be heard.
For the unknown author of "A Tombstone in the Garden", the silence of Australia's bush was an actual presence, stilling the sounds of life, and casting the haze of "an Oriental dream" over him, rousing "vague echoes of old romance ... in this new land of hard reality."\(^7\) And to Agnes O'Brien, the silence of the gums was a void, absorbing her "individuality; their silence is sublime, yet terrifying."\(^7\) Australia, for Lawson, was all of these: sublime and terrifying, romantic and real, promising and denying, golden and sombre; and most importantly, Australia's balanced extremes challenged man by presenting him with a moral metaphor for himself. Lawson's "tension" was so potent that it could only be broken by Nemesis, "Nemesis in troopers' uniform", a refrain repeated four times in the story like the thud of Tom Mason's futile picking.

---

\(^7\) \textit{Ibid.}, 4 November 1883, p. 14.

\(^7\) \textit{Ibid.}, 22 December 1900, p. 32.
Nemesis is the daughter of Night, tarnishing the gold of Golden Gully; she is the goddess of righteous indignation, who strikes man down for presuming to be man. Just before he died Isley Mason had a conversation with his stuttering friend "Tom the Devil", a one-man chorus whose function is completely irrelevant in the edited versions of "His Father's Mate":

"Is there any - why - exarsters at sea?"

"Any wot?"

"Exarsters at sea - why, wrecks?"

"No," answered Isley ... "but I knows a good exarster that father told me about the other night. Thay was a old manner war going down - that means founderin' - somewhere near England, and just as the ship was about to founder, the capting yelled out 'Man thur yards? [sic]' 'N they went down with the yards all manned - yer know what mannin' the yards is, Tom?"

"Yes, but I guess they had some gallons of P. - why - B. in them, or at least some rum, else they'd 'a' tried to let the vessel - why - founder by herself."

"Listen at 'im - the hass? [sic] the boats was all lost, 'n besides it's a grand thing to drown with yer yards all manned."
As he hammered a table together to make Isley's coffin after the boy's senseless death, Tom the Devil could only murmur, "he died with his - why - yards all manned." But Isley Mason's death was not the inevitable end of a small tragic hero, for his death was not inevitable. It just happened. He did not die because of his personal cheerfulness, industry, and faithfulness, but in spite of them.

Australian literature's mood of romance demanded fiction leading from heroism through death to pathos; Lawson's irony revealed the innocent boy, moral "yards all manned", cut down by Nemesis for no apparent reason. Isley Mason, through Lawson's sense of "tension" and irony, represented the new scapegoat of Australian literature.

This special aspect of Lawson's vision, which makes "His Father's Mate" a seminal Australian short story, came to be misunderstood by Lawson's contemporaries. The basis of their attacks, ironically (that he was falsifying Australian life by describing the bush as man's opponent) is the source of Lawson's reputation in the twentieth century. Lawson attached no moral
values to the Australian landscape itself; his first concern was man's ability to work out his salvation by himself. Man's environment was hostile only if he failed, but man was a scapegoat still.

### iii. The Tree of Nollidge

If A.G. Stephens had read only "His Father's Mate" when he reviewed Lawson's first prose collection, he might have called Lawson a "scienced" story-teller: "making infallible point after point, and clinching all in a dexterous climax". As it was, Stephens reserved this term of approval for Alexander Montgomery; Lawson (with that "quaint simple style" of his) had no Art; "his artifices are of the feeblest", and "his picture is made before he knows". 80

Possibly Lawson's other short stories failed to end with an appropriately "dexterous climax": Stephens once rejected a New Zealand writer's story

---

80 Ibid., 15 February 1896, "'The Bulletin' Book Exchange".
simply because it had "too little climax for Bulletin". Stephens dogmatised, "is and aims to be for the most part a more or less ideal representation of life; and death is the most effective literary-climax just as it is the most natural and effective life-climax. Whenever the literary artificer stops short of 'death', the reader feels there is still something to be said." When he wrote this, Stephens was defending the Bulletin against the charge that themes of "sex-and-death" dominated its stories. It was a charge that was familiar to Archibald, who answered a correspondent by telling him that he was "complaining, not only of The Bulletin, but of the scheme of Creation. The world, dear sir, is a mere slaughterhouse. Anyhow, send along your 'cheerful' writers. Where are they?"

---

81 Ibid., 29 January 1898, p.15.
82 Ibid., 5 March 1898, "Red Page".
83 Ibid. Stephens had eccentric views of hyphenation.
84 Ibid., 31 December 1892, p. 5.
Archibald's angry reader, however, had merely been complaining that stories in the paper's Christmas number for 1892 had contained "too much murder, suicide, [and] death generally", and not that they contained too much "sex". Archibald firmly rejected any suggestions that the Bulletin printed any salacious material, or stories that treated "immoral" themes. Archibald may have been justifying his opinions on "the scheme of Creation" (as well as the large number of stories in the Bulletin which ended in violent death) when he reprinted an interview given by Hall Caine in London in 1890. "When the taste in fiction is not for blood," Caine observed, "it is nearly always for something worse - sensuality

---

85 Ibid.

86 See, for example, ibid., 21 May 1887, p. 5: a violent attack on Mrs Campbell Praed, prompted by the publication of her novel The Bond of Wedlock (London, 1887). Mrs Praed "is a disciple of the untrammeled school with its unbridled freedom and lusciously languid surrender to every idle prompting of that illogical something -- a woman's caprice.... When she strays away from the beaten path of commonplace respectability she is wrecked on the rocks of Ouidaism and broken up on the lee-shore of rabid sensationalism."
.... There is at least something virile and manly in bloodthirstiness, [sic] there is nothing but what is basest, and cruelest, and meanest in sensuality."
Then Caine gave his logic an unusual twist which undoubtedly appealed to Archibald's temperament: "There is too little blood flowing nowadays through English literature. And this I take to be a sign of the effeminate spirit of the times."87 If the stories Archibald accepted for publication in the Bulletin during the 'nineties are valid data, then he was determined that Australian fiction could never be called "effeminate".

A.G. Stephens was more hospitable to discussions of "The Sex Question". Victor Daley, for instance, speaking of "the Sex Element in Bulletin stories", suggested that current writers were simply dealing with women as "a charming human female instead of a creature half-divine". "Purient puritanism", he claimed, was the tangled motive of those who "dislike

87Ibid., 13 December 1890, p. 22.
to see Woman written about as a being with desires and passions, and a ripe, beautifully-curved body....

Modern woman, in a word, refuses to be idealised. She has of her own free-will come down from her pedestal and out of her shrine."88 Daley should have been more explicit: she came down with a crash in 1890, when the heroine of Randolph Bedford's story "The Vengeance of Ruby Julia" was "not a woman -- only a female, and possessed as little moral sense as a kangaroo."89 Bedford gained a certain notoriety for his later stories; Archibald is reported to have said -- referring to the mild pornography written by Arthur Adams after he became editor of the Bulletin's "Red Page" -- that "it has degenerated into a bed page -- indeed a double bed page -- sometimes even a Randolph Bedford page."90

88 Ibid., 3 September 1898, p. 6, signed "Creeve Roe".

89 Ibid., 19 July 1890, p. 18.

Before the middle of the 'nineties the "sex question" in Bulletin fiction was scarcely more than a convenient literary theme, usually portraying women as innocent victims of man's infidelity or brutality. After 1897 this emphasis was completely inverted, and endless Bulletin stories of the eternal triangle described newly "awakened" women dominating men. Fictional discussions of feminine sense and intellect in literature, respectability, sublimation and compensation, "sensations", "instincts", sex and "heredity", and "the flesh-burden": all poured into the Bulletin. At the end of the decade Albert

91 In the early 'nineties Mannington Caffyn (whom Stephens said in 1897 "rose highest as an artistic storyteller" of all the Bulletin's contributors) was the paper's most versatile exploiter of the usual love story. His "Diplomacy" (TB, 21 January 1893, p. 7), followed by Bedford's "A Piece of Woman Nature" (28 January 1893, p. 17), marks the beginning of the new emphasis. Louise Mack's "The Bond" (20 November 1897, p. 32, signed "Felicia Watts"), reprinted in The Bulletin Story Book, is characteristic of "sex question" stories of the late 'nineties. Three months after "The Bond" appeared, "Ayenar" replied with "The Case for the Man" (26 February 1898, p. 31: author ["A.N.R."?] unidentified). See also P.T. Freeman's "The Awakening of Mrs Morton" (20 August 1898, p. 31).

92 "The 9th Axiom", TB, 2 July 1898, p. 13, signed "A.G.A.": author unidentified; Frances Elmes, "One Way of Love", 29 October 1898, p. 31, signed
Dorrington inadvertently summarised the "sex question" of Bulletin authors of the 'nineties with the title of his tale "East Lynne on the Castlereagh".\(^\text{93}\)

These stories are important to Australian literature, not because they reflect what Hall Caine meant by "sensuality" and Dogger Joe by "Dirt", but because their organising principle is the theme of betrayal. The story of the loss and regaining of identity has a special relevance for all colonial literatures in the nineteenth century, but only in Australia did the image of the thwarted individual reveal such a major part of a nation's identity. The individuals who came to personify Australia were men; that they were inevitably inhabitants of the bush, however, suggests a curious reflection on the "sex

---


\(^\text{93}\) Ibid., 8 December 1900, p. 32; signed "Alba Dorion".
question" of the 1890s. Apart from stories written by New Zealanders or dealing with convicts, the south seas, and the Malay archipelago, the Bulletin published 1100 short stories during the decade; of these, approximately 350 were explicitly concerned with relations between men and women; in short, "love stories". But of these "love stories", less than one-quarter treat the arts of love in Australia's outback, the apparent source of her national identity.

Ernest Favenc recognised how few outback love stories had been published when he complained in 1891 that "as yet the loves of Australian bush-lovers are unsung and unpainted". And as for the quality of those that had appeared, Favenc carefully noted that one of his own stories in the Bulletin contained no bush-fires or aborigines ("such as only exist in yellow-backed fiction") from which to rescue his heroine.

94 "An Idyll of the Plains", ibid., 7 March 1891, p. 22; signed "Delcomyn".

95 Ibid.
These stock devices, in fact, were not widely used by Bulletin contributors; the eternal triangle remained as stereotyped in the bush as it was in the city, although the primary source of stories describing racial betrayal - white Australian women living with Chinese - did add one new stereotype.\(^96\) For the few Bulletin contributors who were concerned about individuals rather than stereotypes, however, the 'nineties brought a deeper view of the relationship of the "real" Australia and her "ideal" inhabitants. Australians discovered that the "Gardin of Eadin" of Daley's bush Adam contained "the Tree of Nollidge", and that it was not simply the breach-of-promise suit issued by Edward Dyson's bush Eve in "A Child of Nature".\(^97\)

Dyson's "The Conquering Bush" suggested the new

---


\(^97\) Ibid., 28 December 1889, pp. 8-9.
view, one implied by the irony of his title. It was Janet Darton's husband who was "conquering" her, not the bush. Her surroundings merely reflected her growing madness, until she felt that "the relentless trees which had been bending over and pressing down so long were crushing her at last beneath their weight". The source of her madness was her husband, who was "necessarily away from home a good deal, and when at home he was not companionable, in the sense that city dwellers know.... Ned loved his wife, but he neither talked, laughed, nor sang." When Ned became aware of his wife's "strange look of frightened conjecture" as she gazed into her baby's eyes, he "suddenly became very communicative". But it was too late and Janet Barton suicides in a waterhole with her child in her arms.

Not even Dyson's taste for melodrama could

destroy the thematic importance of his stories. In "The Elopement of Mrs. Peters", for instance, a railway navvy murders the man who has run off with his apparently scatter-brained wife. Fanny Peters' insensitivity to pain, and her "indifference ... to the sufferings of others" were caused by repeated beatings from her father. Her husband, moreover, "made no effort to understand his wife, which was well, as he was only an average man, and she was past finding out." Fanny's identity is utterly destroyed and she abandons both her husband and her vivacious appearance for man's working clothes and a man who "did not know I was a woman." The negative quality of man's insensitivity to woman in the bush was actually a positive and destructive force.

The second aspect of the "average" Australian bushman, the work of other Bulletin contributors suggests, was the spiritual homosexuality of human

99 Ibid., 22 February 1896, p. 28.
relations in Australia's outback. The point of "Uriah the Miner: a Love-Story" is not to show the unfaithfulness of a wife who allows herself to be fondled by her late husband's mate in the presence of his corpse; the story, instead, is written as if the mate is betraying his dead companion. Dyson was more direct. In "The Two Macks", he tells how the "mateship" of two old bachelors in the bush "had, after two years, become a synonym at Keep-it-Dark for straight-going, square-dealing, and real grit."

After twenty years of living together one of the men receives the news of his mate's intended marriage as if he had been betrayed: "GOIN' TER GET MARRIED!... There's a discontented beggar for yeh!" The most sensitive exploration of the related themes of betrayal and thwarted identity, and one of the finest short stories published by the Bulletin in

100 Ibid., 18 March 1893, p. 19, signed "C.C." Although Constance McAdam ("Constance Clyde") used this pseudonym after 1895, it is unlikely that she wrote "Uriah". Nor does it appear to be the work of Clive Curlewis ("C.P.Q.C."), who was 18 in 1893.

101 Ibid., 28 September 1895, p. 27.
the 1890s, was Henry Lawson's "The Drover's Wife". This story is ostensibly one describing the debilitating effects of bush life on a wife whose husband has been away droving for six months. Lawson makes it clear, however, that it is her husband's absence which has robbed her of her femininity (she puts on his trousers to fight a bush fire), her sensitivity (he forgets "sometimes that he is married", and now "all her girlish hopes and aspirations are dead"), and even of her identity (soot-stained in her husband's trousers, both her baby and their faithful dog fail to recognise her). "Her surroundings are not favourable to the development of the 'womanly' or sentimental side of her nature", Lawson observes, but the drover's wife is the depersonalised scapegoat of her husband, not her surroundings.

Lawson frequently describes failures, even if his characters do not fail because of their environ-

---

102 Ibid., 23 July 1892, pp. 21-22. In 1928 Mary Gilmore claimed that Lawson wrote "The Drover's Wife" after she had told him "the story of my mother" (George Mackaness, "Dame Mary Gilmore and Henry Lawson", Southerly, XXIV, 1 [1964], 43).
As a result his work often reflects the harsh cruelty of an inhospitable land, and he appears to be denouncing "Miss Kissie Gouvernante"'s glorification of the bush ("where men don't believe a bit in the inherent depravity of the human heart"). The earliest Bulletin short story to challenge this glorification, however, was published four months after "His Father's Mate" appeared. Significantly titled "The Representative Australian", the story concerns a "cocky" farmer returning to England and claiming to be a rich squatter. In a few paragraphs intended to illustrate English ignorance of Australia, the anonymous author describes the cocky's successful wooing of an English girl. She returns with him to a desolate farm in the bush, and writes home about her new life; the story ends with her friends having "gloomy recollections of a lost sister who once listened to a representative Australian and now does her own washing in the pathless desert, and keeps her fashionable trousseau in a barrel in an old slab hut, where the only traces of outside civilisation are the footprints of a vanished hog.
beside the door."\textsuperscript{103}

Those writers who attacked the bush were as mistaken as their colleagues who glorified it, if they believed (as they did) that Lawson accepted their views. More disturbing still to authors of the 'nineties was Lawson's humour. Authors like Steele Rudd certainly wrote with some sense of moral purpose, but at least a reader could appreciate Rudd's broad comedy and pathos without feeling that there was something else behind his work. The source of the confusion was Lawson's refusal to write the sort of short fiction which the \textit{Bulletin} 's editors found most acceptable.

The only significant body of fiction preserved from the \textit{Bulletin} 's nineteenth-century files, in fact, is Lawson's forty-six short stories, and yet his vision alone rose above the concerns of the \textit{Bulletin} 's editors. The most original and passionately Australian of his contemporaries, he was attacked by many of

\textsuperscript{103}Ibid., 20 April 1889, p. 8.
them as a derivative writer hostile to Australia. And while his vision also transcended literary nationalism, his almost single-handed creation of a new mood of irony in Australian fiction made him the central figure of literary nationalism in nineteenth-century Australia.

The source of the new mood, irony, was a literary mode just as new to Australia. Lawson's realism, for the first time, allowed "ordinary minds" to "recognise their own impressions. 'Why, these are our thoughts; these people are our people; these scenes and places are the scenes and places we have known for all our lives.'" Unfortunately for Lawson, this was precisely the reason why he was attacked: his realism challenged the hero of Australian literary myth as well as literary nationalism's mood of romance.

Lawson, as much as any of his contemporaries, recognised that the "noble bushman" was the idealised hero of romance. In pure myth a god is identified

---

Ibid., 29 August 1896, "Red Page", A.G. Stephens' review of Lawson's While the Billy Boils.
directly and metaphorically with his "story", as, for instance, a "sun-god". The hero of romance, on the other hand, is clearly not a god, and is identified by simile and significant association; the bushman was noble because he was associated with the bush, just as Australians could regard him as the most representative Australian because they were associated with him, and therefore like him. But in realistic literature a mythical figure is implausible, and myth has to be "displaced" in a human direction. Lawson solved the problem through the familiar technique of reversing the customary moral associations of Australia's mythical hero: the noble bushman became a scapegoat, the victim of betrayal.

But Lawson did not claim that his bush figures were "like" the noble bushman, much less like gods: the more realistic the fiction, the more incidental the association. His contemporaries, however, felt that he was destroying the "representative" Australian because his figures were so realistic. These people

105Cf. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957) p. 136. Although Frye's general term "displacement" appears to be the most suitable one available for this process, I am, of course, applying it specifically to a problem in literary nationalism.
are our people", not "These people are (or are like) our ideal people". And so they missed the total irony of Lawson's "A Typical Bush Yarn", in which two reprobate old swaggies break up, not because one betrayed the other, but because one failed to betray the other. 106

Lawson's use of descriptive realism represented the maturing of a mode relatively familiar to readers of the Bulletin. Ever since the paper published reported bush yarns and "The Tombstone in The Garden" in the 'eighties, objective representations of rural Australian life had furnished a minor counter-point to journalistic dramas of plot. Lawson was no Stephen Crane, nor was he writing an Australian version of Maggie, A Girl of the Streets. 107 When he turned to Australia's cities (in stories like "Arvie Aspinall's Alarm Clock") Lawson seemed unable to avoid the depths


107 Reviewing Maggie in 1896, A.G. Stephens felt that Crane's work "lacks artistic breadth and unity". A work of art, Stephens believed, "should be no isolated presentment of detached things or persons, but should have a visible relation to all things and persons, be in contact with every facet of existence" (TB, 14 November 1896, "Red Page").
of pathos that characterised the Bulletin's fiction throughout the 'eighties and 'nineties. Instead Lawson transmuted the humour of the bush yarn into unself-conscious irony, and in so doing broke the rhetorical tradition of Bulletin short story writers.

Lawson's recognition of the complexity of any human situation, reflected in his use of irony, gave an unusual depth to his realistic descriptions of bush life. In "Hungerford" and "In a Dry Season" Lawson was the conscious narrator, but his simple statements of fact objectified the narrator as shaping artist. Price Warung, by contrast, lacked the self-control (or editorial assistance) that might have allowed his material to speak for itself. So in Lawson's narrated stories his characters' dialogue - rather than the author's observation - is the instrument of commentary on the characters themselves.

Lawson's special irony frequently resulted

108 TB, 11 June 1892, p. 11. This version ended: "He was dead. 'My God! My God!' she cried."
from two levels of story-telling, that of an objective narrator and that of the speaking character. The oral yarn of the 1880s, carried on in the 'nineties, recognised only the latter. That Lawson was highly sensitive to the difference is clearly demonstrated in his experimentation with "The Geological Spielers". The version printed in While The Billy Boils (1896) is a simply-told narrative piece (including dialogue and related in the third person) describing how Steelman and Smith work a confidence game in New Zealand. In a version published two years later in the Bulletin, however, Lawson's story is purely a conversation between Steelman and Smith, as they discuss their plans for the confidence game which Lawson actually describes in the earlier version.\^109

Similarly Lawson's treatment of the "sex question" avoided absinthe and vice as well as philosophical rhetoric. His spokesmen are the laconic Mitchell and

\^109 Ibid., 24 December 1898, pp. 31-32.
his mate, relating more of themselves than of women. Significantly enough, the tone of their stories is ironic self-deprecation. For they themselves were scapegoats in the Australian myth of betrayal.

Despite the frequent recurrence of several traits - a preoccupation with masculine society and the theme of betrayal, and an emphasis on plot and sudden climax rather than characterisation - no single bush story in the Bulletin of the 1890s can be identified as "typical" of the genre. An impression of the remarkable variety, both in subjects and level of accomplishment may be gathered from the selection made by A.G. Stephens of "stories and literary sketches", published as The Bulletin Story Book in 1901. The seven short stories published in A Golden Shanty eleven years earlier were all set in the Australian outback. In Stephens' collection exactly half of the sixty-four short stories of the 'nineties treated life in the bush. In fact only one-third of the Bulletin's

---

total prose contributions of the 'nineties were bush stories.

Stephens was being completely honest in his introduction to The Bulletin Story Book when he stated that he had not attempted "to choose the best examples of literary style" from the Bulletin's files. Whether he would have been able to do so is another question. More importantly, he claimed that he had not "attempted to choose examples of work characteristically Australian", stories, that is, dealing with bush life. "What country", he wrote, "can offer to writers better material than Australia?... The drama of the conflict between Man and Destiny is played here in a scenic setting whose novelty is full of vital suggestion for the literary artist."111

A few Bulletin short story writers of the 'nineties had anticipated Louis Stone's Jonah in their descriptions of life in Australian cities, where a majority of Australians lived. And a number caught

---

111 "Introductory", The Bulletin Story Book, pp. v, viii. The first edition of 3875 copies, published in December 1901, sold out within eleven months, and a second edition was issued in November 1902.
isolated aspects of the wide scenic variation of Australia: "a country which extends through forty degrees of latitude and thirty-five of longitude". Yet the "scenic setting" Stephens had in mind was not, among others, Sydney's harbour or the Queensland tropics: with unusual uniformity, the authors whose work he published described only the wilderneses of the pastoral grasslands or the bleak deserts of the goldfields.

A.G. Stephens could have been astonished to think that his critics were right: that he had "debased" Australian writing. Fortunately for his reputation, they were partly wrong; but not for the reasons which he might have thought. Because of its literary nationalism, the Bulletin fostered (and published) much of Australia's finest nineteenth-century prose. But the paper's early professions on behalf of "high Art" were undoubtedly forgotten as the century closed. Instead of opening the way to ennobling literature of

112 Ibid., p. vii.
principle and accomplishment, A.G. Stephens' criticism encouraged exciting dramas calculated to appeal to its readers' tastes.

The *Bulletin*′s early demand for "informative" and brief short stories was closely related to its attempts to foster an "Australian national sentiment". One result, the oral bush yarn, finally saw the maturing of Australian realism in Henry Lawson's short stories. But the other result was a simple variation of the colonial romanticism which informed so much Australian writing earlier in the century, a strain of fiction which was unquestionably the dominant mode of *Bulletin* fiction in the nineties. The *Bulletin* of the 'eighties and 'nineties may have been one of the most obstreperous and lively political journals in the British Empire, but most of its short stories were little different from the bulk of Australia's popular and late Victorian fiction.

"If Australian literature does not by-and-by become memorable", A.G. Stephens also wrote in 1901, "it will be the fault of the writers, not of the land."\(^{113}\)

\(^{113}\) Ibid., p. viii. I have inverted this quotation.
The "traditional image" of the *Bulletin* as a repository of literature describing the "real" Australia derives from an inadequate appreciation of this truism. The finest short story writers of the 'nineties did indeed write of bush life. By a strange process of transference, the memorable work of Lawson, Steele Rudd, Edward Dyson, and Barbara Baynton has thus come to be accepted as the only "characteristically Australian" work of the time. And so among literary critics the *Bulletin*’s "bush" fiction was invested with a mystique as pervasive as the theme of betrayal was its negation.

---

114 Rudd's first *Bulletin* story, "Starting the Selection", appeared on 6 April 1895, p. 24; after a dozen more contributions, his stories began appearing under the title "On Our Selection" on 14 August 1897, p. 32. *On Our Selection*, his first collection of (revised) *Bulletin* stories, was reprinted three times between 1899 and 1903, and a total of 20,000 copies were issued by August 1903 (Mackaness and Stone, *op. cit.*, entry XII, p. 58). Barbara Baynton published only one short story (and a handful of verses) in the *Bulletin* during the 'nineties ("The Tramp", 12 December 1896, p. 32).
NEW ZEALAND MUGWUMPS

There is no country in the world which takes more interest in literature than Australia does; and Maoriland is quite close enough to win under Australia's mantle. ¹

"We expatriated New Zealanders", James Philp wrote from Australia in 1890, "in the bitterness of exile, sometimes condemn our country 'as the last place God made'; and then, as the wealth of happy memory drives away bitterness, we make the reservation almost unreservedly, 'but He made it well'." ² The feelings of New Zealand's literary nationalists as they approached the Bulletin were just as mixed. They knew that the paper was (as it said) "the one completely non-local and distinctly universal Australasian newspaper", and that it probably was as familiar to "the

¹A.G. Stephens, Bulletin, 27 May 1899, "Red Page". The Bulletin is hereafter cited as TB.

²Ibid., 4 January 1890, p. 8.
digger in the New Zealand Ranges" as it was to the "stockman of Central Australia". But what place could be found for New Zealanders in a paper which also trumpeted its "consistent and distinctive Australian National Policy": "Australia for the Australians"?

i. "Maoriland Literature"

From its first issue, when it began a column of "Theatrical Notes from New Zealand", the Bulletin was intended to circulate in New Zealand. And after reading the first "theatrical notes" sent to Sydney by their New Zealand correspondent, the editors were astonished at the support given touring drama companies in the colony; during one week alone "Carmen", "Rigoletto", "Maritana", and "La Traviata" were played in Wellington:

we believe that her two principal islands beat the whole of the Australian colonies put together for the support given to entertainments of every

Ibid., 19 March 1887, p. 9.
variety. And yet the public there is rather censorious, and will not put up with mediocrity, as we occasionally see from the free - rather too free for the managers - comments made on the performances by a very outspoken Press.\(^4\)

New Zealand, for the \textit{Bulletin}, was apparently "something different, something / Nobody counted on."\(^5\)

As A.G. Stephens complained twenty years later, "the trouble at present is that the average Maorilander, like the Mugwump, is a person educated beyond his intellect."\(^6\)

Mugwumps or not, New Zealanders responded to the paper with even more restraint than Australians. Despite its column devoted to New Zealand "theatrical notes" and another on "New Zealand Sporting Items", there is little evidence that the \textit{Bulletin} had a wide circulation in New Zealand in the early 1880s. The paper claimed to have been imitated by an Auckland newspaper\(^7\), and occasional paragraphs contributed by

\(^4\)Ibid., 28 February 1880, p. 3; 7 February 1880, p. 4.


\(^6\)TB, 1 December 1900, "Red Page".

\(^7\)Ibid., 2 October 1880, p. 1. The newspaper was the Observer.
New Zealanders appeared in its regular columns; but it was not until 1887 that a correspondent could refer to the Bulletin, somewhat flatteringly, as "a great power for good" in New Zealand.  

Literary contributions from New Zealanders throughout the 'eighties were virtually non-existent. Two anonymous pieces of semi-fiction were printed in 1883, both based on New Zealand experience, but the first short story set in New Zealand was "Pig-Hunting: A Remembrance", published the following year. Its humorous and lively use of slang suggests that it (and possibly the two earlier pieces) were written by James Edmond, who had lived in New Zealand from 1878-1882 and joined the Bulletin's staff in 1886.  

No other New Zealand fiction appeared until 1889, when

---

8 Ibid., 29 January 1887, p. 4.

9 "How We Edited the Tintown Tomahawk", ibid., 13 October 1883, p. 20; "The Mysterious Locket", 3 November 1883, p. 7; 14 June 1884, p. 22. It was clearly Edmond who answered a correspondent in 1898 by saying that "the writer [of the correspondence column] lived in M.L. four years" (2 April 1898, p. 11). Edmond became editor of the Bulletin after Archibald left in 1903.
James Philp contributed a story describing how a New Zealand volunteer naval officer "gave one of Her Majesty's ships a lesson in naval etiquette". New Zealand verse was similarly unrepresented in the paper's pages during the 'eighties; of the fourteen poems published, seven appeared during 1889. Both Thomas Bracken's "M'Gillviray's Dream: A Forest Ranger's Story" - one of the first narrative ballads to be printed by the Bulletin - and Arthur Desmond's "Te Kooti" (purporting to be a free translation of a Maori chant) were reprinted in A Golden Shanty in 1890, but even this small selection was unrepresentative. Aside from two reprinted examples of Bracken's poems, including his immensely popular "Not Understood", most of the Bulletin's original New Zealand verse was topical satire and political protest. Only three


11 Ibid., 19 May 1883, p. 16; 23 March 1889, p. 8.

12 Ibid., 5 October 1889, p. 19; "Up-a-Daisey!", 17 August 1889, p. 6. See Lawson's "A Child in the Dark" (ibid., 13 December 1902, p.14 ), in which "Misunderstood" is presumably a reference to "Not Understood".

13 One each by Fred Nelson (ibid., 7 March 1885,
poems were noteworthy: two because they celebrated Maoris (later to be symbols of literary nationalism for New Zealand authors), and one, a humorous ballad about shearing in Canterbury province, because the editors added an ingenuous footnote to it explaining that "The Waimakiriri River in Canterbury province, N.Z., is big enough not to need any geographical apology for its existence in the pages of a paper like The Bulletin."¹⁴ New Zealand was still an unknown land to the Bulletin's readers of the 'eighties.

By the 'nineties, however, aspiring New Zealand authors had discovered that the Bulletin was virtually the only "Australasian" periodical that could ensure them both a large inter-colonial audience and payment for their work. As in the previous decade, numerous short-lived literary periodicals were started in New Zealand before the turn of the century, but only three

¹⁴ Ibid., 16 September 1882, p. 13; 26 June 1886, p. 15; 7 September 1889, p. 21.
lasted more than two years. The Canterbury University College Review, a student venture, did not begin publishing fiction until early in the twentieth century. Similarly the successful Triad (1893-1937) - published in Australia from 1915 to 1928 - began as a monthly magazine for music-lovers, and did not provide regular space for original literature during the 'nineties. The most distinguished periodical of the three, and probably the finest literary journal to appear in New Zealand during the nineteenth century, lasted only six years: the New Zealand Illustrated Magazine (1899-1905).

Several of the forty New Zealanders who contributed short stories to the Bulletin before 1900 were later to write for the New Zealand Illustrated Magazine, but the New Zealand "national literature" which it was founded to encourage had already begun
appearing in the *Bulletin*’s columns. 15 Poets, at first, were particularly reluctant to submit to the *Bulletin*, and in 1892 and 1893 the paper published more short stories than verse from New Zealand. But by 1894 the *Bulletin* had established itself as the most influential literary periodical circulating in New Zealand. More than 400 poems by New Zealanders were accepted between 1890 and 1900, and the 150 New Zealand short stories it published during the decade represented over 10% of the paper’s total. Perhaps it was one of A.G. Stephens’ "Mugwumps" who congratulated Joseph Spence Evison for founding his short-lived *Critic* in 1899: "a thoroughly well illustrated,

15 New Zealand’s principal contributors to the *Bulletin* were Leo De Bakker ("Polype": 23 stories); Constance McAdam ("Constance Clyde", "C.C.": 22); Joseph Spence Evison ("Phiz": 17); Alfred Grace (13); Frederick Rollett ("F. Rollitt": 11); James Philp (10); J.F. Edgar (5); Mabel Holmes (5); and Robert Thompson ("Robin Studholme": 5). A preliminary list of other New Zealand contributors, in order of the first appearance of their work in the *Bulletin*, includes: "Bakblox" (3); Alexander Stuart ("A.S."); "F.D."); Vincent Pyke; "J.G.S."); "Toruhana"; "Taiwai"; "The Giaour"; "Waimate"; Max Merroll; Arthur Adams; "Waihoa", "Hemi Mira"; H.L. Scoullar; "Te Pahaua"; J.G. Haddow; "Brogden"; "Weka" (4); Nancy Hogan; "Te Tacito"; H.M. Norris; F. Marriott Norris; "L.R.M."; "A.B.D."; "Rangi"; "C. Stockton; "W.P.H."); Edward Tregear (2); "Ruru"; "Curra Curra"; Edgar M. Dell; and A.P. Zett.
genially, and smartly written journal, the peculiar property of New Zealand. Hitherto, one has had, as a last resort, for reading of this kind, to take the Sydney Bulletin.\textsuperscript{16}

If Frederick Rollett can be believed, on the other hand, the Bulletin might well have been the New Zealand author's first resort. New Zealand, he claimed in 1899, simply had "no market" for literature: There are in the country several large and excellent weekly papers, which yield considerable profits to their proprietors, but, to the shame of these proprietors, they do not allow their papers to assist in any way the literature or the literary men of their own country.... A writer does not spring into being fully fledged. He wants schooling and advice and criticism and encouragement. He gets none of this in Maoriland, because there is no publication which receives original matter, and no school which teaches.\textsuperscript{17}

For this reason, he mentioned, he had founded the Maoriland Literary Association, which already had 150 members.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{16}Critic, 8 July 1899.

\textsuperscript{17}TB, 27 May 1899, "Red Page", signed "F. Rollitt".

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., 8 July 1899, "Under the Gumtree".
More depressing for Rollett was the fact that "there is absolutely no Maoriland literature". New Zealand writers certainly had an abundance of material (had he read Robert Joplin's introduction to the first volume of New Zealand verse?) but "no literature". There were, he noted, all those "lonely, storm-swept rocks, sheltered caves, frowning cliffs, broad beaches, for romances of sealing and whaling and wrecks and daring voyages." For "tales of gold-digging", "stories of pioneer settlers and man's struggle for the wilderness", sea-life, gum-digging: New Zealand was "so rich in material that it is a pity it cannot be utilised":

And then -- richest of all, perhaps -- Maori life and lore. Old legends striking as Grecian epics. Stories of heroes and heroines, of magic and monsters, of homeric combats, self-sacrifice, endurance, battles, seiges, and the fierce struggles between the Maori and Pakeha making history dramatically sad.\(^{19}\)

Everything, that is, to delight the heart of Sir Walter Scott.

\(^{19}\)Ibid., 27 May 1899, "Red Page".
"I want to know" Alfred Grace replied two months later, "if an epidemic of sheer funk is spreading amongst our young writers.... In fact, all the gods of Maoriland are quite illiterate. Perhaps that accounts for the scarcity of literary genius in these isles?" Grace may have been remembering one of Rollett's stilted transcriptions of Maori myth published in the Bulletin two years earlier.  

Whatever the reason, it was not through lack of his own industry that New Zealand could be said to lack a literature. Grace was one of four New Zealanders who contributed nearly half of the Bulletin's New Zealand fiction. And for the same reason that the Bulletin called New Zealand "Maoriland" -- to confer a distinctive and indigenous name on the country -- Grace's idea of literary nationalism drew him directly to that "richest" of New Zealand subjects, the Maoris.

Grace was obviously a reader of the Bulletin even before he began contributing short stories in

---

20 Ibid., 8 July 1899, "Under the Gumtree"; 10 July 1897, p. 28.
1897; his first collection, published in Nelson two years earlier, was not called New Zealand Stories, but Maoriland Stories. During the next twenty years Grace published three more collections of short stories as well as two novels. With the exception of his last novel (a pot-boiler set on the South Island gold-fields), all his work dealt with Maori life, and Grace's thirteen Bulletin stories (collected in 1901 with fifteen others as Tales of a Dying Race) marked the first attempt by a New Zealander to treat Maoris in fiction as other than stereotyped objects of contempt or patronage.

To novelists of the 'sixties and 'seventies, Maoris were either bloodthirsty savages or members of a noble and dying race. The only new note of the

---

21 It sold 1800 copies (Alexander Turnbull Library, "Autobiographies, in holograph, of 168 Australasian Authors, Journalists, and Artists", f. 45V). Alfred Augustus Grace (1867-1942), born in Auckland, was educated in England between the ages of eight and twenty. After a brief period teaching school on his return to New Zealand, he took up journalism.

22 Tales of a Dying Race (London, 1901); Folk Tales of the Maori (Wellington, 1907); Hone Tiki Dialogues (Wellington, 1910); Atareta: the Belle of the Kainga (Wellington, 1908); and The Tale of Timber Town (Melbourne, 1914).
'eighties came from Rider Haggard; Maoris joined Indians and Aboriginals as representatives of the mythical lost tribe waiting to be discovered in the interior of their homelands.\textsuperscript{23} Still under the influence of Scott and Fenimore Cooper, novelists of the 'nineties in both New Zealand and Australia continued to turn to the Maoris for stories of romantic adventure. A.G. Stephens had noted that Alfred Domett's verse epic \textit{Ranolf and Amohia} apostrophised "the Maoris just as he would have apostrophised Red Indians had his lot been cast in America."\textsuperscript{24} And so Australians were quite prepared to hear one of the heroes of "Rolf Boldrewood"'s \textit{War to the Knife}, or Tangata Maori exclaim "A real war!" as he leapt ashore in New Zealand. "It reminds one of the 'Last of the Mohicans', and all the joys of youth. We shall have 'Hawkeye', 'Uncas', and 'Chingachgook' turning up

\textsuperscript{23} For example, R.H. Chapman's \textit{Mihawhenua} (Dunedin, 1888).

\textsuperscript{24} TB, 15 February 1896, "'The Bulletin' Book Exchange".
before we know where we are".  

Commentary on New Zealand in the Bulletin itself was generally confined to politics and Maoris, frequently together. References in the 'eighties were scarcely polite, ranging from an Auckland resident's humorous condemnation of miscegenation (because of the "dirty whare" of the Maori) to the editors' suggestions that the "niggers" and "darkies" were not exterminated simply because of their strong military resistance during the Maori wars of the 1860s. More usually, however, the Bulletin's references to Maori affairs were tempered by the feeling that they were a race of noble warriors exploited since the Maori wars by unscrupulous governments.  


26 TB, 18 February 1882, p. 11; 4 August 1883, p. 4; 11 August 1883, p. 5.  

27 See ibid., 6 December 1884, p. 6, and especially 25 February 1882, p. 2, a comparison of Maoris and Australian Aboriginals, prompted by King Tawhiao's visit to Auckland. When Tawhiao visited England two years later, some of the sanest comments in the Bulletin appeared not in the editorials or cartoons (19 April 1884,
New Zealanders themselves were less anxious to see the Maori as the victim of Pakeha injustices. "Trotter Bethune", who claimed to live as a Pakeha-Maori with the Ngatiporo tribe, twice contributed laudatory letters to the Bulletin about the storming of Rangiriri and Rewi Maniapoto's heroic stand at Orakau during the Maori wars ("Ka whawhai tonu ake! Ake! Ake!": "We will fight on forever, forever, forever!"). Already memories of the bloodier aspects of the wars were fading in the minds of New Zealanders, and in 1889 James Philp could make one of the first literary references to their humorous side.29

It was Philp, again, who revealed how far a new and more patronising image of the Maori - valiant in war, nobly peaceful in defeat - had crystallised

---

28 Ibid., 17 November 1888, p. 15; 21 September 1889, p. 20; author unidentified. More likely, B.J. Foster has suggested, the cry was "Kaore e mau te rongo -- ake, ake!": "Peace shall never be made -- never, never!" ("Ake Ake", Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, I, 30).

29 Ibid., 2 March 1889, p. 8, signed "Timi Piripi".
by the end of the eighties. The Bulletin readily printed his "brief dissertation on the noble, copper-skinned race inhabiting the grand islands which Tom Bracken, in a flight of poetic fancy, has not inaptly styled 'Pacific's Triple Star'". Using as an example the successes of an all-Maori football team during an 1888 tour of England, Philp decried any idea that Maoris were "inferior" to Pakehas and celebrated the superiority of half-castes to both.\(^{30}\)

Alfred Grace, aware of the demands of his readers, was quite prepared to use popular images of the Maori in his fiction. His first collection of short stories depended as heavily on violence for its effect as his later novel *Atareta, the Belle of the Kainga* depended on romantic love. In most of his Bulletin sketches, however, Grace broke with the tradition of what has been aptly termed the "Maorilogue".\(^{31}\)

---

\(^{30}\) *Ibid.*, 10 November 1888, p. 8, signed "Timi Piripi". Philp was referring to Bracken's "New Zealand Hymn". See above, n. 62 to ch. 2.

The title of his 1901 collection, *Tales of a Dying Race*, is misleading, for Grace was never pityingly condescending.\(^3\)\(^2\) He delighted in satirising the puritanical conventions of Pakeha society, particularly when it was faced with an inter-racial marriage.\(^3\)\(^3\)

And as the son of a missionary, Grace detested the sort of "Christian" hypocrisy which drove one of the wives of a Maori bigamist to suicide in "Arahuta's Baptism"\(^3\)\(^4\).

It was appropriate that Grace was unsuccessful in his one attempt to enter directly into the Maori mind: his recounting of a Maori legend from the point of view of a Maori.\(^3\)\(^5\) For much of the merit of his

---

\(^3\)\(^2\) The Maori population of New Zealand had been declining annually since the first Maori Census of 1857-58 revealed a Maori population of 56,049, almost exactly half the population of the country. The nadir was reached in 1896, when a Maori population of only 42,113 was reported out of a total of 743,207 New Zealand residents.

\(^3\)\(^3\) See "Told in the Puia", *TB*, 31 July 1897, p. 28.


\(^3\)\(^5\) "The Courting of Te Rahui", *ibid.*, 28 August 1897, p. 32.
stories, like those of Henry Lawson, derived from his neutrality, balancing between two races, two styles of speaking, and two moral codes. Grace's break with the "Maorilogue" tradition, in fact, depended on just such a balance: on his moral neutrality as much as on his narrative objectivity. Each predicated the other, while the rhetoric of the "Maorilogue" denied both.

And just as the irony of humour is generated at the points of contact between two societies with fundamentally different assumptions, so Grace's moral neutrality and narrative objectivity met through the irony of humour. Humour results from a collision; irony accepts and includes everything that collides as well as the humour of the collision itself. Interestingly enough, when Grace became purely a humorist (as in his later Hone Tiki Dialogues, the forerunner of a long series of cheerful and simple-minded Maori philosophers whose latest manifestation is the newspaper character Hori), he debased both his objectivity and his neutrality by condescension.
Despite Grace's failures as a creative writer, even his lapses from balance, objectivity and neutrality were essential to his literary nationalism. By attempting to portray individual rather than representative New Zealanders, he helped introduce a new literary mode of descriptive realism. Some authors might resent being torn from Homeric or Arthurian New Zealand, but at least they no longer had to drift along with Frederick Rollett "from the kelp-girt shore of southern islands that sentinel antarctic solitudes to the Auckland Peninsula, lapt by semi-tropic seas". 36

Other authors, if they also happened to be nationalists and hoped that New Zealand would become a viable multi-racial nation, might applaud Grace's total (and neutral) acceptance of both Maori and Pakeha society. The price for the man in between - the committed man of rhetoric, for instance - could be relatively small. In "Te Wiria's Potatoes", Villiers regards the Maoris as "his protégés", while chief

36 Ibid., 27 May 1899, "Red Page".
Tohitapu regards him as "my pakeha". Their mutual condescension and misunderstanding cost Villiers his potato crop and the Ngati-Ata tribe their pride. On the other hand, he could be like "King Potatau's Powder-Maker": sympathising with Maoris during the Wars, later rejected by Pakeha society, and on his return to their camp, shot by his former Maori friends.

Less sensitive narrators than Grace simply appropriated the Maori as a fictional stereotype. J.F. Edgar found them good-hearted objects of humour: wily, perhaps, but clearly the foils of a superior (white) civilisation. Edgar's "A Maori Play", for instance, in which Maori actors use real bullets in a stage presentation of Ned Kelly's life, is more interesting as a commentary on the popularity of the Australian bushranger's career than as a contribution to New Zealand fiction. Even James Philp's two stories of "John Wesley The Snag", despite his

---

37 Ibid., 29 January 1898, p. 32.
38 Ibid., 16 July 1898, p. 31.
39 Ibid., 1 August 1896, p. 28.
character's sharp observation comparing Pakehas to the great fish of the Old Testament and the Maori race to Jonah, depended for their humour on a stock semi-civilised native.  

For New Zealand authors who refused to use the Maori as a comic figure, an appropriate narrative style was a major obstacle. Some imitated the "nullah school" of Anglo-Indian writing, while others, like Frederick Rollett, adopted the formalised presentation of Sir George Grey's translations of Maori myth. Attempts to reproduce dialogue were usually awkward, as the Bulletin's editors appreciated when they rejected a story in 1900 because the author made his "Maoris talk mixed Chinaman and Australian blackfellow." 

---

40 Ibid., 7 January 1893, p. 19; 25 March 1899, p. 32.

41 Ibid., 10 July 1897, p. 28. See also W.H. Pearson, "Attitudes to the Maori in Some Pakeha Fiction", Polynesian Society Journal, LXVI, 3 (September 1958).

42 Ibid., 10 February 1900, p. 15.
The Bulletin's editorial views on what constituted a good "Maori story", moreover, were scarcely calculated to further the cause of literature, much less literary nationalism and race relations. Stories of the Maori wars were looked on with particular disfavour: "there is always the pakeha in them, and the rangatira, or else the rangitoto, and the Ngatimaniapotos and little things like that".\(^4^3\) This simple-minded objection to Maori words, however, was not the only reason why a "nicely-written" story was once rejected; not only was there "too much dialect" in it, but "too little climax".\(^4^4\) The editors properly objected to endless stories about Hinemoa's celebrated passion, but equally frequently refused "Maori stories" because (as they said of "Maori war-stories") "there is no humour in any of them", an objection they had made as early as 1892 about "most Maori stories".\(^4^5\)

\(^{43}\) Ibid., 27 February 1892, p. 17.

\(^{44}\) Ibid., 29 January 1898, p. 15.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., 27 February 1892, p. 17; 23 December 1893, p. 20; 22 October 1892, p. 5.
When Archibald accepted "Toruhana"'s story "Saving the Family Honour" for publication in the Bulletin, he told the author that it was a "model" story about Maoris on the curious grounds that "it's quite short, most dramatic, and devoid of Ngatimaniapotos and rangatiras. Likewise", the author was encouraged, "you don't give us anything about the valiant Arawas". 46

Needless to say, when "Toruhana"'s story appeared in the Bulletin's next issue, it turned out to be the dramatic tale of a Maori's fight with his own father during a Hau-Hau battle in 1877. While the story purported to be factual, its author (and the Bulletin's editors) continued to favour the narrative devices of the past three decades of "Maorilogues" ("I see dam queer thing there, boss", says the guide as an opening to strange happenings on Moutoa Island). 47

A.G. Stephens' idea of what constituted an

---

46 Ibid., 28 May 1892, p. 7.

interesting "Maori story" was equally unfortunate; Robert Thompson's story chosen by Stephens for *The Bulletin Story Book* is a supposedly humorous tale of Maoris selling off the rendered remains of a Pakeha-Maori's coarse white wife after she had fallen into a hot spring. Mexico. Alfred Grace's stories, clearly, were accepted simply because of their humour, a conclusion supported by the themes of the majority of *Bulletin* stories treating Maoris. Violent tales of comic-opera natives and thwarted love faithfully echoed the *Bulletin* 's editorial passion for "climax", drama, and farce. If New Zealand contributors to the *Bulletin* were willing to sacrifice the high seriousness of literary nationalism by writing Maori stories acceptable to the paper, then perhaps the *Bulletin* was justified in renaming New Zealand "Maoriland".

---

48 "The Dispersion of Mrs. Black", *ibid.*, 12 December 1896, p. 25, signed "Robin Studholme" and so attributed in the *Story Book*. 
Two years before he left England, William Satchell wrote to a friend complaining of his lack of literary success. "There is not a door of any sort which I have not tried & had banged in my face. Yet the public is behind those doors & can only be got at through those doorways. People used to get over the wall once -- it is built too high now." And so Satchell migrated to New Zealand, where he eventually became known as the country's finest novelist to write before the First World War. Not inappropriately, Satchell called his best-known work *The Greenstone Door* (1914), a title reflecting the central problem faced by New Zealanders contributing to the *Bulletin*. While the *Bulletin* was one of the first doors opened to Satchell and many other authors in New Zealand, the paper's sympathies hardly lay with the historical concerns of New Zealand literary nationalism.

---

49 Alexander Turnbull Library, William Satchell Papers, Satchell to Allan Fea, 27 November 1884.
At first glance New Zealanders appeared to succumb to the temptations of writing in a style which they thought especially acceptable to the paper: Satchell's "Ballad of Stuttering Jim", for instance, or his "Song of the Gumfield". On the other hand, Satchell's "Song of the Gumfield" represents Kipling wholly acclimatised in New Zealand, not Satchell selling out to the Bulletin. His "Ballad" owed equally little to the paper, and not simply because of its heavy moral; the poem tells the story of an English visitor who sacrifices himself for his beloved when they are lost in the bush with their New Zealand friend; only the New Zealander survives, to his dishonour. And in any case, Thomas Bracken's narrative ballad "M'Gillivray's Dream", set in New Zealand, had appeared in the paper as early as May 1883, well before the editors made any conscious attempts to encourage Australian balladry.

---

50 TB, 22 December 1894, p. 23; 2 May 1896, p. 3. Both signed "Samuel Cliall White".
Some balladists certainly did write as they thought they ought for the Bulletin. Although Marshall Nalder was careful to use a New Zealand setting for a ditty about fishing, he sprinkled it lavishly with those "blanky"s and "blessed"s that Bulletin readers considered particularly humorous. 

"Kip Yeroon", describing the death of his friend on the gold-fields, felt that he had to refer to New Zealand by noting that "They buried him by the manuka-tree / Where that clump of lawyers and bulibul grows". And "Waihoa"'s effusions on horses were clearly modelled on Paterson's verse, even if only some of them were written in Paterson's conventional doggerel meter. But when Alfred Grace referred in 1896 to "those late Victorian poets who rejoice in reproductions of the Australian

51 Ibid., 28 April 1900, p. 3.

52 Ibid., 21 March 1891, p. 22: author ["keep your own"?] unidentified.

shearer's 'lingo', he was definitely not commenting on the bulk of New Zealand verse contributions to the *Bulletin*. 54

That Constance McAdam, Hubert Church, Arthur Adams, James Liddell Kelly, and Dora Wilcox wrote one-third of the New Zealand verse published by the *Bulletin* is as much a reflection of New Zealand poetry as it is of the *Bulletin*. 55 High seriousness (by the 'nineties more a mark of fin de siècle than New Zealand) led them all to contribute dozens of album verses, landscape lyrics, and verse tributes to the "sex question". New Zealanders knew that they were provincial, not colonial.

Even Will Lawson, who became much better known as a *Bulletin* contributor than Alfred Grace, was obviously not in the latter's mind when he linked

54 Introduction to Hodgson's *Poems*, p. iii. See above, n. 75 to ch. 4.

55 A preliminary list of the 424 poems published by New Zealanders in the *Bulletin* between 1880 and 1900 reveals that these five authors wrote 133: McAdam (38); Church (37); Adams (23); Kelly (19); and Wilcox (16).
"the poetry of the engine-room and fo'c'sle" to imitations of Australian popular verse.\textsuperscript{56} Will Lawson owed his later popularity to verses like "Stokin'", but during the 'nineties he was more likely to turn out titles like "Grief" and "Straws on the Stream".\textsuperscript{57} The \textit{Bulletin} once rejected his "Song of Steel" simply because it had "too much machinery and not enough emotion".\textsuperscript{58} Chris Clementson's "To a Maoriland Robin" represented New Zealand verse in the \textit{Bulletin} of the 'nineties, not Satchell's "Song of the Gumfield", just as Satchell's verse on "A Country Maid" was more representative of his own contributions.\textsuperscript{59} If the \textit{Bulletin} influenced the style of New Zealand poets at all, it was principally in the direction of Arthur Adams' love lyrics and Hubert Church's "throbbing soul".

\textsuperscript{56} Introduction to Hodgson's \textit{Poems}, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{57} \textit{TB}, 7 July 1900, p. 3; 28 July 1900, p. 3; 15 December 1900, p. 3. All signed "Quilp. N." "Stokin'" became the title poem of his third volume of verse (Wellington, 1908).

\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Ibid.}, 29 September 1900, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}, 18 May 1895, p. 3; 20 July 1895, p. 3, signed "Cliall White".
Fiction presented more difficult problems for New Zealand contributors to the *Bulletin*. "The Making of a Saint", for instance, written by Edward Tregear (the future Secretary of New Zealand's Labour Department), appeared to be simply another love story. The point of his contribution, however, is less what he unfortunately described as "the Great Renunciation" of "Romance" than the differences in social climate between Australia and New Zealand. A minister's wife, tired of the catty females and (predictably) the heat of Australia, is sent by her husband to New Zealand for a vacation. Here she finds more gracious women and men more "cultured, with deferential, though frank and open manners". Yet at the same time Tregear wrote the story as if he were speaking as an Australian, not a New Zealander.

Four contributors - Leo De Bakker, Constance McAdam, Joseph Spence Evison, and Alfred Grace - were between them responsible for nearly one-half of the short New Zealand fiction published in the *Bulletin*.

---

60 *Ibid.*, 10 December 1898, p. 27.
Of these four, De Bakker is superficially the author whose contributions could be expected to appeal most to the editors of the paper. They once described him as the author of "tales whose moral is that 'the Almighty has been at it again!'", and indeed, "Polype" De Bakker left a train of coincidence, sudden climax, and bodies long enough to satisfy the most sensation-seeking subeditor.  

---

61 Discovering the identity of "Polype" presents a classic problem in identifying pseudonymous Bulletin contributors. Except for one fortuitous link -- the signature "Polype:De Bakker" to the story "A Xmas Joy" (30 December 1893, p. 20) -- "Polype" might well remain totally unidentified. "L. De Bakker" was an occasional Bulletin contributor during the 'nineties, although his "The Ferryman", reprinted by Stephens in the Story Book, was first signed "F. De Bakker" (TB, 15 December 1894, p. 27). One Barbara de Bakker, inquiry to the Alexander Turnbull Library has established, was a landholder in Westland County and Ross borough in 1884; she died on 31 July 1908, leaving two sons. One, Leo, was born in Ross on 31 December 1867. "L. De Bakker", of "Nelson Creek, Grey County, West Coast", contributed an article to the weekly periodical Fair Play (Wellington, 1893-94) on 17 March 1894 (p. 17).
Behind De Bakker's stories, however, was an author as intent on examining Fate, Destiny, and Free-will as was Joseph Furphy in Australia. Despite their deficiencies - abrupt sentences mixed with ponderous philosophising - his stories are noteworthy for their intensely serious moral questionings. Usually set on New Zealand's South Island goldfields, their death-dealing landslides and cave-ins were not the first intimations of naturalism in New Zealand literature, but a form of existentialism of a particularly twentieth-century variety.

This colonial existentialism is all the more unusual as the product of the author's reading explicitly brought to bear on New Zealand goldfields life. Hans, a German digger, relates his life-story to a friend after they have both been swallowed up by a collapsing mine-shaft; De Bakker concludes with the wish "like Victor Hugo...to know why so many destinies are driven pell-mell upon blazes".62 A

62 TB, 12 March 1892, p. 18, signed "Polype".
story of "Double Destiny" more precisely sets the theme of his later stories: "well has Schopenhauer said that 'to live' is sufficient punishment for the greatest crime". Its ambiguity - and for Bulletin stories of the period, its interest - is not derived from the degree to which Fate (and a sudden death) are the consequences of evil; while it is a mother who deserts her child, it is he who is killed years later.  

Few New Zealanders attempted as conscientiously as De Bakker to combine high seriousness and a New Zealand setting with what they regarded as the type of work the Bulletin wanted. Some failed even to bother; Constance McAdam's "A Tale of Chivalry" is a story of seduction and a bushranger in the Australian "digging days, long ago". And although most authors did write against a New Zealand background (or at least left it ambiguously undescribed), their work inevitably bore the effects of a close reading of the

---

63Ibid., 14 May 1892, p. 10, signed "Polype".
64Ibid., 22 January 1898, p. 31.
Bulletin's files. Otago was substituted for Coolgardie and another New Zealand diggings yarn was hatched; Melbourne became Christchurch and one more romantic melodrama yielded its suicide.

A. G. Stephens' selection of New Zealand contributions for The Bulletin Story Book was nearly as illuminating as the paper itself. New Zealanders, in the first place, were heavily over-represented, and yet half of their stories either avoided any reference to New Zealand or were set in Australia. One of these, a bush yarn from "the nor'-west corner of New South Wales", was by Frederick Rollett, founder of the Maoriland Literary Association ("Maoriland is so rich in material..."). Of the other half only "Weka"'s yarn about "The Man Who Saw a Moa" was anything more than a tale of violent death or romance; because of his attempts at descriptive realism, "Weka" was the only author of New Zealand short stories in

---

65 "Three Cups of Tea", ibid., 25 January 1896, p. 27, signed "F. Rollitt". Eleven of the sixty-four stories in the volume were written by New Zealanders.
the Bulletin who wrote convincingly about both Australia and New Zealand. And although Alfred Grace was not represented in the Story Book, Stephens ensured that it reflected New Zealand writing accurately by choosing half of the stories for their romantic drama.

Stephens, curiously, failed to include any work by Constance McAdam, for it was his taste that made her the Bulletin's most frequently-published New Zealand poet as well as one of the paper's most prolific contributors of short stories. Her interminable lyrics on Love, Death, and God were precisely the sort of fin-de-siècle album verse that dominated the paper's columns, from the plight of motherless children and childless widows to the superiority of women over men. But through her fiction, Miss McAdam emerged as the Bulletin's most single-minded investigator of the "sex question". Even more curious is the fact that the

---

"sex question" for many New Zealanders came to be related to literary nationalism.

New Zealand authors were correct in believing that Australia differed from New Zealand if they accepted the accomplishments of the feminist movement as any criterion. In literature, the movement's different manifestations resulted in a spate of feminist novels during the 'nineties with no Australian counterparts. In law (against the Government's expectations, it is reported) New Zealand women were second in the world only to those of Wyoming in securing the vote. 67 As for Australian attitudes, New Zealanders had only to look at the Bulletin's cartoons and leaders to witness a prejudice against women taking an active role in business and government which would be codified in law for at least a further three-quarters of a century.

Constance McAdam, whose contributions appeared in the Bulletin in 1895, two years after female suffrage was gained in New Zealand, was more interested in the psychology of women than the feminist movement. That

67 Sinclair, New Zealand, p. 181.
she was herself a woman - unlike most Australian investigators of the "sex question" - was one reason why her short stories presented the ambiguities of being a woman in a masculine society more sensitively than Australian attempts. They are also more frank, discussing the promptings of desire and challenging the closed sexual morality of colonies in the late Victorian age. Passion, possession, and sacrifice, as well as problems associated with fashionable pseudo-scientific interests in hypnotism and amnesia: all were subjects for her fictional tracts. Constance McAdam, as much as any of the Bulletin's Australian authors, was responsible for the paper's reputation for "immoral" stories by the end of the century. And perhaps it is only fitting -- if New Zealanders were forced to choose between literary nationalism and a door to the public -- that Miss McAdam migrated to Australia in September 1898, three years after her first contribution to the Bulletin was published. But as A.G. Stephens wrote in 1899, "there is no country in the world which takes more interest in literature
than Australia does; and Maoriland is quite close enough to win under Australia's mantle." In any case, he also said, "the literary limitation of 'Australia' to the continent has doubtful validity." 68

iii. Moaland

Despite A.G. Stephens' determination to take up the burden of Australian literary imperialism, few New Zealanders were willing to play the part of new-caught, sullen peoples. And despite Arthur Adams, Constance McAdam, and other Bulletin contributors, fewer still believed that the new Australian literary empire should be founded on "love-interest". In 1907 the British-Australasian remarked on the fact that "love-interest is notably absent" in Archibald and Currie's New Zealand Verse as if they had systematically excluded all New Zealand verse on love, normally "wont to be one of the chief sources of the poet's inspiration." 69

68. TB, 15 February 1896, "'The Bulletin' Book Exchange".

69. 14 March 1907, p. 18.
For Joseph Spence Evison the Bulletin's enthusiasm for decadent literature and the "sex question" was a betrayal of all that literature stood for. The Bulletin, especially A.G. Stephens' "Red Page" (he wrote in his own paper, the Critic), was fostering a taste for "hermaphroditic, transcendental, weak, literary hogwash which has a nasty scent of Ibsen, Oscar Wilde, et hoc genus omne" about it. Literature, Evison's own contributions to the Bulletin demonstrated, should be exciting, red-blooded, and masculine; in his world no ambiguity existed in relationships between men and women, who should be simply "men and women, mind, not hermaphrodites".

Evison himself experienced exactly the sort of life his stories suggested he ought: after joining the British merchant marine at the age of 13, he sailed to China and India several times (once, he claimed, helping to steal a gunboat, and at another time, being

70 Critic, 5 August 1899, p. 22.
71 Ibid.
captured by Chinese pirates), and apparently took part in British Army campaigns in Abyssinia and India. Arriving in New Zealand in the early 1880s, he took up journalism, and began contributing stories to the *Bulletin* in 1894.\(^7\)

Evison's first short story was a conventional tale of love in an Australian hospital, but he soon turned to more exciting themes of intrigue in the Indian Army ("Die, you dog!" spits the hero as he forces a dastardly seducer to suicide).\(^7\) Evison, unfortunately, was no Kipling, although his narrative abilities in "The Wasn't Reef" rival those of Kipling's first prose collection of 1888, and A.G. Stephens once suggested that Evison"wrote Kiplingesque yarns before ever Kipling was heard of".\(^7\) Evison was far from

---

\(^7\) Alexander Turnbull Library, "Autobiographies, in holograph, of 168 Australasian Authors, Journalists, and Artists"; reprinted in "Biographical Index" to *The Bulletin Story Book*, p. xx.


\(^7\) Ibid., 25 July 1896, pp. 27-28; 3 October 1896, "Red Page".
humorless, but his sense of irony invariably deserted him when he turned to the conventional themes of Bulletin melodrama.

Evison's most interesting contribution to New Zealand literature, however, was not as a short-story writer but as an editor. Although his weekly Critic lasted for only seventeen issues from June to October 1899, its very existence summarised the ambiguities of literary nationalism in New Zealand. The Critic was a letter-perfect imitation of the Bulletin, in layout, masthead, cover title, features, and illustrations, yet its policy was to attack the Bulletin at every opportunity. And while Evison claimed in his "Prospectus" that "there is no good reason why Maorilanders [sic] should depend solely, as at present, upon Australia for their literary market",75 he not only solicited material from Bulletin writers (V.J. Daley and E.J. Brady) and from its cartoonists (Gavin Souter) but also reprinted as the Critic's fictional offerings

75 Alexander Turnbull Library, dated May 1899 in A.H. Turnbull's hand. When Evison added this statement to the Critic's masthead, "Maorilanders" became "New Zealanders".
his own short stories which had previously appeared in the *Bulletin*.

Evison's policy of paying for short stories and verse published in his paper, sprightly illustrations and cartoons, sensible reviews, and literary gossip column could not save the *Critic* from financial disaster, for advertising revenue was simply not forthcoming. Evison fully appreciated that the success of the *Bulletin* was the result of two things: its political irreverence (which he claimed had degenerated into a mouthing of "ancient catchwords of the description of 'fat man'"), and its "quack doctor advertisements",76 He was right, but regrettably for his own paper, patent medicine manufacturers knew that advertisements in a well-circulated inter-colonial paper would bring better sales than in an exclusively New Zealand paper of uncertain distribution.

Before it died, however, the *Critic* demonstrated that many New Zealanders refused to see New Zealand as

76 *Critic*, 8 July 1899, p. 5.
a cultural dependency of Australia generally and the Bulletin in particular. Stirred by Evison's attacks on the Bulletin, a "man in the street" wrote him to congratulate the Critic for fulfilling the "want of a thoroughly well illustrated, genially, and smartly written journal, the peculiar property of New Zealand. Hitherto, one has had, as a last resort, for reading of this kind, to take the Sydney Bulletin, which rarely had any New Zealand matter in it, and, if it had, alluded to this colony as Maori-land, M.L., or some other semi-insulting sort of term."[77]

As his own form of retaliation for the Bulletin's condescension, Evison proclaimed "New Zealand for New Zealanders", and (knowing that the moa was extinct) sarcastically referred to New Zealand as "Moaland".[78]

Evison's particular concern was that New

[77]Ibid. F.E. Maning had actually called New Zealand "Maoriland" in his Old New Zealand...by a Pakeha Maori, first published in 1863, but see above, n. 79 to ch. 4, and below, n. 99.

[78]See, for example, cartoon at ibid., 9 September 1899, p. 13, showing five children -- used by the Bulletin's cartoonists to represent the five Australian colonies -- going into "Federation Yard", with a sixth, "Young Moaland", standing beside a sign "New Zealand for New Zealanders": "Young Moaland: 'I don't want to play in your yard.'"
Zealand youth was being corrupted by unmanly sentiment badly expressed. The "Red Page" of the Bulletin, he claimed, "that sexless thing", was continued only because A.G. Stephens, "the would-be genius in charge ..., intoxicated by the exuberance of his own polysyllabic jargon, doesn't understand half of what he writes, while his professed admirers, understanding none of it, swear it must be fine, because it is incomprehensible!" 79 As for the degenerate tastes of the Bulletin's editors, a correspondent of the Critic heartily endorsed Evison's views on the Sydney paper's "sex-problem stories":

To my mind, they always seemed the weak point of the paper. In the healthy out-of-doors life of a young and growing country, they are singularly out of place. Such hot and sticky sentiment should be relegated to the civilisations that produced Richepin and Flaubert, Oscar Wilde and Beardsley. I hope The Critic will steer clear of these stories of the Woman Who Did, written by Men Who Didn't. 80

Evison's correspondent, in fact, was referring to a

79 Ibid., 5 August 1899, p. 22.

80 Ibid., 22 July 1899, p. 22; signed "Bougara". Author unidentified.
New Zealander's contributions to the *Bulletin*. John Liddell Kelly, a irrepressible literary nationalist and political satirist, had revealed another side of his poetic personality in his contributions to the *Bulletin*: a "Hymn to Eros", "Love in Three Aspects", and -- the target of the *Critic's* contributor -- "Sin and Judgment: The Story of a Man Who Didn't".  

Evison's own standards of criticism, perhaps best described as founded on moral earnestness, were revealed when he praised Longfellow's poetry as melodious, pathetic, and beautiful; more significant is his view of what the *Bulletin's* critics failed to approve. In his defence of Longfellow, Evison was replying to Arthur Bayldon's faint praise of Longfellow on the "Red Page". Bayldon (whom Evison called "Ballyrot") was seen as an admirer of Don Juan and Oscar Wilde, and therefore insensitive to a poet like Longfellow who had little to say about "gay girls and grey horses..., so little to sing about the swagger dying to crows and  

---

81 *TB*, 23 April 1898, p. 3; 10 April 1896, p. 10; 2 October 1897, p. 3.
blue devils, so few chants about the lusts of the flesh and hardly a reference to the sexual problem."^82 So disturbed by the Bulletin's immorality was Evison that he lashed out at its proprietors, including Archibald (whom he regarded as examples of those very "fat men" the paper attacked), A.G. Stephens ("Steevens, professional critic and "Literary Adviser"), and the paper in general (for its "dabbling in Moaland affairs").^83 He unhesitatingly defended Douglas Sladen, one of the Bulletin's particular bêtes noires, noted (incorrectly) that the Bulletin did not have a single Australian on its staff, and condemned Archibald for his habit of accepting literary contributions and never publishing them. 84 Even Edward Tregear, who was at the time editing the Labour Journal, came in for abuse for writing "dirty little stories for the Sydney Bulletin."85

---

82Critic, 14 October 1899, p. 10. Bayldon's Bulletin article was published on the "Red Page" for 30 September 1899.

83Ibid., 8 July 1899, p. 5; 22 July 1899, p. 11.

84Ibid., 14 October 1899, p. 10.

85Ibid., 21 October 1899, p. 22.
Fortunately for Arthur Adams, at least, the *Critic* folded just before the *Bulletin* published *Maoriland and Other Verses*. For Adams, of all New Zealand nationalists contributing to the *Bulletin*, had most accepted the "mantle" of its literary imperialism.

And yet the flurry of interest in the *Bulletin*’s columns surrounding the appearance of *Maoriland* was wholly untypical of the paper. If Evison’s "man in the street" was referring to criticism when he noted that the *Bulletin* "rarely had any New Zealand matter in it", he was right; until 1899, in fact, the paper published only two full reviews of New Zealand works. Both were volumes of verse: Anne Wilson’s *Themes and Variations* in 1891, and Thomas Bracken’s *Musings in Maoriland* in 1892. Lady Wilson was lightly praised as a "delightful imitator", but Bracken found greater favour for his "versified narrative" and "philosophical and contemplative verse like 'Not Understood' and the 'Soul's Treasury'". 86 His "historic poems" and "descriptive poems touching the

characteristics of Maoriland landscape" were less appreciated by the Bulletin's reviewer, probably the same poems that a later Bulletin correspondent had in mind when he commented on Bracken's death in 1898. At his best Bracken's verse had "a delightful freedom from the cynicism too characteristic of the Australian poet". 87

The Bulletin itself never went as far towards appropriating New Zealand's literature as George Essex Evans. The "foundation-stones" of Australasia's "National Literature", he wrote in 1897, "are Marcus Clarke, Alfred Domett, James Brunton Stephens, and, as a fourth, perhaps, Adam Lindsay Gordon". Alfred Domett?

Domett's work in relation to his environment somehow reminds one of a Greek statue that has found its way into a pawnbroker's shop. [James Brunton] Stephens, the many-sided high-priest of Australasian culture, with a fine foresight and a dazzling wit, has rendered a greater service to the cause of National Literature, but he has not soared to as keen an ether as the New Zealander. 88

87 Ibid., 19 March 1898, p. 31; signed "H". Author unidentified.

88 Ibid., 20 February 1897, "Red Page"; signed "Anglo-Australian".
"Yellowbush" was incensed. The fact that Domett "lived twenty years in M.L., and wrote poetry there, no more makes him a M.L. poet than it makes him a Maori." Besides, "the true Australian poet must be born and bred in Australia", not England or New Zealand. "All others are counterfeits."\(^{89}\)

And at this other extreme, A.G. Stephens was never quite as chauvinistic as "Yellowbush". In his review of O.T.J. Alpers' *Jubilee Book of Canterbury Rhymes* -- except for Barton's review of Arthur Adams, the only other lengthy notice of New Zealand literature to appear in the *Bulletin* before Federation -- Stephens was even prepared to admit that certain differences existed between Australian and New Zealand writing. After criticising some of the historical material, and praising Jessie Mackay, Dora Wilcox, and Ernest Currie, Stephens went on to generalise about the "poetic tide in Maoriland". Complaining that the work of New Zealand writers was "usually tame and uninspiring", he assigned a cause; it was, he felt, because New Zealand

\(^{89}\)Ibid., 15 May 1897, "Red Page". Author unidentified.
was "a curiously 'educated' country":

There are "high schools" and "colleges" and "universities" galore; every bright young man is labelled B.A. or M.A., and likes it, and is asked to tea for it; and there is more "culture" to the M.L. maiden's square foot than trips with a dozen arched Australian insteps. And the M.L. Parliament is about the only place nowadays where it is comparatively safe to lard a speech with familiar tags from Virgil (they spell him Vergil) or Horace (they call him Horatius). The trouble at present is that the average Maori-lander, like the Mugwump, is a person educated beyond his intellect.90

But when Frederick Rollett complained at the lack of public and Governmental support given to New Zealand writers, it was Stephens who suggested that Rollett was wrong. "What of the £370,000 annually expended in free education, and the £7000 annually granted to the Universities?"91

Rollett's article in the Bulletin on the absence of a New Zealand literature, ironically, was directed wholly at the Bulletin. For when he noted that a writer "wants schooling and advice and criticism and encouragement", he also added "in Maoriland".

90 Ibid., 1 December 1900, "Red Page".

91 Ibid., 27 May 1899, "Red Page".
"If the four great weekly papers would offer for original literary matter, say, half as much yearly as they pay for sporting news and fashion notes, our literary workers would have some encouragement, and Maoriland would soon possess a literature." The Bulletin was the only journal which attempted to do just that, but for many New Zealanders A.G. Stephens' answer to Rollett simply proved Rollett's case: "There is no country in the world which takes more interest in literature than Australia does; and Maoriland is quite close enough to win under Australia's mantle."

The problem with encouraging literature through newspapers, Constance McAdam pointed out (also in rebuttal to Rollett), was that "this so-called encouragement to literature warms into active life a number of unhappy beings who otherwise would never have thought of writing". New Zealanders had already been encouraged to write.
cautioned about "newspaper literature" in 1877 by the New Zealand Magazine, and Australians in 1888 by Douglas Sladen. Quoting Sladen, even the Atlantic Monthly lectured "antipodeans" (that is, Australians, which they also understood included New Zealanders):
"until Australian writers can cease to say, 'The character of Australian poetry is now determined a good deal by the taste of the editors of the great weekly papers,' but little advancement can be predicted."  

The emergence of the Bulletin (and A.G. Stephens' taste) as a force in New Zealand writing during the 'nineties altered the relevance of these strictures. If New Zealand literature was to consist of anything better than songs "about the swagger dying to crows and blue devils" or "chants about the lusts of the flesh", then literary nationalists would have to meet the Bulletin on its own ground. One result was a series of short-lived periodicals founded to encourage

95 See above, n. 61 to ch. 2.

96 February 1890, p. 283. The quotation was taken from Sladen's A Century of Australian Song, p. 21. See also Alexander and Currie, eds., op. cit., p. xx.
a true "national literature" for New Zealand. William Satchell established his weekly *Maorilander* with the hope that "if there is at present, or if there is to be in the future, any distinctive home life in this colony, then it is in our pages that it will in due time reveal itself". The *Maorilander* lasted for seven weeks. And the *New Zealand Illustrated Magazine* also died, in spite of its awareness of the virtues of the Imperial design and high seriousness.

A more significant result, however, was identified by "Netta" in 1907, six weeks before the *British-Australasian* noted that a New Zealand Swinburne was preferable to an Australian Bret Harte. Writing in, of all places, a magazine published by the Union Steam Ship Company, the *Red Funnel*, she described the "colour problem" as the new bane of New Zealand literature. "Local colour", that is, had become a "tyrant, an upstart dictator", laying its hands on the "freedom of phrase and thought", sending "the shadow of its mana

---

97 *Maorilander*, 8 February 1901, p. 8.
over territories it holds neither by purchase or conquest." The question asked by "every New Zealand review...is not 'Can this man describe a goose?' but 'Can he describe the identical goose that Captain Cook marooned in Fiord-land?'" Newspaper editors, moreover, had turned into chauvinists, failing to consider any prize story whose "plot is laid outside the country":

the orthodox colonial, in this heavenly atmosphere of protection, would prefer a suit of native flax and a mutton-fish shell to alien tweed and outland china. Again, we hear the deep undertones of "local colour" in every overflowing of the Antipodean artist soul. "Where is So-and-so?" "Gone coal-heaving at Westport, to get colour for a mining novel." "Where is Blank?" "Gone to soak in the Waikato, for a war-epic."

When Rollett asked why there was "no Maoriland literature", A.G. Stephens replied that the fault was in ourselves, that we are underlings. "Netta" had a different answer to the new question about why New Zealand had developed the wrong kind of literature: "we have suffered dictation".

---

98 1 February 1907, p. 32. Author unidentified.
Have we not drawn our sins of advertisement to a head by tamely adopting the foreign label of "Maoriland" for our country? As a foreign label, it is melodious and inoffensive. It might have been Damperland or Nuggetland, or fifty other worse names. As adopted and ratified by ourselves, it is as apropos and dignified as a sale-board at the front gate.  

The reaction was beginning. The Bulletin had shown to New Zealanders the possibilities in exploiting "local colour" as a mode of literary nationalism, whether or not that "local colour" was as conventional as the "detested foreign article". And New Zealanders used that mode with a vengeance, challenging the Bulletin's own literary imperialism. But was "dictation" from Australians worse than that same "dictation" from New Zealanders? Had New Zealanders, in fact, finally become Colonials?  

The editor of the Voice seemed to think so. Although the opening sentence of his editorial betrayed exactly the sort of "dictation" described by "Netta", his concern was the same as hers:  

There is an attitude of mind against which we Maorilanders must guard. It may be described as "little Colonialism". Those under its spell  

Ibid., pp. 32-33.
seem to believe that nothing that was ever said or done outside these Colonies has any lessons for us.

While we love the land in which we live, and appreciate its advantages; and should maintain our individuality, and develop a national life of our own having its distinctive expression in a national art and literature; yet for us, a handful of men living at the ends of the earth to refuse to profit by the experience of the rest of mankind...is arrogant and narrow-minded folly.... We are apt to think that we are so far in advance of the rest of the world that the records of the lives of those whose lot has been cast in other lands or times can teach us nothing; and that no doubt but we are the people, and wisdom was born with us.100

If literary nationalism had anything to do with this new image of themselves then A.G. Stephens need not have been surprised to find "W.T. Goodge's satirical verses on the New Zealander passed covertly from hand to hand among Australians" in New Zealand. In 1909 he wrote that Australians found visiting New Zealanders to be "a little self-assertive, a little 'cocky!'": "precisely the complaint made of Australians who have recently arrived in New Zealand".101 Australians, Stephens knew, had long held an image of themselves based on the bushman, an image the Bulletin itself had

100 "Little Colonialism", August 1904, p. 3.

helped to foster. But he was puzzled by those "Mugwumps" whose literature nine years earlier suggested only that they were "educated beyond [their] intellect". After living in New Zealand himself for eighteen months, he sensed "a difference between the typical New Zealander and the typical Australian. Doubtless there is a difference.... What, then, is the difference? How shall it be stated?"  

102 "Banjo" Paterson, "Clancy of the Overflow" (1889) 

I had a vision, 
Or, to be more correct and explicit, I had a nightmare.... What is this wild bantering after the flesh-pots and the birth-stains of the Otherside?  

- Eugene Paul Foveaux, "Federation" (1899) 

---

102 Ibid.
VISIONS, MYTHS, IMAGES

He sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended,
And at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars.

- "Banjo" Paterson, "Clancy of the Overflow" (1889)

I had a vision,
Or, to be more correct and explicit, I had a nightmare.
What is this mild hankering after the flesh-pots and the birth-stains of the Otherside?

- Eugene Paul Foveaux, "Federation" (1899)
VERY LIKE A BUSHMAN

Our half-gods have gone, and our gods have not arrived.1

"The history of a nation", Marcus Clarke wrote in 1877, "is the history of the influence of nature modified by man, and of man modified by the influence of nature."2 And as A.G. Stephens put it, "the spirit of Australia -- that undefined, indefinable resultant of earth, and air, and conditions of life" had by 1899 seized on everything in Australia: "modifying, altering, increasing, or altogether destroying."3 Stephens was wrong: after a century of writing, we are

1 Bulletin, 29 December 1894, p. 7. The Bulletin is hereafter cited as TB.


3 TB, 9 December 1899, "Red Page".
told, Australian authors had actually defined the "indefinable". Through the literature of the 'nineties the "spirit of Australia" emerged in human form as the bushman: the man of the bush, the representative figure of Australian man "modified by the influence of nature".

i. A National Shade

The historical origins of Australia's "spirit" -- its national "mystique", "tradition", or "legend" -- have been traced by Russel Ward from the developing attitudes and values of nineteenth-century bushmen:

Just when the results of public education acts, improved communications, and innumerable other factors were administering the coup de grâce to the actual bushman of the nineteenth century, his idealized shade became the national culture-hero of the twentieth. 4

The historical, "actual" bushman Ward found in the "semi-nomadic" tribe of Australia's outback: 4

4The Australian Legend, p. 12.
"drovers, shepherds, shearers, bullock-drivers, stockmen, boundary-riders, station-hands and others of the pastoral industry". The process by which the actual bushman became an idealised shade, however, is not so clear. The mystique of the actual bushman, it would seem, was "largely unreflected in formal literature" until some time "towards the end of the nineteenth century", when Australians generally became actively conscious, not to say self-conscious, of the distinctive "bush" ethos, and of its value as an expression and symbol of nationalism. Through the trade union movement, through such periodicals as the Sydney Bulletin, the Lone Hand, or the Queensland Worker, and through the work of literary men like Furphy, Lawson or Paterson, the attitudes and values of the nomad tribe were made the principal ingredient of a national mystique.

Literary nationalism and the work of "the men of the nineties" was clearly a primary impulse in the creation of Australia's legend and its hero.5

But while the Bulletin may have been "easily the most important single medium by which the 'bush' ethos was popularized, both in prose and verse"6, it

5 Ibid., pp. 2, 12, 240.

6 Ibid., p. 205.
is also clear that by the end of the century a "'bush' ethos" was only a minor ingredient in the paper's literary contributions. The Lone Hand, moreover, was not founded until 1907. The Queensland Worker published some prose and verse, but the paper's limited circulation and readership never approached that of the Bulletin during the 'nineties, nor were many of its contributions reprinted for popular consumption. As for the labour movement's literary publicists, William Lane (for instance) was one of only two dozen Australian novelists of the 'nineties who concerned themselves with overt social protest, much less with popularising the ethos of the bush worker. His Working Man's Paradise: an Australian Labor Novel (1892), ironically, was published the year before Lane left Australia and the editorship of the Worker to found a "New Australia" in Paraguay.\(^7\)

The difficulty of assigning a creative role in legend-making to the authors and journals of the 1890s is slightly illuminated by Ward's reference to

\(^7\)After the "New Australia" movement failed, Lane moved to New Zealand, where he died in 1917. Working Man's Paradise was published under the pseudonym of "John Miller".
"literary men like Furphy, Lawson or Paterson". For Furphy's novel *Such is Life* - ostensibly "Tom Collins"' diary for 1883, which Furphy completed by 1897 - was not published until 1903, and only became generally known in the 1940s. And Lawson was so violently attacked in the 'nineties for his presentation of the "'bush' ethos" that he left Australia: first, for New Zealand, and later, poverty-stricken as ever, for England. Only "Banjo" Paterson -- successful Sydney lawyer, journalist, and romanticiser of those "old bush days when our hearts were light" -- emerges unambiguously from Ward's representative list as a literary nationalist of the 'nineties who transformed the "actual bushman" into a "national culture-hero".

Whether or not literature of the 'nineties was actually helping to create a contemporary "national mystique" -- and was not simply flexible data for twentieth-century legend-makers -- colonial Australia certainly did not lack observers eager to discover an Australian "national character". By 1907, however, Alfred Buchanan suggested that social commentary on Australia had produced only "a crop of half results, of insufficiently proven theories, and of partially
established types."\(^8\) Undaunted, Buchanan went on to write his own analysis of *The Real Australia*, a valuable document predictably based on the conviction that Australia's climate was tending "to produce a different race of beings, physically and morally, from that in the Northern Hemisphere." As a sensitive and well-read Australian who had himself lived through the 'nineties, Buchanan is particularly noteworthy for his reiteration of those "certain qualities... that come prominently under notice in Australia and appear, from their habit of repeating themselves, to form some integral part of the life of the community".\(^9\)

Buchanan's *Real Australia* is neither a tissue of platitudes nor another "half result". It is, in fact, an unusual historical link between the nineteenth-century pastoral bias of Australian literature and its most coherent twentieth-century expression: the sacrificial or ANZAC myth of Australian historical nationalism.

\(^8\)The Real Australia (London, 1907), p. 3.

\(^9\)Ibid., pp. 2-3.
The historical ANZAC myth (whose potency in literature was later demonstrated by reactions to Alan Seymour's play *The One Day of the Year*) is a familiar one based on the ritual death and rebirth of a god. A new nation, it is said, first comes to "maturity" when its sons are slaughtered in war. To Buchanan, writing in Australia before the first Great War, Australians had lost "the patriotic ideal" of earlier societies. "If you were to ask the average Australian whether it was not his highest ambition to die for his country he would take you either for a person of weak intellect, or for an eccentric amateur comedian."\(^{10}\) Eight years later the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps failed to take the hills of Gallipoli, and Australia joined the sanguine group of nations who had bled their way to "maturity".

Buchanan was scarcely original in calling for a "patriotic ideal" for Australians, but his *Real Australia* was the first social commentary after the 'nineties to anticipate in "the digger" a twentieth-

century projection of the nineteenth-century bushman. Significantly, Buchanan did not refer to the bushman as a figure embodying Australia's virtues. Instead he turned to the Australian landscape as a focus of nationalism in the absence of a national sacrifice. Echoing Australian authors of nearly a century earlier, he assumed that "national sentiment is largely the product of memories. And the Australian, as an Australian, has no memories worthy of the name." None, that is, except the "unattractive aboriginal", the "nomadic gold digger", and the convict (whom he delicately referred to only as "that other man"). Recollections such as these, he said, could scarcely nourish the flame of patriotic sentiment:

So it is that in Australia the shrine of the local patriot is difficult to tend. The altar has not been stained with crimson as every rallying centre of a nation should be. A large expanse of territory, some trees, a whitey-grey or dull green landscape, a number of new buildings, a hard blue sky, a succession of fine days, and alternating periods of drought -- these must be the outward and visible symbols, in default of others more histrionic and less tangible, on which the sentiment of the nation has to feed.\(^{11}\)

\(^{11}\)\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 308-309.
Like many observers of Australia's "national sentiment", Buchanan was also a novelist. His Bubble Reputation, published the year before The Real Australia, was in fact the latter volume dramatised in fiction, and the first cause of both books was the national character of the Australian "local patriot". As he noted in a discussion of the "virtues and vices" of Australians - the first chapter of The Real Australia, and virtually a summary of the characterisation in Bubble Reputation - "strictly speaking, there is no such thing as national character".  

Buchanan's description of Australian vices was short, and revealed his training as a lawyer and journalist. "Outwardly law-abiding", a nation like Australia "may be inherently vicious". Habits such as drug-taking, cigarette-smoking, card-playing, gambling,

12 Ibid., p. 1.
loafing, swearing, and work-shirking, Buchanan suggested, were in Australia more dangerous than burglaries, assaults, thefts, murders "and the rest". But for Buchanan the fact that one "inherently vicious" Australian committed burglary or assault with violence only demonstrated that Australia's "national vigour is unimpaired". Ninety-nine other Australians (presumably also "inherently vicious"), as "every philosopher knows", will instead do "daring feats in exploration, or in athletics", or - a quality that later expositors of the ANZAC myth turned into a virtue - "in war".

The most pervading phase of Australian character, "irresponsibility", Buchanan disposed of more ingeniously. Unlike "the average Englishman", who possesses "the inner something ... that makes a man prefer, when the pinch comes, to do the honourable thing", the Australian boasts about not doing the "honourable thing". "When this irresponsibility reaches its zenith, its nadir, its crown and summit of perfection or imperfection, it produces the Australian larrikin." Even though irresponsibility is the dominant feature of the Australian national character, that is, it was a product of urban life. This manifestation of the "main
streets" and its subsidiary off-shoots, in other words, is the precise opposite of what has come to be associated with the products of the "bush' ethos". And those qualities which Buchanan suggested formed "some integral part of the life of the community" ("virtues, they may be called") are those which Australians and visitors have associated with the representative figure of the bush. Again, Buchanan did not make this connection himself: testimony to the later strength of the Australian pastoral bias and the romantic mood of Australian literary nationalism.

The national "virtues" which Buchanan isolated were not to be taken as unique to Australia, but through both The Real Australia and Bubble Reputation Buchanan intended them to be representative. The foremost virtue was "hospitality", followed by the fact that Australians are "receptive-minded", "tolerant" (except to "black men", "brown men", and the "blind or sick" immigrant) and "ready to learn". Finally, as well as "a certain fairness to opponents", Buchanan

13Ibid., pp. 10-13, 16.
felt that "a certain warmth, a certain generous instinct, a certain spontaneity of thought and action, a certain buoyancy of temper, must be placed to the credit side of the ledger."\textsuperscript{14}

When he turned to the subject of an Australian "national literature", however, Buchanan's ledger revealed more than a few blots. Not only did he deny that Australia had a "national literature", but he also classified Australian writing into "three distinct schools". The "humorous, descriptive style", he suggested, was "distinctively Australian"; the other two were the "flippant school", and the "erotic school". And Buchanan was not hesitant in attributing the state of Australian writing by 1907 to that "important semi-intellectual factor in the life of the continent": the \textit{Bulletin}.\textsuperscript{15}

In terms remarkably similar to those used by New Zealanders in the 1890s to describe the \textit{Bulletin}, Buchanan claimed that the paper "combines in itself

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., pp. 3, 7.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., pp. 106-7, 109, 103.
most of what is smart, and flashy, and cynical, and superficial, and verbally witty in the people among whom it circulates. It was certainly to the lasting credit of the Bulletin that "nine-tenths of that which is musical and distinctive and valuable in Australian verse of the last twenty years owes its publicity, if not its existence to the Bulletin." For their championing the "struggling, underpaid man of talent", the paper's editors could even be forgiven its "army of cheap paragraphists, the tawdry tiresomeness of repeated phrase, the forced ingenuity of distorted facts, the constant disparagement of the kindred nation over-sea". But had the Bulletin actually fostered a national literature?

To Buchanan, a national literature was the "outward and visible form of what is real and vital and permanent in the inner and intellectual life of a people. In other words it is alien to what is merely topical and incidental." The "spasmodic quality, the flashiness of the writing that is done in Australia" might have something to do with Australia's "warm climate"; the

16 Ibid., pp. 103, 105.
main cause was Australian journalism generally and that of the Bulletin in particular.  

National literature meant something more to Buchanan "than a few dexterous verses, a few patches of local colour, and a few characters that can be held up to admiration as 'racy of the soil'." Buchanan, obviously, failed to regard those "few characters" as even the "partially established types" of representative Australian man. A national literature was quite simply "not a record of the peculiarities of shearer and rouseabouts, or of the feats of jockeys or stock-drovers." The "nomad tribe" of Australian bushmen, it would seem, was far from a "national culture-hero" in 1907. And if the values of the nomad tribe were actually "made the principal ingredient of a national mystique" during the 'nineties, Buchanan was extraordinarily slow to recognise literature's role in the process. Or has the literature of the

\[17\] Ibid., pp. 96, 102.

\[18\] Ibid., pp. 95, 96.
'nineties been appropriated by historians in the twentieth century as data for a later historical "mystique", "legend", "tradition", or "myth"?

An historical "myth" is not a literary myth any more than a man may be said to be a god. But just as a man's actions may imitate those of a god, so in terms of literary nationalism can an historical "myth" be part of literary myth. In Australia, the myth-making process itself moved on three continuing levels. The first level was a rhetorical one, on which ideas of "purpose" were projected into a view of the nation. This is the level of most of Australia's early literature, of the sub-literary doggerel in the Australian debate between romanticism and realism, of Francis Adams' "social studies" of Australia, and of much of the Bulletin's reactions to social commentary on Australia.

The second level of the myth-making process is a literal one, on which the nation's landscape, inhabitants, and events are described objectively, and includes most historical narrative as well as commentaries like those of Trollope, J.A. Froude, Max O'Rell,
and factual Bulletin reporting. Both levels furnished the data for historical "myths", such as synoptic views of an Australian "tradition" based on more or less verifiable evidence. Both levels of myth-making, in turn, (together with historical "myths" themselves) are data for the literary nationalist's attitudes towards nationalism. His literary creations are the third level of myth-making: the realm of pure literary myth, ranging from gods acting at the limits of human desire to their human forms in literature acting out variations of the same stories.

All three levels of myth-making, finally, raise a central question about literary nationalism in nineteenth-century Australia: is the "legend of the nineties" as far removed from the 'nineties as Paterson's mythical bushmen were removed from Australia's "actual" bushmen? Until the question is posed, literary and cultural historians in Australia face that dangerous temptation postulated by A.D. Hope for Australia's fiction-writers: "what began as an attempt to come to grips with reality has ended in an
attempt to impose a dream". The "dream", for literary nationalists, might be the creation or identification of a "national identity" or "national character"; both might equally well be their "reality". Whatever the case for Australian observers and authors after the 'nineties, most are agreed that the decade was crucial for the establishment of an Australian mythology in literature. Australians may (to use Blake's expression) have become what they beheld; what they said they beheld is another question.

ii. Visions

The effect of Australia's physical environment on her inhabitants, and their resulting "national character", was a subject energetically canvassed in dozens of books, pamphlets, and articles during the late nineteenth century. Distinguished visitors like Trollope and Froude, immigrants like Marcus Clarke and

Francis Adams, newspapers as diverse as *The Times* of London and the *Bulletin* of Sydney: endless observers eager to identify a new human type in Australia all offered their insights to Australian readers hoping to be flattered, and to English readers expecting to be entertained.

The *Bulletin*'s reactions to some of this commentary are nearly as revealing as the commentaries themselves. While the paper's editors unhesitatingly accepted the pastoral bias as the beginning of the search for Australia's "national character", at the same time their reactions clearly distinguished between prediction and observation. Froude in the 'eighties and Max O'Rell in the 'nineties, for instance, were chided because they reported what they saw in Australia at the time; Francis Adams was praised for what he saw in Australia's future.

The distinction, in fact, marked the first step in the complex process of distilling a nation into its representative figure. The connection between environment and an Australian "national character" was the product of the rhetorical impulse towards myth-making, and very early became a central ingredient in
Australia's evolving historical mythology. It was not Australia's cities but her landscape -- the bush -- which distinguished the country from other nations; therefore the inhabitants of the bush, such as the "nomad tribe" of pastoral workers, would surely develop qualities different from those of other countries. And if they were different, what better qualification for them to be celebrated as the unique product of Australia, her own "national character"?

The phrase "nomad tribe" had been coined by Trollope, one of many visitors who detected the origins of a distinct Australian character -- whether for good or evil -- in the country's harsh topography. In his Australia and New Zealand (1873), and the work of later social commentators like Froude and O'Rell, this observation appeared so frequently that Alfred Buchanan complained about it as one of those predictable statements which had produced only a crop of "partially established types". Froude's Oceana (1886) revealed an earlier version of the pastoral bias, but the bias itself coloured his whole attitude to Australia and New Zealand.

The new race of English Antipodeans, Froude
suggested, the inhabitants of "Oceana", could rejuvenate a vast "commonwealth" of English nations principally because they had unparalleled opportunities to turn their backs on the enervating cities. "The experience of all mankind declares that a race of men sound in soul and limb can be bred and reared only in the exercise of plough and spade, in the free air and sunshine, with country enjoyments and amusements, never amidst foul drains and smoke blacks and the eternal clank of machinery."20

Froude's brief visit to Australia in 1885 scarcely took him outside the principal cities of Victoria and New South Wales. Perhaps for this reason he was slightly disappointed at what he found to be an absence of distinctive Australian "provincialism". "I could not tell whether to be pleased or not at this. On the one side it showed how English they yet were; on the other, it indicated that they were still in the imitative stage." In the end, he left Australia feeling "how entirely English it all was":

20 Oceana, p. 7.
There is not in Melbourne, there is not anywhere in Australia, the slightest symptom of a separate provincial originality either formed or forming. In thought and manners, as in speech and pronunciation, they are pure English and nothing else.  

While New Zealanders might accept a similar verdict on themselves with pride, Froude's observations irritated Australian nationalists because he generalised for the whole continent. They, as much as he, accepted the assumptions of a pastoral bias, and they might have agreed that Australia's cities bred a non-Australian type. But Froude's statement denying a distinctive Australian character to the entire country attacked the principal assumption connecting literary nationalism, environment, and a "national character".

Nine years after Froude's visit, the editors of the Bulletin summarised his criticisms of Australia rather gently. He had, after all, simply pointed out that "life is too easy with us, that we lack the stimulus to be strong, and that our material prosperity tends to spiritual barrenness."

When Froude's Oceana

\[\text{\textsuperscript{21}}\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 163, 135.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{22}}\text{TB, 27 October 1894, p. 6.}\]
first appeared in 1886, however, the Bulletin's editors were moved to one of their finest passages of what Constance Rourke has called "comic myth-making". Froude, they advised, might well have taken note of a distinctly non-English language in Australia, "bullockdriverese":

It is not the conventional tongue of our great cities, but belongs rather to the solitary plains of the West, where it mingles plaintively with the sweet music of the paddymelon and the emu. And the men who use it are a very different class from the exquisites who do the block on a summer afternoon.... They themselves are the lineal descendants of John the Baptist, for they are so many voices yelling in the wilderness, and bidding all who hear them come and be d--d.... His voice is the nearest approach we have to the song of the turtle which echoed throughout the land of Judah in the spring time of joy; his boots are the embodiment of the idea of manly independence; his shirt, if hoisted on a pole in front of a serried line of Australian bayonets, would be the very type of a flag of freedom; and his hat is a poem.

This figure straight from the pages of Whitman was no Australian Adam. The bullocky's morals, the Bulletin said, are "uncertain and transitory to the

\textsuperscript{23} American Humour (New York, 1931).

\textsuperscript{24} TB, 19 June 1886, p. 11. In the same issue a correspondent was told that "we believe 'Frewd' is the correct pronunciation, but since 'Oceana' was published many Australians pronounce it 'Fraud'" (p. 15).
last degree"; he is profane, cruel to his beasts, and "so thoroughly armour-plated within, through long indulgence in rum, that he could swallow a ten-penny nail without winking". Perhaps he was Mike Fink, embodying the virtues of Australia as a defiant Yankee-Aussie. Whoever he was, the Bulletin felt that he was "a good fellow none the less": and when the brass band goes prior to the final fall of the curtain, he will drive his team in triumph through the golden gate, while many a bloated K.C.M.G. is pulled up outside and cross-examined as to his land syndicates and railway contracts, and finally told to go down the steps and take the first door on the left and fall the rest of the way.25

But although the mythical bullocky-hero was rhetorically complete in the Bulletin's editorial, he had yet to appear in literature.

The Bulletin's editors held no special brief for the working classes as such, much less their more picturesque representatives.26 Froude was spared the paper's condemnation because he generally ignored them,

25Ibid.

26In 1895, for example, the editors referred to the paper's "argument that a man's hob-nails are no proof of brains; are, if anything, a proof of absence of brains; since the first thing brains do for a man is to take the hob-nails out of his boots" (ibid., 27 April, p. 6).
contenting himself with praising their industriousness. Not so Max O'Rell. Even before their main review of O'Rell's *John Bull & Co.: the Great Colonial Branches of the Firm* (1894), the *Bulletin*'s editors seized on one of his essays in a French magazine. O'Rell, the paper reported, saw the working-man as "lazy, drunken, a sieve -- thinking only of himself, and nothing of his country. He idles in the towns, while the country cries for labour."27

After the usual defensive response ("O'Rell saw only a corner of Australia"), the editors offered their rejoinder in familiar terms, but terms which summarised their own characteristic views of the actual Australian. The working-man, they said, "has large virtues to compensate small vices":

If thriftless, he is generous; if deficient in energy and initiative for himself, he has zeal and sympathy for others. He degenerates in the cities; but you must average him to know him. See him in the bush, see him on the mines. The *Bulletin* would pit the first ten thousand men around Coolgardie against any workers in the world -- not as beasts of burden, not as money-makers, not as saints, but as men.28

27 *Ibid.*, 1 September 1894. *John Bull* was reviewed on 27 October 1894, p. 21. See also a cartoon satirising O'Rell on 3 November 1894, p. 12. Lawson refers to him in the story "Shall We Gather at the River?" "Max O'Rell" was the pseudonym of Leon Paul Blouet.

It is the bush itself, that is, which creates "men", and it is to the bush that Australians must look for their divine "average".

O'Rell's own comments on the bush, the Bulletin told a correspondent two weeks later, "are naught but a weak dilution of Marcus Clarke's preface to Gordon's poems". Clarke's "Preface", understandably, was the Bulletin's particular bête noire, for no attitude to Australia was more antithetical to literary nationalism and the Bulletin's editorial view that the Australian landscape was both beautiful and cheerful. The wide popularity of Gordon's verse in both Australia and England - Froude thought Gordon the "one poet" of Australia: "an inferior Byron, a wild rider, desperate, dissipated, but with gleams of a most noble nature shining through the turgid atmosphere" - ensured an equally wide readership for Clarke's preface, one of the few genuinely inspired purple passages in nineteenth-century Australian prose.

29 Ibid., 15 September 1894, p. 18.

30 Oceana, p. 166.
But seven years after Clarke's "Preface" appeared in 1876, a Bulletin reviewer suggested that "the authorities be empowered to interfere" if any more Australian authors wrote "about 'gaunt gums', 'spectral branches', 'tortured limbs', 'melancholy whistles', or 'weird and eerie beings'.... If we are to have an indigenous literature, let it be unconventional, masculine, original -- free from the fripperies of fashion or the jargon of the sixth form." Masculinity, apparently, was the desirable product of the bush in both its inhabitants and its literature.

A year after his "Preface" was published, Clarke had also written a mildly satirical essay on "The Future Australian Race". Although the Bulletin could say by the mid-'nineties that this essay was already "famous", the paper's editors were nervous about its fame. Clarke had suggested that the future Australian Empire would consist of two parts above and below a line drawn through the centre of the continent.

---


32Ibid., 27 October 1894, p. 6.
Above the line would evolve a "luxurious and stupendous civilisation" -- including Queensland and the Malaccas, New Guinea "and parts adjacent" -- which would differ from that of Egypt and Mexico only "by the measure of the remembrance of European democracy".

Below the line, however, would evolve a republic, whose "intellectual capital" would be Victoria, "the fashionable and luxurious capital" in Sydney, and, interestingly, the "governing capital" in New Zealand. The new breed of Republican "Australasians" would be "fretful, clever, perverse, [and] irritable": "selfish, self-reliant, ready in resource, prone to wander, caring little for home ties". "In another hundred years", he concluded:

the average Australasian will be a tall, coarse, strong-jawed, greedy, pushing, talented man, excelling in swimming and horsemanship. His religion will be a form of Presbyterianism; his national policy a democracy tempered by the rate of exchange. His wife will be a thin, narrow woman, very fond of dress and idleness, caring little for her children, but without sufficient brain-power to sin with zest. In five hundred years, unless recruited from foreign nations, the breed will be wholly extinct; but in that five hundred years it will have changed the face

\[33\text{Op. cit., p. 29.}\]
of Nature, and swallowed up all our contemporary civilisation. It is, however -- perhaps, fortunately -- impossible that we shall live to see this stupendous climax.\textsuperscript{34}

To the \textit{Bulletin}, however, Clarke's essay was a signpost marking "the currents of deterioration in our national character". "If observers and thinkers can but determine the nature and force of those currents, and statemen can erect a barrier to their influence, the Republic of Australia will long live to amuse its children with the prophecy of Marcus Clarke."\textsuperscript{35} In the meantime, the \textit{Bulletin} commended to its readers one volume above all others as the most brilliant "body of suggestive thought upon ourselves and our future": Francis Adams' \textit{The Australians} (1893). By comparison the observations of Trollope and O'Rell were "the merest spume and froth", Froude was "always in leading-strings, fixed in preconceptions", and Clarke's dogma was too doubtful, his wit too sparkling.\textsuperscript{36}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., p. 30. \\
\textsuperscript{35}\textit{TB}, 27 October 1883, p. 6. \\
\textsuperscript{36}Ibid. Although Adams' book did not appear until 1893, it was based on a series of articles he wrote in 1890 for the \textit{Fortnightly Review}. The paper praised his earlier study, \textit{Australian Essays} (Melbourne, 1886), as "some of the sanest criticism ever published south of the line" (26 September 1891, p. 8).
\end{flushright}
The reason for the Bulletin's preference for Adams is not difficult to locate. Australia, Adams claimed, would indeed develop into two different communities: not the northern and southern ones of Clarke, but those of "the Pacific Slope and the Eastern Interior". Solely because of climate, "in another hundred years the man of the Interior -- the veritable 'bushman' -- will be as far removed from the man of the sea-slope as the Northern Frenchman from the Southern, as the Castilian from the Andalusian". It is there, in the far Interior - "not one hundred, but three and four and five hundred miles" back from the sea -- that Australians will find "the one powerful and unique national type yet produced in the new land".

In the bush, Adams wrote, "I find not only all that is genuinely characteristic in Australia and the Australians springing from this heart of the land, but also all that is noblest, kindliest, and best". Just as the West was the "heart" of the United States, "the

\[37\] Australians, pp. 12, 13.

\[38\] Ibid., p. 144.
genuine America", the "Interior is the heart of the genuine Australia, and, if needs be, will do as much for the nation and the race." ³⁹ The "new species" of Australian was "the Bushman": not the selector or squatter, but "the true Bushman, the Bushman pure and simple, the man of the nation." Significantly enough, Adams closed his chapter on "the Bush People" with Paterson's "Clancy of the Overflow", published a few months earlier in the Bulletin's Christmas issue for 1889. For the "man of the nation", the "one powerful and unique national type" was to be found in his "perfected sample" in "the ranks of the shearers, boundary riders, and general station hands" of the Australian Interior: ⁴⁰

As the stock are slowly stringing, Clancy rides behind them singing,

For the drover's life has pleasures that the townsfolk never know.

And he sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended,

And at night the wond'rous glory of the ever-lasting stars.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 154, 171.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 165-6, 184-6.
iii. The "Bushman's Bible"?

The Bulletin's editors unhesitatingly turned to the bush for a vision of Australia's future "national character", and were more than willing to participate in the first "rhetorical" stage of historical myth-making for Australia. But the paper's tone of aggressive defensiveness when faced with the data of the second stage, direct observation; its references to the "deterioration in our national character"; and its determination to "average" the bush working-man: all suggest that the Bulletin's editors were also highly uncertain about the special qualities of life in Australia. If rhetoric melded with fact in the 'nineties to produce Australia's distinguishing historical myth, what was the Bulletin's role in the process?

As early as 1881 the Bulletin began a series of "Marginal Notes" as comments on the "own decided type of...abstract and apparent graces of mind and form" of the Australian colonies. These notes, unfortunately, failed in any attempt to "find the character of a people mirrored in its literature", and the series was
discontinued. \footnote{TB, 29 January 1881, pp. 13-14; 19 February 1881, pp. 1-2.} Again in 1894 the editors called for correspondents to send in information on "characteristic national developments" as contributions to knowledge of the "Australian character as modified by Australian conditions". \footnote{"The Coming Australian", \textit{ibid.}, 10 November 1894, p. 6; see also "Some Australian Characteristics", 29 December 1894, pp. 6-7.} The results, not unexpectedly, were disappointing, and by 1899 A.G. Stephens was lamenting that "the national fibre is being in a hundred ways slackened and destroyed", characteristically adding "in the cities, not in the bush". \footnote{\textit{Tbid.}, 9 December 1899, "Red Page".}

The \textit{Bulletin}'s concern for Australia's "national character", in the first place, was closely related to its political chauvinism. From publishing a letter condemning Australian eating habits (because they were based on those of "cold and clammy Britain") to deploring the weedy physiques of urban Australians (suggesting they be built up by a compulsory citizen army which would defend Australia from foreign invasion),
the paper's editors attempted to probe any area of Australian life which they felt should be enriched simply because Australians lived in Australia. Even the larrikin's accent was the "twang of cockney vulgarity" which had been imported "long before rabbits, sparrows, snails, and other British nuisances were grafted upon our budding civilisation."  

The subject of "degenerating", moreover, was nothing if not interesting to the Bulletin's readers. When the Sydney Morning Herald published a report suggesting that Australians were degenerating because of the climate, the Bulletin immediately attacked the paper for its (to them) English-based reasoning: "the chief hope of the Australian people", they countered, "lies in the fact that they must of necessity become a tropical race, and that, in so doing, they may develop the vigour, endurance, and mental capacity which have

\[44\] Ibid., 2 December 1893, p. 5, signed "Locust": author unidentified; 13 February 1897, p. 6.  

\[45\] Ibid., 6 January 1894, p. 6.
caused the children of the sun to fill so vast a space in the world's annals." 46

Seven years later, in 1900, the Bulletin also reprinted a paper by a Townsville doctor, Joseph Ahearne, delivered before a Roman Catholic congress in Sydney. On this occasion Dr. Ahearne suggested that Australians were degenerating both physically and mentally in the tropics, and that the topic was one worthy of the forthcoming federal Parliament. 47 For the less politically-minded, recourse could always be had to any of the remarkable number of Australian companies advertising in the paper. Scarcely an issue in the 1890s failed to contain at least one product -- like galvanic belts and electric girdles (both male and female models illustrated) -- calculated to restore lost "vigour" to "young men and those who wish to marry who, as a result of early follies, or the excesses of a more mature age", suffered from quite frightening debilitation.

46 "This Degenerate Nation", ibid., 22 April 1893, p. 4.

47 Ibid., 29 September 1900, "Red Page".
Whatever the policies of the Bulletin's advertising manager and accountants, its editors' intentions were not far removed from electric girdles. In terms reminiscent of their onslaughts on Aestheticism during the 'eighties, "The Bulletin's! Xmas Sermon" of 1894, for instance, attacked contemporary Christmas literature. "It is, in the main, a bathetic variety of literature -- a mild and sentimental drivel in which the flesh and the spirit meet and maunder together to no special purpose". Christianity, that "old, dream-like, unworldly faith of Galilee can't be made to fit in with the latter-day life of Europe and America and Australia; either the old faith has to go, or the new life must be wholly reconstructed."48

Aside from the predictable crop of fictional melodrama ("The Woman Scorned!" by Alexander Montgomery), death ("The Ghosts of the Desert" by Ernest Favenc) and love ("The Little Duchess" by Ethel Turner), the sort of "reconstructed" life that the Bulletin chose to represent by its contributors' short stories and verse

48 Ibid., 22 December 1894, p. 6.
in the Christmas issue one week earlier was unmistakable. The diggers of Dyson and "E.A.D."\(^{49}\); Lawson's swaggy and Daley's sundowner\(^{50}\); Paterson's steeple-chase rider and drover\(^{51}\); William Sabelberg's cookies\(^{52}\); and even the generalised bushmen of A.G. Stephens and Henry Ellis\(^{53}\): all were calculated to portray pathetically, romantically, or humorously (and in most cases, in all three ways) life in Australia away from what Furphy called the "blue-moulded littoral".

The significant fact about bush literature for literary nationalists (as well as the Bulletin), however, was not that it was set in the bush. "The bush", instead, represented everything that was not urban:


\(^{50}\)"That Swag", ibid., p. 11; "Larry", p. 12, signed "C.R."

\(^{51}\)"The Amateur Rider", ibid., p. 13, signed "Banjo"; "Saltbush Bill", p. 18, signed "A.B.P."

\(^{52}\)"Two Cockies", ibid., p. 6, signed "W. Brenta".

\(^{53}\)"Dispersed: a Lay of the Herbertson Hot Springs", ibid., p. 22; "My Horse", p. 2, signed "A. Chee".
urban life, that is, symbolised by its ultimate form of "degeneration", that walking index of vice, the larrikin. To the Bulletin, if the larrikin's accent was vulgar, it could be attacked as cockney and British, and thus to be denounced as un-Australian on political grounds. And if his degenerated physique was weedy, it must be due to city life, for no true Australian could admit a weedy physique as characteristic of the "race".

It was one of the Bulletin's more forceful attacks on "larrikinism", in fact, which found two of its editors in jail after their unsuccessful defence of a libel suit. 54 Perhaps it was with Trollope's reference to the "wild, untaught savagery of 'bush children!" in mind - the children of "free-selectors, cockatoos, and small farmers" - that the paper attacked the Federal Australian for an article suggesting that larrikins were simply high-spirited boys. 55 "Youths bred in the bush", an editorial of 1881 claimed, "are almost uniformly

---

54 See above, n. 23 to ch. 5.

55 Australia and New Zealand, II, 256.
well-behaved. They may smoke, but as a rule they have an aversion for drink. They are remarkably taciturn."

If not Trollope, then the editors had certainly read Marcus Clarke. Bush youths, they agreed, "seem in some small degree at least to have been impressed by the dominant note of Australian scenery, Weird Melancholy, and to have imbibed the spirit of the Australian mountain forests, 'whose solitude is desolation, in whose black gorges is stifled a story of sullen despair.'" Carrying on their references to Clarke's preface, they contrasted bush youths with "depraved" urban gangs, who "serve, as they prowl around in droves, but to remind one of the 'flights of white cockatoos which shriek like evil souls,' or of the mopokes with their 'horrible peals of semi-human laughter.' We know and understand the Australian larrikin. But we don't know the Federal Australian larrikin."

56 TB, 28 May 1881, p. 2.

57 Ibid.
Given the Bulletin's anxiety to identify the true character of the larrikin, what of the averaged but "actual" inhabitant of the bush? Was he, any more than the urban larrikin, likely to respond to the paper's call for "high Art", for the cultivation of that aesthetic sense which would bring to Australia "the refining and humanizing effects of a higher civilization"? To more than one Bulletin correspondent, Francis Adams' "one powerful and unique national type" was scarcely the figure to reconstruct a "new species" of Australian.

"As a general rule", "Hiram Abiff" observed in 1889, "the Australian bushman has an old song-book for his breviary, pater-noster, and decalogue. I cannot adduce stinginess as a reason why three out of four station hands refuse to subscribe to a paper or to buy a few novels from hawkers.... I have therefore come to the conclusion that inertia is the principal cause of the want of mental pabulum in a bush-hut". His further example of the bushman's literary inertia - that "it is well known that about the most difficult thing to induce a bushman to do is to write a letter" - may have
been glorified by the friend of "Clancy of the Overflow", but semi-literacy appeared to many Australians to be an uncertain qualification for a divine average. 58

Even semi-literacy was a rarity among bushmen -- or at least "Australian native bushmen" -- if a reply to "Abiff"'s article by a New England correspondent can be accepted. "Five out of six", "The Bullet" wrote from "Jeogla" station near Armidale, N.S.W., "are not buyers simply because they are unable to read, and the sixth is too stingy to buy them if they were given to him." And then, in the first recorded use of the well-publicised phrase describing the Bulletin's influence among Australian bushmen, "The Bullet" elaborated on his impressions of Francis Adams' "man of the nation":

"I have often heard it said that "The Bulletin is the bushman's bible", and, so far as the majority of bushmen are concerned (who, by the way, are not eligible for the A[ustralian] N[atives'] A[ssociation]), that statement is a solid truth; but the native bushman who can read rarely soars above the literary pabulum provided by the stock reports and the records of prize fights and boat races and recipes for whitewashing hencoops.

58 "The Hypochondriac of the Australian Bush", ibid., 13 April 1889, p. 20. Author unidentified.
As for the bushman's more general qualities -- those to be observed only in time, and not by the more hasty impressions of Trollope or Froude -- "The Bullet" was equally blunt. Despite the Bulletin's Christmas issues, the bushman reflected an "ethos" far removed from both Australia's urban life and the city-dweller's romanticised conception of the "genuine" Australia. Compared to the bushman, he claimed, even the dull Hodge of rural England is as entertaining as a Gaiety show. The native rarely travels out of the districts in which he was born, except for a shearing-trip, and if he cannot get a job on an adjacent station, he will potter about on his own, or a relative's selection, and fill in his spare time by snaring possums. He takes no interest in the affairs of his country, cares little and knows less about what is going on in Parliament, and fails to enthuse over anything that can't be ear-marked or branded. 59

Being born in Australia, it would appear, conferred no especially civilised qualities on the "actual" Australian bushman.

Literate or not, "Bookworm" advised the Bulletin, "the average Australian does indeed prefer the poorest imported literature to the brightest pro-

59 Ibid., 11 May 1889, p. 13. Authors unidentified.
ductions of his own country". While his example -- John Nicholson's Halek, "purely the product of the Australian bush" -- may in itself have justified this preference, a "bush bookseller"'s comments were more revealing. "Bush readers", he told the Bulletin, wanted only "Willy Ro-o-illy", "The Red Hand of Ulsther", "Spaches from the Dock", "Maria Monk", and "Ned Kelly". While the clientele of the "bush bookseller" may reasonably be suspected to have been exclusively Irish, his other observations suggest they were not. The only other books he could sell (and most likely he was one of those itinerant "hawkers" mentioned by "Hiram Abiff") were "suppressed" books, the familiar "blue" volumes best known to Customs men and, apparently, to bush hawkers and their clients. 61

"Female readers", on the other hand, were attracted to the "'Young Ladies' Journal', 'Family Herald', and 'Bow Bells' kind of literature": a predeliction, he suggested, which may account for the

60 Ibid., 5 May 1894, p. 21. Author unidentified.
61 Ibid., 9 March 1895, "'The Bulletin' Book Exchange".
peculiarly "aristocratic" names with which Australian parents seem impelled to burden their children. Standard authors, such as Dickens, Thackeray, and Lytton "don't seem to suit most bush-readers". "Poetry is a dead letter, though a few years ago I sold a 'Byron' to a giddy youth." After the notorious Deeming trial, he concluded, "it's all detective tales, bush-ranging yarns, and heroes of the prize-ring."  

Presumably A.G. Stephens was not far wrong when he told the story of an unnamed Sydney bookseller who "partly imported, partly compiled an immense manual of agriculture specially written round Australian conditions of weather and crops, and humped it laboriously into the back-blocks". Usually refused by the "representative Australian farmer" because "he couldn't really afford it", the agent would pack up and turn away, when:

the r.A.f.'s eye would suddenly brighten with an idea, and he would lean over to whisper

62 After Frederick Deeming was arrested for the murder of his wife in Windsor, Victoria, the London correspondent of the Melbourne Argus discovered that Deeming had also murdered his first wife and their four children in England. Deeming was hanged on 23 May 1892.
hoarsely, "Say, mister, hain't yer got naything blue? What's thishyer 'Maria the Monk' I hear them talkin' about? I wouldn' mind givin' ten bob for somethin' real spicy." So the book-man laboriously humped his ideals and his enthusiasm and his whole art and practice of Australian agriculture back to Sydney, and sold them for waste paper; and imported tons of "Maria Monk" and "Boccaccio" and "Plain Blue Talk" and the rest; and on his next visit to the backblocks the representative Australian farmer would ride forty miles after him on the chance of securing "one of those books with pictures of women like yer sold to Bill 'Arris at the Nine-Mile Scrub." 63

Stephens meant his story seriously, incorporating it in one of his discussions on the effects of Australia's "agricultural bush-environment" on the inhabitants of the bush. "Between isolated Man and Nature in the bush there is perpetual warfare. You must either dominate or be dominated." Stephens had no doubts about who was losing. Many bushmen, he claimed, were "reduced by their environment to the level of savages; and their promiscuous relationships shock a city moralist." The ordinary selector, "uneducated, hardly stirred by refining influences of arts or letters, with his energy often exhausted day after day by severe muscular labour, goes

63 Ibid., 27 March 1897, "Red Page".
into the bush as into a mental tomb." 64

The selector, of course, was not a member of the "nomad tribe" of Australian bushmen. "A bushmen kills the snakes on his 'selection', but there is a snake which avenges them all - the 'selection' itself."

The nomad tribe were free from that snake-selection, from the bit of crape wound around the selector's hat to signify his spiritual death:

There are whole bush communities in the N.S.W. agricultural districts where the male population wear crape habitually, constantly. It is a trade-mark, like the butcher's blue apron. A stranger asks, surprised, "Has there been an epidemic?" Not so; these men mourn as by a kind of dumb instinct. The Bush has strangled their souls. 65

Stephens pointed out that the intelligence of itinerant shearers and miners had been frequently compared to that of selectors, to the disadvantage of the men on the land. But put "shearers and miners on selections, give them the same horizon to look at, similar trees to cut down, and different cows to get out of the same bog from one year's end to the other, and

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid.
their superior intelligence will evaporate like morning mist." The bush, that is, was the source of the values of "real Australia", but it strangled the souls of the men most tied to it.

Perhaps, then, the "actual" Australian bushman could be raised to heroism in historical mythology not simply because he did not live in Australia's cities, but because he was a nomad. On the one hand, as one of the Bulletin's editors remarked in 1894, "the divergence of type which Clarke anticipated between residents in the temperate zone and residents in the tropics, is really growing, as Adams noticed, between dwellers in the interior and dwellers on the littoral... in the minds and physique of the people." The bush, he suggested, gave "health and strength not to be found in alleys and factories". The monotony of the bush, it was true, "narrows all but strong and original minds", but even the dullness and apathy generated by the bush (and particularly the "stoic philosophy" of bushmen)

---

66 Ibid.
was preferable to the precociousness and viciousness of the cities. Only a year later, on the other hand, Jerome Darnet used one of his short stories to observe that "there is nothing of the Stoic in the character of Australians. They fail even to understand the spirit of Stoicism.... Most of them are only brutally cynical." 68

Yet, the Bulletin's writer continued, "the race now being evolved will be fitter for its environment than any which could be imported":

The writer has seen sun-dried Queenslanders and ruddy Maorilanders trudging 200 miles to a Northern rush. They started all together, side by side, but on the third day many of the Maorilanders -- big, beefy, stalwart men -- were being carried by the tough, lathy Queenslanders. In feats of strength the Australian bushman may easily be beaten; but for feats of endurance who can surpass him? 69

Who indeed? For only three months before the Bulletin had condemned individual shearers, the epitome of the nomad tribe, for their role in the shearers' strike of 1894. Moreover, the paper attacked the shearers first, by comparing them with New Zealanders,

---

67 Ibid., 29 December 1894, p. 6. The article was written in reply to Annie Besant's comments on Australia.
68 Ibid., 3 August 1895, p. 27.
69 Ibid., 29 December 1894, p. 7.
and second, by suggesting that they lacked the qualities of those other "independent settlers", the cocky farmer. The shearer, their editorial stated flatly, "is a person with few ambitions, and who is mostly content to be a servant and wage-earner all his days. He never had, like the average Maorilander, an intense resolve to become, sooner or later, an independent settler".  

As for that other noble rambling man, the teamster, the Bulletin was equally blunt when he showed the true colour of his bush virtues -- white -- in 1894. Arthur Jose later reported the incident in The Times of London: "it was the Bulletin that, when Bourke teamsters rioted against the competition of camels driven by Pathans, told them plainly (and got itself much disliked therefor) that they might object to Pathans in the name of a white Australia, but that camels had come to stay."  

The Bulletin had said that the issue began as a racial one, but the editors also pointed out why it arose at all. "Asiatics" ran the

---


71 31 August 1903, unsigned.
camel business "chiefly because the hopelessly conservative Australian teamster, instead of adapting himself to new circumstances, has set himself to shove back the Atlantic with a broom, and a small one at that." The "actual" teamster may have objected, but "Billabong" was prepared to rebut them even more directly: "the cry of 'Australia for the white man!' has made a lot of mean whites look upon themselves as the salt of the earth." If nomadism conferred special virtues on the Australian bushman of the 1880s and 1890s, both the Bulletin and its correspondents were slow to recognise them.

At the first "rhetorical" level of historical myth-making, then, it would seem that the heroic image of the bushman was amplified during the 'nineties because he was not associated with the "actual" urbanised Australia, just as the bushman of five decades earlier had come to represent everything which was not associated with the realities of convictism. And the idealised bushman of rhetoric and literature was apparently as

---

72 TB, 17 February 1894, p. 7.

73 Ibid., 21 July 1894, p. 7.
different from the "actual" bushman as he was from the "actual" convict.

Historical myth, however, is formed by both rhetoric and fact, not rhetoric based on the denial of fact. The "ideal" inhabitant of Australia was certainly seen as the man of the new land, environment, and "soil": the bush-man. But the majority of Australians, by the end of the century, chose to live in towns and cities, and they were scarcely "characteristic" of the "true" Australia. Therefore they must not have embodied "characteristically Australian" virtues because they did not live in the bush. Have twentieth-century historians accepted only the logic of nineteenth-century rhetoric, allowing it to slip into the logic of fact? Or has historical myth-making been founded on rhetoric and literature, instead of rhetoric and fact?
iv. Myths

If the "actual" bushman can be observed at the point when rhetoric and fact merged into historical myth, then the contradictions between both levels can be resolved. For it is at this point that the first and second stages of historical myth-making are operating simultaneously, revealing the role of literary nationalism in reconciling the "actual" inhabitants of the bush with a "national literature", and pointing to the distinction between historical mythology and literary myth. The unlikely figure of the "swagman", curiously, was the key to it all.

By the beginning of the 1880s the actual swagman certainly deserved the romanticising of historical mythology. As the Bulletin found him in 1881, he was already "a melancholy study":

He has poor joy in the present -- no hope in the future; the meanest workman of white blood -- insolent, indolent, dissolute, thriftless, mindless, godless. And wherefore? And who must bear the blame? Himself, chiefly. He will soak his body and soul in alcohol; and when ten thousand devils, bred from his orgies, hound him on to death, he does but pay the debt wilfully incurred.... Squatter, and preacher, and publican, with every other prosperous man of the bush,
may face high heaven with a "God, I thank thee that I am not as this man", while the poor, used up, degraded tool hides his face from the sunlight and renders his body to the worms.\textsuperscript{74}

The swagman, however, was understood to exist as two distinct types: the "sundowner", or loafer, and the swagman proper, the itinerant bush workers, such as the shearer or rouseabout. Fearing that readers "unacquainted with the conditions of Australian bush life" might think from an English paper's article on swagmen that they were beggars, a \textit{Bulletin} correspondent claimed in 1889 that "the 'sundowner' is, and always has been, a myth. The genuine loafer is not the stamp of man to carry his swag from station to station, travelling a score of miles under a broiling sun when water is often unobtainable. The ordinary swagman prefers working to travelling":

Meanwhile, as the country becomes more settled the race of swagmen is dying out, and ere long one of Australia's most picturesque figures will exist only as a tradition, and will be accounted as great a curiosity as the mythical bunyip.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{74}\textit{Ibid.}, 25 June 1881, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{75}"The Mythical Sundowner", \textit{ibid.}, 14 September 1889, p. 8, unsigned.
Four years later Joseph Furphy began drafting the work which would immortalise "the ordinary swagman": Such is Life. The remarkable success of Such is Life since the 1940s has in no small part been due its portrayal of the values of "one of Australia's most picturesque figures", which in turn has strengthened the "tradition" of the ordinary swagman himself.

Furphy, in fact, disagreed with the distinction made by the Bulletin's correspondent. Three weeks after the article on "The Mythical Sundowner" appeared in the paper, he wrote to the editors complaining that the unknown author of the earlier article had confounded the "base and helpless class" of true loafers, that of the "gentleman-sundowner", with the "honest workers who, as the shearing season approaches, come from Victoria and eastern New South Wales like lions from the swelling of Jordan". These honest workers, Furphy suggested, "are the very antithesis of the sundowner -- active, emulous, independent and capable men.... Your true sundowner will scarcely accept the easiest work of a rouseabout in the shearing season: at any other
Moreover Furphy disagreed that the true sundowner was "mythical", both because he had seen them himself, and because the sundowner -- "the representative or typical sundowner" -- will never fail "while human nature sports into so many varieties and degrees of laziness":

wherever food is to be obtained without the vulgar equivalent of work, there the sundowner of the present day sits, like Patience on a monument, smiling at his unearned increment -- namely, his pannikin of flour.... While there exists a circuit of stations as a basis of operations the phoenix-like sundowner shall flourish in immortal youth.

But Furphy's argument was clearly based on the sundowner as a representative figure for human "laziness", the figure which represented (rather than was) a "social extreme". And by the end of the 'eighties, as he said, "the old economic systems which produce and tolerate social extremes are dying out -- dying hard, certainly, after the manner of abuses, but dying, nevertheless."

76"'The Mythical Sundowner!"; ibid., 5 October 1889, p. 8, signed "Warrigal Jack". Ward is unaware that "Warrigal Jack" was Furphy (Australian Legend, p. 178).

77 Ibid.
By 1894 the depression following the bank crashes of 1893 had irreparably altered the status of the swagman as an actual part of Australian bush life. Both classes of swagmen, a Bulletin correspondent wrote in September, were clearly "in the past": both the "good workmen, who promptly smashed their cheques at the nearest pub., and then humped 'bluey' in honest search of a fresh job; and professional 'sundowners', who turned up, year in and year out, with automatic regularity". Thanks to the depression, he reported, "hundreds of men are tramping across wind-swept plains and over mud-choked roads, without swags, and owning no earthly possession save the rags which hang about their half-starved carcasses". And as in the depression of the 1930s, which witnessed the same phenomenon, neither squatters nor selectors could afford to feed them, much less employ them. The "phoenix-like" sundowner of Furphy would rise again only in literature.

In the meantime, Australians were left with a rhetorical conviction that the bush was the "real

Ibid., 1 September 1894, p. 23.
Australia", and with the knowledge that it had been depopulated in fact. For the "actual" nomad tribe of Australian bushmen bore no more resemblance to the outback "man of the nation" during the 1880s and 1890s than paper currency bore to the idea of "money". The "currency lad" of earlier convict days -- the true native-born Australian -- lived on in the form of the bushman. Both were promissory notes, symbols of potential (not actual) reserves. If the Bulletin's editors and correspondents were correct, only historical myth could redeem the bushman.

The development of that myth can be seen in Furphy's concept of the swagman. The "actual" swagman, as the Bulletin found him, was wholly God-forsaken; to Furphy, he was only an honest worker. In the sundowner, however, Furphy discovered the link between his observation and his creative imagination; the sundowner became progressively a "social extreme", a quality of "human nature", a "representative or typical" figure, Patience, and finally, the phoenix.

At the same time, and almost inadvertently, Furphy gave to the swagman all the attributes of the
Despite the *Bulletin* correspondent whom he was rebutting, Furphy had discovered the swagman in the process of becoming "a myth": the representative figure of both the industrious and "picturesque" ordinary swagman and the lazy and "typical" sundowner. And just as importantly, both were "dying out" because Australian bush society no longer had a place for their distinguishing virtues. The dying sundowner wandered in search of himself, the dying swagman in search of work, and the two wanderers became inextricably melded.

At the first stage of myth-making in Australia, then, the noble bushman ought to have become the repository of Australia's "national character". But at the second stage the *Bulletin* and its contributors knew that whatever national character actually existed "wants deepening and strengthening in the stress of national need". By 1894 the editors of the *Bulletin* were already turning to historical mythology "in order to realise all the hopes which our poets have uttered for us". Mere rhetoric would not do; anticipating Buchanan and the Boer and Great Wars, they invoked the historical myth of sacrifice. "It may be that... we shall yet need to pass through the furnace of suffering,
and serve our apprenticeship to sorrow." That same year, almost in answer to the Bulletin's lament that "our half-gods have gone, and our gods have not arrived", Lawson published Short Stories in Prose and Verse.

Henry Lawson, A.G. Stephens wrote in his review of Lawson's first book, "is the voice of the bush, and the bush is the heart of Australia." But Lawson's voice, as we have seen in an earlier chapter, was not that of most of his contemporaries, nor was his bush their bush. He suffered from "want of patriotism", and his "drivelling pessimism" scarcely gave "the cue of what may be a Nation great and free". Unlike Paterson, who gave Australians "the real bushman and his sentiments", Lawson showed "the pseudo or mongrel bushman", who "hates the bush".

---

79 Ibid., 29 December 1894, p. 7.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid., 5 January 1895, p. 15.
82 See above, nn. 77, 66, 56, and 54 to ch. 3.
The violence of these contemporary attacks on Lawson, as well as later exercises in the hagiography or demonology of literary criticism, are all reflections of literary nationalism attempting to operate on the third level of myth-making. For literary nationalism, like historical mythologising, is the impulse behind attempts to relate "potential" to "fact", "rhetoric" to "actuality": the impulse of much of Lawson's verse, for example. But in his short stories Lawson presented figures at the level of pure myth: of literature, not of history. Did literary nationalists in Australia (to borrow A.D. Hope's formulation) begin their myth-making as an attempt to come to grips with the reality of literature, only to end in an attempt to impose an historical dream?

Arthur Jose, more than any other critic of Lawson in the 'nineties, came closest to identifying the central problem which Lawson's prose presented to literary nationalists. Instead of printing Jose's 800-word article on the "Red Page", A.G. Stephens had it banished to page fifteen of the Bulletin's issue for 28 May 1898, just above paragraphs on a coroner's hand-book from New Zealand and a bottle-and-rag business in
Melbourne, and sandwiched between portraits of the late Mr. Gladstone and Miss Hetty Holroyd, "a coming Sydney soprano". Australia, Jose said, was a land with "long arms":

The land of huge, unvarying distances, of sheep by the thousand and rabbits by the million, where a sudden drought brings the millions and thousands down to hundreds and tens, and a good fall of rain runs them up into thousands and millions again -- where the main range with its barren level ridges typifies the worst side of democracy, every hummock as high as another and none really high -- the "reckling" of the continents, the gawky, long-limbed, red-haired child that nature in her shame kept out of society as long as possible.83

It was these long arms that Australia "wound round many a man whom physical weakness or dull intellect has handicapped against his fellows, and has made of him the swagman, the spieler, the unique Australian type of failure."

The true product of Australia's environment, the "swagman-type", the "typical Australian native", "the unique Australian type of failure" has been "set down at last by a man who knows him"; Henry Lawson.

83"Reckling" is used here by Jose in the sense of "the smallest and weakest animal of a litter", a usage with some currency in the midland and northern counties of England. Jose was born in Bristol.
And at last Australian literature knew the authentic hero of its mythology, the figure of pure myth. Jose had identified the pharmakos, the scapegoat wholly alien to literary romance, but the linking figure between ironic comedy and ironic tragedy.

Jose was slightly nervous about calling "this swagman-type the typical Australian native." "Let it be distinctly understood", he went on, that the swagman-type was "typical, not of the mass of the population, but of the influence of the country. He is the Australian as the kangaroo is, not as mutton is Australian; but even now the sheep vastly exceed the kangaroo in number."

In one clean leap of the critical imagination Jose cleared that infuriating barrier between rhetoric and fact. He simply accepted the unpleasant possibility that Australia's environment had produced as its unique product the "failure", and that the failure as an archetypal figure had entered Australia's literature.

Jose, moreover, disposed of nearly all the criticism which had been levelled at Australia's "national character" -- from Trollope and Froude to Annie Besant and A.G. Stephens -- by conceding, in effect, that they were correct. The Australian was the
man whose "whole life and character have been shaped in spite of himself by the land that owns him". The "Britisher", whether he was South African, Victorian, Anglo-Indian, or "frosted Canuck" was a "Britisher" still, as long as "he is the master, dominating and taming the new land of which he has taken possession..... It is when the land takes possession of the man that the differentiation really begins." The result, in Australia, was "the unique Australian type of failure":

Globe trotters have noticed him, sometimes as a picturesque object (which he isn't very often), sometimes as a moral lesson. He is a drunkard and a gambler -- he has very little moral stamina -- he is a God-forgetting scoundrel in a God-forgotten country.... But the globe-trotter has never ever seen, has never had the most remote experience of the conditions under which he lives. The great plains swallow him up, and their monotony deadens his brain more than all the liquor he drinks -- delirium tremens has at least the saving grace of variety. The burning sun evaporates his conscience, and the soaking storms when they come wash all the morals out of him -- he survives only because he is thoroughly adapted to his environment, and has a wild cat's tenacity of life.  

---

84 Pharmakos, of course, can mean "scoundrel", as in Aristophanes.
Anticipating A.D. Hope’s description of "the ultimate men...whose boast is not: 'we live' but 'we survive!'"\(^{85}\), Jose clearly recognised that he was identifying the same man whom A.G. Stephens reported as wearing crape in memory of his strangled soul. "Small wonder if he has in him a good deal else that is animal -- not much encumbered by 'finer feelings'. But virtue does not leave him because it is virtuous. Such virtues as will help him in the struggle remain to him, and increase mightily."\(^{86}\)

As for those virtues, Jose found "typical Australian qualities: wherever you find men country-bred, shaped at least partially by the typical Australian environment, there you will find the drunkenness, the easy-going gambling propensity, the comradeship that at best is heroism and at worst 'chivalry upside-down'." Australia he had described as a gawky child, a child, he hoped, who would "some day carve great statues in marble; at present she is modelling in very soft putty." \(^{85}\)"Australia", loc. cit.  

\(^{86}\)TB, 28 May 1898, p. 15.
And Lawson's book of short stories, he concluded, "is the photograph-album of her models."  

For all Jose's references to "comradeship" and the "greatest" virtue -- "the virtue of mateship" -- the swagman-type's heroism was still that of the sacrificial victim. The swagman, like Lawson's Isley Mason, would go down with all yards manned: nos morituri te salutamus. On the other hand, the "swagman-type" of Australian literature was not simply inert. As his name implied, he was more or less constantly on the move, an archetypal questing-figure. Nor, in fact, was he ever alone; his companion was "Matilda", as a song of wide currency after the 'nineties noted. Unfortunately for those who have suggested that "Waltzing Matilda" should be Australia's "national song", "Matilda" had been passed on from convict jargon as a term for the consenting male partner in a homosexual relationship.  

87 Ibid.  

88 See Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Report into Criminal Law 1847 (447), VII, in which "witnesses spoke of male prisoners on Norfolk Island being 'married' to each other"; one of these so-called "Colonial Women" was named "Matilda" (L.L. Robson, op. cit., 116).
In their search for a representative human form for Australia, images of questing came naturally to Australian authors. Victor Daley once described the bushman as Adam, Furphy compared the sundowner to Ulysses, and the *Bulletin* likened both the bullocky to John the Baptist and "the sunbronzed, bearded miner" to Greathead the Pilgrim. The appeal of the swagman as a romanticised subject of Australian writing is not difficult to locate. The solitary figure, wandering at will, fed virtually on request, conscious of belonging to a freemasonry of wholly independent spirits, and operating within an acknowledged code of behaviour: the form has appeared in literature in various forms as long as man has felt himself alienated from his gods, his society, or himself. And as we have already seen, the *Bulletin* was repeatedly forced to castigate those contributors who seemed to think "that all the human race was in the swag industry".

As an archetypal figure the literary swagman

89 *TB*, 27 December 1884, p. 12; 5 October 1889, p. 8; 3 September 1881, p. 2.

is the exact opposite of the hero-victim of Australia's Fall, the convict: a not unnatural literary response to that representative figure of a period in Australia when it appeared to many authors that all the human race was in the convict industry. The literary swagman, moreover, is a lineal descendant of the literary bushranger, who in turn was the first inversion of the convict. The convict, as a symbol of values, was lock-stepped to his society; the bushranger was out of step and on the run; the swagman ambled where he would, and even received his pannikin of flour as due tribute for doing so.

The wandering bushman, ironically, represented a denial of literary nationalism's search for an Australian "identity". As Marcus Clarke had said, the history of a nation is "the history of the influence of nature modified by man, and of man modified by the influence of nature." After a century of settlement the results were highly disappointing, if the "actual" bushman embodied Australia's characteristic virtues. Instead of producing a new race, the bush had strangled the souls of its inhabitants. In an attempt to compensate for fact, literary nationalists could offer only literary
rhetoric and a symbol of their aspirations.

If twentieth-century historians have been correct in assuming that authors of the 'nineties attempted to mirror the "real" Australia in their work, then these authors did indeed participate in the formation of a national "mystique", "legend", or "tradition". But the authors who wrote of the bush in the 'nineties were also literary nationalists, and Henry Lawson discovered what could happen to the author who did not share their mood of romance. The mood of irony and the mode of realism were both unacceptable to many literary nationalists simply because they could be used to identify Australia all too well. Historical myths may be formed from rhetoric and literature, but only at the price of fact.

The "'bush' ethos", again, was undoubtedly used as a "symbol of nationalism" by both the Bulletin and its literary contributors. To the Bulletin's editors, however, it was a "distinctive" ethos because it deadened the very virtues that the "typical" Australian should embody. And so they willingly accepted romantic "bush literature" in their search for an appropriately Australian literature, stories and verse which earned
them Alfred Buchanan's reminder that a "national literature" was "not a record of the peculiarities of shearers and rouseabouts, or of the feats of jockeys or stock-drovers."

If Arthur Jose was correct, on the other hand, Henry Lawson had already given Australia part of the "national literature" defined by Buchanan: the "outward and visible form of what is real and vital and permanent" in Australia's "inner and intellectual life". Lawson had completely associated Australians with their environment, revealing the Australian who was "typical" because he was typical of the distinctive "influence of the country".

The noble bushman of Australian romance was as much a figure of pure literary myth as Lawson's "swagman-type", but Lawson had to "displace" the myth to make it plausible in his realistic prose. Significantly enough, when he reversed the customary moral associations of the old pastoral myth and turned the noble bushman into Australia's pharmakos, Jose instantly recognised the "typical Australian native": "the unique Australian type of failure". Literary nationalism had finally
identified both the new land and the new people of Australia.

Discussing New Zealand's "search for identity", Keith Sinclair has suggested that "the popular conception of the origins of present-day New Zealand" centers in a "New Zealand-British tradition". The slogans of this "tradition", "fairy-tale", or "myth" describe New Zealand as the "Britain of the South", and New Zealanders as "More British than the British". And as Sinclair rightly objects on historical grounds, these "modern legends about the highly civilized founding fathers and their respectable wives...give an impression of New Zealand, past or present, much less varied and colourful than the reality,"

---

1 Kendrick Smithyman, "Legal Fiction", Landfall XI, 2 (June 1967), 127.

2 New Zealand, pp. 397, 399.
Discussing New Zealand's "search for identity", Keith Sinclair has suggested that "the popular conception of the origins of present-day New Zealand" centers in a "New Zealand-British tradition". The slogans of this "tradition", "fairy-tale", or "myth" describe New Zealand as the "Britain of the South", and New Zealanders as "More British than the British". And as Sinclair rightly objects on historical grounds, these "modern legends about the highly civilized founding fathers and their respectable virtues...give an impression of New Zealand, past or present, much less varied and colourful than the reality."  

---


2New Zealand, pp. 297, 299.
For nineteenth-century literary nationalists, however, New Zealand's "reality" was very much part of her "origins", a "reality" which had two aspects: "the stock from which the New Zealanders are sprung is not only British, but the best British". And "the best British" apparently meant the same thing to Dr. Doris Gordon in 1956 as it did to Robert Joplin in 1843: "the great majority of New Zealand women are descended from the selected stock of early ships. There are no remittance women; none of the convict colony origin". Did literary nationalism, through the old Imperial design and the literary dialogue of the 1890s, reflect the beginnings of a national "legend", "tradition", or "myth" for New Zealand?

In his discussion of "literature as an approach to national character", William Cameron found himself tempted "to characterize the New Zealander by comparing him with his national symbol, the kiwi, that flightless bird, so well adapted to his own environment, shy, ungainly, yet whose habits are not fully known". Not

---

3Quoted in ibid., pp. 297, 296.
unexpectedly, Cameron based his comparison on literature revealing "the psychological and sociological links between New Zealanders and Britons", the first aspect of literary nationalism's nineteenth-century "reality". But when Edward Tregear characterised the New Zealander as a kiwi eighty years earlier, he chose a somewhat different point of comparison. In one of his "southern parables", a conversation between a kiwi and a visiting seagull, Tregear left little doubt that his seagull was an Australian:

"Come along, old boy, and have a fish." "No;" said the Kiwi, "I don't eat fish, worms are too lovely for anything." "Come and have a swim?" urged the gull. "I don't swim," was the answer. "I have'n't any nasty webbed toes on my feet." "Well, I'll fly you round that rock out there, and back again," said the visitor. "Flying is vulgar," replied the Kiwi, "and -- a -- in fact, I haven't got any wings. But (getting spiteful) I should like to cut off those beastly white wings of yours with which you flap about up there in that disgusting way."  

---

4 New Zealand (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1965), pp. 38-9. New Zealand's official emblem is in fact the four stars of the Southern Cross, although the (green) leaf of the silver fern has received some official recognition by usage.

Tregear may not have intended his kiwi to represent the typical New Zealander, but if Australia had anything to do with literary nationalism's search for a New Zealand "national character", Tregear may well have meant the "moral" of his parable to be more than satirical: "some have goodness thrust upon them".  

i. The Man Suspended

Literary nationalists in New Zealand eager to express "the aims and aspirations of the newest of nations", Frederick Rollett wrote in 1899, had only to turn to the richest of all sources of legend-making, "Maori life and lore". For here, ready-made as it were, already existed "old legends striking as Grecian epics". And as the representative figure of New Zealand's mythology, who better than the Maori, natural man in harmony with his environment? New Zealanders ought to let their minds "become attuned to the harmony of Nature", James Philp wrote in the Bulletin: let them

---

6 Ibid., p. 21.

7 Bulletin, 27 May 1899, "Red Page". The Bulletin is hereafter cited as TB.
"worship at the altar of Nature herself!" Better yet, Philp went on, was the "progeny of the sturdy European pioneer and the lithe daughter of the wilderness", offspring "of a calibre superior to either of his progenitors." 8

With the notable exception of Alfred Grace, however, the literary motives of nineteenth-century New Zealand authors were unfortunately those of Mrs. Margaret Bullock. Writing to Sir George Grey about her pseudonymously-issued Maorilogue *Utu: a Story of Love, Hate and Revenge* (1894), she stated simply that it was written "to meet a Publishers request for a 'shocker!'". 9

"My desire at the outset was to preserve the memory of manners and customs now obsolete, and fast fading from the recollection of even the natives themselves. To do this effectively involved the concoction of a story sensational from the beginning, so sensational, in fact, 

8Ibid., 10 November 1888, p. 8, signed "Timi Piripi".

9Auckland Public Library, Grey Papers, Bullock to Grey, 8 January 1895. Published under the pseudonym of "Tua-O-Rangi" -- and so listed as late as 1961 in J.A.S. Burns, *A Century of New Zealand Novels: a Bibliography of the Period 1861-1960* (Auckland, 1961) -- *Utu* is here identified as Mrs. Bullock's work for the first time.
that I am not sure but I ought again to apologise for asking you to read it."^{10}

And although Arthur Adams' *Tussock Land* (1904), among others, did attempt to portray the New Zealander of the future as a half-breed, Adams' Aroha Grey was the representative of a "newer people, a nation that has no past". While New Zealand's landscape figured largely in the "design" of the Imperial idea, it was a landscape to be conquered. New Zealand's environment was one to be created in a new image, and the Maori, for the most part, represented precisely those forces which would destroy that image. If anyone at all inhabited New Zealand's "suspended" landscape, he would not be a Maori.

Nevertheless literary nationalists populated New Zealand with at least one figure, silent and denying though the landscape may have been. At first glance, ironically, he appears to be an Australian, the romantic bushman accidentally transplanted across the Tasman.

---

^{10}Ibid., Bullock to Grey, 14 September 1894.
Representing the "legacy of a not-too-distant pioneering past", it has been suggested, "such characters as the 'man alone', the old gold-miner, the 'gentleman of the roads' and the independent deer-stalker are regarded by some as archetypal New Zealanders." The origins of this "archetypal New Zealander", however, are to be found in the work of George Chamier, not the swaggy or digger of Australian literature.

Dick Raleigh, a solitary and peripatetic "philosopher" (and a well-educated immigrant from England), could scarcely be further from what R.W.B. Lewis has called the American Adam, although he has strong resemblances to Lawson's Jack Mitchell and Furphy's Tom Collins. George Chamier was no Lawson or Furphy, nor was his _Philosopher Dick: Adventures and Contemplations of a New Zealand Shepherd_ (1891) uniquely a result of New Zealand experience. But as the expression of a moral quest, _Philosopher Dick_ has an importance central

---

11 J.C. Reid, "Introduction" to _A Book of New Zealand_ (Glasgow, 1964), p. 25. In his introduction Professor Reid disputes this simplified picture of the "archetypal New Zealander".
to literary nationalism in nineteenth-century New Zealand.

Whether or not the "man alone" is the archetypal New Zealander is of less importance than the extraordinary vitality his literary descendants enjoy. From Chamier's *Philosopher Dick* to John Mulgan's *Man Alone* (1939) and Frank Sargeson's *Memoirs of a Peon* (1965) is a short distance indeed, and it is apparently not much farther to Barry Crump's *A Good Keen Man* (1960). In fact Professor Cameron has claimed that the extraordinary success of *A Good Keen Man* was "undoubtedly due to the fact that a cultural hero has been born":

> perceptibly true to life, the lone deer culler is shrewdly self-reliant in the bush, mock-heroically scornful and ill at ease in the life of the towns, cynically and almost boorishly detached in all but one or two of his personal relationships, adept at keeping the welfare state (which pays him) at arm's length, disarmingly enthusiastic about the minutae of his work, impatient and scornful of inexperience and incompetence, sardonically tolerant of other men's idiosyncrasies, and, above all, intolerant of any form of social or civilized life.\(^{12}\)

This "cultural hero" of the twentieth century, in other

words, is the exact antithesis of George Chamier's original "man alone".

Literate, adaptable, and shrewd, "philosopher Dick" is more than a picaresque hero-wanderer. He is actually the representative figure of a New Zealand literature's moral quest: wryly serious, and preoccupied at a personal level with the ambiguities created by the Imperial design at the national level. He came to New Zealand, he said, "not with a view to getting on with the world, but to get away from the world". "I came out all this way to be free, and I find that there is no such thing."\(^{13}\)

To others on Merino station, their flute-playing shepherd (with three shelves of books brought in by pack-horse) was a real "original". Doc Valentine - Raleigh's best friend and a physician exiled to the colonies for his indiscreet love affairs - saw Dick as something more: "a man of vast erudition for his age, who spoke half a dozen languages that nobody could

\(^{13}\)Philosopher Dick, pp. 48, 65.
understand, who could argue the point against all comers, but who never knew his own mind". Doc Valentine tries to persuade his young friend that his solitary life will drive him mad. Dick himself worries about going mad, but he recognises that his trial in the wilderness is necessary. He does not want to be either wise or happy, but simply to think. "The wise man only thinks about his daily pursuits; the happy man does not think at all". 14

Chamier's novel, as it unfolds, is very much a flawed work, even if read only for its descriptions of a pig-hunt or life on a sheep station. Lengthy and awkward, it is larded with Dick's philosophical inquiries, both in conversation and in letters and a diary. But as it stands, Philosopher Dick is virtually the culmination of literary nationalism in nineteenth-century New Zealand. For it is the story of the death and rebirth of a man, his search for identity, and his relationship with his new spiritual and physical home. Curiously enough, it also suggests

14 Ibid., pp. 65, 46, 53.
the movement of Henry Lawson's search for Australia: from Jack Mitchell, the philosophising and wandering swaggy–pharmakos, to Joe Wilson, the man who triumphs over himself and in so doing succeeds in establishing his permanent home on the land.

When Raleigh first arrived in New Zealand, he had access to its "good society", which shocked his "aesthetic notions and fastidious tastes" at every turn. Later, "low life", too, repulsed him by its "daily exhibitions of brutishness and intemperance". Unexceptionally he "longed to return to his mountain hut to enjoy the wild scenery, to listen to the harmonies of nature, to indulge once more in silent meditations."¹⁵ And it is that "nature", significantly, which permeates the novel's three crises.

The first occurs after an extraordinarily severe snowfall isolates his mountain hut. "For the first time in his experience he realised a sensation of anxiety and dread -- he felt that he was alone." Slowly the dark night of his soul closes in, as he also faced for

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 96-7.
the first time the real meaning of his search for himself: "his realms of bright fancy gave place to the cold regions of reality, that appeared naked and forbidding.... The gloomy spectre Reality, having once revealed itself, would never leave him". Finally he comes to "realise his own personality as if it were a thing apart, an object in view", and even "the moving beauties of the landscape...shone with a pale and melancholy light". Apparently demented, Raleigh sees visions, prays, and then, after the visions vanish and he finds "nothing but emptiness":

At last there came another phantom to stay with him and keep him company in the lone and dreary vigils of the night. It made its appearance as an undefined and awful Presence, and thrilled his soul with indescribable dread. Yet after a while he became accustomed to it, and he got to welcome it and to take it to his heart. It was the Idea of Death.\(^ {16} \)

Having established his metaphysical search for identity within the context of orthodox myth, Dick relates his quest with his hopes for New Zealand:

I foolishly expected that a new country, wide and bountiful, oppressed with no burdens, hampered with no restrictions, but fresh and fair from the

\(^ {16} \text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 98-9, 102, 109.} \)
hands of God, would afford much happier
conditions of life and progress.... I thought
to find peace and contentment in sweet
communion with nature.... I promised myself to
analyse my thoughts, to look into my heart, to
acquire the highest wisdom.

'And all our knowledge is, ourselves to know.'
But it is not so. The knowledge of ourselves
will reveal us nothing -- nothing worth knowing.

All that remained to "philosopher Dick" was "a blank,
the dark impenetrable mystery of the soul." All,
that is, except for his ultimate spiritual death and
rebirth.

Immediately after his realisation that New
Zealand and its landscape could not work out his
salvation for him, Dick was confronted with a mysterious
wild dog, "with pointed ears, dark reddish hair, and
flaming eyes". His flock stampeded, and he discovered
that it had leapt in a body to its death at the bottom
of a deep gorge. The lambs of the shepherd had died,
and Dick felt the irresistible temptation to follow
them. Struggling at the edge of the gorge between the
Lorelei of death and a "small still voice", he fainted.

---

17 Ibid., pp. 228-9.
18 Ibid., pp. 231, 243.
When he awoke, Dick knew that he had won the struggle for himself, and he abandons the job he first sought for its solitude. Losing himself in the bush, he conquers his third and final temptation through physical "suffering and endurance". He finally reaches Merino station, and feels "a load off my mind that was heavier to bear than the bulky swag I have had to hump on my back on many a weary tramp over those desolate ranges". Characteristically, he muses for a moment on dropping his swag: "yet I cannot compare this happy release to Christian's, whose pack of sins suddenly tumbled off his shoulders." Bunyon's Christian was redeemed by grace; Dick took up his swag voluntarily, laying it down only after he knew that he had worked out his own salvation. After his rebirth he feels confident that he can meet the demands of society, appropriately symbolised for him when he dons "a white shirt". ¹⁹ His quest ended, Dick decides to remain in New Zealand, and Chamier's novel closes with the hint of a future marriage.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 281, 286-7.
Dick Raleigh was certainly no Odysseus, resourceful, flamboyant, clever, and daring, finally regaining his home on Ithaca after ten years of wandering. For Odysseus returned to reclaim his own home, whereas Dick's wanderings led him from the death of his old "home" to the rebirth of his new one. Dick Raleigh, in fact, was Aeneas, lares and penates packed away, the very figure of high seriousness, his father on his back, leading his potential son by the hand.

Dick's search for himself, moreover, revealed the new significance of New Zealand's landscape for her Aeneas. Like literary nationalists ever since the 1840s, at first Dick experienced the romantic delights of "sweet communion with nature". But gradually it becomes clear that his environment changes as he does, not through pathetic fallacy, but as a moral allegory of his quest. Apparently causing his crises, the various forms of "nature" in the novel are actually the result of his search for himself. Dick's isolation after a snowfall is the effect of what he wanted: to be
utterly "alone". He wanted to die -- indeed, he had to, because that was what Chamier's story was about -- and so a chasm appeared. And he had to be tested, so, in effect, he lost himself in the bush. Nature (as Henry Lawson also knew) was neither benign or hostile to the man searching for himself, but wholly neutral. It was simply there.

New Zealand's nature, Hubert Church wrote, was "elusive", "suspended", and denying: denying, that is, to the man seeking his own identity, the man who had to suspend his preconceptions of himself. Dick Raleigh began discovering himself when he separated himself from his "personality", when he had to deny what he once thought was himself. By holding his "personality" as "an object in view", "Reality" revealed itself to him. Identity has to be first looked at objectively, by denying the "self" in order to know it. And as Captain Russell told Australians in 1890, New Zealand's "distinct" nationality was formed by that "self-denial" of which

---

Australians knew nothing.  

Although Dick's attitude to his physical surroundings changed, from his "sweet communion with nature" to bidding "adieu to the savagery of nature", even these extremes implied nature's neutrality. For Dick knew that he had approached the bush for the wrong reason. He "foolishly expected", he said, "to find peace and contentment", to escape from society, when in fact he wanted to find himself. And when he spoke of the land's "savagery", he also knew that he was only "at the 'Half-way House' to civilisation".  

Dick's re-entry into society finds him still in New Zealand in the garden of the Symour's Glenmoor estate. No longer the wanderer, Aeneas has found his home, and prepares himself"to start a fresh volume". His old friend Doctor Valentine warns him humorously that he will have to be tamed "down to the ordinary standard" of New Zealand if he wants to be happy, but Dick (after a conversation with Alice Seymour) had

21See above, nn. 19 and 26 to ch. 4.  

22Philosopher Dick, pp. 286-7.
already made his decision to found a new Troy. He was now able to balance "conventionality" with his "high notions", the same balance that literary nationalists had discovered developing from the Imperial design. And the garden of Glenmoor estate, he saw, was created with "grand old native trees" and carefully tended English flowers, all contrasting with the "bare and glowing plains around."23

ii. Visions

George Chamier's high seriousness may not have yielded literature with the synoptic exuberance of a New Zealand Whitman, but if Philosopher Dick characterised the archetypal New Zealand nationalist, he was far from a petulant kiwi. More importantly, Chamier revealed just how subtly the emphasis of the Imperial design of literary nationalism had shifted by the 1890s.

The Imperial idea, at first, had presupposed a definite system of values - however hazily expressed -

---

23 Ibid., pp. 568-9, 542-3.
for New Zealand as a nation in the Pacific. The "design" of the Imperial idea was a twofold one: first, to impress on New Zealand the best of British values (whatever the "birthright" of the British race meant), and to preserve them against the day when Macaulay's New Zealander could stand on the broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's. Secondly, the Imperial idea was intended to foster those values which would grow naturally from the shared experience of living in New Zealand. In the strength of one was the strength of the other, and the New Zealand "identity" would be found in both.

The inclusiveness of this vision, like that of Canada, did not involve a choice between loyalty to Britain and loyalty to New Zealand. Sir Wilfred Laurier, when asked about his possible successor as leader of the Canadian Liberal Party, enjoyed telling of a Canadien habitant whose two wives had died, and who was himself about to die. "Bury me between them", he would say, "but cant me a little toward Cécile".  

---

Laurier's anecdote summarised the ambiguities of being New Zealanders as much as it did Canadians. The sons might incline towards New Zealand while the pioneering fathers looked first on Britain; the central fact was that they were both in New Zealand. And like Canadians living only a few miles from the United States, and to whom to be a Canadian was an act of choice, so to be a New Zealander was virtually a decision not to be an Australian.

Chamier's Philosopher Dick, however, posed the question of whether or not a "New Zealander" could exist at all. For Dick Raleigh left England to be "free", only to discover that all sections of society in New Zealand denied him the freedom he sought. He eventually re-entered "civilization" -- a microcosmic civilisation whose garden symbolised the ideal Imperial design -- but only because he was able to earn for himself the qualities he had expected to find represented by New Zealand society, the society which rejected him. New Zealand was no longer a pioneering society, yet he had to become a spiritual pioneer to accept its limitations. And New Zealand claimed to be a visionary society,
accepting all who were prepared to work out their own individual destinies, yet Dick Raleigh found that his individualism had to be both the source and defence of his integrity. Had their vision of New Zealand life become so limited for literary nationalists that it excluded the very qualities which distinguished it from life in Australia?

"The typical New Zealander", C.A. Blyth has written, "has very strong private views on the superiority of many features of New Zealand society over their Australian, American and British counterparts", views which Professor Blyth has analysed briefly as social "visions" and economic models. In the "Kiwi Vision" Blyth finds the aspirations of industrial urbanism in New Zealand, fostered by self-conscious nationalism, founded on the conviction that New Zealand is a society "distinct in history, racial stock and material interest from other societies, notably Australia and England". "In the revulsion from Australian Confederation and the enthusiasm for the Boer War the nationalistic element came of age". The "Colonial Vision", on the other hand, Blyth discovers
evolving in the thirty-five years after 1890: a rural vision of a land in which education was free "and credit almost so", where government was in the hands of a "rural democracy", and which was dependent on Britain for "migrants, capital, markets, defence and culture".\textsuperscript{25}

Economic models apart, no nineteenth-century literary nationalist denied that from the very beginnings of settlement New Zealand provided a rare opportunity for her new inhabitants to work out some sort of visionary society. Just as the history of New Zealand is not summed up as the story of the "Britain of the South", of course, so the history of literary nationalism in New Zealand is not the story of an (independent) Kiwi Vision opposing a (dependent) Colonial Vision. The Imperial idea embraced and accepted both. Yet whatever the validity of Blyth's distinction for political history, it is significant that he bases it on differences between rural and urban life, and that both of his visions consciously look away from Australia.

\textsuperscript{25}"The Special Case: the Political Economy of New Zealand", \textit{Political Science}, XVIII, 1 (March 1966), 38-40.
For the Sydney Bulletin, one of the singular qualities of "the average Maorilander" in the 'nineties was his "intense resolve to become, sooner or later, an independent settler". That the Bulletin was comparing the Australian shearer (the epitome of the Australian "nomad tribe") with "the average Maorilander" is particularly revealing, for the paper struck on the central demographic fact which distinguished New Zealand from Australia: the absence of a clearly-defined and moving "frontier".

That the Bulletin willingly accepted Francis Adams' vision of Australia's "man of the nation" in the "heart of the nation" (not "one hundred, but three and four and five hundred miles" away from the settled coast) was not accidental; for many men have learned that it is satisfying to project their aspirations into others whom they feel ought to embody them, yet who are little enough known to be examined closely. And since most of the inhabitants of Australia's closest "frontier" needed large capital resources to prosper (unless they

\[26\] TB, 8 September 1894, p. 6.
were subsistence-farming peasants), it was just as satisfying to project heroic virtues into their nomadic and independent employees.

But New Zealanders, like Canadians, needed few special virtues to occupy their own "frontier"; and they had much less need to create any myths about their bush environment. Fertile land suitable to support an industrious man and his family was usually available for the asking. It was an Australian living in New Zealand, ironically, who created one of New Zealand literature's few authentic "frontier" characters, and it was the same Australian, still living in New Zealand, who finally established the "independent settler" as part of Australian literature: Henry Lawson.

Lawson's three trips to New Zealand called up all the ambiguities of his own literary nationalism. His one sustained attempt to write of a wholly New Zealand subject -- "A Daughter of Maoriland" -- reveals none of his powers in describing landscape. The irony of his own role in the story, on the other hand, highlights the theme of betrayal which informed so much of
his Australian fiction. As the scapegoat of his own ideals ("universal brotherhood lines") Mr. "Lorrens" completely failed in his "literary ambition" of getting a "romance out of" his reprobate Maori student.  

New Zealand represented a point of departure for Lawson in more ways than one, symbolically represented by the only positive ambition of his archetypal swaggy, Jack Mitchell. Looking at the moon over the Australian bush -- "the only thing that looked cool out there" -- Mitchell confesses:

when I die I'd like to die in a cold place -- where there's a glimpse of distant snow on the ranges across the tussock and blackfern hills -- where the mountain rivers run all summer -- down yonder--in--in Maoriland.  

Less sentimentally, Lawson also described the exodus of Australian workers from their own "condemned country" to New Zealand: "when Australia was fading from view we shed a tear, which was all we had to shed; at least, we tried to shed a tear, and could not. It is best to be exact when you are writing from experience." Alternately,

---

27"A Daughter of Maoriland", first collected in Over the Sliprails (Sydney, 1900), reprinted in Mann, ed., Stories, I, 397-403.  

28"Dust Thou Art!", TB, 28 January 1899, p. 31.
when he wrote of immigration the other way caused by New Zealand's economic depression, Lawson's unemployed were "mostly Australians" who "used to hang round the wharf [in Wellington], like lost souls, whenever there was a boat going to Sydney; and they'd watch the steamer swing off as if it was their last chance on earth slipping away from them."\(^{29}\)

One of Lawson's most direct comments on Australian nationalism, however, was actually only a prelude to the comments of a figure more important to literary nationalism in New Zealand. "His Country -- After All" relates a conversation among an "ex-Australian", a bagman (commercial traveller) who "might have been a professional spieler", and a New Zealand stage-coach driver near the "Avetere" (Awatere) River in the South Island's Marlborough district. To the ex-Australian's comment that the worst country of New Zealand "would make an Australian's mouth water", the

\(\text{\textsuperscript{29}}\)"For Auld Lang Syne", and "Coming Across", both collected in While the Billy Boils (1896), reprinted in Mann, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 248-50, 210-19; "A Respectable Young Man With A Portmanteau", first published in the Sydney Worker, 1 December 1894, reprinted in Mann, \textit{op. cit.}, III, 133-4.
coach driver mused "I always thought Australia was all good country":

"Good country!" exclaimed the man with the grey beard, in a tone of disgust. "Why, it's only a mongrel desert, except for some bits round the coast. The worst dried-up and God-forsaken country I was ever in."

After the bagman leads him on, the ex-Australian continues:

"What's Australia? A big, thirsty, hungry wilderness, with one or two cities for the convenience of foreign speculators, and a few collections of humpies, called towns -- also for the convenience of foreign speculators, and populated mostly by mongrel sheep, and partly by fools, who live like European slaves in the town, and like dingoes in the bush -- who drivel about 'democracy', and yet haven't any more spunk than to graft for a few Cockney dudes that razzle-dazzle most of the time in Paris.... Bah! The curse of Australia is sheep, and the Australian war-cry is Baa!"

"Well, you're the first man I ever heard talk as you've been doing about his own country," said the bagman...."'Lives there a man with a soul so dead, who never said -- to -- to himself!'... I forget the darned thing."

The New Zealand driver's only response is "to observe that he always thought a man ought to stick up for his own country." Then the ex-Australian sees and sniffs Australian gum-trees, and the conclusion of "His Country -- After All", his laconic decision to return to Australia, has subsequently passed into Australia's
canon of literary nationalism. But despite the intrinsic interest of the Australian's comments (as well as those of the New Zealand driver), it is the man between them, the bagman, who is Lawson's more significant creation. For he is Steelman, the "professional wanderer" and "gentleman-spieler", always a New Zealander in his various appearances in Lawson's stories, and the man in between Jack Mitchell and Joe Wilson. Jack Mitchell was Lawson's most completely-realised "unique Australian type of failure", the wandering swaggy who wanted to be buried in New Zealand. At the other extreme is Joe Wilson, the independent selector on the land, whose struggles to succeed mark him as the moral extension of Mitchell and the culmination of Lawson's vision of Australia. Perhaps not accidentally, Lawson wrote Joe Wilson (1901) in New Zealand, the country where the "average" inhabitant's intense resolve (the Bulletin noted) was to become an independent settler, not a romantic and nomadic bushman.

30 Collected in While the Billy Boils, reprinted in Mann, op. cit., I, 99-102.
Steelman originated as Bill in Lawson's story "Stiffner and Jim (Thirdly, Bill)", with the abilities and philosophy of a confidence-man: "the population of the world was divided into two classes -- one was spielers and the other was mugs. He reckoned that he wasn't a mug."\(^{31}\) Jim, the narrator, later became Smith, sometimes Steelman's straight man, and at another time "a little sneak". As Steelman proper, however, Lawson's creation emerged as 'a spieler', pure and simple, but [he] did things in a humorous style.... Steelman 'had' you in a fashion that would make your friends laugh."\(^{32}\) Steelman, that is, was the likeable opposite of Australian literature's scapegoat: a variation of the Yankee pedlar and Sam Slick of Canadian writing, the "man alone" who had discovered that the world had little room for him. "The man that doesn't ante gets the best of this world; anything he'll stand is good enough for the man that pays.... Most of the time crow low and roost high".\(^{33}\)

\(^{31}\)Ibid., 83-8.


\(^{33}\)"How Steelman Told His Story", ibid., 25 February 1899, p. 31.
Steelman, in fact, is the picaresque and active half of that New Zealand figure whose contemplative side was represented by Chamier's "Philosopher Dick". Like Dick Raleigh on one level, Steelman came to terms with New Zealand by striking hard on another; as he advised his sidekick Smith, "if you find yourself between two stools, strike hard for your own self, Smith -- strike hard". 34 Instead of opting out of his society, like the Australian swaggy, or by suffering, like Joe Wilson, Steelman detached himself from his society at the same time as he remained within it, turning its demands to his own advantage. And it was this special detachment that defines Steelman's role in literary nationalism. Just as any man in New Zealand could become independent because the whole physical country embraced a series of tiny diffuse and fragmented "frontiers", so Steelman saw society as a series of frontiers, and himself as the only pioneer. And so too, a later figure like Barry Crump's "good keen man" could come to be called a "cultural hero" because (among other reasons) he was able to retain his

34 Ibid.
independence even while an employee of an embracing welfare state.

Steelman's special detachment, moreover, points to his function as a one-man chorus in Lawson's stories, the familiar figure "in" society but not "of" it. It was in this role, for instance, that he once advised Smith to describe him as a geologist from Sydney, rather than London: "'Sydney is the London of these Maorilanders. You see,' he continued, condescendingly, 'you seldom hear of London or Melbourne over in these parts, but you always hear of Sydney. Every second yokel's ambition is to see Sydney before he dies.'\(^\text{35}\) And again, as he advised Smith on the art of ingratiating the spieler with the Australian mark, he characterised the Australian in New Zealand:

Curse the Government and say the country's done! It don't matter what Government it is, for he's always against it. I never knew a real Australian that wasn't. Say that you're thinking about trying to get over to Australia, and then listen to him talking about it -- and try to look interested, too!... He'll run Australia down most likely (I never knew an Other-sider that had settled down over here who didn't). But don't you make any

mistake and agree with him, because, although successful Australians over here like to run their own country down, there's very few of them that care to hear anybody else do it.\textsuperscript{36}

Steelman's particular targets, appropriately enough, were Australians: an Australian landlord in New Zealand\textsuperscript{37}, and the "Gentleman Sharper from the Other Side". The "gentleman sharper" had come to New Zealand to trim the locals; Steelman, more active than Tregear's kiwi, trimmed the wings of the Australian.\textsuperscript{38}

Lawson's trips across the Tasman may not have shown him much of the vision of the old Imperial design, but he was as sensitive as any New Zealander to the self-images of nationalism.

iii. Images

When Tregear characterised the New Zealander as a kiwi, there is no doubt that he deliberately chose its flightlessness as the principal point of comparison with his Australian seagull. New Zealand's

\textsuperscript{36}"An Oversight of Steelman's", \textit{ibid.}, 18 September 1897, p. 32.

\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Ibid.}

geographical isolation, Tregear knew, had left the kiwi safe from natural enemies, and it had evolved without wings. One of New Zealand's major attractions for immigrants was that same fact: here, at the very end of the world, was a chance to be truly "free", safe from the Old World's quarrels -- the "Great Peace" was peaceful only in retrospect -- and safe from the encroachments of social demands except those which New Zealanders themselves created.

This image of New Zealand was an attractive one for literary nationalists, and no less potent for being far from historical "reality". If New Zealand's historical myth centers in the vision of a "Britain of the South", literary nationalists never forgot that they had established this image quite consciously, to emphasise the fact that their origins were not those of Australia.

If Tregear meant his kiwi to represent New Zealand herself, he would probably have explained its isolated development by referring to D'Arcy. Joseph Dargaville, M.H.R., (speaking at a public meeting in Auckland in 1884 on "New Zealand and the Proposed Australasian Federation") had a more unimpeachable
authority:

The hand of a good and wise Creator has made New Zealand capable of abundantly supporting twenty millions of people, and has placed it far away out in the Pacific Ocean, more than 1000 miles from Australia -- as far distant from Australia as England is from the borders of Russia or from the coast of Africa. Is it too much to infer from this that the people here were intended to be self-reliant and free? (Cheers). 39

After describing New Zealand as the bearer of "peace, commerce, and civilization throughout Polynesia", and itemising her notable blessings of nature, Dargaville asked:

Are all these things to be of so little avail to us? Or are we such degenerate sons of our forefathers that we are now to be told by our rulers that we are incapable of working out the high destiny for which we heretofore thought ourselves and our country fitted? That we must have the aid, co-operation and protection of Australia to enable us to stand. Confess that this is so. Do this disgraceful act of disloyalty to the Colony and your children will live to be ashamed of their fathers! (Cheers); [A Voice: We will never agree to Federation.] 40

To suggest that New Zealanders would be "disloyal" -- much less "degenerate" -- if they federated with

39 New Zealand and the Proposed Australasian Federation ([Auckland, 1884]), p. 6. A copy of this seven-page pamphlet is held by the Auckland Public Library, although it is not listed in David M. Wylie, A Bibliography of Political and Commercial Relations between Australia and New Zealand (Wellington, 1947).

40 Ibid., p. 7.
Australia, Dargaville must have been appealing to an especially well-established image of New Zealand indeed, even though he was speaking under the auspices of the Auckland Trades and Labour Council. And yet Henry Lawson's three trips to New Zealand suggest the relative ease of movement between Australia and New Zealand in the late nineteenth century, exactly the sort of personal interchange which ought to break down stereotyped images of nationalism. For a "New Zealand tradition" was formed by New Zealanders' reactions to their image of Australia as much as it was an expression of their image of themselves.

Passenger traffic between Australian and New Zealand certainly increased remarkably during the last quarter of the century. Between 1876 and 1880, for instance, an annual average of 5,623 passengers arrived in New Zealand from Australia, and 4,835 departed to Australia each year: in terms of each 1000 of New Zealand's total population, 12.8 arrivals and eleven departures annually. Between 1891 and 1895, however, an average of 17,607 (26.4 per thousand) arrived and 15,565 (23.3 per thousand) departed annually.\(^{41}\) But

\(^{41}\)Arnold, "New Zealand in Australasia", Table II, at p. 26.
despite the fact that New Zealand was closer than Western Australia to Australia's east coast -- and closer still after the introduction of steam on the trans-Tasman route -- literary interchange was negligible. Each country provided exotic material for authors of the other, and neither benefited.

Labour, on the other hand, was accustomed to moving across the Tasman, and in fact part of the large increase in traffic between Australia and New Zealand during the 'nineties was due to Australia's depression and the shearing strike of 1894. But as one New Zealand shearer wrote the Bulletin - which opposed the strike - explaining why he and his fellows agreed to shear despite the strike: "we all thought over there that the Australian shearer was too high and mighty a being to condescend to work. Our impression was that he preferred to lie around in the shade and swap lies with his mates". The image of Australian shearers in New Zealand was no less discouraging, partly, according to a New Zealander in 1890, because they felt that they had to live up to

---

their own image:

They earn their money honestly; but they are queer
characters, and from a kind of conceit or vanity
they like to make themselves out queerer and worse
than they are. They are very rough, and some of
them are very great blackguards. Many of them
are social outcasts and utter Bohemians, and it
is these also who set the example and keep up the
tradition of class animosity. The "travelling
labour", though a necessity in the earlier stages
of colonisation, is at best a necessary evil, and
it becomes an unmitigated nuisance as soon as it
ceases to be necessary. 43

To the Bulletin, by contrast, New Zealand shearers
were "the best and most reliable non-union labour
ever supplied in this country", while a station-
owner in New South Wales called them "the most decent
lot of men we ever had to do with, so quiet and
respectful, and good shearers". 44

Although the shearing strike of 1894 was an
exceptional occurrence in trans-Tasman relations, it
also reflected one aspect of the image of the newly-
developing New Zealand "type": the Bulletin's "average
Maorilander". New Zealand shearers were able to move

43 Edward Wakefield, New Zealand After Fifty
Years (1890), pp. 154-7, quoted in Arnold, op. cit.,
pp. 43-4.

44 TB, 22 September 1894; Australian Pastoralists' Review, no date cited: both quoted in Arnold, op. cit., p. 56.
to Australia temporarily because the period of the strike coincided with a temporary lull in their own work as farm labourers and, incidentally, shearsers. Many of them were already rentiers who had taken advantage of the sort of opportunity codified by the Advances to Settlers Act of 1894. This Act, which nearly doubled the number of land holdings in New Zealand (while the acreage of Pakeha-occupied land increased by only one-quarter), created the conditions delightfully described by a Bulletin correspondent in 1898:

"Swagging in the M.L. bush settlements last winter, I called at a cockey's whare to try him for a shakedown. A 12-year boy came to the door and told me that 'as the swaggers had put Seddon into office, he was the proper person to apply to. Squatters were not going to run free boarding-houses for the future.' Next day found out that the 'squatter' and his family had been Christchurch unemployed until the Seddon Government brought them up here and put them on a perpetual lease. How soon a gutter-rat turns Tory!"45

Whether or not New Zealand produced a race of Tories, it was New Zealand's fertility and her fragmented "frontier" which prompted both the Bulletin

and a correspondent to suggest that the "New Australia" movement would have been better advised to project their settlement towards New Zealand instead of Paraguay. In 1890 the paper called New Zealand "the garden of Australasia" on the basis of statistics which demonstrated that New Zealand had far more land under cultivation than the other six colonies combined. Ten years later a "Maorilander" suggested that New Zealand's fertility helped to "explain why small settlements which prosper in Maoriland are almost impossible in Australia." One 330-acre section, he noted from official returns, yielded an average of fifty bushels of wheat per acre. "Your Australian figures look small potatoes alongside of these, and I have sometimes been considered an amiable liar for telling such things to N.S.W. farmers, who reckoned 20 bushels of wheat a perfect miracle". More importantly, the "Maorilander" could not resist commenting on the Government's purchase and break-up of an estate near

46 Ibid., 22 July 1893, p. 4; September 1893, p. 13.

47 Ibid., 4 January 1890, p. 5.
Oamaru, pointing out to Australians the advantages of "a system which enables a whole people to be collectively prosperous, though possibly none may individually achieve great wealth." 48

When Frederick Rollett called on New Zealand authors to write "the life-history of a people whose thoughts in the future may influence the world", he was referring to this same "system". 49 By the social legislation of the Liberal Government of Ballance, and after his death in 1893, "King Dick" Seddon, by the end of the 1890s New Zealand became what Asquith described as the political and social laboratory of the world. The achievements of New Zealand's House of Representatives became the object of literary nationalism, and, in turn, a major part of New Zealand's historical mythology.

"The New Zealand tradition", Keith Sinclair has suggested, was "that democratic and egalitarian aspiration, that yearning for what is today termed


49 Ibid., 27 May 1899, "Red Page".
'social justice', which the Liberals inherited from the pioneering generation, and to which they gave a measure of tangible expression decisive enough to mould the future history of the country." And it was during the 'nineties, when this "tradition" was being formed, that literary nationalists could genuinely believe that their astounding number of novels and tracts of social protest might actually influence the shape of the nation. While it is doubtful that their work did, it is a reflection of the intellectual history of the time, whose results could gleefully be compared to the idea of social justice in Australia.

Single Tax theories, communal industrialism, socialism, Women's Rights, Prohibition, utopianism, strikes: virtually all the major political movements of the late Victorian era appeared in fiction and verse in Australia and New Zealand. But in Australia, only some two dozen novels explicitly treated political theory as a literary contribution to political nationalism, and nowhere is the intellectual poverty of Australian protest verse more evident than in Henry Lawson's popular

\[50\] New Zealand, p. 185.
efforts on behalf of the underdog.

New Zealanders matched Australians novel for tract, in both quantity -- despite the disparity in population -- and absence of quality: from Reve Wardon's Macpherson's Gully (1892), "containing some views of the social outlook from the proletarian standpoint", as the dedication page (to Sir George Grey) had it, to F.M. King's Wreck of the "Erthshire", or the Economics of Coral Island (1899), published by the National Single Tax League. New Zealand's literary nationalists, moreover, included one of the principal experimenters in the social laboratory of the world. A promising young member of the House of Representatives, William Pember Reeves had already contributed "A Helpless Spectator" to the first issue of Zealandia (July 1889), describing the plight of a small farmer who is ruined by his larger neighbour. And in 1890, 

51 The most comprehensive available guide to New Zealand's fiction of social protest is the bibliography of fiction in Joan Gries, "An Outline of Prose Fiction in New Zealand" (University of New Zealand [Auckland University College], unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1951), vol. 2.

52 Twelve monthly issues of Zealandia were published in Dunedin under the editorship of William Freeman, author of the novel He Who Digged a Pit (Dunedin, 1889).
weeks before the Fabian Society's *Fabian Essays in Socialism* arrived in New Zealand, Reeves' articles on communism and socialism were published in the *Lyttelton Times* and reprinted in the *Canterbury Times*. At the same time the *Canterbury Times* was reprinting Edward Bellamy's immensely popular *Looking Backwards*, a book which a *Bulletin* correspondent in 1890 found five passengers of nine in his railway carriage reading in New Zealand, which the train's newsboy told him outsold "any other recent book", and which in Australia he found to be "practically unknown as yet".

New Zealand, Professor Frank Parsons wrote in 1904, "is the birth place of the Twentieth Century", and New Zealanders have never been reticent in telling Australians about it. Australians of the 'nineties, on the other hand, were unwilling to turn to their quaint little neighbour, so full of respectability and self-conceit, for signposts to the future. Condescension,

---

53 So given in Sinclair, Reeves, p. 100. The American title, of course, was *Looking Backward*.

54 *TB*, 8 February 1890, p. 5.

as an author in the *Australasian Pastoralists' Review* demonstrated in 1898, is an entirely adequate substitute for knowledge:

It is a very curious thing that New Zealand, which boasts the most respectable and best-educated population in all the colonies, should be given up to demagogues, and governed in a jealous socialistic spirit.... The main reason for the spread of theories in New Zealand is probably its isolation and the division into small communities. Large cities like Sydney and Melbourne have their drawbacks, but they create a healthy public opinion which discourages fads and snubs conceit.\(^5^6\)

It was left to the radical "pink infidel", the *Bulletin*, to make "Maoriland" a touchstone of "progressive" political nationalism for Australia.

Every New Zealand poet, Thorold Waters once reported, could expect to sell at least three copies of his verse: one to himself and two to Sir George Grey.\(^5^7\) As in literature, so in "Liberalism": Grey was widely considered to be one of Australia and New Zealand's great patrons. According to Price Warung, he was completely unlike other Governors who simply filled "the part assigned by Bret Hart [sic] to angels, by

\(^{56}\) 15 August 1898, quoted in Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

\(^{57}\) "About Hori Grey", *TB*, 1 October 1898, p. 18, signed "Thorold Dalrymple".
'Loafing around the Throne'[^58]. As early as 1881 the *Bulletin* considered Grey the most distinguished "among all Australian [sic] statesmen", later calling him "a tribune of the people" and even "Australia's Moses"[^59].

Accustomed to Australian politics, however, even the *Bulletin* was surprised when New Zealand's general election of 1890 -- the "first in Australasian history" with full manhood suffrage -- saw the Liberal party of Ballance and Stout defeat Atkinson's Government: a "Labour victory", the paper exclaimed.[^60] And when Seddon, the Liberal party's new Leader, increased the party's majority in 1893, the *Bulletin* felt that "this result is a proof that Democratic sentiment is very real and very deep-rooted in Maoriland".[^61] The following year the *Bulletin*’s editors suggested that "the Australian Democracy" was confronted with two examples to follow: the spoils system of the United States, or


New Zealand's government. "In character and tendency" they suggested, "the present Maoriland Administration is the most democratic in Australasia; and it is idle to deny that the gloomy prognostications which greeted its entry to power have been conclusively falsified."\(^{62}\)

New Zealand under Seddon may have been suffering "from a violent attack of experimental legislation", but it was going "further in the direction of State Socialism than any other Government in the world".\(^{63}\) And just before the elections of 1896, the Bulletin noted that his "has been a Labour and semi-Socialist Government, and has proved that a Labour Government can be as peaceful and much more intelligent than the ordinary variety."\(^{64}\) After Seddon's second victory the paper called New Zealand "the land where the Democracy has achieved more successes than anywhere else in the world".\(^{65}\) Seven weeks later the Bulletin summed up "five

\(^{62}\)Ibid., 25 August 1894, p. 7.

\(^{63}\)Ibid., 12 October 1895, p. 6; 11 July 1896, p. 6.

\(^{64}\)Ibid., 11 April 1896, p. 6.

\(^{65}\)Ibid., 22 May 1897, p. 7.
years of socialism", a policy, it said, "which has been one long outrage on that kind of orthodoxy which consists mostly in reconstructing and issuing interminable 'B' debentures":

the province of socialist experiments has made greater advances, so far as its industries are concerned, during the last five years than any of the other [sic] Australias; it is the only one where wages have not diminished; capital has apparently been accumulating instead of being driven out; and the inrush of the enfranchised woman into all manner of industries has not produced any disastrous results so far, except, perhaps, to the enfranchised woman herself. 66

Six months before another Seddon victory in 1899 the paper explained how the Liberals were successful:

they got into power by assuring the people that they were going to wash the body politic in moderation, and then they kept on washing until the body politic found, to its surprise, that whole-sale washing was beneficial. 67

And six months after his victory, the paper began a series of James Edmond's leading articles proclaiming a policy for the forthcoming commonwealth, strongly

66 Ibid., 10 July 1897, p. 6.

67 Ibid., 24 June 1899, p. 9.
based on New Zealand's experiences under Liberal government. 68

New Zealanders would certainly have agreed with Henry Lloyd when he suggested that "this Newest England is no Utopia, no paradise.... The tactful portrait painter would not say that the New Zealanders were the most civilized, the most happy, the most prosperous people in the world". But as Lloyd also wrote in 1900, "they certainly are the least uncivilized, the least unhappy, the least disinherited": qualities of the "New Zealand tradition" which literary nationalists in New Zealand considered would be totally destroyed by federation with Australia. 69

---


iv. The Kangaroo's Tail

The Bulletin, despite its consistent advocacy of Federation for the six Australian colonies, recognised as early as 1885 that for New Zealand, "isolation -- so far as freedom from outside interference is concerned -- is the true policy."\(^{70}\) Again in 1891 the paper emphatically approved the decision of the New Zealand Government to send delegates (including Sir George Grey) to the Australasian Federation Conference as observers only:

It is an instinctive fear of the possible result that induces the Maorilanders to stand like the fox in the fable at the mouth of the sick lion's cave, while wishing the occupant a speedy recovery, declining to go inside. As the footsteps all going the one way prompted the fox to remain bowing at the entrance in order to avoid complications, so Maoriland is induced to stand and wait by the reflection that, whenever a small island allies itself with a large one, the big partner usually gets on top and stays there.\(^{71}\)

\(^{70}\) Ibid., 29 August 1885, p. 3.

\(^{71}\) Ibid., 4 April 1891, p. 6.
Advocacy of federation among land-connected colonies was all very well, the paper went on, but the water curtain between Australia and New Zealand had already created "a fundamental distinction, one whose roots lie deep in human nature itself, and give every promise of remaining firm this side of the millennium". New Zealand was "as large as the United Kingdom":

it enjoys the varieties of climate resulting from a latitudinal stretch of over thirteen degrees in the temperate zone; its resources are immense, its soil fruitful, its people one. With the exception of an adequate population -- a want which time may be trusted to remedy -- it possesses within itself all the attributes of a great nation. Political myopia alone could prompt its people to allow their country's destinies to be controlled and its development dominated by an island nearly thirty times its size and over a thousand miles distant... She is isolated, extensive, and supremely dowered, and will have to solve for herself the problem of how to keep inside the future Australian national tariff and outside the future Australian National Federation. To permit any interference in her affairs by a body far beyond her borders will be to commit an act of national suicide.\(^7\)

Eight years later, however, in 1899, the Bulletin observed that "the tide of Federal sentiment is

\(^7\)Ibid., p. 7.
beginning to rise in Maoriland”, and addressed a long editorial "To the People of Maoriland" attacking anti-federationist views. Federation "would probably make little difference to the two lone islands", the Bulletin said, except for two advantages: New Zealand would have more trade outlets and a smaller interest bill to pay for her national debt. Australia, on the other hand (it added a year later), could only benefit:

If Maoriland entered the Commonwealth it would bring to the Commonwealth counsels a band of the most progressive statesmen in Australasia, and it would add so strongly to the democratic vote and influence in the Federal Parliament as to make the victory of the progressive party certain every time and on every occasion.

But Seddon and New Zealand’s Government still held back: perhaps, (one New Zealander wrote to the Bulletin) because of politicians like Mr. Napier from Auckland, who "assured the House in all seriousness that Maoriland would lose her individuality by joining the Commonwealth".

---

73 Ibid., 16 September 1899, p. 6.
74 Ibid., 6 October 1900, pp. 6-7.
75 Ibid., 13 October 1900, p. 7.
The "individuality" Napier spoke of, however, could not be assured to New Zealand simply by counting up the number of Acts over which New Zealand's House of Representatives would retain power. Money and power counted, but it was New Zealand's self-image which eventually prevailed. Nor could many New Zealanders ever see "the whole question" of Federation with the same bright simplicity as the president of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce; it was, he was reported to have said, a question "of profit and loss, so far as its commercial aspect was concerned", and "so far as New Zealand was concerned he took it that, if New Zealand decided to join this great federation, the balance would be in favour of this colony." To Joseph Spence Evison and the Critic, this reasoning was at best "open to very grave question" and at worst "monstrous". The issues at stake were New Zealand's "national sentiment, national aspirations and hopes". And even if New Zealanders did decide to sell their birthright "for a very small mess of pottage", it

---

76 Critic, 2 September 1899, p. 4.
might turn out to be "no pottage at all."  

After it was all over, and Seddon failed in his last-minute attempt to negotiate for an open-ended constitution allowing New Zealand's later entry into Federation on the same terms as original states, literary nationalists in New Zealand could look back with a certain sense of relief. Arthur Adams, appropriately, celebrated Australia's "nationhood" by portraying New Zealand as a young queen who has just broken off an unworkable royal engagement, relatively tactful, yet quite clearly aware of where her own interests lay:

Not with a stubborn pride imbued,  
And not in an empty scorn;  
In my lonely islands aloof I wait,  
And watch you take up your mighty fate--  
I see you gird on your nationhood  
And march into the morn!

And as you go you will understand  
Diverse our fates must be;  
There is room enough for a double reign,  
Each paramount o'er a royal demesne --  
You lord of a solitude of land,  
I queen of a world of sea.

---

77 Ibid.
78 "New Zealand to the Commonwealth", quoted in Arnold, op. cit., p. 129.
Before federation and among themselves, however, the courtiers of the queen of the sea offered their advice on the union more frankly. Eugene Paul Foveaux decided that under the circumstances Whitman offered best scope as a model for his "vision":

I swear I am beginning to see things!
For I had a vision,
Or, to be more correct and explicit, I had a nightmare.
A land overrun with larrikins, bookies, spielers, medical quacks, yesnoes, Chows, and the Japanese-what-d'ye-caller?
Lepers, uncaged gallow's birds, sundowners, and others afflicted with delicate health and chronic fatigue, active, however, in all the different shades of iniquity: a land afflicted with hot and debilitating winds, bush fires and droughts.
These are not the Othersiders' faults, but their historical, climatic, and geographical misfortunes, with which some propose to federate.
But there is a natural gulf fixed between here and there,
And on such occasions as this we should pray that it be made more so than otherwise.\(^79\)

Having summed up most of the images of Australia held by New Zealand literary nationalists for the previous half-century, Foveaux glancingly referred to some of the more immediate issues surrounding Federation:

\(^79\)Critic, 30 September 1899, p. 15. A.L. McLeod's Walt Whitman in Australia and New Zealand (Sydney, [1964]), records some comments on Whitman by nineteenth-century New Zealand authors.
Australia's treatment of her Aboriginals, commercial advantages to New Zealand (her oats would have a larger market), New Zealand's "national character", and her role as a Pacific power:

The native-born animal of this country is as superior to the native-born animal of the other country, As the Maori to the blackfellow, As our oats to their oats. I sing not skiteingly, because I sing of ordinary facts (whitmanesque and whitmanese, you'll perceive) And, apart from the exciting question of the price of oats, there is such a thing as nationality. What is this mild hankering after the flesh-pots and the birth-stains of the Otherside? (A good enough people -- barring their vices, the most virtuous on earth.) We shall lead -- not they. Do you understand? New Zealand is Queen of Oceana (if she isn't, who is?) Everybody shall come to her -- she shall come to nobody. She is sufficient in herself. Japan conquered China. This may seem irrelevant to those who do not see into the inner meaning of things; who have no pretensions to the prophetic eye. But that's their funeral, and concerns neither you, nor me, nor the other fellow.

Foveaux next turned to the "inner meaning" of federation itself, suggesting that New Zealand ought to join Australia only "when she has become tired of the responsibility of her independence":
If we federate, is it not preferable to federate with infernal regions direct? Instead of indirectly? There is more dignity in taking a thing at first hand than at second hand. There is more dignity in falling to a temptation that is fine, and large, and proportionate, and hair-raising and infernally terrific, than that which is mean, and paltry and servile, As, for instance, I might take the trouble to point out, the price of oats.

Australia, that is, was not only so intrinsically undesirable a nation that New Zealand would lose her self-respect by joining Federation, but Australia would actually appropriate New Zealand:

Is New Zealand to become the tail of Australia? To hurry up before it is too late? Is this her inglorious destiny? My friend! Do you understand what a tail is? It is an appendage to a body, and wagged according to the temperament and disposition of that body. My friend! Ask the Maori if he will be the blackfellow's tail. My friend! Also ask the question from the other side of a six-foot fence, with a clear sweep of the country it is proposed to federate with the Otherside, before you. For the Maori has a narrow-minded, isolated, smugly-satisfied, unbusinesslike conceit of his country that adds considerably to the charm and the variety of the landscape.
Or are we so surfeited with liberty and independence that we know not what servitude and servility are like, and are willing to experience?

And the unborn millions shall arise, and ask, "Why was this?"

And their sages and sadly wise men shall reply, "Oats."

"Nationality was given in exchange for oats."

Here, then, were virtually all the crucial images fostered by literary nationalists in nineteenth-century New Zealand, and all centering in New Zealand's differences from their own image of Australia. If the image could have been tested by a referendum or public-opinion poll, the results might have demonstrated the final success or failure of literary nationalism in New Zealand. Perhaps Seddon knew that the question had been settled long ago, or perhaps he intuitively understood the meaning of a widespread lack of concern in the country. Whatever the case, he chose a truly New Zealand solution to the final test of nationality: a Royal Commission.

On Boxing Day, 1900, the Earl of Ranfurly issued a Commission by his letters patent as Governor of New Zealand to ten men: "for the purpose of inquiring as to the desirability or otherwise of our said colony
federating with the Commonwealth of Australia." The Commissioners included the Hon. Charles Bowen, M.L.C., a "Canterbury pilgrim", former Minister of Justice, and author of Poems (Christchurch, 1861); the Hon. Major (later Sir) William Jukes Steward, M.H.R., whose poems were published in Dunedin in 1867; and Harold Beauchamp, Katherine Mansfield's father. They returned their Report five months later, after receiving replies to 14,231 questions from 261 witnesses in Invercargill, Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland, Sydney, Richmond (N.S.W.), Hobart, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Brisbane. Not surprisingly, the terms of their conclusion are more revealing than the conclusion itself:

Your Commissioners, after giving the fullest consideration to the evidence before them, and with their knowledge of the soil, climate, and productiveness of New Zealand, of the adaptability of the lands of the colony for close settlement, of her vast natural resources, her immense wealth in forest, in mine, and natural scenery, of the energy of her people, of the abundant rainfall and vast water-power she possesses, of her insularity and geographical

---

80 Steward himself wrote a poem on Federation, "New Zealand at 'The Young Queen's Crowning' (After Kipling)", published in his Vision of Aorangi (Timaru, 1906), pp. 51-30. The "Old Queen" having blessed the Australian "young Queen", the young Queen's sister, New
position; remembering, too, that New Zealand as a colony can herself supply all that can be required to support and maintain within her boundaries a population which might at no distant date be worthily styled a nation, have unanimously arrived at the conclusion that merely for the doubtful prospect of further trade with the Commonwealth of Australia, or for any advantage which might reasonably be expected to be derived by this colony from becoming a State in such Commonwealth, New Zealand should not sacrifice her independence as a separate colony, but that she should maintain it under the political Constitution she presently enjoys.

Eugene Paul Foveaux, if he ever read the Report itself, would have had good reason to be smug; his poem on "Federation" differed from the Report only by being in free verse instead of prose.

Zealand, petulantly asks "hast thou no blessing for me?" The Old Queen, rather Lear-like, recalls that she gave Australia "empire all over the Southern Land", and decides that New Zealand shall carry light to "the islands that sprinkle the Southern Sea" and shall reign over them. She concludes, meaningfully:

And because of the love thou hast borne me, and the islands from whence ye came
Thou shalt grow in my very likeness and be called by my very name.

There is little evidence to suggest that New Zealand witnesses before the Commission did not reflect general public opinion at the time: 60% opposed Federation, 27% favoured it, and 13% were undecided. Almost all of those who supported Federation, interestingly, did so on grounds of New Zealand's (and their) financial advantage. William Buckland, for instance, a New Zealand-born solicitor and author of two volumes of verse written during the 'seventies, appeared as the representative of the Waikato Farmers' Association ("Oats."). Some took a wider view. The Rev. George Macmurray, vicar of St. Mary's Cathedral, Auckland, understood Federation to be ordained by "God and nature", while Matthew

---

82 Calculated from figures given by Arnold, op. cit., at p. 141; of 186 witnesses interviewed in New Zealand, 112 opposed Federation, 50 favoured it, and 24 were undecided.

83 Evidence as witness no. 165, Federation Commission, pp. 433-38. In 1899, in fact, New Zealand's exports to the Australian colonies (excluding gold) amounted to only 8.4% of New Zealand's total exports, and her imports from Australia represented only 5.8% of her total imports (ibid., p. xvii). Buckland wrote Morning Rays by Omega (Auckland, 1870), and The Bridal Wreath (London, 1877).

84 Ibid., answer to question 801 at p. 385. Questions were numbered from "1" in each city in which
Kirkbride, another poetaster, felt that Federation would be an excellent step towards "the federation of the English-speaking race". George Booth made a more immediate point, suggesting that the opportunity "to take a hand in the government of a much larger people" would break down any tendency among New Zealanders to become "narrow-minded and insular". Francis Kenna ("K" of the Bulletin) was not so sure; as editor of the Brisbane Worker he thought that "the accession of New Zealand would mean a liberalising of the Legislature of the Commonwealth; but if I were a New-Zealander I am inclined to think that I should feel that it would not lead to the progress she has been making, and which she is likely to make in the future, being continued." the Commission sat, rather than consecutively throughout the hearings. Question numbers are cited here for ease in locating references; the Commission's evidence was printed in relatively small type -- 10-point (long primer) -- on foolscap pages.

85 Ibid., answer to question 2012 at p. 450.
86 Ibid., answer to question 412 at p. 173.
87 Ibid., answer to question 609 at pp. 690-91.
Other New Zealanders were quite prepared to attack Federation on commercial grounds, principally because of fears of unfair competition. William Carr, an upholsterer, enlightened the Commissioners: "Well, in Melbourne they get English springs...something of this description [spring exhibited] -- a firm strong spring; but they do not use many of them: they cost about 12s. 6d. a gross. Here we put in a much lighter spring, a much nicer spring. You will observe the difference: this is a much better spring, it costs half as much again...." But Carr was just as interested in what he called "the national point of view", or what the Commissioners came to call "the sentimental view of the question". As Carr put it, New Zealand "was far better off as a nation 'on our own' than if we were simply a joint in the tail of, I might say, the Australian kangaroo."
And despite the Commissioners' determination to investigate specific sections of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act as it could affect New Zealand, this "sentimental view" ran through nearly all the evidence they received. In the end, it decided the whole question.

For John McLachlan, a retired business-man born in New Zealand in 1843, New Zealand's "origins" and the Imperial idea was the central issue:

We are Englishmen, Scotchmen, or Irishmen, as our parents were, and any entanglements which would weaken this feeling would, in my estimation, be injurious. We hear a great deal about the 'broader life' and 'higher ideals' that would be evolved by our connection with the Australian Commonwealth; but, to me, to be a citizen of the Empire, and of that section of it called 'New Zealand,' is to place me on a higher plane than merely to be a native of a dependency of New South Wales, as we were seventy or eighty years ago. In fact, our present geographical connection with Australia, and constant use of the term 'Australasian' by the Press of New Zealand, is a very great drawback.  

McLachlan had no doubt about the origins of New Zealand's

---

91 Ibid., answer to question 2282 at p. 465. Cf. a letter from "Ban Australasian" to the editor of the Evening Post [Wellington], 20 January 1967: "When I was a young man steps were taken to outlaw the use of the word 'Australasian.' It is now creeping back into use...."
"higher plane". New Zealand, he noted, was "unique" for two reasons, both widely accepted by other witnesses. First was New Zealand's "insular position, its climate and scenery, and its productiveness"; second was the "people and their physique" which had developed in New Zealand:

in both of these respects, from the very nature of its first settlements, it more nearly represents Britain than any other dependency of the Empire, and that these unique features are all in our favour; and it should be our object to retain them, for, as years roll on, it will be found that the Canadian will become more and more American, the Australian will develop a type differentiating him more and more from the Briton, whilst the African will probably be further removed than either: and that this must be so is evident to every one who remembers the nature of their first settlements and their present environments.92

"First settlements" and "present environments": two points which appeared with remarkable consistency throughout New Zealand testimony, and which can be seen behind innumerable references to New Zealand's "identity". A boot manufacturer was sure that New Zealand's past had given her "the elements of a nation", and while he was not too explicit about what these "elements" were,
he was certain that "with federation we would be likely to lose our identity". And without federation "we are more likely in the future to work out our destiny on different and perhaps higher lines than the Australian people would do."\(^93\)

The "elements" of New Zealand's "identity" depended to some degree on who was speaking, but most would have agreed with John Liddell Kelly:

> although I do not wish to speak as exalting New Zealand unduly, I find that the testimony of travellers is that there is a better tone in New Zealand than in Australia. Not only the political but the moral and social conditions of the people here are superior to those that generally obtain in Australia.\(^94\)

And as James Izett noted, federation "is a marriage from which there is no divorce, and death does not come to relieve the suffering"\(^95\); or, in the mixed metaphors of another witness (metaphors which apparently

---

\(^93\) Ibid., answer to question 995 at p. 396.

\(^94\) Ibid., answer to question 364 at p. 271.

\(^95\) Ibid., answer to question 574 at p. 283. Several months later Izett published The Blood that Makes for Empire: A Series of Patriotic Songs (Wellington, 1901).
both had wide currency): "you put your head into the lion's mouth trusting he will not bite; but he often does bite; and it seems to me that by joining the Commonwealth we simply become a new joint in the kangaroo's tail to be wagged as and when he pleases."  

When one witness suggested that New Zealand's "national character" was being kept up by "progressive legislation", he was obviously speaking in the same terms as John Liddell Kelly's "better tone".  

Although the Chief Clerk and Inspector of Factories for the Department of Labour assured the Commissioners that Australians could "no doubt endeavour to work up to our standard" 98, a Christchurch "clicker" was quite

---

96 Ibid., Dr. Richard Laishley, answer to question 132 at p. 354.

97 Ibid., The Hon. William Rolleston, answer to question 49 at p. 349. Rolleston was Leader to the Opposition from 1891 to 1893. His successor, Captain W.R. Russell, together with Sir John Hall, represented New Zealand at the Australasian Federation Conference in Melbourne in 1890. In his own evidence before the Federation Commission Hall remembered his speech in Melbourne in which he pointed out "that the intervening sea constituted twelve hundred reasons against New Zealand joining" (answer to question 1295 at p. 210).

98 Ibid., James Mackay, answer to question 270 at p. 266.
definite about Australia's present conditions. The Australian worked longer hours for lower wages, was inferior in "social position and comfort", and was exposed to "terrible" poverty (Sydney was "as bad as the East End of London"). Commissioner Thomas Leys was convinced: "That, I suppose, is producing degraded conditions of life that do not exist in New Zealand?" "Undoubtedly."  

For others, education prevented New Zealand's "national character" from degenerating. The manager of a drug company observed in the course of his evidence favouring federation:

the distance of Australia from New Zealand seems to impress a number of people, who think we should stay where we are, on the general ground of that the people of New Zealand are intellectually more capable than the people of Australia; and yet they say we should stay where we are. Well, it strikes me most forcibly that if we are intellectually superior, and go into Federation, our influence would tend to elevate the greater mass.  

---

99 Ibid., William Darlow, answer to question 2150 at p. 248. A "clicker", he explained, was "connected with the boot trade".

100 Ibid., question and answer 2152 at p. 248.

101 Ibid., Thomas Whitelock Kempthorne, answer to question 2045 at p. 117.
But again and again witnesses returned to the problem of "first settlements". "I hold the theory", a land agent mentioned, "and have expressed it more than once, that the first men who found a community leave their impress on that community for all time", and it was "a different class of men who founded most of the settlements in Australia; and I think most certainly there will be a national type developed there different from ourselves". ¹⁰²

"Ethical differences", after all, could not be ignored, suggested Arthur Purchas, a medical doctor and Anglican priest. "In New Zealand we have a remnant of a highly intelligent, brave, and capable people", not "time-servers or Mammon-worshippers", and it was the "sacred trust" of every New Zealander to stay "free from the difficulties and dangers which have to be faced by the Commonwealth of Australia". ¹⁰³ Nor were clergymen alone in stating (as another one did) that "the moral

¹⁰² Ibid., Samuel Vaile, answer to question 395 at p. 367.
¹⁰³ Ibid., answer to question 1615 at pp. 428-9.
The "moral stamina" of New Zealand, James Izett proclaimed, could only be "increased and intensified" even more by the passage of time, whereas federation (an engineer said) meant that New Zealanders would "simply lower the tone of national life in New Zealand instead of keeping it up to the present high standard." These objections were certainly founded on a "sentimental view" rather than commercial factors, but as Frederick Revans Chapman noted, so was the question of Maoris. The draft Act for federating Australia expressly excluded natives for purposes of computing the population of Australia. This provision not only put New Zealand "at a certain disadvantage in representation"; it was "something more than that: it would cast a slur upon the Native race here, which would feel it. We have treated them here on an exact equality with the colonial population, and

104 Ibid., William Curzon-Siggers, answer to question 1902 at p. 111.

105 Ibid., answer to question 574 at p. 283.

I do not think this colony could very well accept a scheme of that kind."\(^{107}\)

On the other hand, another witness suggested, perhaps New Zealand's very differences from Australia were a good reason for federating: "with its better climate, its more productive soil, and better type of settler, I should think that it would be a mere question of time when it would be able to take a leading position in the Federation."\(^{108}\) But there it was again: the "better type of settler", New Zealand's "better lot of men", an agricultural engineer called them.\(^ {109}\) Pierce Charles Freeth, a Wellington journalist, virtually summed up the "sentimental view" of New Zealand nationalism as it was revealed before the Commissioners:

I contend that the people here are peculiarly adapted to nation-making. Some of the best blood of all nations is in the veins of the pioneers of this country, and it is within the knowledge of those present that it is being

\(^{107}\) Ibid., answer to question 237 at p. 37.

Chapman was the son of H.S. Chapman; see above, n. 2 to ch. 2.

\(^{108}\) Ibid., John Duncan, written statement at p. 340.

\(^ {109}\) Ibid., Arthur Ward Beaven, answer to question 1356 at p. 215.
transmitted with most gratifying results to the second and third generation. My observation is that the Australians differ from us in character, disposition, and sympathies, and that the probable tendency will be to widen the gap between us in this respect. I have arrived at the conclusion that the Australian is not of the same robust, moral, vigorous type as the New Zealander; and it seems likely to me that in Australia, the type will degenerate, while here it will become more distinctive for physical and mental development, independence of character, moral stamina, and high ideals. 110

The "myth", "legend", or "fairy-tale" about New Zealand being the "Britain of the South", in other words, did not simply rest on the New Zealanders acclaiming their similarities to Britons. Instead, as literary nationalists had known since the first settlements in the country, the New Zealander's image of himself was founded on the qualities by which he differentiated himself from Australians.

In the twentieth century, New Zealanders could forget their "origins" and become colonials, finding their pride in the social legislation of the 'nineties. Freeth, too, linked legislation to nationalism as he continued his comparison of New Zealand and Australia,

110 Ibid., answer to question 1328 at p. 324.
but he made it clear that these accomplishments -- the quest for social justice of the "New Zealand tradition" -- were a development from an existing image of New Zealand:

I venture to say that our legislators are, on the whole, of a better type than the Australian, and that our legislation in the past has added in no small measure to our reputation as an altruistic, yet shrewd, far-seeing people. I have arrived at the conclusion that only by remaining untrammelled can we pursue a broad, progressive, enlightened, commonweal policy.\textsuperscript{111}

The real reason Freeth gave for the "nation-making" abilities of New Zealanders, however, was the same reason why New Zealanders needed no mythical bushman: every New Zealander could actually become one, through the fragmented "frontier" and the virtues bred by "self-denial":

The Australian tendency is to crowd into cities; the New Zealand tendency is to spread out and take a strong hold upon the soil. The Australian climatic influences and natural conditions breed pessimism, wantonness, desire for luxury, and prodigality. New Zealand climatic influences and natural conditions tend to foster industry, shrewdness, thrift, and the spirit of self-help.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid.
The results of this image could indeed lead to the feeling (as the editor of the Voice said) "that no doubt...we are the people, and wisdom was born with us"\textsuperscript{113}; or, in its inverted form, the complaint of a Christchurch farmer before the Federation Commission: "I think it is a very great mistake for us to run away with the idea that we New-Zealanders are in any way superior to the Australians, for as a people we might feel proud of them; and, in fact, many of our best business-men throughout New Zealand are Australians...."\textsuperscript{114}

On the other hand, as A.G. Stephens wrote in 1910, "it is the peculiar talent of the typical New Zealander to preserve his moral superiority in the midst of shocks; he denounces while he embraces."\textsuperscript{115} His posture, literary nationalists had also known since New Zealand's "origins", was that of the Imperial idea: balancing rival claims for loyalty, accepting them all while remaining detached himself. And by so doing he

\textsuperscript{113}See above, n. 100 to ch. 8.

\textsuperscript{114}Federation Commission, Henry Overton, answer to question 1901 at p. 237.

created a new nationalism, that of the "man alone". New Zealand's "man alone", far from being the alienated figure of literary cliché or the outcast of a smothering welfare state, was the representative figure of New Zealand's moral quest, both philosopher Dick and Steelman: Imperial Aeneas.

When A.G. Stephens sensed "a difference between the typical New Zealander and the typical Australian", he was speaking about people he had met, not literature. But if he had been a New Zealander, he would not have gone on to ask "What, then, is the difference? How shall it be stated?" For literary nationalists in New Zealand had already stated the difference by insisting that New Zealand was not Australia. Apparently negative and simplistic, their definition was actually as complex as the figure of Aeneas himself. New Zealand's Imperial Aeneas still carried his father on his back, and his son had yet to grow up, but even if he had not fully discovered his

CONCLUSION

They became what they beheld.¹

When A.G. Stephens sensed "a difference between the typical New Zealander and the typical Australian", he was speaking about people he had met, not literature. But if he had been a New Zealander, he would not have gone on to ask "What, then, is the difference? How shall it be stated?" For literary nationalists in New Zealand had already stated the difference by insisting that New Zealand was not Australia. Apparently negative and simplistic, their definition was actually as complex as the figure of Aeneas himself. New Zealand's Imperial Aeneas still carried his father on his back, and his son had yet to grow up; but even if he had not fully discovered his

home, at least he had escaped the Thrace of Australia. As Stephens also observed, the "peculiar talent of the typical New Zealander" was "to preserve his moral superiority", to denounce Australia at the same time as he embraced it. To New Zealand's literary nationalists, paradoxically, it was this very inclusiveness which they hoped would differentiate their society from that of Australia. By proclaiming the similarities of New Zealand's environment and inhabitants to those of Great Britain, New Zealanders could be both subjects of the Empire and citizens of New Zealand. Their distinctiveness came from both. Australian literary nationalists, on the other hand, proclaimed their distinctiveness by emphasising Australia's differences from Great Britain. And it was in just these differences, between aggressively colonial Australia and serenely provincial New Zealand, that New Zealanders found their "moral superiority" to Australians. Literary nationalists, like the Seven Nations of Blake's Jerusalem, "became what they beheld."

By the end of the century, one aspect of nationalism in New Zealand had moved beyond literature:
pride in the social legislation of the 'nineties. Politicians had renovated Eden and its verandah. Partly in spite of this, and partly because of it, literary nationalists could only point out that New Zealand was still a limited society, in danger of sacrificing inclusive provincialism for exclusive colonialism. But colonial or not, the first source of pride for literary nationalists continued to be New Zealand's "origins", the self-denial which led to images of discovery, rather than the guilt that led to images of salvation.

Australian authors realised very early in the nineteenth century that the country's "ign'rant present" -- fallen man and an equally post-lapsarian landscape -- was scarcely appropriate material for the identification of a new people and their new land. Celebration of the bushman linked both "by the All Hail, hereafter!" New Zealand's authors, however, eventually discovered the link between their country and its inhabitants in the figure of the man searching for himself. Whatever he found was the identity of both himself and his country, for it was the search
that mattered. He sought to learn; the Australian bushman was created to forget.

Yet for both Australians and New Zealanders the literary identification of their two countries did not mean a struggle between a "sense of exile" and a "sense of liberty", or (in later terms) between a "nationalist" and an "internationalist" outlook. Throughout the nineteenth century both outlooks were included in literary nationalism's dominating mood of romance: the impulse of authors determined to recreate their environment imaginatively by idealising it.

To a few authors, this mood of romance was simply an obstacle to identification, obscuring more than it revealed. Through an opposing mood of irony, literary nationalists like Henry Lawson in Australia and Alfred Grace in New Zealand attempted to define their nations by particularising what they felt were the essential images of each. Otherwise, as Lawson said of Australia's landscape, "we don't know how to take it, and prefer not to take it at all". The "closed" mood of romance dissociated man from his environment; the more open mood of irony reassociated them.
But as Lawson discovered through the debate in the *Bulletin*, his contemporaries failed to understand the distinction between a new mood and a new mode. From one side came attacks because his work violated the *Bulletin*'s ultimate standard of literary judgment, popular taste; from the other side he was reviled because he was apparently attempting to destroy the old image of salvation, the bushman. Lawson's realism was too realistic for Australians.

To a New Zealander like Grace, descriptive realism was merely an extension of the old Imperial idea; moral neutrality and literary objectivity meant acceptance, not denunciation, and creation, not destruction. The essence of literary nationalism in New Zealand, in any case, was high seriousness and the preservation of literary standards; the excellence of a way of saying mattered as much as what was said. And so the *Bulletin* focused the dialogue of literary nationalists in New Zealand for the same reasons that Lawson was attacked in Australia. The *Bulletin*'s popular fiction and verse undermined the "higher tone" of New Zealand's literature, while its literary chauvinism and encouragement of
"local colour" pointed the way to colonialism, not provincialism: to the single vision of historical legend, not the simultaneous awareness of literary myth.

As a result of the Bulletin's influence, the preoccupations of literary nationalism in nineteenth-century Australia and New Zealand became the preoccupations of social history in the twentieth. The New Zealand dialogue and the Australian debate, both begun over the functions of literature in defining a new society, merged instead into a debate between "nationalism" and "internationalism". The lessons of the 'nineties were forgotten, and the debate continues today.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliographical Note

This list is selective, including only items cited in the text and footnotes, arranged in the following order:

1. Primary Sources
   i. Manuscripts
      A. Collections
      B. Marginalia and Inserts
   ii. Newspapers and Periodicals
   iii. Broadsides and Publications in Periodicals
   iv. Books and Pamphlets
      A. Official and Semi-official Documents
      B. Collections
      C. Individual Authors and Writings

2. Secondary Sources
   i. Manuscripts
   ii. Articles and Parts of Books
   iii. Books and Pamphlets.

Although several bibliographies mentioned in this Note list items relevant to the comparative study of Australian and New Zealand literature, the only bibliography directly concerned with relations between the two countries does not include literature: David M. Wylie's A Bibliography of Political and Commercial Relations between Australia and New Zealand (Wellington: National Library School, 1947).

Bibliographies of Australian literature found especially useful in the preparation of this study include:
Ferguson, John A. Bibliography of Australia. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1941-.


----------. Australian Literature: a Bibliography to 1938 by E. Morris Miller... Extended to 1950, Edited with a Historical Outline and Descriptive Commentaries by Frederick T. Macartney. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, [1956].

Ferguson's Bibliography does not list literature published after 1850; after that date, Miller's original Bibliography is preferable to Macartney's later edition. My forthcoming note on "Early Australian Poetry and its Bibliographers" in Australian Literary Studies compares entries in Ferguson and Miller for Australian verse separately published before 1850, and suggests that on the basis of this comparison, Miller's post-1850 literary entries may reasonably be presumed to be fairly complete. The following bibliographies of individual subjects have also been cited in this thesis:


New Zealand literature -- until the New Zealand National Bibliography (under the editorship of A.G. Bagnall) is completed during the next decade -- lacks a comprehensive bibliography. In the meantime, several published lists, taken together, provide adequate guides:


Smith, Elizabeth M. "Bibliography of N. Z. Fiction, 1862-1939" in her *A History of New Zealand Fiction from 1862 to the Present Time, with Some Account of its Relation to the National Life and Character*. Dunedin: Reed, 1939.

The most reliable guide to nineteenth-century New Zealand fiction, however, remains unpublished: the bibliography to Joan Gries' thesis "An Outline of Prose Fiction in New Zealand", listed below in section 2(i). My *New Zealand Poetry: a Preliminary Checklist* to 1914 (Wellington: National Library Service, 1965) is based on entries extracted from published lists and catalogues, entries in the draft *New Zealand National Bibliography*, the shelf-list of the Alexander Turnbull Library, and carded entries in the Union Catalogue of the National Library Centre. I am deeply indebted to the staff of the Alexander Turnbull Library and the National Library Centre -- and particularly Mr. A. G. Bagnall, Chief Librarian of the Alexander Turnbull Library -- for remarkable aid, personal guidance, facilities, and at one point in my work, the services
of a research assistant. Such cordial hospitality showed me how a pedestrian scholarly duty, as I first saw it, was in fact a delightful experience of personal discovery.

A revised and extended version of my preliminary checklist is being prepared for publication (including items such as broadsides, to be excluded from the National Bibliography), based on my further reading and sightings in the following libraries:

- Library of the Auckland Institute and Museum, Auckland
- Auckland Public Library, Auckland
- Library of the University of Auckland, Auckland
- General Assembly Library, Wellington
- Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
- Library of Victoria University, Wellington
- Wellington Public Library, Wellington
- Library of the University of Canterbury, Christchurch
- Christchurch Public Library, Christchurch
- Hocken Library, Dunedin
- Library of the University of Otago, Dunedin
- Mitchell Library, Sydney
- Public Library of New South Wales, Sydney
- Private collection of Sir John Ferguson, Sydney
- Fisher Library, University of Sydney, Sydney
- National Library of Australia, Canberra
- State Library of Victoria, Melbourne
- Public Library of South Australia, Adelaide.

Dr. W. H. Pearson's contribution to the "Annual Bibliography of Commonwealth Literature 1964" in The Journal of Commonwealth Literature, I, 1 (September 1965), 59-70, provides a helpful list of bibliographies of New Zealand literature.
Pseudonymous authors in both Australia and New Zealand have been identified from an Index of Australian Literary Pseudonyms, with Selected New Zealand References, being compiled by Miss Susan Hadfield, Australian National University, with my collaboration. For contributors to the Bulletin, the main source of this Index is a series of questionnaires sent out at various times by A.G. Stephens in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Most of the holograph responses are now held by the Alexander Turnbull Library, although a typescript copy of this basic document in the history of Australian and New Zealand literature is also held by the Mitchell Library. Stephens himself prepared various lists extracted from the responses, now distributed in these two libraries:

Alexander Turnbull Library. Autobiographies, in holograph, of 168 Australasian Authors, Journalists, and Artists.

----------. Austrazealand Authors, Artists, Musicians. Carbon Typescript.

Mitchell Library. Alphabetical List of 172 Authors and Artists of Australia and New Zealand with Place and Date of Birth and Working Pseudonyms. Typescript.

----------. Austrazealand Pen-names, 1890-1925. Typescript.

Autobiographies of Australian and New Zealand Authors and Artists. Typescript and MSS.
In the list below, works found useful in the preparation of this study but not specifically cited in the text or footnotes -- such as George Nadel's *Australian Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia* (Melbourne: Cheshire, [1957]) -- have been excluded. Simply to have included all New Zealand verse read, for example, would have meant doubling the number of entries; and Australian verse and periodicals, tripling them. Dates noted in entries for section 1(ii), newspapers and periodicals, are those for issues actually read (inclusively), not dates of publication. For ease in locating less well-known items which were technically published by the authors themselves, printers' names, frequently newspaper offices, have been supplied.

1. Primary Sources

i. Manuscripts

A. Collections

Alexander Turnbull Library. O. T. J. Alpers Papers.

--------. Australian Manuscripts. 4 vols.

--------. William Satchell Papers.


--------. Sydney Bulletin Writers Manuscripts and Portraits. 3 vols.
- MS Verses by Hugh McCrae.

Auckland Public Library. Grey Papers.


- Letters from Mr. Edger After His Departure from New Zealand.

- Despatches to Governor of New South Wales. September-December 1839.


- Macquarie Papers. The Governor's Diary & Memorandum Book [10 April 1816 to 1 July 1818].


- Parkes Correspondence. 1890.

- Two untitled scrapbooks compiled by A. G. Stephens. Q049/3 and Q049/4.
Papers of A. G. Stephens.

J. R. Tyrrell's Collection of the Papers of A. G. Stephens.


B. Marginalia and Inserts


Hocken Library. William Pember Reeves, ed. 


Charles Tompson. Wild Notes from the Lyre of a Native Minstrel. Sydney: Robert Howe, 1826. Author's MS emendations.
ii. Newspapers and Periodicals


The Australian Magazine or, Compendium of Religious, Literary, and Miscellaneous Intelligence. Sydney: 1821-1822.


Derwent Star and Van Diemen's Land Intelligencer. Hobart: 1810.


Literary Magazine. Dunedin: 1885.

The Literary News; a Review and Magazine of Fact and Fiction, the Arts, Sciences, & Belles Lettres. Sydney: 1837-1838.


iii. Broadsides and Publications in Periodicals

Botany Bay, A New Song. [London, ca. 1790].


[Grant, Mr.]. Panegyric on an Eminent Artist, Parramatta, New South Wales, 1804. London: Dawson, [1804].

[Harkness, C. M.]. The Ngaio Tree [and] A Dream. [West Rangitikei]: 1865.

Irons, Charles Clarke. A Jubilee Ode, Specially Written to Commemorate the Canterbury Jubilee. [Christchurch: Kinge, 1900].


iv. Books and Pamphlets

A. Official and Semi-official Documents


B. Collections


Mackay, Jessie, ed. *New Zealand Rhymes Old and New.* [Wellington: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1907].


--------. *Australian Poets 1788-1888, Being a Selection of Poems upon All Subjects Written in Australia and New Zealand During the First Century of the British Colonization, with Brief Notes on Their Authors.* Introduction by Arthur Patchett Martin. London: Griffith, Farran, Okeden and Walsh, 1888.

A Southland Miscellany of Prose and Verse, No. 1.
Riverton: Geary, [ca. 1899].


--------. A Southern Garland. [Sydney: Bulletin, 1904].

Stewart, Douglas and Nancy Keesing, eds. Australian Bush Ballads. [Sydney]: Angus and Robertson, [1955].

--------. Old Bush Songs and Rhymes of Colonial Times, Enlarged and Revised from the Collection of A.B. Paterson. [Sydney]: Angus and Robertson, [1957].

Stone, Desmond, ed. Verdict on New Zealand. Wellington: Reed, [1959].


C. Individual Authors and Writings


Boake, Barcroft H. Where the Dead Men Lie and Other Poems. Edited by A.G. Stephens. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1897.


Bracken, Thomas. Behind the Tomb; and Other Poems. Melbourne: Clarson, Massina, 1871.

The Haunted Vale; a Legend of the Murray, and Other Poems and Lyrics. Sandhurst: Robshaw, 1867.


Brennan, Christopher J. XXI Poems: MDCCCXCIII-MDCCCXCVII; Towards the Source. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, [1897].

Verse. Edited by A. R. Chisholm and J. J. Quinn. [Sydney]: Angus and Robertson, [1960].

Britton, Henry. Loloma; or Two Years in Cannibal-Land; a Story of Old Fiji. Melbourne: Mullen, 1883.


The Real Australia. 2nd ed. London: Unwin, 1907.


[Burn, David W. M.] Eggs and Olives, by Marsyas. Dunedin: C. S. W., [1933].


Church, Hubert N. W. Poems. Wellington: Whitcombe and Tombs, [1904].
-----.


-----.


[Corlett, Mrs.]


[-----.]


[Cotton, John].

Journal of a Voyage in the Barque Parkfield, Captain Whiteside, from Plymouth to Port Philip, Australia, in the Year 1843. London: Bentley, 1845.


-----.


-----.

[Poems]. Edited by H. J. Oliver. Australian poets ser. [Sydney]: Angus and Robertson, [1963].

Dargaville, Joseph. New Zealand and the Proposed Australasian Federation. [Auckland: 1884].


Dyson, Edward G.  Below and On Top.  Melbourne: Robertson, 1898.


Field, Barron. *First Fruits of Australian Poetry.* Sydney: [George Howe], 1819.

--------. *First Fruits of Australian Poetry.* 2nd ed. Sydney: [George Howe], 1823.


Froude, J.A. *Oceana or England and Her Colonies.* London: Longmans, Green, 1886.

[Furphy, Joseph]. *Such Is Life: Being Certain Extracts from the Diary of Tom Collins.* [Sydney]: Angus and Robertson, [1962]. First published in 1903.


--------. *The Pigeons' Parliament, a Poem in Four Cantos, with Notes; to which Is Added Thoughts on the Wairarapa, and Other Stanzas.* Wellington: Lyon, 1854.


Grace, Alfred A.  *Atareta, the Belle of the Kainga.* Wellington: Gordon and Gotch, 1908.

*---------.*  *Hone Tiki Dialogues.* Wellington: Gordon and Gotch, [1910].


*---------.*  *Tales of a Dying Race.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1901.


*---------.*  *Thoughts; a Series of Sonnets.* Sydney: Duncan, 1845.


Hervey, Thomas Kibble.  *Australia; with other Poems.* London: Hunt, Robinson, 1824.

*[Hills, Cecil].  *A Land Redeemed, or the Past and Present; a Poem of the Year 1843, by Harmonides.* Sydney: Welch, 1847.

Hope, A. D. Collected Poems 1930-1965. [Sydney]: Angus and Robertson, [1966].

Howitt, Richard. Australia: Historical, Descriptive, and Statistic; with an Account of a Four Years' Residence in that Colony; Notes of a Voyage Round the World; Australian Poems, &c. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1845.


Kelly, John Liddell. Zealandia's Jubilee; an Ode, to Which Are Appended N.Z. Prize Poem on "Queen Victoria's Jubilee" and Prologue to "Britannia and Her Daughters". Auckland: Kelly and Baulf, 1890.


King, F. M. Wreck of the "Erthshire", or, the Economics of Coral Island. Auckland: National Single Tax League, 1899.
Kingsley, Henry. Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn.
London: Oxford University Press, [1924].
First published in 1859.

Kirkbride, Matthew M. The Arch-Druid, or, the Conquest of the Brigantes: A Lay of Ancient Britain. London: Emmott, [1885].


Lang, John Dunmore. Aurora Australis; or Specimens of Sacred Poetry for the Colonists of Australia. Sydney: Eagar, 1826.


La Peyrouse, Poème Précédé d'une Notice Biographique de La Peyrouse, de la Liste de Tous les Officiers, Savants et Autres, Attachés à l'Expédition Commandée par La Peyrouse, ainsi que des Nouvelles Parvenues en 1827 sur le Sort de cette Expédition, par XXX. Paris: Delaunay, Huzard et Bachelier, 1827.

Lawson, Bertha. My Henry Lawson. Sydney: Johnson, [1943].


----- In the Days When the World Was Wide and Other Verses. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1896.

-------.  Over the Sliprails.  Sydney:  Angus and Robertson, 1900.


-------.  Short Stories in Prose and Verse.  Sydney:  L. Lawson, [1894].

-------.  Stories.  Edited by Cecil Mann.  3 vols.  [Sydney]:  Angus and Robertson, [1964].

-------.  While the Billy Boils.  Sydney:  Angus and Robertson, 1896.


McKay, Alexander. *Lines Written on a Scene from Lake Harris Saddle, West Coast, Middle Island*. Wellington: Hughes, 1880.


Montgomery, Alexander. *Five Skull Island and Other Tales of the Malay Archipelago*. Melbourne: Robertson, 1897.

[Montgomery, Eleanor Elizabeth]. *Songs of the Singing Shepherd*. Wanganui: Willis, 1885.


Neilson, Shaw. *Poems*. Edited by A.R. Chisholm. [Sydney]: Angus and Robertson, [1965].


Paterson, A.B. *The Man from Snowy River and Other Verses*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1895.

*---------*. *Rio Grande's Last Race, and Other Poems*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1902.


Stephens, Alfred G. Oblation. [Sydney: Websdale, Shoosmith, 1902].


Tompson, Charles. *Australia: a Translation of the Latin Prize Poem of S. Smith, a Student of Hyde Abbey School, Winchester,* Published in the Sydney Gazette of December 17, 1829 [Sydney]: Mansfield, [1829].

---. *Wild Notes from the Lyre of a Native Minstrel.* Sydney: Robert Howe, 1826.


Veel, Mary Colborne-. The Fairest of Angels, and Other Verse. London: Cox, 1894.


Walton, John. Twelve Months' Residence in New Zealand, Containing a Correct Description of the Customs, Manners, &c., of the Natives of that Island, with Other Information Valuable to Emigrants. Glasgow: M'Phun, 1839.


Williams, George P. A New Chum's Letter Home and Divers Verses, Dry and Diverse. 2nd ed. Auckland: Gordon and Gotch, 1904.


2. Secondary Sources

i. Manuscripts


ii. Articles and Parts of Books


--------. "Lawson Manuscripts in New Zealand, and a Note on Lawson's Autobiographies", Biblionews, 2nd ser., II, 3-4 (July-October 1967), 6-14.

Robson, L. L. "The Historical Basis of For the Term of His Natural Life", Australian Literary Studies, I, 2 (December 1963), 104-121.


iii. Books and Pamphlets


Christie, John. About Poets and Poetry; with Special Reference to "Heather and Fern": J. Liddell Kelly's Place in Literature and His Views on "Unconquerable Woman". Wellington: [New Zealand Times], 1903.


Maling, Peter B. *Samuel Butler at Mesopotamia, together with Butler's "Forest Creek" Manuscript and His Letters to Tripp and Acland*. Wellington: Government Printer, 1960.


Simmons, Samuel R. *A Problem and a Solution: Marcus Clarke and the Writing of "Long Odds", His First Novel.* Melbourne: Simmons, 1946.


