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THE LIFE AND WORK OF C. H. PEARSON

1830-1894

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the
Australian National University.

J. M. Tregenza

This is my original work.

J. M. Tregenza
A photograph probably taken at the height of his Australian career.
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PREFACE

My first aim, when commencing to work on this biography, was to do what I could to trace the papers of all persons with whom C. H. Pearson was known or was likely to have corresponded. The results of this search may be found in the bibliography. Needless to say many enquiries proved fruitless, though in two cases at least they definitely established the non-existence of collections of papers. Pearson corresponded on educational questions with Sir Robert Hamilton, a sometime Governor of Tasmania, but a surviving son of the latter, now living in the house in Bath in which his father died, is quite certain that no papers have been preserved. The papers of Sir John Cockburn, brother of Pearson's best man and a Premier of South Australia, may also have included letters of value, but the box containing them was destroyed by fire many years ago.

An exhaustive search was naturally made for Pearson's own papers. This was complicated by the fact that any grand-children born to his daughters would not bear his name. However the discovery of the wedding certificate of his eldest daughter, preserved at Somerset House, and a guess at the possible date of birth of a possible son led to the discovery of such a son's birth certificate. Through the assistance of a distant relative of Mrs. Pearson, living in Adelaide, I was ultimately able to contact this grandson of Pearson, Mr. C. F. P. Clerihew, of Bath. Mr. Clerihew knew of no
papers, but wrote on my behalf to his grandfather's only surviving daughter, Mrs. Gifford. Mrs. Gifford, however, was only able to refer me to two Melbourne friends of hers who had known her father. There was no hint of any papers.

A year later, as I was approaching the end of my last scholarship term, Dr. Geoffrey Serle of Melbourne University, in England on sabbatical leave and searching generally for any papers of possible relevance to Australian history, discovered that Pearson's papers did exist after all. Mrs. Gifford had died in the interim, and the papers were in the keeping of her son, who was very kindly prepared to allow them to be brought out to Australia, under the condition that those letters by his grandfather's English friends should return after six months to find their home in the Bodleian. The discovery, however, took place too late to allow for any substantial re-writing, and for the purposes of examination it has been decided that I should submit the existing thesis without seeing any of the new papers.

It will be noted that the last section of Pearson's life, covering the years 1879-1894, is dealt with in less detail than the years immediately preceding it. Had time and space not pressed so heavily, some of the earlier sections might well have been condensed, and the last section extended. It may be said in defence of the present form, however, that it was in the earlier period that Pearson had the experiences and
did the thinking which underlay the more practical work of his later colonial years, and that an attempt has still been made to present a complete life.

For their assistance in various ways I am indebted to the following: to the Bodleian Library, the Cambridge University Library, and the British Museum for photocopying letters in their possession, and to Mr. C. F. P. Clerihew of Bath for granting the necessary permission for this to be done; to Mr. William Musgrave of Headley, Surrey, for allowing copies to be made of letters from Pearson to his grandfather, to Mr. Anthony Musgrave of Sydney, who passed on to relatives in England my original letter of enquiry and to Mr. Lake, the National Library representative in London, who worked through the Musgrave papers and arranged for Pearson's letters to be copied; to Professor J. A. La Nauze for having copies made of letters from Pearson to Deakin; to Miss Mabel Hardy of Adelaide for giving me access to papers of her grandfather; to Mr. Warwick Goodenough of Adelaide, for working through the early Minute books of the Adelaide University Association and the Adelaide University Council; to Brigadier Bagnall-Wild for looking up records in Oriel College; to the headmistress of the Melbourne Presbyterian Ladies' College, Miss. R. E. Powell, for assistance in tracing records of Pearson's career as foundation headmaster of the College; to Mrs.
Fanning and the staff of the National Library Australian section, the Public Library of Victoria, the South Australian Archives, the Royal Melbourne Technical College, the National University Library and many other persons and institutions for practical help.
This thesis is a biography of a nineteenth century Fellow of Oriel who emigrated to Australia in middle age and laboured there for most of his remaining years as educational pioneer and reformer, liberal politician, and journalist. There have been two principle aims: to show how his liberals ideas evolved, first in England, later in his wide travels, later still in his varied experiences of colonial life; then to show how he attempted to put his ideas into practice. He is first shown growing up in the Evangelical tradition, then coming into contact with the High Churchmanship of Professor Brewer, the Christian Socialism of F. D. Maurice, the free-thinking of his uncle Babington; then attempting to follow Goethe in a search for all-round culture, lecturing in History, writing an eye-witness account of the Polish insurrection against Russia in 1863; then suddenly throwing up the Old World for the New and buying a South Australian farm, returning to England defeated by drought, but impressed by the fruits of democracy, seeking satisfaction again in travel and in mediaeval scholarship, returning once more to his colonial farm, marrying, being obliged for his wife's health to live in Melbourne, lecturing, acting as foundation headmaster of the first Australian school to provide a first-class education for girls; then plunging into politics and attempting to implement radical reforms of the land laws, the constitution and the colony's whole education
system from the University to the Reformatory Schools; then experiencing a lean period, drawn once more to England but coming back to take the Education portfolio and to carry on the work he had begun - extending technical education, seeing to the foundation of a Teachers' College, resisting attempts to change the secular character of the State education curriculum; finally returning to England, sick, and deprived of most of his savings by the 1890's depression, but able to enjoy a last few months of fame following the publication of a book summarizing his experiences and accurately predicting the sort of world the next two or three generations would have either to enjoy or endure.
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Note: All cartoons originally appeared in Melbourne Punch.
Chapter I

OXFORD LIBERAL

'I think I see more clearly than formerly that you and I and all men must take our own line and act according to our character, with many errors and imperfections and half-views, yet upon the whole we trust for good. We must act boldly, and feel the world around us as a swimmer feels the resisting stream.'

Benjamin Jowett to A.P. Stanley, October 23, 1849 - the year Pearson went up to Oxford.

Like many another mid-Victorian English liberal, Charles Pearson came of a family deep-rooted in the Evangelical tradition. His great-grandfather Pearson had married a sister of John Atlay, early friend and Book Steward of John Wesley, his grandfather Pearson had been a member of the first committee of the Church Missionary Society and his father first Principal of the Church Missionary Institution, Islington. The most imposing of these gentlemen was

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undoubtedly the grandfather, John, a patriarchal figure who died four years before Charles was born, but whose influence could be felt by the latter wherever he turned - in the great library of Jansenist theology which his father had inherited and which provided his main boyhood reading matter, in his father's rigorous educational methods and religious beliefs, and in numerous family connections with other, and better-known, Evangelical families. Not only had this grandfather had John Wesley's Book Steward for an uncle, but he had completed his training as a surgeon under the roof of William Hey, a man as well-known for his aggressive piety as for his eminence as surgeon to the Leeds General Infirmary.

He was twice mayor of Leeds, [writes G.T. Bettany of Hey] ... and in that capacity so severely denounced profanity and vice that the populace burnt him in effigy, and threatened him with personal violence. 3

With such a background John Pearson had gone to London, built up 'one of the largest practices' in the city and become, like his master, as well-known in the religious as the medical world. According to his grandson,

He belonged to what was known as the Clapham sect, was one of the founders of the Bible Society, and

3 D.N.B.
was intimate with Wilberforce, Zachary Macaulay, and the whole connection of Stephens, Venns, Thorntons, & Babingtons.\(^4\)

This intimacy was strengthened by the marriage of one of his daughters to a younger son of Thomas Babington, uncle to Lord Macaulay.

John Pearson the surgeon was a man of wealth and position in London. He not only had one of the largest practices but had added to his fortune by marrying the daughter and co-heir of a landed gentleman, Robert Norman of Lewisham. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, member of the Royal College of Surgeons and of the Royal Institution.\(^5\) He sent five sons to Cambridge, all of whom subsequently seem to have married 'well', one of them marrying the daughter of a viscount, another the grand-daughter of an earl.\(^6\) But perhaps the best measure of his social stand-

\(^4\) Memorials p.10.
\(^5\) D.N.B.
\(^6\) Alumni Cantabrigienses, 1752-1900:
  I John Norman (Charles's father) m. Harriet Puller, dau. of a London merchant.
  II Frederic, m. the widow of Granville Sharp (nee Heydocke Hill.)
  III Edwin, m. the Hon. Alicia Hewitt, dau. of 3rd Viscount Lifford. He was knighted in 1836.
  IV Arthur, m. dau. of the Hon. and Rev. R. FitzGerald King.
  V William Wilberforce, m. dau. of Alex. Alexander of 'The Larches', Warwickshire.
ing is the fact, recorded by his grandson, that he 'twice refused a baronetcy which he was offered through Lord Wellesley's influence', doing this at the request of his eldest son, an Anglican clergyman, who was not to be given a predominant share of the estate and who lacked sufficient means of his own to support the title.

As a man of social standing and a prominent Evangelical John Pearson made bonds between his family and other more renowned Evangelical families which retained their strength well on into the nineteenth century, despite changes of belief and fortune in the descendants. Thus several important friends and advisers of his grandson Charles were descendants of old Clapham families or of families closely connected with Clapham. There was George Gisbourne Babington, a man who became a 'second father' to him when he fell ill in London as a student. There was Sir James Stephen, who set him on his literary career with a favourable notice of an early book review, Sir James's sons FitzJames and Leslie, both literary associates in London, and their cousin

7 Memorials p. 9.
8 Ibid p. 45.
9 Ibid p. 88.
Wilberforce Stephen, a predecessor as Minister of Public Instruction in Victoria. There was Sir Henry Acland, a life-long Oxford friend, who introduced him to the study of medicine and enlarged his knowledge of art, and there was Lord Macaulay who invited him, when a young King's College professor, to come and talk with him any time he liked. If Charles Pearson, by virtue of his family, belonged to any social group, it was that formed by the descendants of the old well-to-do Evangelical families of the late 18th century. However democratic his views might be, however relatively small his income, he was always conscious of belonging to this group. There is no more eloquent testimony to his class sense than the entry 'Pearson of Ediwie' complete with coat of arms, an extensive genealogy, and reference to an 'Estate' (in fact a small wheat farm) in Burke's Colonial Gentry of 1891.

Grandfather Pearson cast a long and imposing shadow. He was stern, matter-of-fact, dominant - a man in whom Evangelical missionary zeal, Calvinist love of logic, and

\[10\] Memorials pp. 83-5.
\[11\] Ibid p. 103.
a spirit of scientific enquiry were equally evident. Besides forming his 'great collection of Jansenist theology', he wrote various minor medical and scientific works including *A Plain and Rational Account of the Nature of Animal Magnetism* (1790), and contributed to Zachary Macaulay's *Christian Observer* an inquiry into the Port Royal Miracle of the Holy Thorn, explaining it on natural grounds. There is no indication that he possessed either imagination or wit. His two-volume *Life of William Hey*, a biography of his old teacher, is described by Bettany as a 'most diffuse and tedious work'. Although in later years he became more indulgent he brought up his first children - he had seventeen in all - in the most rigorous fashion. Charles's father, who was the first-born, took the full toll of this regimen and grew up in consequence a 'shy, timid man', never quite able to realise the expectations aroused by his natural gifts. The small portrait of the latter reproduced in the *History of the Church Missionary Society* shows a man with

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12 Memorials p.12.
13 D.N.B. (under Hey.)
14 Memorials p.10.
15 Vol.II, facing p.70.
regular features, dark curly hair, a high forehead, 'sideboards', a set jaw, full lips and large dark eyes - a vigorous, able-looking face that stands out in a gallery of evangelical divines. His story, however, if reckoned in worldly terms, was one of partial failure - of a strong contender for the Chancellor's medal at Cambridge who spends the first thirteen years of his ministry occupying a series of curacies, the next thirteen as first Principal of the Church Missionary Institute, Islington, founded in 1826 to fit young evangelicals of 'extremely diverse degrees of education' for the mission field, and the last fourteen as rector of one of the churches in Tunbridge Wells. It is evident, however, that although he gave up serious scholarship himself he exacted high scholastic standards from his Islington pupils and from his own children. Whatever else

16 **History of the C.M.S.**, II p.71. Pearson senior is reported to have remarked, when showing his successor over the Islington Institution and pointing to a candidate who later became an Archdeacon in Manitoba, 'He is a mason by original calling, and he is able either to build a stone wall, or to go through one, as occasion may require.' *Ibid*, I, p.266.

17 He was nevertheless the author of several books of sermons and at least seven other publications, including a *Life of Archbishop Leighton* and *The Candle of the Lord Uncovered: Or the Bible Rescued from Papal Thraldom by the Reformation* (1835). See D.N.B. entry under 'Pearson, John Norman (1787-1865).*
he might not accomplish he held to these standards. When a committee of inquiry in 1830 recommended that the Islington Institution should be 'less of a College and more of a Home, ... the academical element ... to be distinctly subordinate to the spiritual element' he resigned, although he later withdrew his resignation. At least he had the satisfaction, when he retired after eight more years as Principal, of hearing his old Cambridge competitor for academic honours, C.J. Blomfield, then Bishop of London, say

That he had been much struck with the comprehensiveness of the theological knowledge acquired by the students and with the judiciousness of the mode in which it had been imparted, and ... that the Society's students had been among his best candidates.18

In his own family these standards involved the thorough tutoring in Latin of each of his five sons from the age of six, and then the sending of them to public school and university, a sacrifice which his father had made before him with his five sons. It is not a little tribute to the Reverend John Norman's standards that of his five sons, two became judges, two more Anglican rectors, and the fifth, the subject of this thesis, a Fellow of Oriel and Minister of Education in the Colony of Victoria.

18 History of the C.M.S. Vol.I, p.266.
To Charles, who showed early promise he gave a particularly thorough training, drilling him in his Latin studies from the age of six right up to the time when he went to Rugby at the age of thirteen. It seems to have been a father-son relationship not unlike that of James and John Stuart Mill: excellent scholastic results were achieved but at the cost both of filial affection and all-round development.  

When Charles did go to Rugby he was able, though the youngest but one in a class of sixty, to come out head of it in examination. At Latin verses he was a virtuoso, able to 'string together sixty hexameters in an hour without flagrant fault, and without a positive merit'. But in the little he ever wrote of his father there is no expression whatever either of affection or gratitude, while the father only appears in his subsequent story as a man 'bitterly disappointed', 'profoundly irritated', 'very much dismayed' and again 'disappointed' at his son's decisions and actions.

21 Ibid, pp.29, 44, 71, 77.
Of his mother Pearson writes very little, beyond mentioning that one of her brothers was a fellow of Merton, another an Indian civil servant, and a third, Sir Christopher Puller, Chief Justice of Bengal. Her father, Richard Puller, was a London merchant. According to her daughter Charlotte she was 'religious, upright, conscientious, and refined, and an excellent housekeeper', a woman whose energies were almost wholly taken up with the business of bearing and rearing children. For twenty one years, from 1817 to 1838, there were only seven during which she did not either give birth to or bury a child. Charles, born in 1830, was her tenth child and fourth son. Before he was six she had given birth to three more children, the last two only to die in childhood at the ages of three and six. During this period an older daughter also died at the age of fifteen.

It was, therefore, a secluded, sombre childhood that Charles experienced. As his mother was generally

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22 Burke's Colonial Gentry, 1891.
23 Memorials p. 2.
24 Pearson genealogy in Burke's Colonial Gentry, 1891.
preoccupied, the two children nearest to him in age most of the time away at school, and his father less a companion than a strict, middle-aged, schoolmaster, subject to frequent attacks of gout, Pearson was thrown a good deal on his own resources. There were no dances, no theatre parties as he grew older, nothing more dissipating than attendance at a Bible Society or Missionary meeting, and even then, in this chastely moral world, he was regularly obliged to examine himself and make confession of sins—now 'too much troublesomeness and quarrelsomeness', now simply 'disobedience'. Fortunately he was sustained by a lively imagination, a decided literary talent, and a pleasantly dry sense of humour, all of which qualities may clearly be discerned in the following letter, written at the age of nine to his favourite sister. It is dated March 1840.

Dearest Charlotte,—I am now going to write to you and to tell you all the remarkable events which have taken place since your absence. Imprimis, Mrs. Smith has departed hence, and Miss Delves has taken her place. 2. A most alarming circumstance has lately occurred, which will freeze your blood with horror. Last Monday night, at about eleven o'clock, Maynard having been smoking his pipe, went forth to enjoy the evening air, when lo! he beheld—a bold villain, who having parted from three others, climbed over the gate (which was barred) and went up first to the back entrance, and then to the front door, which he tried to break open.
But Maynard had watched his proceedings and followed, not with a brand or lance, for the days of chivalry are clean gone, but with a - poker. However, the villain heard him, abandoned his enterprise, and rushed away through Mr. Marsden's field, with Maynard at his heel, roaring out lustily 'Stop thief'! But the thief was deaf to his vociferations and did not stop till he had gained a place of safety. On hearing this alarming news Eliza nearly fainted, Susan turned as white as a towel, and Elizabeth could get no sleep till 5 o'clock in the morning, she was so panic-struck. Papa has now got some pistols, and a dog is coming to-morrow to guard against such visitors. For myself and the 2 children we snored as loud as if nothing was the matter .... The dining-room and drawing-room are now papered, but I am sorry to say the 1st has a violent scarlet fever, and the 2nd is in a galloping consumption. Papa has had a sounding-board put up over the pulpit. He, all the family except myself and little Timothy are quite well, we 2 having divers complaints which are now in a state of convalescence ... I should have written you a poetical epistle, only the muse fell asleep on Mt. Parnassus, and Pegasus was eating some oats in the stable, and I could not make him stir an inch.

I must now, my dearest Charlotte, bid a tender adieu.25

As a conscious essay in mock heroic and bathos it is a precocious piece of writing for a nine-year-old. Yet while the repressions and isolation of his childhood developed certain powers to an unusual degree, and did not succeed in destroying his natural sense of humour, the training as a whole, as he later recognised, was bad for him 'morally and

25 Memorials p.4.
spiritually'. He became so absorbed in himself, so habituated to a narrow self-contained life, that in later years, even after attending school and university, it was only with the greatest difficulty that he was able to identify himself with any concern outside himself, and take that active part in public affairs which one side of him craved.

In 1843, at the age of thirteen, he went to Rugby. Dr. Arnold had died only the previous year and the tradition which he had established only served to reinforce that of the evangelical rectory from which the boy had come. When, towards the end of his life, he wrote of his schooling, Pearson viewed this tradition from much the same position Lytton Strachey was to adopt thirty years later in his *Eminent Victorians* (1918). The boys, he claimed 'were taught to be always feeling their moral muscles' a habit of which they found it difficult to divest themselves in adult life. Thus Rugby soon came to be known at Oxford as 'the disagreeable school', while many a boy was impelled into Holy Orders for which he was not suited. Morbid introspection and over-scrupulousness sometimes accompanied by a loss of

26 *Memorials* p.12.
faith were the fate of others. That these influences left their mark on Pearson is not to be doubted. But at the same time the comparative freedom of a big public school after a secluded rectory, with the access it gave to a library of much wider range than the 'great collection of Jansenist theology' which had provided much of his reading material to this point, gave scope to the un-evangelical, catholic side of his nature. He began to devour new books, to relax the scholastic discipline imposed so rigorously and for so long by his father, even to resist what he considered over-bearing authority.

I was disgracefully idle so far as school work was concerned, but neither physically nor intellectually indolent. I read every book in the school library - Spenser's 'Faery Queen' among the rest and I took a fair place at football and gymnastics, though I was never more than a bad cricketer.  

In his eclectic, free-ranging study habits, however, he was pitting himself against the whole tradition of the school, which required that a definite task should be undertaken and accomplished well. Had not Arnold himself remarked 'if there be one thing on earth which is truly admirable, it is to see God's wisdom blessing an inferiority of natural

27 Memorials p.16.
powers, where they have been honestly, truly and zealously cultivated'. To G.E.L. Cotton, his form master in his third year, Pearson was clearly a boy with a superiority of natural powers sadly in need of honest cultivation. The battle was joined, Cotton attempting to use coercion, Pearson taking up an 'attitude of dogged opposition, rather desiring to precipitate a crisis'. The crisis did come and the headmaster requested his father to withdraw him. The father, bitterly disappointed, seems to have been ready to despair of his son, and in fact did, at this point, effectively throw in his hand, leaving it to his eldest son John, a twenty-seven-year-old London barrister, to decide what next should be done. John, very sensibly, arranged that Charles should be sent first to a private tutor, and then on to King's College. Thus commenced the educational process which was to lead to the latitudinarian liberalism of his later years. There was nothing exceptional in this breaking of evangelical bonds. In Pearson's generation it was rather the rule amongst the able sons of evangelical parents. What gave some distinction to Pearson's individual case was the peculiar strength of both the binding and liberating forces and of the resulting tension within him.

King's College, an Anglican foundation affiliated with the University of London, was at this time, whether by chance or design, a veritable liberal seminary. Even during Pearson's two years there the student body included FitzJames and Leslie Stephen, Frederic Harrison, Canon Farrar, Albert Venn Dicey, M.H. Irving (son of the Evangelist and first professor of classics at Melbourne University), Henry Kingsley (author of the Australian classic *Geoffrey Hamlyn*, and brother to the better-known Charles), and D.C. Lathbury, (sometime joint-editor of the *Economist*). A little before Pearson's day Wilberforce Stephen, first Minister of Education in Victoria, was also a student there. It was not a wealthy foundation and consequently its staff was not well paid and the classes were mostly too large to make for first class teaching. Its main function was to prepare the sons of professional men for entry to Oxford and Cambridge, the church, the army, medicine or a commercial life. Most of the students came from proprietary schools at the age of 16 or 17 - or 18 to 19 if they joined the medical department.²⁸ᵃ Nine out of ten lived with their parents and there were no organized sports. The great virtue of the

college was that it did not restrict able boys from thinking for themselves. Its aim was to give a general education with a sound non-sectarian religious training rather than to cram for particular scholarships and examinations. Of the College Pearson wrote with unreserved enthusiasm.

To King's College I owe everything that can be derived from a place of education. I think the system was thoroughly good; I am sure it suited me. In place of the Puritanism of my home and the mechanical discipline of Rugby, I found a rule of the largest liberty compatible with common order. We were allowed to choose our own lectures, with the consent of our guardians; punishments were almost unknown, and the assumption throughout was that we were to be influenced through our own sense of honour and duty.29

Much depended, however, on the capacity and authority of the lecturer. Thus F.D. Maurice, who lectured on modern history and English literature, the 'new' subjects which Pearson himself was later to teach, was not a success, while J.S. Brewer was incomparable.

In his final year Pearson was fortunate enough to be admitted into a special class of six taken once a week by Brewer. The real occupation of the students was to engage the latter in conversation on any matters they wished to discuss. Invariably, such was the scope of his learning.

29 Memorials p.31.
they retired profitably convinced of their own ignorance. As teacher and subsequently as colleague Brewer was an important figure in Pearson's life. Many years later, when the latter had settled in Australia, he spoke with 'reverential admiration' of his old teacher 'for giving to the world the best of his wonderful intellect and learning, and being contented with a bare pittance'. Brewer's life was one of worldly unsuccess and devoted service. Whether as chaplain to the workhouse of the combined parishes of St. Giles-in-the-Fields and St. George, Bloomsbury (the former being 'the largest and most degraded parish in London') or as Lecturer and Professor at King's College or as Principal of the Working Men's College or as a scholar of the reign of Henry VIII, he gave himself unsparingly to his task and asked and was given little material reward. He loved grace and dignity in religious worship and it is related of him that from the first as a workhouse chaplain he taught the boys and even some of the older people to sing the psalms to the Gregorian chants. He was, in all likelihood,

30 Memorials p. 43.
31 Ibid p. 196; a comment made to Mrs. Pearson.
33 D.N.B. entry.
primarily responsible for the High Church sympathies which Pearson held at Oxford, and for his professional interest in medieval history after graduating.

King's College, which Pearson attended from 1847-9, not only introduced him to new subjects, school friends, and teachers: it gave him an opportunity, which no residential public school could have given, of close contact with several of the portentous social and political events of those years. Two days before the Paris revolution of 1848 the situation in France was brought home to him by meeting at dinner a Radical M.P. who had expected to assist at the great political banquet planned by the leader of the French Liberals, Odilon Barrot, only to be called off at the last moment by an arrangement with the Ministry. Then, on April 10th, 1848, he had a very direct and memorable contact with Chartism. On that day, when the Chartists planned to march into London to present their petition, Pearson, like every other boy in the College, with the exception of one 'philosophical Liberal', enlisted as a special constable, his duty being to garrison King's College with about sixty other students.

\[34\] Memorials p. 38.
As I went there in the early morning, he relates, I met a procession of Chartists in Russell Street, Bloomsbury, on their way to Kennington Common. Stunted and famished-looking men, they marched in perfect order without noise or threats, and seemed anxious to talk with anyone who would address them, so as to explain that they meditated no violence. It so happened, however, that just as I came upon them they were passing an alley of the worst description, probably long since improved away, and the inmates of this—thieves, prostitutes, and loafers—pounced out to salute the processionists with cheers and foul imprecations against the wealthy classes. I have no doubt that tens of thousands of rabble like this were eagerly waiting the news of a collision, and that if the troops or police had been overpowered anywhere a few of the best houses would have been instantly fired and sacked.... Certainly, he concludes, the effect of that day in London was to make mass demonstrations absolutely ridiculous. They were never attempted again till Mr. Beales revived them and, through the weakness of the Conservative Home Secretary, brought them into fashion.35

The vividness of the description and the positiveness of the assertions in this passage, written forty years later at the end of a career as a parliamentary member of the democratic Liberal party of Victoria, testify to the profound impression which this surprise contact with London's underworld made at the time. If it were not actually responsible for the horror of all forms of civil disorder which Pearson always felt, it must have done much to reinforce it. Pearson must also, in this year, have been aware of and been influenced by,

35 Memorials pp. 41-2.
Maurice's activities both in connection with the foundation of the Christian Socialist movement and with the opening of Queen's College, London, one of the very first institutions to cater seriously for the higher education of women.

In this same momentous year, 1848, as a result of a chill caught on the day of the Chartist procession and subsequently neglected on account of imminent examinations, Pearson developed a pleurisy which laid him up for a year and 'more or less crippled him' for the remainder of his life. It also brought him into contact with a man who was to influence him, perhaps, more than any other — an uncle by marriage, George Gisbourne Babington. Babington was a member of an ancient family long settled in Leicester at Rothley Temple, a fine old Elizabethan country mansion. Of his father, Thomas Babington, a prominent member of the Clapham circle, Marianne Thornton writes in her Recollections:

How clearly do I see now his rather wooden face, his country gentleman figure, his odd husky utterance, weighing so fairly and clearly every side of every question, and putting down Mr. Wilberforce's airy flights by his facts and dates and figures; a sort of moral and mental arithmetician to be referred to at any moment. No man ever gave one a stronger belief that he was acting from conscientious motives on every occasion, small or great, or a more firm conviction of his truth. 37

36 Memorials p.43.
While Thomas Babington's children were growing up his house was always crowded with young guests, at the centre of whom his nephew Tom Macaulay was often to be found. Of George Gisbourne, a younger son, Pearson relates:

He was put as a youth to learn surgery with my grandfather, got engaged to my aunt Sarah Anne Pearson, and having married her, was rapidly rising to the first rank in his profession when he ruined his health by neglecting a pleurisy. Obliged to give up regular practice in London, he eked out his income first by practising in the winter at Rome, and afterwards by setting up at Leamington. Towards the end of his life he returned to London, taking no professional work, but busying himself with the directorship of an assurance society. He was a man of singularly subtle intellect and great capacity for acquiring knowledge of the most various kinds. He had taught himself several languages very thoroughly, ... His favourite studies were military tactics and controversial theology. He could explain all the campaigns of Napoleon; and though himself a moderate free-thinker, he read every work of John Henry Newman, Pusey, Manning, and R. Wilberforce with the keenest interest. Having no children of his own, he almost adopted my sister Carlotta and myself, directing our studies and counselling us in the more important acts of life.

He was a man of 'singular unselfishness' accustomed to refusing fees from 'poor people ... visibly in want of money', although, in the Clapham tradition, most capable as a man of business. For a time he had shared rooms with his cousin Macaulay, and there is a lively description in Trevelyan's

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39 Memorials, p.45.
Life of the latter of the two friends debating.

He [Macaulay] left college a staunch and vehement Whig, eager to maintain against all comers, and at any moment, that none but Whig opinions had a leg to stand upon. His cousin George Babington, a rising surgeon, with whom at one time he lived in the closest intimacy was always ready to take up the Tory cudgels. The two friends 'would walk up and down the room, crossing each other for hours, shouting one another down with a continuous simultaneous storm of words, until George at length yielded to arguments and lungs combined. Never, so far as I remember, was there any loss of temper. It was a fair, good-humoured, battle in not very mannerly lists'.

Constant contact with such a man as Babington could only hasten the revolution in Pearson's outlook which was taking place in London. In place of a father brought up in a severely Calvinistic house in Golden Square here was a man whose childhood had been spent in a beautiful old country mansion always filled with lively young people. In place of a father with fixed beliefs and a strong dislike of being crossed, here was a man with catholic interests, an open mind and a love of lively, good-tempered argument. It is little wonder that Pearson should have described him as a 'second father' and have written:

Five-and-twenty years after his death I still find myself asking if he would have approved my conduct in some given case, and revering the old man's verdict, as I apprehend it more than the judgment of my contemporaries.  

40 Trevelyan, op. cit. I, p. 113.
41 Memorials p. 46.
The discovery of a 'second father' however, did not prevent a second crisis developing in Pearson's career at the end of his King's College course. Now nearly nineteen, he appears to have adopted an attitude of fatalistic unconcern about his future career, showing no desire to proceed to one of the universities, and suggesting, to the profound irritation of his father, that he should become a solicitor. According to his account, he justified his position to an anxious mother by remarking blandly that he 'thought a man's worth depended on what a man was and not on what he did', adding with characteristic perversity that he 'should in all likelihood make more money as a solicitor than as a barrister'. Finally, playing on the concern of his parents, he appears to have agreed to proceed to a university on the condition that he could go to Oxford, where members of his mother's family had graduated with some distinction, rather than to Cambridge where his brothers and Pearson uncles had been less successful. Fortunately his uncle Babington was able to use influence to have him entered at Oriel College.

Memorials p.44.
Oxford, when Pearson entered it, was still old unreformed Oxford. Individual tutors were still expected to teach everything. The Professorial system hardly existed.

The Professors of Greek and Modern History did not lecture; there was no Professor of Latin; the Professor of Ancient History gave the same lectures year by year; and metaphysics and logic were either not taught, or taught with conspicuous badness.

There was hardly any study of mathematics and science, and the schools of medicine and law were defunct. The study of certain Greek and Roman classics together with some classical history was the foundation of Oxford learning. The teaching of the supplementary subjects was generally poor. The theology taught was elaborate but quite antiquated, the logic text-book

was an epitome of almost every possible blunder. It was as if geography were taught on the system of Ptolemy, the teachers explaining now and then what results had been superseded by modern science.

Philosophy mainly involved the uncritical memorization of the Ethics of Aristotle. For the able and conscientious few, however, this was not so bad a state of affairs, for it

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43 Memorials p. 55.

44 Ibid p. 51.
threw them on their own resources in a way that the more highly organized reformed university of later years did not.

In those older days, [recollected Ruskin, having in mind the late 'thirties and early 'forties;] there was more elbow-room; independent reading was as yet not dead; we loved and valued the old English masterpieces - we now pull them in pieces, and examine them in detail, and destroy their life, by a sort of vivisection of mind. ... The world was not as yet altogether ruled by 'Boards', those sure signs of old age in institutions; we knew nothing of 'Faculties', we tried to think widely on life and learning; independence was curbed by the Thirty-Nine Articles; it ranged all the more freely elsewhere.45

It was now, in the early 'fifties, the experience of Pearson.

Every generation at a college has its character, and the one I knew at Oriel was distinctly clever and Bohemian. Wanting guidance and stimulus from the college staff it threw itself upon English literature - Emerson and Carlyle, Mill and Grote, Tennyson and Keats.46

It was the opportunities Oxford offered for social intercourse and not the formal training which Pearson valued. He was a serious enough student and in 1852, after going to London for a course of coaching by a private tutor took a Classical First. But it was the discussions in the rooms of his friends, the debates in the Union, the reading parties in the vacations, that made Oxford worthwhile for him.

46 Memorials pp.53-4.
There was no dearth of subjects to be discussed. Chartism at home and revolutions abroad, Christian Socialism, Marx and Engles' Communist Manifesto (1848), the higher education of women, reform of the Universities, the foundation of new public schools, enlargement of the franchise, the entry of Newman into the Roman Catholic church (1845) and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England (1850), the publication of Robert Chambers's Vestiges of Creation (1844), J. A. Froude's The Nemesis of Faith (1849) and Tennyson's In Memoriam (1850), the launching of the Pre-Raphaelite movement (1850) and the vigorous promulgation of Positivism by Richard Congreve of Wadham College, all besieged the minds of young men interested in public affairs, the arts and questions of belief. Pearson, with his first-hand contacts with Chartism, Maurice's Christian Socialism, Brewer's High Churchmanship and his uncle Babington's moderate free-thinking, and in general with the catholic scope of the teaching at King's College, was well equipped to make an impression, and appears to have taken the opportunity.

When we met again at Oxford, [writes his friend Arthur Butler, first Headmaster of Haileybury school,] he astonished all his old Rugby contemporaries by his
maturity of thought and knowledge, and the seemingly exhaustive theories of life, which he had ready at his fingers' ends.\footnote{Memorials p. 145.}

No longer able to accept his father's teachings (for the most part based on views formed at the end of the 18th century) he appears to have been unable to hold the creed of any other particular school or party in toto and to have become a confirmed eclectic.

During all these years, [writes his friend Grant Duff,] he was much occupied with religious questions, and was more or less Maurician but Maurician rather in sentiment than in opinion. He leant to the Sacramental teaching of the High Church party, but in all matters of Biblical criticism and interpretation belonged entirely to what was then beginning to be known as the Broad Church.\footnote{Ibid p. 176.} \textit{(Italics mine.)}

W.H. Fremantle, subsequently Dean of Ripon, records that,\footnote{Ibid p. 176.}

He made little of the barriers of sect, and considered that there should be no hindrance to the inclusion of the various Protestant denominations within the Church system. On the other hand, he would say that the doctrine of Transubstantiation was merely a strong way of expressing the belief in the presence of Christ with his people; and that confession to a priest could do no harm - he would not object to his wife (he was unmarried then) going to confession.\footnote{Ibid p. 163.}

According to another contemporary, Arthur Butler, he had a 'great tenderness towards the High Church party, then represented by Marriott of Oriel, Vicar of St. Mary's'.\footnote{Ibid p. 149.} He
was not, however, a High Churchman himself, and Butler
instances one of his objections to the Party.

I remember, [he writes,] after a sermon of Marriott's
in which occurred the words 'Women are much more
religious than men', that Pearson was much annoyed by
them, as characteristic of the attitude of the party
towards much of the most virile thought and energies
of the time. But he never failed to do justice to the
depth piety and devotion of the High Churchmen, and was
a constant attendant at the services at St. Mary's.

In political matters he found it just as difficult
to give himself wholly to one party. From his own recoll-
ections he appears to have begun his Oxford career as a
Peelite liberal-conservative.51

I made my debut at the Union in my second term with
a speech on Free Trade, which established my reputation;
[he writes in his autobiography,] but in fact my belief
in Free Trade was at that time almost my only point of
contact with Liberals.52

From the precis of this speech given by Morrah in his
History of the Oxford Union (based on the only contemporary
report, as distinct from reminiscence, of Pearson's actual
words as an undergraduate now available)53 it was a forth-

51
Melbourne Argus, May 29, 1877 p.7 - report of a speech by
Pearson to his supporters after losing his first electoral
contest.

52
Memorials p.68.

53
P.136. The precis is based on a complete report of the
three night debate (Feb. 14, 21 and 28, 1850) made at the
instance of Knatchbull-Hugessen, afterwards Lord Brabourne.
Such a report was unprecedented.
right speech, very earnest and a good deal more liberal than he remembered it to be.

... To him it seemed that the principles of Toryism meant 'that everything should be done for the people, and nothing by them'. The corn-laws were passed not by the people, but by the representatives of rotten boroughs .... It might be said that Free Trade seriously injured landlords. They deserved no pity if what they took unjustly were taken from them. Why did they not break up their farms? This, with the addition of long leases, would solve the problem. The French Revolution afforded a lesson which should be learnt. He appealed to the highest feelings: politics should be viewed with religious awe. (Italics mine.) Modern Toryism was mere pride of caste, of feudal absurdity, rousing an intense hatred. Free Trade might lessen the gulf between rich and poor. There was thunder in the horizon as well as dawn - the great social strife of Europe was reaching our shores. 'It would be no small benefit if the labouring masses were urged against us by the absence of fancied rights, not by the sense of real wrongs: if they were led against us (Italics mine.) by mock patriots and pseudo-philosophers, and not by the God of the desolate and oppressed'. (Loud Cheers.)

It is unfortunate that there is only a precis to go by, but even so it is easy enough to see here what G.J. Goschen, subsequently Chancellor of the Exchequer, meant when he wrote of Pearson, 'He would argue, but from a loftier plane than most of us'. Thus in the course of a speech in

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54 Morrah p.136.
55 Memorials p.152.
support of his own motion advocating Christian Socialism
he urged the Union not to oppose Christian Socialism
'through prejudice "lest haply we be found even to fight
against God"' and in another, as recollected by Arthur
Butler, he

... warned the Tories of the changes imminent in the
Constitution, and the breaking up of the old strata
of Society. In the shade of our archiepiscopal
palaces, and in the vicinity of our Houses of
Parliament, there were springing up, he said, new
principles and new parties, which would convulse and
overthrow the present order of things, which might be
a blessing if we would understand and come to terms
with them; but, otherwise, would cause a new Revolution
in England, to which the old historical Revolution
would be mere child's-play in comparison.

There was something of solemnity without a shade of
pedantry, in his voice and manner, as he said this,
[comments Butler,] which for the time bore down all
opposition, and wakened thoughts in men's minds,
anticipating many of the movements of the present day
which never before had entered them.

And this made him a man of great influence among
his contemporaries, and he was looked to as a person
from whom much might be expected.57

In all of these speeches he was speaking on the side
of the minority: in fact as far as Christian Socialism was
concerned, a very small minority. It was not a situation

56 Dean Fremantle's reminiscence. Memorials p.163.
he disliked. At Rugby he had had a reputation for 'taking his own line and going his own way'\(^{58}\) and nineteen years later at Cambridge Professor Sidgwick found him

\[\ldots\text{one of the small class of persons whose practical adhesion to their convictions is only made more resolute by its colliding with popular sentiment or with self-interest; the position of 'Athanasius contra mundum' would certainly always have had an attraction for him.}^{59}\]

While at Exeter College, to which he had won a scholarship after a year at Oriel, he deliberately absented himself from 'the parade communion that was held once a term' not because he was not a regular communicant at the time, but because he thought the rule 'immoral'.\(^{60}\) It was a similar insistence on principle that led him, having come under the influence of F. D. Maurice, to put up his motion on Christian Socialism, despite the fact that the Sub-Rector of his college, William Sewell, had shortly before warned him against holding extreme opinions, with an intimation that the reputation of doing so would affect his prospects of a fellowship.\(^{61}\) It was this same moral scrupulousness, or perhaps more accurately fastidiousness, which had led him to apply for the scholar-

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\(^{58}\) Butler. *Memorials* p.144.

\(^{59}\) Ibid p.184.

\(^{60}\) Ibid p.68.

\(^{61}\) Ibid pp.67-8.
ship at Exeter. At Oriel, he explains, he had been 'out of harmony' with his surroundings.

The influence of our teachers at King's College had been severely moral, and the tone of conversation among us virginally pure. The talk at Oriel wines generally became Aristophanic after the first half-hour, and I then used to withdraw quietly .... The only men who were really reading secluded themselves altogether from the general life of the college.62

Elsewhere, when talking of King's College, he writes,

When we went afterwards to Oxford and Cambridge we were most of us disgusted at the reckless manner in which illness was shammed or lies told to the tutors. We had in fact outgrown the public-school ethics to which University discipline was adapted. In another respect King's College was above the moral standard even of Rugby. Foul language and coarse wit were absolutely repressed by public opinion ... 63

One can detect here a hint of that 'feeling of moral muscles' which he himself alleges to have been a disagreeable habit of Rugby boys. In keeping with this fastidiousness was a certain asceticism, necessitated, so he claimed, by the smallness of his father's allowance, but nevertheless regarded, at least in later life, as of value.

62 Memorials pp. 60-1.
63 Ibid pp. 32-3.
Incidentally, the circumstances under which I went up were advantageous to me. My income was so small — my father only allowing me £150 a year — that during my first year, I used to economise by only eating half rations at dinner, and to the last I never ate meat at breakfast or lunch. I am not sure that this asceticism was not carried too far for my health; it would have been better for me to take some exercise beside walking, and to live more generously. In fact, I broke down with torpid liver towards the end of my second year, and was only restored by a visit to the baths of Marienbad. But the habit I acquired of keeping my appetite severely under control has been invaluable to me in later life.

The ironical footnote to this is that Marienbad was in what is now Czechoslovakia, well over seven hundred miles away. That Pearson should have half-starved himself at Oxford and then gone on an enjoyable journey across Europe to cure himself, was characteristic of the man.

It was ... an advantage that I twice accompanied my sister to the German baths in the summers of 1849 and 1851. I got fond of the Continent, taught myself German, some Bohemian, Swedish, and Italian, and was fairly well versed in Schiller, Goethe, Dante, and Tegner before I took my degree.

Pearson, in fact, emerges from his own reminiscences and those of his friends in two distinct guises. He was not only ascetic, 'lofty', religious and solemnly prophetic.

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64 Memorials pp. 74-5.
65 Ibid p. 75.
My general impression of him, [writes Goschen,] is not the same as Arthur Butler's. The latter omits one very marked characteristic, a great enjoyment of 'persiflage'. He had also a keen sense of humour, which he tacked on to his persiflage, and it was often difficult to say whether he was in earnest or playing with his subject. He certainly struck many of us as the reverse of serious, and a mutual friend has mentioned to me his astonishment at Pearson's free treatment of all things human and divine in his earlier Oxford days. ... I consider that, with much thought and an infinite fund of knowledge he combined a splendid gift of paradox ...

This was the Pearson whom another friend remembered as a 'capital travelling companion', ready at a moment's notice to deliver a sophistical lecture to a stray dog or travesty a German song, the member of an Essay Society who suggested, when the University invited Odes from its junior members celebrating Lord Derby's installation as Chancellor, that the Society should offer a contribution 'written in a satirical vein, which the authorities (presumed to be incapable of humour) should accept as a serious panegyric, but which all intelligent persons should recognise as a squib', the man of whom Conington, the eminent Virgil scholar, was fond of saying, 'considering how great were Pearson's gifts


67 Ibid pp.156-7. (Reminiscences of Dr. J.F. Bright, Master of University College, Oxford.)
of imposture, it was greatly to his credit that he used them so moderately, the man whose most memorable Union speech was not a solemn plea or prophecy but a brilliant piece of irony and deception. It was a speech made to an amendment in the course of a four-night debate on Gladstone's joining the coalition government of 1853. The amendment read

That we view with regret and disappointment the position assumed by Mr. Gladstone towards Lord Derby's Government and his subsequent coalition with the Whigs, as uncalled for by political exigencies, inconsistent with his past career, and tending to render permanent the disruption of the Conservative Party.

According to the account in H.A. Morrah's The Oxford Union, 1823-1923,

Pearson, after Gladstone had been severely vituperated, launched a surprise. He drew a graphic picture of a public man who had violated every principle and thrown his early professions to the winds. At each pause the Conservative benches cheered vehemently, thinking that he was speaking on their side, till he suddenly turned round and exclaimed, 'This, Sir, is the character of an inconsistent statesman, and this has been the career of Lord Derby'.

To G.C. Brodrick, subsequently Warden of Merton College, this speech was 'the finest piece of rhetoric' that he had 'ever heard at the Union'. The historian James Bryce who went

68 Memorials p.158. (Reminiscences of G.C. Brodrick, Warden of Merton.)
69 Morrah p.136.
70 Memorials p.158.
up to Oxford in the late 'fifties also testifies that in
his time it 'was often referred to as the most striking
piece of oratory the Union had listened to for years'.\textsuperscript{71}
Not unsurprisingly, however, the speech did not carry the
day. It was a \textit{tour de force} and appreciated as such.

This then was the Pearson of Oxford days. His friend
J.F. Bright completes the portrait:

A slight figure of a man, wise and thoughtful beyond
his fellows or his years, with a face already show­
ing marks of doubtful health, but ever ready to break
out into a bright, slightly sarcastic smile - even
cheerful laughter; his conversation - always original
and racy, brilliant and paradoxical, sometimes a little
perverse; very thoughtful and full of generalisation,
which not unfrequently wanted a little proving, but
with a background of very sterling seriousness.\textsuperscript{72}

Much of his time at Oxford he spent moving within a small
but surprisingly homogeneous circle. Of seventeen friends
he or others mention in the \textit{Memorials}, seven, in addition
to himself, were the sons of Anglican clergymen, the others,
with two exceptions being the sons of merchants or

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Memorials} p.167.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid pp.156-7.
professional men.\textsuperscript{73} Nine of them, were, like himself, old Rugby boys, while a tenth had been one of the first pupils of Marlborough, a school modelled closely on Rugby. All these men, whether they had actually been taught by Arnold or not, were still largely ruled by the Dr.'s ideals and values. And Pearson, despite his gentle expulsion from Rugby, the disparaging remarks he made of the school later in his life, and all his irreverent banter as an undergraduate, was as much ruled by them as anybody. The Rugby influence met him wherever he turned. The two young dons with whom he was most intimate at Oxford - John Conington (later Professor of Latin) and Henry Smith (later Savilian Professor of

\begin{itemize}
\item Sons of Anglican clergymen: Pearson, John Conington, Arthur Butler, G.C. Brodrick, W.J. Stephens, H.N. Oxenham, J.H. Bridges, E.S. Beesly and W. Shirley. Butler's father was the sometime headmaster and Oxenham's the second master of Harrow.
\item Sons of prosperous merchants: G.J. Goschen, C.S. Parker, and Frederic Harrison.
\item Sons of doctors: Goldwin Smith and Frank Bright (the latter's father being the eminent physician who discovered the nature and causes of 'Bright's disease'.)
\item Sons of lawyers: H.J.S. Smith and W. Jex-Blake. M.E. Grant Duff's father was the Resident of Sattara in the East India Company and author of a History of the Mahrattas, Winstanley's was a landed proprietor, and Fremantle's the 1st Baron Cottesloe.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{73} Biographical information about J.H. Bridges is taken from the entry in Kunitz and Haycraft's British Authors of the Nineteenth Century, and about Stephens from Mennell's Dictionary of Australasian Biography, 1892. Information about the remaining men comes from the Dictionary of National Biography.
Geometry) had both been taught by Arnold and appear to have considered it one of their first duties to stimulate promising young men 'to work for the nobler aims of life'. In his memoir of Smith, written in 1888, Pearson recollected how both these men, though of the most opposite temperament threw themselves with such unaffected simplicity into our interests and occupations, that we all came to regard them as personal friends, and to talk as freely before them as before one another. ... That the intercourse was begun and carried on on their part from a conscientious desire - due partly to Arnold's teaching - to convey a serious interest into everyday life, I at least cannot doubt. As one who profited by the association let me record that meetings of this kind were not only the most pleasurable part of a chequered Oxford life to many of us, but unquestionably did more to stimulate thought and form character than the more formal influences of the chapel and the lecture-room.74

The earnest intentions of these young men were for a time embodied in a society equivalent to a German 'Tugend Bund' (literally 'virtue society') whose aims might have been drafted by Arnold himself. They commenced:

Our object is to impress ourselves more effectually with the duties entailed upon the educated classes by the present state of society in this country ... 75

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74 The Collected Mathematical Papers of Henry John Stephen Smith, M.A., F.R.S. ... Oxford, 1894, pp. xix-xx. It was, at this time, quite exceptional for dons to take such an interest in the affairs of undergraduates.

75 Memorials p. 311, note B.
But the Rugby-Evangelical influences to which these young men had mostly been subjected do not alone account for their unusual character. Temperamentally, and in some cases because of their very constitutions, they stood apart from the general undergraduate body. Even Goschen, destined to be Gladstone's Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the most 'successful' of them all in later life had been no 'Tom Brown' at Rugby and had had a difficult time in his early years.76 Goldwin Smith had deliberately abstained from games at Eton,77 and Conington had found the responsibilities of being a member of Arnold's august Sixth Form difficult to bear.78 Oxenham was 'tall, thin, dark-haired, dark-eyed, and with the mien and gait of the recluse',79 Grant Duff 'a man of almost dainty refinement both physically and morally', C.S. Parker one whose 'refinement of manner and

76 Lord Goschen and his Friends. Ed. Percy Colson, Hutchinson, 1949. 'How glad I am,' he wrote to his mother from the school, 'that I did not leave Rugby, but stood all the disagreeable worries, etc. which so long made me wretched enough. Last half I certainly was comfortable, but I could perceive that the elite hardly considered me as one of their number.' Quoted on p.14.

77 D.N.B. 1901-1911.


79 D.N.B.
accent militated against his gaining the ear of the house when he later, to the surprise of his friends, entered the Commons. Ill health or physical disability also helped to set these men apart. Pearson himself was 'slight' and already prone to chest and digestive illnesses. Conington was markedly short-sighted and at times hesitant in speech. Both Brodrick and Henry Smith had had to go abroad for their health before coming to Oxford, and Grant Duff 'suffered through life from indifferent health, and in particular from astigmatic vision to such an extent that it was extremely difficult for him to read or write for himself.' But perhaps the best evidence of the circle's non-conformity with the standards and customs of the 'world' was the proneness of its members either not to marry at all or to marry late in life. Thus W instanley, Conington, Oxenham, Henry Smith, Brodrick, C. S. Parker and Henry Boyd all died un-

80 D.N.B. 1901-1911.
81 Henry Smith's Memoir, p. xxii.
82 D.N.B. 1901-1911.
83 D.N.B.
84 D.N.B. 1901-1911.
married. The remainder of the group, with the exception of Goschen and Jex-Blake, all married late - Bright, Grant-Duff, Fremantle and Harrison in their thirties (Harrison at 39), and Pearson, Butler and Goldwin Smith at 42, 46 and 52 respectively. How far ill-health, over-rigorous upbringings, the comparatively substantial incomes from Oxford fellowships which had to be resigned on marriage, or a certain strain of ascetic mediaevalism in the High Church movement, operated to keep these men single it is impossible to determine, although one can say fairly safely that the combination of a heavily moral schooling with virtual seclusion from members of the opposite sex outside their families must have made it difficult for all of them to adjust themselves to the idea of marriage. Oxford in these days was an exclusively male society. 'Married Fellows', an eminent undergraduate of the day later observed drily, 'were as yet unknown; it had not yet become necessary to build whole suburbs of semi-detached villas to receive the feminine colonists of the future'. In some cases, including

85 Brodrick completed his reminiscence of Pearson in the Memorials with the words 'Though I was never very intimate with Pearson, I think we felt a certain bond of sympathy between us by virtue of our evangelical training in childhood'.

86 Lord Bowen in his memoir of Henry Smith, Spectator, Feb. 17 1883.
Pearson's, heterosexual emotions appear to have found an outlet in a strong attachment to a mother or sister, or to an older woman thought of as a 'sister'. Some idea of the intensity of Conington's feelings for his mother may be gauged from one of his last utterances, made as he lay dying: 'There was God, and me, and my mother, and I was her guardian angel'.

Henry Smith, for nearly all his life in Oxford, lived either with his mother or sister.

The attachment of mother and son to one another, [writes Pearson,] had been deeper than is common, and the course of their lives had drawn them nearer together, than can often be the case.

When, after his mother's death, Henry Smith's sister came to keep house for him during term time, he was, says Pearson, 'supplemented by one who was almost another self'.

Pearson, for his part, showed a singular affection for his Charlotte, 'his beloved "Carlotta"' travelling with her on the continent while an undergraduate in 1849, 1851, and 1853, and corresponding with her regularly throughout his life. He also, towards the end of his life, referred

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87 Henry Smith's memoir of Conington, op. cit., p.lxxi.
88 Biographical sketch of Smith, op. cit. p.xxiv.
89 Ibid p.xxiv.
90 Memorials p.298.
91 Ibid. These letters, which may have told more about Pearson than any others, were destroyed by Charlotte before her death.
to Mrs. Acland, wife of the Regius Professor Medicine at Oxford whose home he much frequented during his postgraduate bachelor days in England, as 'virtually my sister for twenty-six years'. \(^92\) It is significant in this context that he should have 'discovered' years before Matthew Arnold, the *Journal* of Eugénie de Guérin, a diary addressed by a talented Frenchwoman entirely to her brother Maurice, a consumptive of some literary genius, to her love for whom she brought, in Arnold's words, 'the devotedness of a woman, the intensity of a recluse, almost the solicitude of a mother'. \(^93\) Grant Duff reports that when Pearson returned from France after making this discovery he was quite 'possessed' by the book, and able to talk of 'little else'. \(^94\)

There were, needless to say, strong negative as well as positive influences in this Rugby-Oxford milieu through

\(^92\) *Memorials* p. 224. Quoted, without reference by Stebbing.

\(^93\) Essay on 'Eugénie de Guérin' in *Essays Literary and Critical*. (Everyman ed.) p. 80. Arnold writes of Pearson's 'discovery' in the following words: 'Parts of Mdlle. de Guerin's journal were several years ago printed for private circulation, and a writer in the *National Review* [Pearson] had the good fortune to fall in with them. The bees of our English criticism do not often roam so far afield for their honey, and this critic deserves thanks for having flitted in his quest of blossom to foreign parts, and for having settled upon a beautiful flower found there!'. (p. 79.)

\(^94\) *Memorials* p. 176.
which Pearson passed. Conington might be described by Nettleship as a man of 'invincible goodness'\textsuperscript{95} and it might be said of Henry Smith that 'his popularity was such that he had no personal enemies',\textsuperscript{96} but at the same time these men avoided the sort of reforming activity which would involve them in any soiling of the hands. Smith, according to Pearson, 'had a feminine instinct for avoiding whatever would give pain'. Conington, according to Smith, was prevented by a certain 'timidity' from tackling 'rough and ready pieces of work'. Conington did become enthusiastic about Christian Socialism in 1848 but seems to have known the working classes only through his 'scout' and to have done little more than send some heavy verses to \textit{Politics for the People}\textsuperscript{97} and for a time wear strangely cut trousers made by a local co-operative tailoring organization. The point was that the acute sense of duty which these Oxford liberals all possessed could easily be negativized by their very unworldliness and scrupulosity. It was symptomatic that the 'Tugend Bund' to which Pearson belonged and which sought to turn

\textsuperscript{95} D.N.B.
\textsuperscript{96} Pearson in \textit{Memorials} p.108.
... to good account much of that irresolute energy, and sincere though indefinite desire to do good, which no one acquainted with the Universities can fail to recognise as characteristic of many of our contemporaries there. Should have 'died noiselessly before ... any of the members could boast of being actively at work in any way'.

At the same time the values which Arnold had inculcated never let these men rest. They were sensitive, imaginative men, and when they attempted to follow Arnold's dictum and make 'the discharge of every duty, however secular, ... a direct religious service', they ran a real danger of breaking down under the strain. A friend called Winstanley, who became a positivist under the influence of Richard Congreve, tutor of Wadham, actually took his own life.

Poor Winstanley, [wrote Pearson,] whom I had known from when he was a boy of 12 years at Rugby, where he and I were the youngest and first in our class, unfortunately fell under the influence of Positivism, and was stimulated to think beyond his physical powers. Finally he drowned himself in a fit of despondency, occasioned, I believe, by his appointment as High Sheriff of Leicestershire.

Conington, between his appointment to the new chair of

98 Memorials p.311 note B.
99 Ibid p.74.
100 Henry Smith's memoir of Conington, p.xxxii.
101 Memorials p.73.
Latin at Oxford in 1854 and the actual assumption of his duties, was thrown into a most profound depression by 'a sense of the reality of eternal things being instantaneously borne in upon him' giving him an 'overwhelming consciousness of the terrors of the unseen world'.

He was able to resolve the crisis only by returning to the faith of his childhood and never departing from it. Another friend, H.N. Oxenham, acting from the same motives which had prompted Pearson to advocate Christian Socialism whatever the cost, had the temerity to move in the Union that 'the Company of Jesus had deserved well of the Church and of mankind'. According to Morrah his career was 'pretty well broken' by this single speech. Although the Union subsequently elected him president,

one college after another refused him a fellowship, up to the number, possibly, of ten. 'It was pathetic to the last to see how he clung to Oxford, and would go there on a few days' visit to men far his juniors as his contemporaries disappeared'.

Having taken Anglican orders he entered the Roman Catholic Church but scrupled to take priest's orders, studied in

102 Henry Smith's memoir, p.
103 Morrah, p.118.
Germany under Dr. Dollinger, became an ardent ultramontanist and wrote many articles for the Saturday Review in support of his views.\textsuperscript{104} He was a characteristic member of Pearson's circle, 'anything but worldly-wise' his 'torrents of talk ... proof of a mind quivering with mental energy',\textsuperscript{105} never able to settle comfortably into any niche.

Inevitably, emerging from such a milieu Pearson had difficulty in deciding on a career.

I had scruples about taking Orders, and even more decided doubts - which I have never ceased to entertain - as to the morality of the legal profession ... I had no interest to help me into the English Civil Service, and no wish to remain in Oxford as a college lecturer or tutor.\textsuperscript{106}

A solution to the problem was to follow his uncle Babington - and incidentally his grandfather Pearson - and study medicine. In this way moral dilemmas could be sidestepped and his 'intellectual hunger for facts' after years of training on the 'dry husks of scholastic logic and metaphysics' assuaged. Consequently, having taken a Classical First in the Michaelmas term of 1852, he filled in the next two terms

\textsuperscript{104} D.N.B.
\textsuperscript{105} Morrah, p.118.
\textsuperscript{106} Memorials pp.76-7.
(until he should be able to gain entrance to a hospital) by 'coaching three or four pupils and studying anatomy and physiology, with H.W. Acland's assistance, and chemistry under Neville Story Maskelyne'.

Dr. Acland, who now came to rank with Brewer, Maurice, George Babington, Conington and Henry Smith as one of his chief guides, was a Fellow of All Souls, Lee's Reader of Anatomy at Christ Church, Physician to the Radcliffe infirmary at Oxford, Radcliffe librarian, and soon to be (1858) Regius Professor of Medicine in Oxford. Like George Babington, who had advised him during his medical student days in London, and whom he greatly admired, he was a younger son of a landed gentleman closely connected with the Clapham Sect. He was 'by nature of an artistic, enthusiastic, and romantic temperament' and although a pioneer of modern medical and scientific studies in Oxford believed firmly that all those who undertook such studies should have

107 Memorials p.77.
108 D.N.B.
109 Sir Thomas Acland - a name 'often on men's lips as a type of an independent politician and a thorough gentleman'. (D.N.B. Supp. entry under H.W. Acland. See further references in E.M. Forster's Marianne Thornton, 1956.)
110 D.N.B. Supplement.
'an opportunity of gaining the wide culture for which the university has long been famed'.\textsuperscript{111} He himself was an exemplar of such culture. Ever since undergraduate days he had moved in artistic as well as scientific circles. When a gentleman-commoner at Christ Church he had befriended John Ruskin.

Fortunately for me, [recollected Ruskin,] beyond all words, fortunately - Henry Acland, by about a year and a half my senior, chose me; saw what helpless possibilities were in me, and took me affectionately in hand ... we both of us already lived in elements far external to the College Quadrangle. He told me of the Plains of Troy [which Acland had visited and sketched while recovering from illness]; a year or two afterwards I showed him, on his marriage journey, the path up the Montanvert;\textsuperscript{112}

Acland and Ruskin remained life-long friends. During the 1840's they shared an enthusiasm for early Italian art and in the 'fifties collaborated in promoting and designing the Oxford museum.\textsuperscript{113} In the summer of 1853, at the conclusion of Pearson's first Oxford studies in medicine, Acland spent some time in the Scottish Highlands with Ruskin and his wife and John and William Millais, and it was on this occasion,

\textsuperscript{111} D.N.B. Supplement.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Praeterita} I, pp.303-4.
\textsuperscript{113} See entries in the D.N.B. Supplement under both H.W. Acland (1815-1900) and John Ruskin (1819-1900). Both men made prominent contributions to the 1859 publication *The Oxford Museum*. 
and at Acland's suggestion, that Millais' celebrated portrait of Ruskin was commenced.

Under Acland's direction Pearson had the pleasantest and most gentlemanly of introductions to the study of medicine. He continued to speak in the Union, he joined and contributed papers to a select little Essay Society, generally on 'subjects connected with art', he coached his pupils, and began to learn the first principles of his main study. There was only one other student - a man named Fox, later a well-known Bristol physician - and the two appear to have been left a good deal to their own devices.

Acland turned us loose into the Christ Church Museum, with directions to study the preparations, and with a cupboard full of unarticulated human bones to assist us in practical anatomy ... Our chemical teaching was of the same sort. Maskelyne liked talking to us, and encouraged us to spend long hours in the laboratory discussing the first principles of chemistry, and now and again took us through an instructive course of analysis.

Thus passed the Lent and Summer terms of 1853, a period which Pearson described as 'The pleasantest part of my University life'. It drew to a close with a visit to

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114 Memorials p.162, Fremantle's reminiscence.
115 Ibid p.77.
116 Ibid p.72.
Germany in the long vacation of 1853, in the company first of Goschen and Franck Bright then of his sister Charlotte. After this he took lodgings with Fox in Edinburgh to prepare for the lectures of Sir John Goodsir, the Professor of Anatomy.

While waiting for Goodsir to turn up he wrote a light-hearted letter to Acland which suggests that he was still looking on the study of medicine more as a rounding-out of his general education than the preparation for a life's work.

16, Chapel St.,
Edinburgh.
[c. Oct. 1853]

My dear Dr. Acland,

I am quite ashamed of myself for not having written before to thank you for your speedy answer to my letter, & especially to ask you after your leg and how you have contrived to injure it I fear from your account considerably. I know of course next to nothing about the muscle in question but Valentin says it is strong enough (in an experiment he made) to support a weight of 320 lbs or thereabouts & I conclude therefore you must have met with some tolerably severe accident. Pray tell me how you are going on when you next write. As for advice I can only recommend you to keep it in the position at present easiest & most conducive to future recovery which I am sure is a very professional kind of counsel & contains very nearly as much as if I had graduated ...

I called on Professor Goodsir to-day but he was on the Continent & as far as I could understand the broad Scotch of his servant, she has no very clear idea when he is to return. We think of beginning some chemical work on Monday in the laboratory of a certain Dr. Wilson who is to take us
through Inorganic Chemistry before Session commences. Of course this will be very superficial but I hope we shall manage to pick up something by the way. I wish you would advise us as to our reading: we have tried our hand at Owen, but for want of your Museum & a little more knowledge did not get on very satisfactorily ... Pray remember me to Mrs. Acland, & believe me to remain my dear Dr. Acland, ever yours most sincerely Chas. H. Pearson.

When they learnt that Goodsir would be unable to lecture both men repaired to London to attend the anatomy lectures at St. George's Hospital. Like Acland before them they appear to have found their initiation by no means pleasant, not so much because of the work itself, as the circumstances under which it had to be done. A further annoyance was the difficulty of obtaining any extensive practical experience. However Dr. Babington appears to have helped the young men find their bearings as effectively as he had once helped Acland, and at the commencement of 1854 Pearson was able to send a more reassuring account of progress back to Oxford.

117 Bodleian, M.S. Acland d.79. The letter is undated.

118 Ten years before, Acland, just down from Christ Church, had written disgustedly to his father 'Everything wears the air of low men, of low habits, such as I have never hitherto come in contact with'. Again he wrote in his diary: 'I am greatly horrified with the want of order and plans - the want of control and authority exercised among us students. The teachers truckle to us, joke; ...' Quoted Atlay, p.82.
30 Upper Seymour Street,
Jan. 2nd 1854.

My dear Dr. Acland,

I write partly to have the pleasure of wishing you and Mrs. Acland many happy returns of the New Year. And partly because I feel ashamed of my own indolence in not having written three weeks ago to recall a charge which I then most innocently though erroneously brought against my prospective fate at St. George's. In fact an hour after I had posted my last letter to you Mr. Hewett gave Fox & me the offer of a baby to dissect which of course we gladly accepted & are beginning dimly to believe that at some future period we may know something of anatomy. Further, you will be glad to hear that thanks to the kindness of my Uncle & Mr. Hewett we are no longer unnecessarily disgusted by the Physiological lectures.

During the last week Fox has been at home & I, I regret to say, have been quite idle professionally, with the exception of a visit to St. Bartholomews in company with one of the Physicians there. ... 119

Medicine, however, was far from being Pearson's only interest at this time, and he goes on to tell how he had recently gone along to see 'an address from the working classes' presented to his old teacher F.D. Maurice in relation to his late expulsion from King's College for holding unorthodox religious beliefs. His account reveals how thoroughly class-bound his outlook really was. He means well, but cannot help condescending.

119 Bodleian, M.S. Acland d.79.
He [Maurice] made a capital answer, reproving the men for some personal allusions which they had introduced; exhorting them to educate themselves & cultivate a more friendly feeling towards the upper classes, & disclaiming all that was personal to himself except so far as he represented a principle & a cause; the cause being that of the Church of England, whose idea, he said, he had been labouring to carry out in all that he had done. The men seemed an intelligent respectable lot, worthy of such a teacher & to have the truth spoken to them ... 120

It was at this time, too, that he had published an ardently patriotic poem on the Crimean War entitled 'East and West'.

He was now, and always remained, a Francophile, and the alliance of England with her traditional enemy gave him occasion for a rousing poetic flourish.

France and England bring their legions from wild snow and torrid regions,
Blotting out in better memories Fontenoy and Waterloo;
Great in commerce, great in science, greater in the stern reliance
Which hath made those ancient foemen stand like brothers, firm and true.
Breasting side by side the grisly fight,
Charging side by side the horrible height;
Our great past refuted and undone
By that nobler war which makes us one. 121

Of course he knew no more about charging horrible heights than the actual life of the 'labouring masses' to whom he

120 Bodleian, M. S. Acland, d. 79, Jan. 2, 1854.
121 Memorials p. 175. (Quoted by Grant Duff.)
referred in some of his Oxford speeches, and he goes on to write some fulsome lines about mothers acquiescing in the sacrifice of their sons to preserve national honour. His attitude to war and the cause of Empire always did have a somewhat hectic quality about it, partly perhaps because he himself had so unwarlike a constitution, and wished in some way to compensate for the fact. As late as 1885 he had some verses published in a leading Melbourne newspaper celebrating the despatch of a colonial contingent to the Sudan, and was often to express impatience with what he considered Gladstone's imperial apathy.

With Fox's return, the two men appear to have settled down to four months steady dissecting (which Pearson claimed he came to like) and to the study of chemistry under Hofmann and Crookes in the London School of Mines. This steady application, however, was not destined to last. In Easter of 1854, having characteristically withdrawn his application for an All Souls' fellowship on the ground that he was unable to conform to certain statutes which no fellow of All Souls ever conformed to, he succeeded in being elected to an Oriel fellowship. This meant relinquishing anatomy for the time being in order to keep his year's compulsory residence. But
financially it was well worth it as in the following year he was made a Perpetual Fellow which brought him in an average income approaching £300 p.a. for the remainder of his bachelor days, which were many. During his first term in residence he served as Acland's clinical clerk at the Radcliffe Infirmary and thus gained a little more medical experience. Ill health, however, had already begun to dog him before he returned to Oxford.

I remember [writes Fremantle of a visit to Pearson and Fox] a delightful evening spent in their company at their lodgings in Edgware Road, when, after the manner of young men, we ventilated every subject in heaven and earth. But the seeds of the illness from which he suffered more or less throughout his life were beginning to show themselves. One of our friends who met him about that time wrote to me that he feared his appearance denoted 'the beginning of the end'.

In the long vacation of 1654 Pearson went to Ireland to join Arthur Butler who had a few pupils with him on a reading party and there on the far west coast caught a grave pleurisy.

122 In letters of Sept. 9 and 18, 1957, the present Treasurer of Oriel, Brigadier R.E. Bagnall-Wild, writes: 'A "perpetual" fellowship was I gather interpreted as being for life, or until such time as continued absence (with or without stipend) or marriage, made it impossible for the Fellow to carry out his duties as a Fellow ... ' 'The amount of his stipend was not fixed, but he drew a share of the annual dividend, which in 1865, a fairly typical year, was £253.4.7½; and a share of fines which in the same year was £39.0.9½.'

123 Memorials pp. 163-4.
which very nearly resulted in his death. From Arthur Butler's account it caused him to revert to the fatalistic mood which had so tried his parents at the end of his King's College career after his first pleurisy attack.

... his patience was indomitable and his consideration for others quite exceptional; but I thought at the time that his recovery was retarded by his disposition to take gloomy views of his condition, and for some time to abandon needlessly every hope of recovery. The circumstances, however, were very trying: they were of a kind to excuse any amount of depression and despondency. 124

For the remaining half of the year he convalesced at home, then returned to Oxford for the Lent term of 1855 in order to complete his year's residence.

It must have been a gloomy period for him, the only relief being that for the moment his physical weakness following an almost miraculous escape from death protected him from the demands of his evangelical conscience and dulled any ambition to hold a prominent place in public life which his successes in the Oxford Union might have led him to

Memorials p. 148. Butler's daughter, Miss Ruth Butler writes (13 Sept. 1958) 'I have found the actual diary in which my father recorded Pearson's illness in Galway. It is rather fuller than the account which he wrote in Stebbing's Life, but differs in no way from that, - except that my father records his own great anxiety and distress during the long wait for the doctor'.

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entertain. When at the end of his period of compulsory residence in Oxford three doctors advised him that he would never have the strength to 'bear the fatigues and exposure of a medical life',\textsuperscript{125} the last responsibility seemed to be taken from him. He now had an assured income of nearly £300 p.a. from his fellowship - enough to live on in moderate comfort. All he needed, for the time being at least, was a congenial occupation which would not unduly tax his powers. By good fortune a lectureship in English Language and Literature at King's College was then being advertised. He applied and 'easily got it (in Easter, 1855) as the pay was extremely small'.\textsuperscript{126} A short while afterwards he was promoted to the Professorship of Modern History - a post which involved giving lectures 'eight hours a week for thirty weeks of the year', and which brought him a salary of £200 p.a.

During the months of his slow recovery at Oxford, Pearson had been a frequent visitor at the house of his former medical teacher, Dr. Acland. Indeed the Aclands had offered to take him into their house to nurse him back to health,\textsuperscript{125} Memori als p.85.\textsuperscript{126} Ibid p.85.
and although he had refused the offer, the fact that it was made indicates how much a member of the family he had come to be. It was at this time that he first came to know Mrs. Acland well. She was the daughter of the Evangelical banker William Cotton, a munificent builder of London churches, and was quite as cultivated a person, in her own way, as her husband.

I am sure many who knew her for years never dreamed how rare and how severely trained her intellectual powers were. She could follow Dante's sonnets by ear, translating them as they were read out to her; knew some Greek, and was thoroughly at home in the last results of metaphysical thought or political economy; a dangerous disputer if she was roused to controversy; an admirable counsellor if the aid of her clear judgment was invoked.127

She it was whom he called 'virtually my sister for twenty-six years', and it is more than likely that she, more than anyone else, gave him his life-long interest in the higher education of women. For him, now and during the years to come, the rambling old Acland house in Broad Street with its panelled walls and profusion of books, paintings and statuettes, was home in Oxford.128 Even when, some twenty-

127 Memorials p.84.
five years after the intimacy first began, he returned to Oxford during a short visit to England from Australia it was with Dr. Acland, now widowed, that he and his wife stayed. On that occasion Mrs. Pearson noted that he 'seemed supremely happy to be once again with his old friend'.

With Dr. and Mrs. Acland, who had both been brought up in the evangelical tradition and yet were eager to comprehend and apply the recent advances of scientific knowledge, Pearson could freely discuss most subjects, from tactics in University politics to fundamental questions of belief. In 1855, of course, his most immediate problem was his future career. He had, for the moment, a niche at King's College, but this need not be permanent. Should he attempt to follow Goschen and strive to make a name and a fortune for himself, or Brewer and devote himself to educational work in the poorest London districts without asking for reward, or Henry Smith and live out a quiet scholarly life in an Oxford college? Or was there another solution? Through much of his first year at King's College the soul-searching went on, the whole problem naturally, from his up-bringing, being thought out in religious terms. In the latter part of the

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129 Memorials p.218.
year, probably in September, he alluded to this inner debate in a letter to Dr. Acland.

I suppose it is a consequence of that theory of Christianity, which I spoke to you about & which reduces its fundamental ideas to those of self-perfection & self-sacrifice, that I cannot give the advantage ... to the Conventual system. A withdrawal from all share in the sorrows & experiences of everyday life seems to me, to say the least, a desertion of the spot which the Cross most immediately shadows. It is perhaps unfair to compare where I know only a portion of the circumstances. Yet I think, what I have said, applies to any very great development of the ascetic & conventual system. And I have wished to communicate this to you as one result of much that was fermenting within me during my stay at Bonn. But still more, as I dare say you have guessed, I have wished to touch upon this topic, because I have feared you may have thought me to a certain extent unconscious of or indifferent to your family affliction. My own nature always leads me to shrink from any manifestation of sympathy during the first experience of a sorrow. I have a kind of feeling that the mind must fight out its intellectual perplexities & the heart know its own bitterness in secret. But I think I can assure you that often when my manner may have given least trace of it I really perceived & shared the grief against which you & Mrs. Acland were struggling. ... 130

Yet the idea this letter gives of a thoroughly introverted, unworldly young man, absorbed in self-perfection, is only half the truth. Another letter, written about this time to Mrs. Acland criticising a speech which her husband

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130 Bodleian, M.S. Acland, d.79, undated fragment, probably written, from internal evidence, in September, 1855. (Pearson refers to Jowett having 'just been made Greek Professor.')
proposed to give to the Ashmolean Society, provides another, and more extensive insight.

During the months that Pearson had been learning the principles of medicine from Dr. Acland the two men must have spent much time discussing how to reconcile their similar inherited religious beliefs with recent scientific discoveries. Just a few months before Pearson took up his medical studies Acland had written to his great friend Ruskin on the same problem and Ruskin had written back:

You speak of the flimsiness of your own faith. Mine, which was never strong is being beaten into mere gold leaf ... . If only the Geologists would let me alone, I could do very well, but those dreadful hammers! I hear the clink of them at the end of every cadence of the Bible verses ... 131

From his position in the University Acland was most concerned to be able to convince both himself and others that scientific studies need not undermine religion. So was Pearson, and he indicates in his letter how he personally thought a reconciliation could be made - not through agnosticism, for he never claimed that God was unknowable - but by holding in abeyance the formulation of a logically consistent creed comprehending all phenomena, and relying

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131 Complete Works, xxxvi, p.115.
rather on intuition to apprehend God and His moral and spiritual intentions for man. Yet while he knows that Acland holds much the same view his shrewd political sense tells him that it would not be expedient to elaborate it before an unsympathetic middle-aged audience. Here, more than anywhere else in these early years, can the practical politician of the 1870's and 80's be found in embryo - realistic, self-confident, and, what was to aggravate his conservative opponents more than anything, unmistakably, if ever so slightly, patronising towards those who did not share his views.

Dr. Acland asked me to speak to you on the subject of the address he proposes to deliver to the Ashmolean Society. I believe I shared his general idea on the subject but criticised the manner in which he proposed to express it. Some of my objections related merely to his style which I thought somewhat discursive & rhetorical: I fancied that problems rather than results ought to be submitted on such a matter to a soi-disant scientific society. What I said besides I will endeavour to put into writing: you will see that they are comments rather than objections. And I had better begin by stating what I took to be the object of the Essay in a brief analysis.

'A great & once dreaded change has been wrought in Oxford - scientific training is definitely a part of our course. What will be the moral effect of this on the students? They cannot fail to be struck by the immensity of God's works: between scientific results & the received systems of theology. Any-how we must work on honestly & leave the result to a Higher Power.'
Now I suppose that no member of the Ashmolean would recommend a scientific training if he thought it irreligous in its tendency. But where to Dr. Acland religion & Christianity are identical there are many who perhaps unconsciously reason otherwise. To them belief in a Divine Providence scarcely thought of as a Personal Agency; admiration and study of his works: a moral life & kindly nature make up the sum of religion. Moliere's hero 'whose religion is very much like arithmetic' is scarcely an exaggerated type of inferior minds of this order: their religion takes the form of spiritualising the ordinary operations of the intellect. And no doubt even this stage is an advance on the scepticism of the last century & is as it were a step of the altar. But some confusion must result if men whose conceptions of Christianity are thus narrow hear it spoken of as difficultly or not at present reconcileable with science: they will be either perplexed or angry.

But will it benefit them that their own position should be made clear to them? Such an assembly in such a place is perhaps the last to need it. The scientific man approaching Christianity must work out the conviction for himself or gather it from the experience of others, that truths are not affected by our inability to understand or reconcile them. The young beginner approaching science may be grateful for the warning voice which has armed him with this lesson. But men of middle life, who have not practically thought out this conclusion, will not understand it. The danger is, that they will look on such a statement as the confession of weakness of one who is a Christian by temperament, & seeks therefore to hold the two [i.e. religion and science] apart. For where the intellect predominates it assimilates the moral sentiment & spiritual nature to the conclusions of a purely logical & therefore insufficient system. Such natures have no consciousness of weakness or insufficiency.

A religious address of the kind Dr. Acland proposes would I think therefore be better fitted to his Christ Church audience who are old enough to doubt, & who are not yet philosophers. If he wished to speak on a cognate subject to the Ashmoleans he will, I think, find it necessary to define very exactly what he means by religion. And probably if he attempts this he will end by perceiving that the subject is too extensive to be treated of even synoptically.
in a discourse. And he will shrink from analysing those convictions which are & must be rather the result of a life than of an argument. If religion could be demonstrated, I suppose we should long ago have taught it as we do Euclid. But I confess I never met with any arguments for it that would hold water, except itself; the most we can do is to refute the cavils of its opponents & there I have no fear that a God-fearing generation will ever be at a loss.

I see that I have expressed myself crudely & almost inconsecutively: this you must excuse. I think you will make out my drift & agree with me in part at least. Of course I have not meant to argue against the giving a religious tone to the address or alluding incidentally to some of these questions. But I doubt the expediency of opening a difficult subject unless it can be thoroughly examined ... 132

While, however, Pearson was ready to give sound tactical advice he was not a very active campaigner during his King's College years for the liberal reforms which he supported. In a speech made many years later, he was reported as saying that 'more or less in a quiet way [italics mine] he had joined in every liberal movement in England, down to the establishment of the national league for the promotion of secular education'.133 The qualification was certainly necessary. He did actually write an open Letter to the Provost of Oriel College on a scheme for making Oxford more

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132 Bodleian, M.S. Acland, d.79, Pearson to Mrs. Acland, Oct. 26 (No year given, but mostly likely 1856.)

133 Argus (Melbourne) May 29, 1877, 7.
accessible to medical students in 1856, but the closest he seems to have come to actual political activity was the collection, with another liberal, of some 800 'very respectable' signatures for a petition to Lord Palmerston in July 1861 in connection with the 'Turnbull Case' - Turnbull being a zealous Roman Catholic who had been caused to relinquish his post in the Records Office on the ground that he might be tempted to alter documents hostile to his own religious views. This activity, however, simply involved the signing of an advertisement in the *Saturday Review* asking for signatures and the eventual presentation of the petition in company with James Martineau, Froude, E.H. Plumtre, and Professor Brewer.

During his King's College period, 1855-64, Pearson was the essence of the cultivated, academic English liberal. He did not plot and plan in cabals and stand on public platform, or go round like F.D. Maurice in 1848 placarding walls. He had no contact with and little understanding of the 'masses'. The soul-searching revealed in the 1855 letter to

134 Unfortunately no trace of this letter, listed in the Oriel records of Pearson's 'works', can be found.

135 On the last page of the issue for Feb. 16, 1861. Pearson, it might be added, did not take this step on his own initiative, but at the request of Brewer. *Memorials* p.92.
Acland seems to have become less urgent, and the emphasis to have been placed, as time went on, more on 'self-perfection' than 'self-sacrifice'. By 1858 he was, from his own recollection, 'more influenced by Goethe's views of culture than by any care to make a fortune or a name'. Almost insensibly the evangelical emphasis on spiritual self-perfection had been transmuted into a desire for cultural self-perfection. Much the same sort of thing had happened in Acland's case, and the example of the older man was a potent one. One can find evidence of it taking effect in a letter from Pearson written early in 1857. In the previous Autumn Acland had assured the Dean of Christ Church, Liddell, that nothing but a winter in Madeira would save his life, and to ensure that his charge got there safely he had accompanied him all the way. On his homeward journey he had been shipwrecked on the Dorset coast. Of the whole expedition, which resulted amongst other things in a splendid Spanish tunny fish finding its way, via the shipwreck, into an Oxford Museum display case, suitably inscribed in Latin, 136 __Memorials p.105.__
Pearson remarked:

An ordinary physician would as soon think of consulting Don Quixote for a sovereign specific for wounds as of deserting his ordinary practice to eat green peas in Madeira, and study a shipwreck on the southern coast. Well, I suppose it is no use reproaching you, as you will go on to the end of time cultivating the heart and brain in your own most expensive fashion. ... I had better leave off, for I am so divided between satisfaction at your safe return, amusement at your way of effecting it, and a sort of irrational respect for the motives which prompted your expedition, that I am quite unable to express any clear meaning. 137

Despite the apparent detachment Pearson was soon, if not already, so persuaded by this irrational respect as to positively out-Acland Acland in the cultivation of heart and brain. Apart from teaching history conscientiously—seeming to himself, at least at the beginning, 'little more than a machine taking in facts or fictions & giving them out again as lectures' 138—he wrote quite a deal for literary journals and the press, enjoyed the society of his many bachelor friends from old Oxford days, paid regular visits to Lord Macaulay (to whom he had been introduced by his uncle Babington) frequented art galleries, wrote some poetry, and

137 Quoted Atlay pp. 236-7.
138 Bodleian, M.S. Acland d.79, letter to Mrs. Acland, Oct. 26, (1856?).
occasionally assisted liberal causes with his pen - always taking care, with Goethe's precepts in mind, not to spoil the balance by too whole-hearted a concentration on one thing, always exploiting the cultural possibilities of the moment.139

Every year he journeyed abroad. In 1856 he went to Alençon in Normandy staying there with a Huguenot family and learning the language. In 1857 he stayed with a banker's family in Blois. In 1858 he visited Russia with an old Exeter college contemporary, Henry Boyd, and travelled by steamer down the Volga to Kazan, five hundred miles east of Moscow. In 1859 he visited Hungary and Servia, in 1860 the south of Ireland, in '61 Florence, in '62 Norway ('Boyd accompanying me part of the time and sketching, while I translated for him as I had done in Russia') in '64 Poland, where he made a survey of the country at the height of its insurrection against Russia. Much of his writing for such

139 Goethe to Eckermann. 'Beware of attempting a large work. It is exactly that which injures our best minds, even those distinguished by the finest talents, and the most earnest efforts. I have suffered from this cause, and know how much it has injured me.' Quoted by Trevelyan in his Life and Letters of Macaulay ii p. 363 apropos the 'Lays of Ancient Rome'.
journals as the *Saturday Review*, the *Continental Review*, the *Spectator*, the *National Review*, the last of which he edited jointly with Walter Bagehot from July 1862 - July 1863, was the fruit of his travels and his knowledge of modern languages. Thus the editor of the *Saturday Review* generally published any literary articles Pearson proposed and usually sent him 'any books that came to him in the less familiar modern languages - Swedish, Portuguese, or Spanish - and a certain proportion of English works on history'.

His best year as a man of letters was 1861 during which his *Handbook of English History during the Early and Middle Ages* came out and the *Spectator* published an article by him every week (mostly book reviews).

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140. A weekly founded in 1856 to replace the Peelist *Morning Chronicle*. Pearson, together with many other Oxford contemporaries, contributed in the 1850's. He finally severed his connection with the paper after it had suppressed support of Jowett and the other contributors to *Essays and Reviews*. (Memorials pp. 88-9.)

141. A short-lived paper 'partly established by foreign Liberals who wished to see their views adequately represented in England'. Pearson contributed a series of letters on Russia in 1858, later published separately as *Russia, by a Recent Traveller*.

142. In addition to the weekly articles in 1861 Pearson also contributed in 1863 a lengthy eye-witness account of the Polish insurrection against Russia which was widely acclaimed in France as well as England.

143. A liberal journal, founded by James Martineau and a few of his friends.

144. Memorials p. 88.
He was never obliged to move much out of the circle of his friends. In London, a good proportion of his literary associates were old King's College or Oxford contemporaries - including FitzJames Stephen, Brodrick, Grant Duff, Cunningham, Goschen, Goldwin Smith - while at Oxford he could always be sure of good company. Events like those recorded by Mrs. Walter Bagehot in May 1863 must often have been repeated.

Walter and I went to Oxford - dined with Mr. Pearson in the Fellow's common room at Oriel College, and met the Master of Lincoln and Mrs. Pattison, Mr. Henry and Miss Smith, Mr. Grote, Mr. Hutton and Dr. Acland.

24th. - Walter breakfasted at Oriel with Mr. Pearson the Smiths etc. After service Mr. Pearson took us and Mr. Hutton to the Museum, Exeter Chapel, and Balliol, where we lunched with Dr. Jowett. Walter dined in Balliol Hall and I with Miss Smith, where the gentlemen joined us.145

When Pearson travelled abroad he was either accompanied by a friend, went to stay with friends, or took letters of introduction to people who would be sure to make him at home. His path was made so easy.

145 Quoted from Mrs. Bagehot's diary in vol. X of The Works and Life of Walter Bagehot, by Mrs. Russell Barrington, pp. 365-6. 'Mr. Grote' is presumably George Grote the historian of Greece, and 'Mr. Hutton' R.H. Hutton, editor of the Spectator.
I was sorry to leave England without catching sight of you, [he wrote to Acland in the summer of 1856,] but my chance of seeing you was uncertain & I began to find that I wanted change of air so I crossed the Channel with the determination to settle myself in some French family that I might pick up the language for conversational purposes. Thanks to a letter of introduction ... I have been fortunate enough to get into a very pleasant family; that of Pastor Audebez.146

He enjoyed his travels, observing everything with an urbane, often gently--amused tolerance.

I find the family a very pleasant one, [he wrote while staying with Pastor Audebez,] simple & genial & rather bitten with the Anglo-mania; also possessed with a great dread of Catholicism & Puseyism. Indeed the Pastor is a dissenter from the Established Protestantism of France & has been slightly persecuted; and all his friends in England are either ultra-Evangelicals or Dissenters. He gave us a prayer this morning for the conversion of 'Pagans, Papists & Turks', & has set me to translate the Prize Essay of the Evang. Alliance with the hope, I more than suspect, of correcting my liberalism. However these little extravagances do not prevent him from being a sensible kind-hearted & good man, with a practice considerably more liberal than his principles ... 147

While in Paris he had an introduction to M. Nisard, a member of the Academy.

I was amused to find him an ultra-conservative in educational matters. He harangued me for an hour on the benefits of a sound classical education; & declared that all science was dying out in France in consequence

146 Bodleian, M.S. Acland d.79, undated letter from Alençon (presumed written in the summer vacation, 1856).

147 Bodleian, M.S. Acland d.79, letter from Alençon (1856).
of the inability of the students to write Latin verse. Fortunately my profession of faith did not exclude me from his good offices; & I have seldom made a more pleasant acquaintance than that of his family ...

When he went to St. Petersburg he took letters of introduction to several mercantile houses, and one to Professor Kaveline, a gentleman of charming manners, who gave me the first glimpse of the new spirit that had awakened in Russia.

It was always the same. His wit and charm as a conversationalist, his comfortable means, and his cosmopolitan connections gave him an open passport into cultivated society wherever he went.

Some idea of his outlook after seven or eight years of this life can be gathered from two articles he wrote for the Spectator in the years 1862-3, the first a review of the newly published Les Misérables of Victor Hugo, the second an 8,000 word 'Special supplement' in the Spectator of Sept. 12, 1863 on 'The Insurrection in Poland'. In his

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148 Bodleian, M.S. Acland d.79, letter from Alençon, (1856).
149 Memorials p.99.
review of *Les Misérables*¹⁵⁰ he is quite out of sympathy with Hugo's spirit of romantic rebellion against the tyranny of 'laws and manners ... creating artificial hells in the midst of civilization'. He concedes the 'nameless charm' of Hugo's style and the 'exquisite finish of detail' in his descriptive passages, but writes with the cold reason of a strict philosophical radical of his ideas.

¹⁵⁰ There is some confusion about the authorship of this review of the first part of *Les Misérables* in the *Spectator* of April 12, 1862. Pearson, in his autobiography, after referring to the fact that his poetic contributions to the *Spectator* in 1862 were rather outshone by Swinburne's, continues 'I came more successfully into competition with Swinburne as a reviewer of Victor Hugo. I took the first part of *Les Misérables*, he the second. My praise was much more jealously measured out; but Victor Hugo himself preferred my article, ascertained from Louis Blanc that I was the author, and wrote to thank me for it'. (p.94).

(Italics mine)

In the *Spectator* for 1862 there are four separate articles on the five parts of *Les Misérables* - each part presumably being reviewed as it was published, parts two and three being combined. The confusion arises because all four articles, plus an additional article on 'Victor Hugo's Philosophy' are included by Sir Edmund Gosse in his *Collected Works* of Swinburne (vol.III), 1926. One can only assume that Gosse, who does not cite the first publications of Swinburne's reviews, has made an oversight. The review of Part I entitled 'Victor Hugo's New Novel' certainly seems distinct from the later ones stylistically.
Allowing that Jean Valjean was punished beyond his due, and so brutalised by punishment, we may yet fairly say that the era of Draconian legislation is past, and that, after all, we must in this world look chiefly to acts, and I (sic) leave the question of intention to heaven. The true preventive for all crimes that arise from necessity is the simple expedient of an efficient poor law, which M. Victor Hugo, like most Frenchmen not men of science, would probably regard with horror. For the man who, having the workhouse at hand, prefers stealing to breaking stones and a temporary separation from his family, we confess we have little pity.

It is all, for Pearson, so cut-and-dried, so 'simple'. Men must simply recognise their best interests and discipline themselves. He adopts a thoroughly Evangelical tone towards the close.

It is strange that an artist like M. Victor Hugo should believe that there is any fatality in men's manners which can overbear a resolute conception of morality. Prometheus never falter from his purpose though the vulture gnaws his liver, and the earth is heaving around him.

But perhaps the world is not composed of potential Prometheuses or even Pearsons. Behind the rhetorical conclusion lurks a characteristic query.

Is it reserved for our own century to proclaim that man, who seems to have conquered space, is yet powerless against his own appetites, and must bind himself that he may not rush upon the sword? If so, 'Christus nos liberavit', the text M. Victor Hugo mournfully quotes, has indeed lost its meaning, or has brought death into the world.
The rising of a people against foreign oppressors had long been a theme to engage Pearson's sympathies. Three months after he had entered King's College as a boy of sixteen he had won the Plumptre prize for verse with a poem in praise of all the acts and battles of liberation which had taken place along the banks of the Rhine. More recently, in 1860, his friend Fremantle had found him one morning ... in his lodgings in London surrounded with maps and books of statistics about Italy, to enable him to trace each step of Garibaldi's liberating expedition in Sicily and Naples, which he thought the grandest thing that had occurred in our lifetime.

Now he was to make his one and only direct observation of an insurrection in progress. There were few privations. His friend Grant Duff had provided him with a letter from the Foreign Office to the British consul in Warsaw, and another friend had provided him with Polish introductions. As on all his travels he hardly moved out of his own class. In Warsaw he 'spent a week very pleasantly in seeing Polish society, and listening to the Polish history of events'.

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152 Memorials p.164.

153 Ibid p.111.
When he travelled out into the country he discarded his British letter and took one from the insurgent government which guaranteed him a carriage and horses wherever he went. The closest he seems to have come to the Polish 'ranks' was to march for two miles alongside an insurgent division of some 1000 men. As a result he views the struggle only so far as it effects the gentry, with no more than occasional allusions to the peasantry and the middle classes such as:

Out of more than 11,000 conscripts taken in twenty-three years (1833-1856) from one district (Piotrkow), only 498 ever returned, and these mostly demoralized.

Household servants and shoe-makers are said to have furnished more recruits proportionately to the insurrection than any other class...

The Polish peasantry are below any nation of Western Europe.

The tenor of the article, and incidentally the paper's high regard for Pearson as an observer, can be gathered from the following editorial comment.

We publish to-day a full account of the present position of the Polish insurrection by an English traveller, whose name, - if we could give it without endangering the safety of his friends in Poland, - would be a sure

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154 Spectator, Sept. 12, 1863 p.2490.
155 Ibid p.2485.
156 Ibid p.2486 col. ii.
157 Ibid p.2485.
guarantee for the most rigid accuracy, and for the highest class of cultivated judgment...
A great aristocracy is not always a great blessing, and in past times it has not been so even for Poland. But England at least should feel some compunction in calmly permitting the only nation to be trampled out which can surpass, and probably far surpass us, in our greatest political advantage over other nations, — an aristocracy that is a genuine and organic part of the people, and so thoroughly penetrated by the popular spirit as to be willing to suffer, and, if necessary, perish in the cause of the millions below.

But apart from the restricted point of view Pearson's survey is an excellent piece of writing, dispassionate, balanced, shrewd. That five years earlier he should have visited Russia and 'brought back none but the pleasantest recollections of unfailing courtesy and kindness' encouraged him to take an Olympian standpoint. He lists the methods of repression, the indignities and 'interrogations' inflicted on the gentry, the complete suppression of Polish education, the outrages, — not as crimes of the Russian people but as 'the abominations which the crime of unjust dominion inevitably entails', giving power, as it does, to 'worthless adventurers'. He sees that what the Cossacks are now doing in Poland is no worse than what we have done in Ireland and India, than what the French did in La Vendée, or than the Austrian vengeance in Hungary and Italy ...

158 Spectator under 'News of the Week'.
159 Ibid p.2485.
160 Ibid p.2485.
But above all he sees, and is forced to admit, that liberal reforms and 'good intentions' can well lead to licence.

Alexander II is eminently, to his honour be it said, a pacific sovereign. He was compelled by the treaty of Paris to reduce his forces, and his own inclination has led him to neglect them. All accordingly had fallen into disorder before the war began. Again, the great social changes going on in Russia have altered the relations of officers and men, and made it difficult to enforce subordination. The men, frequently drunk, wandered over the country, living at free quarters, and murdering in mere revelry or in their anger at some repulse.161

But the immediate effect of the war on him was not merely depressing. It was indeed a 'deplorable struggle' resulting from a 'tragic misapprehension about France's readiness to intervene',162 and the 'effusion of blood' must be stopped 'instantly' by British intervention and Polish readiness to compromise, but in the heroism of the gentry Pearson found a symbol of noble self-sacrifice dear to his heart.

I can conceive no more sacred household life than that which trains its women to be sisters of mercy, and no better occupation for men than a war for a just cause unstained by any hope of plunder or of the marshal's baton. It is not these people I pity, it is the future survivors of the noble army of martyrs, it is the country and Europe that are losing them ... 163

161 Spectator p.2487.
162 Ibid p.2489.
163 Ibid p.2490.
After a week's travel through the country districts during which he 'only saw Russian troops once, and then in a town', Pearson returned to London, had his article published, received the acclaim of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, met distinguished Poles who had fled their country, and settled down to his former comfortable, ordered life. Then suddenly, to the amazement of his friends, he announced that he intended to emigrate to Australia.

164 *Spectator* p.2490.
Chapter II
'WILLOWIE' HOMESTEAD, MT. REMARKABLE, 1876.

One of the principal homesteads of the district in which Pearson chose to settle.
Chapter II

**PRIMITIVE DEMOCRACY**

Pearson's friends might well have shown surprise when he announced his decision to emigrate. Why should a bachelor with literary instincts and talents and a total income of approaching £1,000 a year suddenly commit himself from the capital of the world to the antipodes? He first appears to have pleaded ill health. Before he had gone to Poland he had been suffering from an undefined illness which the continental journey had failed to cure.

I suffered from sluggish liver, the organs of digestion almost refusing to perform their work, and, as is usual in such cases, I was fearfully depressed. This was presumably the same 'torpid liver' which had caused him to visit the German baths in 1849 and '51 and to drink the Homburg waters in 1859. It is a vague phrase which could

1 Memorials p.313, Note G. "Mrs. Pearson says: "Mr. Pearson told me that he was making between four and five hundred a year from the sale of his books and from contributions to the Press before he left England for Australia, in addition to £200 from his Professorship, but that it was hard work"."

2 Ibid p.118.

3 Ibid p.100.
refer to a variety of forms of dyspepsia and was in all likelihood partly if not wholly psychological in origin. Earlier in his account he himself suggests this. Having stated that he had been 'seriously out of health without being absolutely ill' before going to Poland, he continues in the next sentence 'A variety of causes had affected me: mental worry of different kinds being the chief'.

That this 'mental worry' was at the root of his restlessness becomes clear when he still determines to emigrate after discovering in January of the following year that he was 'outliving' his disease. Had he wished to cancel his plans at this stage he could readily have done so as he did not actually leave London Docks until May 2nd.

There were several possible reasons for his depression, other than medical ones. There was his failure in the previous year to gain the Chichele Professorship of History at Oxford, (although the only candidate to have written an

5 Ibid p.118.
6 Adelaide Register, Aug. 4, 1864, p.3. Captain's report of the voyage of the Coonatto.
historical work,) and the more recent refusal of the Council of King's College to vote him an increase of salary after eight years' service, although admitting his entitlement to it. Moreover the severance of his connection with the National Review had left a gap in his literary life. What now, at the age of 33, could he look forward to? He could no doubt retain his Professorship at King's College for the rest of his life at £200 a year. He would have his annual journey on the continent, occasional visits to Oxford and his dinner parties with congenial friends in London. He would go on writing anonymous book reviews and occasional signed articles for the press. He would probably revise and extend his published volume on Medieval English history, and with luck he might pluck an academic plum. But there was no certainty that his career would advance beyond its present station, and unless it did he was in no position to marry should he wish to do so. It is true that he was making

7 Memorials pp.125-6.
8 It was a common predicament of English dons. Jowett could never have married, had he so desired, on his income as Professor of Greek in Oxford. Henry Sidgwick, whom Pearson came to know at Cambridge, would certainly have found it difficult to marry at the age of 37 without the addition of £250 to his income through his election to the Trinity Prefectorship of Moral and Political Philosophy a few months before.
something in the region of £1,000 p.a., but the £300 from his Oriel fellowship would cease automatically on marriage, and the £400 income from his review writings was uncertain and quite likely to be reduced with new responsibilities. The only assured income to which he could look forward if he married was in fact the £200 from his King's College Professorship, for unlike such Oxford friends as Grant Duff, Brodrick, Goschen, Oxenham and Parker he had no comfortable private means. And there is good reason to suppose that Pearson, at the age of 33, was by no means reconciled to permanent bachelorhood. He had always enjoyed the society of cultivated women, and indeed many years later, when he had settled in Australia and married there, he kept up his old friendships by letter.

He had many warm women friends, [his wife was later to write of these Australian years,] and some of the pleasantest letters he received were from his English countrywomen – Mrs. Acland, Mrs. Luard, Mrs. Lumby, Mrs. Lloyd Evans, Mrs. Venn, and the Baroness d'Hozier.9

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9 Memorials p. 264. Mrs. Mark Pattison, wife of the Master of Lincoln College, Oxford, later Lady Dilke, was another friend. There is an inscription by her in a volume of Pearson's posthumously published Reviews and Critical Essays in the Australian National Library, in which she refers to the author as 'my dear old friend'.
The Mesdames Luard, Lumby and Venn mentioned here were the wives of Cambridge dons whose acquaintance he had yet to make in 1864, but Mrs. Acland, the Baroness d'Hozier, and Mrs. Lloyd Evans, he already knew well. He had met the Baroness, and her daughter, when holidaying at Blois in 1857, and had subsequently visited both ladies in Paris a number of times, obtaining by this means 'a glimpse of that curious Legitimist society which contrasts so wonderfully with France as it is'. For Mrs. Evans, the former Lydia Parry, he appears to have had an especial regard. The two brief and widely-separated passages in his autobiography in which the name of this lady is mentioned are just as exceptional (for their emotional content) as that in which he talks of his fearful depression. The first refers to his convalescence from the grave pleurisy which he had caught in Ireland at the age of 25.

I was still a wretched invalid even when Christmas came and could only walk out now and then when the sun was out; but my Christmas at Clifton [where his father was living in retirement] was among the brightest times of my life. Lydia Parry (now Mrs. Lloyd Evans) was constantly in the house. Grant Duff stayed with us for a week or two, reading Dante, and making himself generally pleasant, and a Cambridge friend was there part of the time.

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9a Memorials p.98.
10 Ibid p.83.
The second passage refers to a visit he paid seven years later, in the winter of 1862, to Colonel and Mrs. Evans in Rome.

I spent three of the most perfect weeks of my life, enjoying their society and devoting myself every day to sight-seeing. It seems to me that such days reflect brightness and colour over one's whole life.  

This was just half a year before he became 'fearfully depressed'. It is not entirely unlikely that the contrast between his happiness in Rome in the company of the Evans's and his narrow bachelor existence in London was one of the strongest of the factors causing him to break away from his old life.

For many reasons, then, Pearson was discontented with his niche. He wanted more money, he wished to retrieve the reputation for brilliance he had enjoyed at Oxford as an undergraduate, he wished to play some part in the world of affairs as well as in that of scholarship.  

It was not enough that he should be regarded by his contemporaries as an amiable bachelor, a good dinner-party conversationalist, a man  

11 Memorials p.102.  

12 Nine years later he told his fiancée 'that he would very much have liked to stand for the English House of Commons if he could have afforded it'. Ibid p.198.
one might call on for an odd book review or lecture, the author of a history that was something between an original piece of scholarship and a school text-book. It was all very well for Grant Duff, comfortably provided with private means, a Member of Parliament (having recently been offered the seat for Elgin Burghs by the liberal party) and recently married, to assume that he should 'devote' himself to literature 'in the spirit of a German student [or a Brewer], expecting no return except the consciousness of doing good work'. Pearson was not prepared to do this, nor to stand quietly still while other Oxford friends, after periods as curates, assistant schoolmasters, literary men about town, obscure barristers, were moving into responsible positions — for Goschen was now a director of the Bank of England of some four years' standing; Henry Boyd, his companion on journeys through Russia and Norway had been made Perpetual Curate of St. Marks, Victoria Docks, (1862) and was commencing his long strenuous labours to rebuild his church, establish schools and improve parish housing and sanitary conditions; George Brodrick had forsaken law for journalism.

13 Memorials p.119.
(1860) and was regularly writing leaders for the *Times*; Arthur Butler, the friend who had accompanied him for his disastrous holiday in Ireland in 1855, had recently been nominated first headmaster of Haileybury School (1862) which he was to make, in a few years, one of the ranking public schools of England; and Goldwin Smith, on platform and in pamphlet, was fighting the cause of North America against the slave-owning states.14

The problem was, where to go and what to do? During his adult life he had neither devoted himself to a particular cause nor striven single-mindedly for a particular position or honour. Goethe's ideal of all-round cultivation had ruled his life. Now, however, that the range of new places, peoples, art galleries was rapidly diminishing, the ideal could no longer sustain him. He had neither the requisite receptive nor the requisite creative capacity.

I had nearly exhausted Europe as a tourist, [he writes almost savagely,] and I do not suppose loitering about picture galleries would have done me any good.15

14 It was for this cause that Smith first appeared on a political platform at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, on April 6, 1863 at a meeting of the Manchester Union and Emancipation Society. (D.N.B.) The information about the other Oxford friends comes from the same work.

15 *Memorials* p.118.
English politics was closed to him - he had neither the money nor the influence to make his way. He was not disposed to devote his life to the struggles of Poles or Italians for national independence, nor to the liberation of American negro slaves. He might talk enthusiastically of the ennobling effect on the Polish gentry of their just war against Russia, but he himself lacked both the constitution and inclination for active warfare, even, at this stage, for the kind of political, journalistic warfare which Goldwin Smith was conducting.

America, with its Civil War was no place for an Englishman who sided with the North, unless he were prepared to stand by in silence while his country was denounced.

The idea that he might go to the Federal American states as Goldwin Smith was to do in Sept. 1864, precisely in order to represent the sympathetic views of English liberals, does not seem to have occurred to him. In any case he felt like escaping, not crusading.

In these circumstances Australia might provide both an

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16 Memorials p.198.
17 Ibid p.118.
escape and the 'opening' which he required to give him 'real' independence. He had personally known men who had found such 'openings'. His old King's College and Oxford contemporary M.H. Irving now held the chair of Classics at Melbourne University and W.J. Stephens, an original member of the Oxford Essay Society, was headmaster of Sydney Grammar, both having been appointed to these positions in the mid 1850's.

R. Murray-Smith, who had taken part with him in Oxford Union debates, was now a Melbourne merchant. A second King's College and Oxford contemporary, Henry Kingsley, had emigrated before taking his degree, and then returned five years later to publish his successful novel Geoffrey Hamlyn (1859) telling of the colonial careers of a group of Devonshire families who come to Australia to restore their fortunes, take up large tracts of splendid land in the Snowy River area, prosper, build gracious homes, and eventually

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18 Memorials p.81.
19 Both men spoke in the great debate on Protection, 1850, Pearson on the night of Feb. 14, Murray-Smith on the night of Feb. 28. (Morrah, The Oxford Union, 1823-1923 p.121.)
return to re-establish themselves in county society. Why should not Pearson himself emulate these families? The notion was not absurd. Had not Frederick Sinnett, in the official *Account of the Colony of South Australia* prepared for distribution at the International Exhibition of 1862, recently written of 'squatting',

One proof of the remunerative character of the pursuit is, that all sorts and conditions of men have thriven in it indiscriminately. Gentlemen from England, without experience; professional men, turning to the bush rather than to their professions; men of capital or education, or neither, or both; representatives of all these classes have grown wealthy by squatting, and that not in isolated cases, but almost as a general rule.

It is true that Sinnett qualified his picture of the South Australian pastoral industry by pointing out that 'in adverse times, and under adverse circumstances, some energetic and able men have failed', that the newcomer nowadays must have capital, that the squatters held their runs 'on terms liable to change' being especially 'subject to assessment changes, alterable at any time by Parliament', and that their

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20 Pearson had almost certainly read this before emigrating. He refers to Kingsley in his autobiography as 'the first novelist who made Australian life a theme of romance'. *Memorials* p. 37.

recent prosperity had been 'partly caused by the high price which wool had commanded in the home markets'.\(^{22}\) However, even with these qualifications, there was much to tempt Pearson at least into having a look at the pastoral industry on the spot, and from the deliberate preparations which he now began to make to fit himself for a pioneering career it is clear that he considered quite seriously the possibility of investing what capital he had managed to save over the years in a sheep run.

With characteristic thoroughness he went down to the workshops in the London docks to learn the use of the tools he might be called on to use in the 'bush'. Further, and more remarkable, he turned his mind to the application of science to pioneering. There was no reason why a slight and scholarly Englishman should be unduly handicapped in the bush if he turned his wits to proper use. He might, for instance although lacking the brawn to fell trees with a primitive axe, apply hydraulic power to the task. The idea so took hold of him that he actually invented, had patented, and, with Henry Body whose church was in the dock area, had

\(^{22}\) Op. cit. p. 46.
built at a cost of no less than £200, a machine for felling trees by driving a blade through the trunk by hydraulic pressure. From the details given in the British Specifications of Patents for 1864, the principle of the machine was simplicity itself. Mounted on 'a carriage similar to a gun carriage', and driven by hydraulic pressure provided by the operator, who pumped a lever up and down, a piston pushed a blade straight through a tree with brute force. There was no idea of a sawing motion. Purchase was obtained by a chain round the trunk. Unfortunately the machine was only a success on small trees and stumps, the weight of the tree jamming the blade in other cases, and the £200, a year's professorial salary, was lost.

After thoroughly studying the conditions of the various colonies he decided to try his fortune in South Australia, and on May 2, nearly eight months after his return from Poland, three months after his health had begun to improve, and a little over a week after submitting the specifications of his tree-felling machine, he left London in the small sailing ship Coonatto (633 tons) together with three other

Memorials p.165. Dean Fremantle's reminiscence.
passengers and a miscellaneous cargo including several 'very fine' rams and a number of deer. The voyage was inordinately long and towards the end very rough. From the Captain's report it took the ship over a month to cross the equator after a 'succession of light contrary winds' and another month to round the Cape. From there she took only 25 days, suffering now from a continuation of bad weather, which at one time caused some damage, for a heavy sea broke on board and washed the long-boat from the chocks, badly staving her and some of the deck-houses.

It was not a journey to improve Pearson's constitution.

Altogether the time was one of penance. There were only three passengers beside myself, a stupid, ill-tempered solicitor (who was always quarrelling with the captain and who, but for his amiable wife, would have been sent to Coventry by the rest of us); the wife; and a debauched piano-tuner.

One can only assume that Pearson came to Australia under such circumstances to save money, perhaps to compensate for the loss on his patent machine, for there were much faster and more comfortable means of travel. In the same issue of the

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24 South Aust. Register, Aug. 4 1864, p.3. 'Shipping Intelligence' and 'Stock Importations'.
25 Ibid p.3. 'Miscellaneous'.
26 Memorials p.120.
S. A. Register that lists the arrival of the Coonatto, the Black Ball and Eagle Line of Packets notifies that its ship the S.S. Great Britain 'has arrived in Hobson's Bay after a splendid passage of 58 days' and invites intending travellers to 'Steam to England in Sixty Days'.

Eventually, however, the 91 days of penance were over and on the morning of August 3, 1864, Pearson first stepped on to Australian soil at Port Adelaide. One can imagine him, in accordance with his usual custom when arriving in a new city, setting off to present the letters of introduction with which he had taken care to equip himself. The most important of these was to Arthur Hardy, brother-in-law to John Stuart Mill, and son-in-law of Bonamy Price, the master Pearson had most admired at Rugby.27 There could have been few if any South Australians better fitted to introduce Pearson to the colony. Although Hardy was older by twelve years, the two men resembled each other closely. Hardy was the son of Thomas Hardy, magistrate for the West Riding of Yorkshire, and Lord of the Manor of Shepley. Like many another well-read man Pearson was to meet in the colonies he had

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27 Memorials pp. 120, 123 and 193. (Reference to 'a Miss Mabel Hardy, a niece of Bonamy Price'.)
emigrated because of ill-health, consumption having threatened his life when he was reading for the bar as a young man. Like Pearson he had set out quite inexperienced in pastoral and agricultural matters but confident that book-knowledge, applied with commonsense, would lead to success. The titles of the books he mentions reading on the voyage out in 1839 (in a holograph diary now in the S.A. Archives) well express the mixture of practicality, piety and general literary culture which characterized the man:- 'Cunningham's Work on N.S.W.', 'W. Fox's Right Expediency', 'Childe Harold', 'Moore's Account of Swan River', 'Mr. Fox's 2 Sermons on Providence', 'A Month in the Bush', 'Shakespeare's Winter's Tale’, 'Lang's Account of N.S.W.', 'Hillyard's Work on Agriculture', 'Blakelock on Sheep', 'Defoe's History of the Plague', 'Mr. Fox's Lecture on the 3 Ideas of Christianity and a Sermon by Biddulph', 'Voltaire's History of Charles XII', 'One of Mr. Fox's Sermons for New Years Day & to the Young', various articles in the London and Westminster Review, articles from the Cape Almanac on Cotton and Linseed, 'The Great South Land', and Bulwer Lytton's latest novel

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28 Shelf No. 1133.
Ernest Maltravers. (pub. in two parts, 1837, 1838.) With information gleaned from the more practical of these books, capital from his father and a fair measure of sturdy non-conformist piety, Hardy had been well equipped for success in the 'paradise of dissent' and had built up a substantial fortune as pastoralist, quarry-owner, and (more by accident than design) barrister. In the township of Glen Osmond, at the foot of the Mount Lofty range a few miles from Adelaide, he had much the status of an English squire. In Thomas Gill's History and Topography of Glen Osmond29 he invariably figures as the leader in important local activities, whether building on his own land at his own expense and primarily for his own quarry workers, the state's first country Mechanics' Institute, acting as magistrate, or forming and commanding a local Volunteer Rifle Corps. Appropriately he had called his home 'Birksgate' after his father's Yorkshire manor-house.

Hardy was one of a small distinct class of men in South Australia consisting of those who had come out from England

29 Adelaide, 1905.
'like gentlemen', according to the Wakefieldian plan, and had established themselves as such as closely after the English fashion as possible, building English style villas modified for the climate, erecting churches and halls on their properties for the use of their households and employees, planting English trees and gardens, importing deer, putting down their own vineyards, subscribing to the

The expression occurs in a letter from Harriet Taylor (later Mrs. John Stuart Mill) to her brother Arthur Hardy, probably written while the latter was reading for the Bar in London. It is a lively account of her brother Edward's campaign to have himself established in the colonies. 'Edward continues at Birksgate where he seems to pass all his time in smoking. Papa is in the utmost annoyance at his presence there, and says there is no thing he would not do to get rid of him, except the one thing without which he says Edward declares he will not leave, and that is to send him out "like a gentleman". To my thinking both the idea and the expression seems (sic) the last degree of vulgarity - if he is "a gentleman" that fact will not be affected by the way he might go out - at all events it seems to me that the only valuable quality of a gentleman, his gentlemanly feelings, could be here pursued by honestly setting himself to maintain himself rather than remain in a house which he has been repeatedly desired to quit as his father told me a day or two ago.' (M.S. in possession of Miss Mabel Hardy, Adelaide, a grand-daughter of Arthur Hardy.) Ironically enough Edward's campaign not only succeeded but he was shortly followed out to Australia by Arthur.

The Duttons of 'Anlaby', the Hawkers of 'Bungaree', the Gilberts of 'Pewsey Vale', the Angas's of 'Collingrove' and Grant and Stokes of 'Coonatto' all erected churches either on or near their properties.
usual English magazines, maintaining the domestic amenities of an English country house, and often going back to England to marry and eventually to die. They had little of that flamboyance and dash which marked the Toorak society of Melbourne in the later part of the century. Their tastes were quiet, tempered very often, as in Hardy's case, by a non-conformist or evangelical up-bringing. Hardy's action in erecting his Mechanics' Institute for the use of his quarry workers and their families 'to avoid the inducement to pass their evenings at the only public house', and his insistence, after giving all other responsibility for the management of the hall to the men themselves, 'that no person should remain a member who by intoxication interfered with the comfort of the other members' were quite characteristic. It was into such a society that Pearson was

Letter from Arthur Hardy to the Chairman of the Glen Osmond Institute, read, in his absence, at the Institute's jubilee celebration held on August 10, 1904. (Printed in the S.A. Register, July 14, 1909, p.5.) In this letter Hardy tells how Mr. and Mrs. John Stuart Mill, on learning of the venture, 'selected a considerable number of books [c.100] from their library which they thought would be suitable to assist in establishing a mechanics' institute' and sent them out to Glen Osmond. The account of the opening of this little Institute on August 10, 1854 in the S.A. Institutes' Journal of 20/11/1901, gives an excellent idea of the paternal solicitude of such men as Hardy for 'the mental improvement of the working man'.
MAP TO ILLUSTRATE PEARSON'S SOUTH AUSTRALIAN YEARS

- 50 miles

- Pearson's horseback journey, 1864, (probable).
- Extent northern railway, 1864.
- Additional line laid by 1872.
now introduced, and into which, on his second visit to the colony, he eventually married.

From 'Birksgate', following Hardy's advice, Pearson made his way north some 200 odd miles to the station which bore the same name as the vessel that had conveyed him out from England. (See map p.105.) He may have gone first to Port Augusta at the head of Spencer's Gulf by sea, either with the Coonatto which had some cargo found for there, or by the little Lubra (220 tons) which made the trip regularly via Port Lincoln on Eyre's Peninsula. He would then have made his way forty miles inland. Alternatively he may have travelled to the end of the northern railway line at Kapunda, 47 miles from Adelaide, and thence by coach or other horse-drawn vehicle for the remaining 150 odd miles. Had such English friends as Henry Smith or Grant Duff known of Pearson's present whereabouts they would have been justified in imagining him roughing it under the most primitive conditions. But such was not the case - at least while he was at 'Coonatto'. Although he himself has not described the station, a good idea of it can be obtained from other sources. Situated on the wide Willochra Plains which are bounded to the west and north by the Flinder's Ranges, it
was large and prosperous with the reputation of being one of the best-managed runs in the State. Bailliere's South Australian Gazetteer, 1867, gives the following statistics:

Coonatta and Yanvary Run (N. district:) lease No.74; occupiers Grant and Stokes; area, 138 square miles - of which 5 miles are purchased land; grazing capacity 19,500 sheep, or 145 per square mile. On these and adjoining stations, held under different leases, are 90,000 sheep, 150 head of cattle, and 150 horses ...

In August, 1873, it was visited by the English travellers, the Misses Rosamund and Florence Davenport Hill who set down their impressions in their book Australia as We Saw It (1875). To them it bore some resemblance to an English village presided over by a squire.

We now entered a neat enclosure, and leaving the church and schoolhouse on our left, soon found ourselves at a handsome gate, the entrance to a small garden, a rare adornment at a station, and always, we understood, to be attributed to the presence of a lady. Everything wore a trim English air within and without the house, and those who think station life means a log hut, a bullock dray to travel by, and a menu of mutton, damper, and tea, would have had difficulty in realising their position, or indeed in believing themselves out of England, finding themselves in fact surrounded by the comforts, and leading the life of an English country house. The home-mail had arrived that morning, and the interval between afternoon-tea and dinner was pleasantly spent in looking over the 'Times' and 'Punch', and the various new publications it had brought.
Our hostess was busy with her Sunday School next morning, and played the harmonium in church, for the choir whom she herself trains; and our host read the service and a sermon... 33

The manager and part-owner of 'Coonatto', F.W. Stokes, was another colonist who had been sent out 'like a gentleman'. He was the son of a clergyman, the Vicar of Cobham and Rector of Milton, Kent, and brother of Lieut. Gen. Sir John Stokes, K.C.B., R.E., the eminent engineer and adviser to the British Government on near eastern problems. After attending Westminster school, London, he had been sent out in 1850 at the age of seventeen to learn the business of sheep farming, and in a short time had been entrusted with the management of runs. By marrying one of the many daughters of Mr. William Giles of 'Beaumont', an early and pious colonist who had become manager of the South Australian Company's

33 Rosamund and Florence Davenport Hill, Australia as We Saw It, (London, 1875) p.204. The hospitality of 'Coonatto' was proverbial. Bishop Short testifies to this as early as 1860. At the homestead, he then wrote in his diary, 'the best possible cheeses were daily brought to table, while at an out-station he was 'soon regaled with a brace of wild ducks, tart and cream, in the most comfortable style'. Whittington, F.T., Augustus Short, First Bishop of Adelaide (Adel. 1887) p.129.
affairs, and who was also his father's cousin and 'very dear friend', he had immediately related himself to a considerable number of the South Australian gentry.35

Had the time been a decade or so earlier, the surrounding scenery more dramatic, a good proportion of the hands 'old lags', and bushrangers an occasional threat, 'Coonatto', when Pearson knew it, could well have been a model for one of the stations in Henry Kingsley's Geoffrey Hamlyn - much the same domestic graces and amenities, much the same manorial relationship between master and men, and a similar orientation towards England, for like the heroes of the novel, and like his partners Alexander and F.A. Grant, Stokes eventually

34 G.E. Loyau, The Representative Men of South Australia, (Adelaide, 1883) pp.116-7. Giles, who emigrated a year after the foundation of the colony, brought his wife and eleven children with him. He was a Congregational lay preacher, and as a member for Yatala, was one of the framers of the 1851 constitution.

35 An account of the Giles connection is given in Family Life in South Australia, (For Private Circulation Only.) By J.I.W. Editions of 1882 and 1890. Copy containing keys to names, cuttings etc. in S.A. Archives, shelf No.23.
returned to England to retire. It may be imagined how thoroughly at home Pearson was here in the remote northern plains of South Australia.

The next step was to 'look at the country' and decide how best to employ his little capital. Like all other aspects of his colonial adventure, Pearson took this seriously, and with Stokes's name as a passport, he 'made a tour on horseback round the principle stations from Port Augusta to Moolooloo and back to Coonatto and Mount Remarkable'. In view of the fact that Port Augusta was at least 60 miles away to the west (via Melrose and Mt. Remarkable), and Moolooloo well over a hundred miles to the north, this was no mean undertaking for a man of Pearson's constitution - a round trip in fact of approaching four hundred miles, in sparsely populated and arid country. As a result of what he saw and heard, and of what he must have read in the news-

36 In the 1880's after his three year term as M.P. for the district of Mt. Barker (1878-81). He died at the home of his brother, Sir John, without leaving any issue. Obituary notice, Adelaide Observer, Aug. 10, 1889. Alexander Grant returned to England to marry in 1863, came into a large inheritance (£300,000), assumed the name Thorold (that of his benefactor), and never returned. Frederick Grant, brother of Alexander, retired to live in England at much the same time, but was forced to return to Australia with his family a few years later after the great drought of the 'sixties had depleted his income. (Letter to the S.A. Register of March 3, 1928, p.18, col. 5-7, by W. Thorold-Grant, son of Frederick.)

37 Memorials p.120.
papers, Pearson decided not to put his money into leasing and stocking a run.

A cry had been raised that the runs were let below their proper value; and the Government surveyor had been instructed to assess them anew. The squatters, seeing only their own side of the question, were confident that the existing valuations could not equitably be raised. I felt certain, from what I saw of the temper of the country, that they would be; and was not inclined to run the risk of buying into a run whose rent might be raised six-fold in three months' time.38

His prediction about the raising of the rents was accurate enough, and although few rents were increased by as much as six-fold, it so happened that that of Coonatto head station was – from £235 12s. 6d. to £1345 12.39 If he still persisted in going on the land the only alternative now was to lease or buy a farm, and employ a man to do most of the heavy work.

He decided to lease about a square mile of country known, or to be known as 'Haverhill', which straddled the 'main road' to Adelaide three miles east of Melrose. It appears to have been divided into four 80-acre sections, and to have been cleared to about half its extent. According to

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38 Memorials p.120. The first instructions to the Valuator of Runs to make re-assessments were laid on the table of the S.A. House of Assembly on July 14, 1864. S.A.P.P. 1864, I, 89. The first Reports of the Valuator (Goyder), a 'Tabulated Statement of Revaluation of eighteen Waste Lands Leases' was furnished on August 12, 1864, a week after Pearson's arrival. S.A.P.P. 1864, I, 127.

39 Bailliere's South Australian Gazetteer (1867), p.58.
the present owner of much of the land, Mr. Frank Smith, a son of one of Pearson's neighbours, half the square mile was so heavily timbered that it was not cleared until the third man to occupy the farm after Pearson, a Mr. Lange, tackled the job with his eleven sons. Through the middle of the property ran a small creek, then, as now, skirted by large gums. The rain-fall, because of the proximity to the Flinder's Range and Mt. Remarkable, was fair, and the country was inside the line marking the limit of safe farming which Goyder was to draw in November of the following year (1865). The land itself, one of the earliest pieces in the district to be cultivated, is described by its present occupier as 'average land for a good farm.'

The leasing of 'Haverhill' was, nevertheless, very much an 'experiment' to use his own term. Of the whole 965,000 acres composing the Country of Frome, in which his land lay, only 124 were officially reported under cultivation in 1864-5. The main wheat-growing area was at least 70 miles to the South, and markets a good deal further away than that, although there would have been some local demand for hay by teamsters. There were other factors, however, besides economic ones. There were friends not far distant at 'Goonatto' and the air of the district was clear and dry, both important considerations for one

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1 S.A. Parly. Papers, 1865, no. 9 (Agric. & Livestock Stats.) My attention was drawn to this by Mr. Keith Bowes.
with a weak chest. Then it was certainly the best-watered and one of the most beautiful areas in the northern part of South Australia. Mount Remarkable, an aptly named peak of 3000 feet, dominates the low, gently undulating country to the east. The gum trees on its slopes and at its foot, which harbour thousands of birds, are amongst the finest of their kind in Australia. A stream of excellent water, for many years used by a local brewery, runs all the year round from springs in its valleys. Out on the plains stretching away from its base, dotted with massive old gums, there was splendid horse-riding country. These were all factors to count with a man like Pearson, and they explain why, when he was in England some years later, a 'longing for the Australian bush' should have come over him 'almost like homesickness', and he should have thought of Mt. Remarkable as one of the 'prettiest' spots on earth. It was certainly a place to give him more than a rational attachment to Australia.

The little village of Melrose, lying in a sheltered depression at the foot of the Mount, had been a general depot and police station for the outlying sheep stations of the north since the late 1840's. The first squatters had wanted

40 Memorials p.140.
police protection from the aborigines and a station had been built. Then a copper mine had been opened at Spring Creek, ten miles to the north, and the bullock drivers who carted the ore to the coast at Port Germein had made their homes beside the police station in order to give their families protection during their absences. When Pearson arrived to board there, for there was no suitable house on his own leasehold, it numbered about 250 souls.\(^4\)

It was an amazing thing how Pearson, on this colonial adventure, managed to find congenial society. That he should have found his way unerringly to 'Birksgate' and 'Coonatto' was perhaps not so surprising, but that he should have settled in a remote northern township in which the senior clergyman, the Rev. T.N. Twopeny, M.A., was a graduate of his own Oxford college, and the leading store-keeper, Mrs. Searle, a sister of the Dean of St. Paul's, was remarkable. The latter, he recollected,

\[\ldots\] had married a surgeon, and subsided finally upon store-keeping in the bush. She was a clever, lively woman, intended by nature for London society, and sadly thrown away upon the primitive democracy of a bush township.\(^4\)

\(^{41}\) S.A. Gazetteer (1867), p.139.

\(^{42}\) Memorials p.121. Mrs. Searle was a sister of Dean Mansel.
After visiting Melrose some time before Pearson's stay there, Bishop Short had written in his diary of the same lady,

Left a widow with three interesting boys, she continues to superintend and carry on her late husband's extensive store, with the view of realising the means of taking her sons to England for education; a worthy design worthily carried out at much self-sacrifice, such as English mothers well know how to make ... 43

A little over two months before Pearson arrived, on June 27, 1864, she had laid the foundation stone of Holy Trinity Church assisted by Mr. Stokes of 'Coonatto', on land given by her. 44

Shortly afterwards, according to a little account of early Melrose preserved in the local school house, she returned to England (presumably with a modest fortune) to complete her design.

With Twopeny and Mrs. Searle, the resident curate the Rev. Sam. Green, the Stipendiary Magistrate Mr. G.B. Smith, and the Messrs. L'Estrange of 'Bartagunya' station and Whitby of 'Willowie', Pearson naturally ranked as one of the Melrose district's 'leading inhabitants', being made a J.P. in February, 1865, 45 occasionally taking services in the

43 Whitington, p.130.
44 Adelaide Observer, Aug. 6, 1864. Country Correspondence under 'Melrose'.
45 S.A. Govt. Gazette, 1864. The appointment was effective from Feb. 9.
absence of a curate and on at least one occasion acting as chairman of a village 'soiree'.

The most important factor in Melrose life during Pearson's thirteen months' stay in the township was the great drought of 1864-6, the worst in South Australia's recorded history. The lack of rain was already serious when he arrived. On August 24, 1864, the local Observer correspondent reported

The settlers in the North are complaining greatly for want of rain, and it is feared a famine will ensue if rain does not come soon, for as there is no grass it is impossible to cart with bullocks, and there are scarcely any horse-teams about the north. The proprietors are discharging all the men they can possibly spare, and the remainder are obliged to live almost without bread, flour being £8 a bag.47

By mid-December large fires had broken out in the surrounding district and a plague of grasshoppers had arrived to devour what little grass remained, the air at times being completely clouded with them.48 In early January a correspondent wrote down from Ediowie station further north, 'It is now eleven months since we had as much rain as would wet a silk hand-

46 Observer, Nov. 18, 1865, letter from Melrose.
The main street of Melrose looking away from the Mount to the north-eastern plains. The building with the distinctive chimneys and dark signboard was (and still is) the Mt. Remarkable Inn. (Photograph in possession of S. A. Archives taken in the late '60's.)
kerchief through'. 49 Not until the end of April was there any relief in Melrose when 'copious showers of soaking rain' fell, bringing up the grass and encouraging townsmen to get to work on their 'little plots of garden'. 50 Early in June the weather in the agricultural districts was favourable enough to encourage plowing and sowing, although further out on the plains there had been little or no rain and 'very bad accounts of the lambing at the sheep stations' were coming in. 51 A week later, although no further rain had fallen severe frosts had come to damage the seed crops.

The drought, followed by the frosts, must have made Pearson query the wisdom of the decision he had made shortly after his arrival in Melrose to terminate his leave from King's College by resigning. 52 However, now that he had burnt his boats, he set out in a do or die fashion to cope with the situation, and in mid June the Observer correspondent reported:

A great drawback to some of the farms in this neighbourhood is the scarcity of water, both surface and otherwise; but I am happy to record the good fortune of the proprietor of Haverhill Farm, about two miles from here.

49 Observer, Jan. 7, 1865.
50 Ibid, May 6, 1865.
51 Ibid, June 10, 1865.
Men have been employed for some considerable time in sinking in one of the paddocks, and having gone about 100 feet, the boring apparatus was brought into action, and sent down some 40 feet more, when the work was almost given up in despair, but as a last resource 16 lbs. of powder were put down the hole and fired, and in the following morning, much to the delight of all concerned, 25 feet of water was found in the well. This, of course, will much increase the value of the property, and it is to be hoped it will encourage others to try for water on their land, which will not only benefit themselves, but will add much to the development of the district generally. I should have mentioned that others have sunk in vain for water at very short distances from the present well, and it is very cheering to know that the present proprietor has been amply rewarded for his perseverance.  

One can imagine the sceptical talk in the district as the stubborn English professor persisted in putting down his exceptionally deep well, at no little expense, despite the nearby evidences of failure. Even then, according to the present owner of the land, there was never very much water, and what there was was 'bad', so that eventually the well had to be filled in. Pearson had also spent a 'good deal' of money on fencing one of the sections - probably at least £80.  

Because of this heavy expenditure on improvements which could only pay for themselves over a long period, he decided to buy

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Observer, June 17, 1865.

Memorials p.121. In 1872, when Anthony Trollope visited the State, the rate for wire fencing was £40 a mile. (Australia and New Zealand, 1873, p.214.)
the farm — probably at the basic price of £1 an acre. If this were the case he would then, between the cost of the land, the well, the fence, half the seed of his wheat crop which he had cannily sown on a share basis with his 'farm servant', and the wages of the servant himself, have spent at least a sum in the neighbourhood of £1000, to say nothing of the abortive tree-felling patent, his board in Melrose, and his passage out. When, under the exceptional drought conditions, he lost the complete crop which he had had sown down, and the drought still showed no sign of breaking, he had little alternative but to return to England with the small amount of money he still had left. He could have borrowed from the banks, but even had he done so, and enjoyed a good run of seasons, he calculated that the profit he could make would not compensate for the necessary surrender of his Oriel fellowship. He had learnt the truth of Sinnett's remark:

The class of farmers who succeed best, probably, are men with sufficient means to purchase a small freehold and stock it, but without sufficient means to tempt them into 'gentleman farming'. That capitalist farmers may do well, there is no question .... But it is, probably, nevertheless true that a man with his eighty acres or so, cultivated by himself and his family, makes more in proportion to his investment than his wealthier neighbour.

55 Memorials p.121.
56 Ibid p.122.
57 An Account of the Colony of South Australia (1862) p.
He could only be thankful that he still owned the land, which he was able to let to Stokes of 'Coonatto' at a rate which gave him 6% on his purchase money, and that he had not invested in a pastoral lease and a flock of sheep only to have his rent greatly raised and his sheep die on his hands. At least he was spared the dismal task, so common at the time amongst northern squatters, of ordering a mob of sheep to be driven here and over the countryside in a vain search for grass until they died.

Pearson's colonial experience, however, was not confined to farming in a time of drought and enjoying the society of the well-read, well-connected Anglo-Australians who visited at 'Birksgate' and 'Coonatto'. Inevitably, as a resident of Melrose, he shared the amusements, achievements and crises of the 'primitive democracy' of the little town. In the small, two-year-old court house, built to seat about 40, and then used not only for its proper functions but also as church and village hall, he sat on the bench, stood at the lectern, took part in the monthly 'readings' organized originally by his

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59 Trollope, ibid pp.468-9, states that 'hundreds of thousands of sheep' were driven south only to die in this manner during the drought of 1864-6.
The left wing of the stone building on the right served as court-house, church and village hall during Pearson's first visit. P.O. and overland telegraph station to the left. (Photograph taken in the late '60's and in possession of S. A. Archives.)
fellow lodger the Rev. Sam. Green in aid of the Church Building Fund, and listened to the Lord Bishop of Adelaide on one of his rare visits to the north inform Melrosians that their village 'instead of being one of the outlying townships, and the rendezvous of the worst characters, was now a worthy rival of any villages of the same size farther south, and ... at last within the pale of civilization'.

The Melrose 'readings', which died out when their originator left for Port Adelaide and revived when an energetic young curate replaced him four months later, gave great scope to the elocutionary and vocal talents of the town. Extracts from Dombey and Son, Julius Caesar, Broad Grins from China, Barnaby Rudge, the poems of Browning and Praed, Pickwick Papers, alternated with romantic, pathetic or humorous songs.

Pearson is never mentioned as appearing on the stage as a performer, but he certainly chaired the August 1865 'reading' which was a particularly popular one because of the high proportion of musical items. The report itself conveys better than any commentary the nature of this, for Pearson, novel experience.

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60 Observer, Nov. 5, 1864.
The second reading of the season took place at the Court-House on Tuesday last, when the room was well filled. The chairman, Mr. C.H. Pearson, J.P. having opened the proceedings with some suitable remarks, the programme commenced with 'Mrs. Gamp's Tea Party', read by Rev. H. Howitt, followed by a song, 'Gentle Annie', by a lady amateur, accompanied on the melaphone by Mr. Jackson; the 'Bloomsbury Christening', first part, Mr. Gray; song, 'The Rover's Bride', harmonium accompaniment, Mr. Williams; 'John Browdie's Visit to London', from 'Nicholas Nieceby', read by Mr. Leighton in the true North-country dialect, which caused rounds of applause and roars of laughter. Interval - Song, 'Craigie Lea', a lady amateur; Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer', Rev. H. Howitt; duet, 'What are the Wild Waves Saying', harmonium accompaniment, Mr. Williams and a lady amateur; the 'Bloomsbury Christening', second part, Mr. G.E. Gray; song, 'My Mamie's Awa', melaphone accompaniment, a lady amateur. Votes of thanks to the performers and to the Chairman were carried. A collection was made towards a fund for a new harmonium for the Melrose Church, which amounted to £4. 10s. The National Anthem was led by Mr. Williams, and heartily joined in by the audience. The harmonium accompaniments were played by a lady amateur.

In many respects the year 1864/5 were an exceptional one for Melrose. The readings were not a regular occurrence, but largely resulted from the enthusiasm of the clergymen who happened at the time to be stationed in the town in connection with the Melrose Mission which served the outlying stations. For many years after 1865 the town was to have no resident clergyman at all, let alone two. But apart from this there

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Adelaide Observer, Aug. 12, 1865, p.4.
was the drought, and the building of the church, and the erection of the Clare - Port Augusta section of the Adelaide - Darwin telegraph line, in addition to an abnormal number of misadventures. 'Host Allen' of the Mt. Remarkable Inn had an arm shot away, a child of 19 months was burnt to death while in the care of a woman who was baking bread in his mother's house, Edward Bolus, the unofficial 'Mayor' of Melrose - a saddler, auctioneer, house and commission agent, prominent singer and secretary to the newly founded Oddfellows' Lodge, suddenly absconded without paying his debts, and most dreadful of all, the Stipendiary Magistrate for the town and the whole northern district shot himself dead. The inquests into both deaths were conducted by Pearson, that into the suicide of his fellow magistrate being one of the last duties he performed before leaving the town in November 1865. Poor Smith's wife had died in January of the same year, and from the evidence given at the inquest he had been at various times in a suicidal state of mind since early

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64 Adelaide Observer, May 6, 1965. 'The southern road is kept alive by the constant passage of drays bearing the poles for the Clare and Port Augusta Telegraph line to their future destination.
65 On Oct. 4, 1864.
August. In this difficult situation, Pearson, according to the local correspondent, 'summed up in a clear and lucid manner, laying before the Jury all the probabilities or possibilities of the case'. In the heat of the following morning, with the smoke from 'large conflagrations on Crystal Brook, Booyoolie, Bundaleer, and Canowie' rising in the southern and eastern sky, he took his due place in the funeral procession from the town to the cemetery, thus:

The corpse on a car - Eighteen brethren of the Loyal New Melrose Oddfellows' Lodge as chief mourners, walking two and two, in the mourning ashes of the Order - Mr. C.H. Pearson, J.P., and Dr. Bewicke, surgeon to the Lodge - Eight gentlemen, tradesmen, two and two - The Rev. T. Nowell Twopeny, M.A. - Mr. C.H. Smythe, Clerk of the Local Court, followed by a number of gentlemen and others amounting in all to about 45.

It was a strangely symbolic conclusion to the Australian adventure—the little group in black, solemnly pacing out along the wide, straight, glaring road; the brown undulating plains stretching endlessly out on either side, ravaged by drought and locust plague more fiercely than anyone had known; the light of the morning sun, red with the mounting smoke of bush-fires: and in the middle of the desolation the exotic figure

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88 Observer, Nov. 11, 1865.
89 Ibid, Nov. 18, 1865.
70 Ibid, Nov. 18, 1865.
of Pearson, defeated, about to return to an uncertain life in England, yet for the moment identified with a simple Anglo-Australian country community, dourly surviving as best it could the trials of pioneering.

In the circumstances, his departure would have been keenly felt in the Mt. Remarkable district. After describing the funeral of G.B. Smith the Observer correspondent continued:

We have just experienced a great loss in the departure of Mr. C.H. Pearson, J.P., who is intending to leave the colony. During his short stay amongst us he has earned for himself the sincere regard of many and the respect of all with whom he came in contact by his kindness, affability, and courtesy. As a Magistrate he was just and impartial, and as a townsman showed that he had the welfare of the place at heart. For several Sundays, between the change of curates, he acted as lay reader, giving two services a day at the Court-House, which must have been a heavy tax on a man who had come out for a holiday to regain his health. He takes with him the good wishes of all, and had times been more prosperous, the people of Melrose would probably have given him a farewell dinner or some other public acknowledgment of esteem before his departure; but in the present state of affairs no one has spirit to start any such movement.71

There seems little reason to doubt Pearson's assertion that it was 'with sincere regret' that he decided to return to England. The climate had suited him, and the horse-riding and driving, the day to day business connected with a farm,

71 Observer, Nov. 11, 1865.
and the dispensation of local justice, had given scope to that practical, executive side of his nature so little known to his English friends. It was a parochial enough society that he was leaving, certainly, but at least within it he had been a man of a little consequence who might be looked to in a time of crisis for cool judgment and advice. And from what he said many years afterwards of this first contact with ordinary Australians, he had a high regard for the people of Melrose, melaphones, harmoniums and all. In one of his early Melbourne political speeches he said emphatically, as reported by the Argus, that

Coming out here 14 years ago, and living for the first time in a democratic community, he changed from a liberal of the English type to a democratic liberal. That was the great change of his life.72

72 Argus, May 29, 1877, p.7.
Chapter III
Chapter III

WANTING OCCUPATION

When he reached Adelaide from Melrose Pearson received word of his father's death in England, and as he 'succeeded, in consequence, to part of a small inheritance' he decided to return to England leisurely, breaking the journey here and there to stay with old friends. First he visited Melbourne and Sydney. His impressions of the two cities were very different. For what must have been the first time in his life he had the frustrating experience in Melbourne of not having his letters of introduction honoured.

... the place struck me then, and has always impressed me since, as the most inhospitable I have known. Of course I except the case of private friends, such as Irving and Murray Smith then were.1

As these two old Oxford contemporaries were both thorough-going Conservatives (in the colonial sense) he 'did not make the acquaintance of a single Victorian Liberal, and carried away the impression ... that Higinbotham was an inspired fanatic, and that his associates were rogues'. By Sydney, the smaller, less self-confident city, he was 'charmed ... in every way'.

1 Memoriais p.122.
I thought it the loveliest town I had ever seen, and I was fortunate enough there to have my letters of introduction honoured, and to make very pleasant acquaintances.\(^2\)

Under these happier circumstances he took his first leave of Australia at the end of January 1866 and travelled on to India. Most of his time there he spent in Madras, where his brother Alleyne was stationed, and in Bombay where he could enjoy the society of two staff members of the Bombay university - the Vice Chancellor, Sir Alexander Grant, who was an old Fellow of Oriel and Professor Oxenham, a former King's College pupil. This was his first contact with the Asia he was later to write so much about. His reaction was characteristically evasive. He saw natives treated with brutality by Europeans, and was revolted. At the same time he felt unable to sympathise 'properly' with them, 'feeling towards them myself as the Northerners in America are accused of feeling towards blacks'. He realised that even had he been able to stand the climate and the 'inanimate routine' he would never have made an Indian civil servant.

After proceeding to Italy and making his way across Europe with Walter Pepys, a younger son of the first Lord Cottenham,  

\(^2\)Memorials p.122. Cf. J.A. Froude, *Oceana, Or England and her Colonies* (1866) p.144: 'In Victoria they wished to show us their colony; in New South Wales they offered us admission into their society'.

he arrived back in England in May. It was not the homecoming
he had imagined two years before. He was 'discredited by
having done nothing' in Australia, and now, having severed
his old connections with King's College and the press, he had
nothing to go to in England. For a moment he had hopes of
succeeding his friend Goldwin Smith as Regius Professor of
History in Oxford but Smith resigned just before the Conserv­
atives came into office, and the new government made an
excellent choice and appointed Stubbs. He first escaped the
whole 'dreary' situation by touring Norway with his brother
John and his wife, and then by going into a comfortable,
scholarly retirement, living on his fellowship and small
inheritance, and revising and expanding his mediaeval history.
For this purpose he took a 'cottage of gentility' in the
quiet little village of Farnham Royal, mid-way between London
and the Athenæum on the one hand and Oxford and Oriel
College on the other. Here, provided with 'two horses, a
groom and a man' (and possibly the cats to which he was much
devoted a year or two later)3 he practised that very withdrawl

3 A chance remark from Henry Sidgwick in 1869 about cats
lacking a moral sense evoked a surprisingly elaborate defence
of feline morality from Pearson. To his surprise, Sidgwick
discovered that his friend was in the habit of having
regular reports of his cats' welfare forwarded to him by his
housekeeper whenever he was away from home. (Memorials pp.
185-6.)
from everyday life he had once reprobed so strongly, living in a solitude broken only by Sunday visits from friends.

Before he had buried himself completely in the Middle Ages an invitation to contribute to a collection of 'Essays bearing directly on the Reform of the House of Commons' gave him an opportunity to salvage at least something from the Australian fiasco. The project, in which his old friends Brodrick, Bryce, Hutton, Leslie Stephen and Goldwin Smith were all involved, was intended to 'show that the demand for a more national Parliament is not a mere cry to which it would be folly and weakness to give way' but a just and reasonable reform. It was Pearson's function to provide a reassuring first-hand report on the Australian colonies, demonstrating that they were socially and economically stable and had not declined under democratic self-government as ex-squatters living in London were often heard to allege.

He makes out a fair case, although on one or two matters he had obviously been led by his Oxford friends into assertions which could have acutely embarrassed him in later years, especially his claim that the recent victory of the Victorian Upper House over the 'illegal tactics of the ministry' during

the Darling Grant crisis was a sign of the essential stability of the country. He is naturally most convincing on the few occasions when he speaks from personal experience. It is from these passages that one can estimate what he really meant when he talked of his transformation from a 'liberal of the English type into a democratic liberal'. Clearly he did not mean that he had renounced the validity of class distinctions.

The Australian clubs, like the English, are confined to men of liberal education and easy means. The Australian railways have their three classes. Sleeping as I have often done in Bush Inns, I was never expected to share my room with a bullock-driver or a shepherd.

Rather did it mean that he now believed in the power of free institutions, and the ready availability of land, to give ordinary men an independence and self-respect unknown in England. This was no longer for him an axiom, but a palpable truth.

It once happened to me to find myself with my horse and trap in a mountain gap where I could neither go backwards nor forwards without assistance. My companion went for assistance, and the first working man found walked two miles in a hot wind to help me, and positively refused to accept money. On another occasion a farmer, a perfect stranger to both myself and my companion, walked a mile with us to show us a difficult bush track. I could multiply cases of this kind to any extent.

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6 Essays in Reform p.194.
8 Ibid p.
He had found that when a man bought land in Australia he became 'sober, hard-working, and trustworthy, as one who has a stake in the country and a position to maintain' and that even when he was employed by others he would give generously of his labour, providing - and this was the key to all social relations in Australia - his independence was recognised and respected.

As to whether this levelling up process would mean, as opponents of democracy claimed, that 'the educated minority who in spite of all their shortcomings are indispensable to progress will gradually give up their interest in politics, and perhaps transfer themselves to England' he does not care to prophesy. He will only report on what he had found.

Among the clergy, the barristers and doctors, the military and naval men who visit or live in Australia, men of all characters and all opinions, I never met, and I never heard of, one who found that breeding and education unfitted him for the colonies. My Oxford friends in particular were as good citizens as if they were native to the soil.9

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9 Essays in Reform p.215. One of these friends was Murray Smith. The year before he met Pearson in Melbourne he had returned to his native land on holiday. Thence he wrote back to his mother-in-law in Victoria: 'You'll be rather amused to hear me say, that on many accounts, I prefer Australia to England as a residence. I don't mean to say that if I were a rich man, with plenty of leisure, I shouldn't enjoy travelling about, and seeing these glorious Alps and fine old cities .... But to settle down as a business man of moderate income is a very different thing. You are such an insignificant unit in the enormous crowd, you're so like a horse in a mill .... ' Letter dated Liverpool, Dec. 21, 1864. Micro-film in Public Library of Victoria.
That there were shortcomings in Australian democracy he does not deny, although they were not the shortcomings imagined by English critics.

... what I really dread for Australia is much more the conservative apathy of men partially shut out from the world, and coming to believe that the trodden way is the best, than any revolutionary fervour for sudden and great changes.10

There was already, for example, a 'crying need' for greater expenditure on education and railways.

The problem of educating the children of forty families scattered perhaps over 1,500 square miles, is no doubt difficult, but must be grappled with if Australia is to overcome the disadvantage of her isolation from the world.11

Australia would also, to his way of thinking, have to learn by hard experience the foolishness of protective tariffs. But he refuses to predict, concluding 'We can deal positively with the past, but the future is in other hands than ours'. He gives no hint that he personally cared to participate in the preservation and perfection of what had been commenced. One has the impression that he was as much repulsed by the colonies' meagre cultural life as he was attracted by their democratic possibilities.

10 Essays in Reform p.216.
11 Ibid p.204.
The society of Melbourne and Sydney is, I think, superior in variety and refinement to that of any English country town, but it is not and cannot be equal to that of London or of Paris... The eye positively hungers, after a time, for something better than the builder's Gothic or bastard Palladian of our colonial structures.\textsuperscript{12}

The prevailing tone of the essay is very like that of the article on Poland written immediately before he left for Australia – the tone of an intelligent, dispassionate observer, who has made a fairly rapid survey of a country, has been impressed with certain qualities in the people, but feels no lasting sense of identity with them.

For the moment what mattered most to him was the revision of his History, and in order to complete this he took up residence in Oriel College in July of 1867 for readier access to libraries. Even here, however, the fates seem to have marked him out for penance.

Talk of roughing it in the bush: I have never roughed it there as I have done at Oxford. Dirty servants, unpunctual and inattentive; an impossibility of being private in one's rooms, as the bedroom and pantry were approached through the sitting-room; badly cooked food; dogs forbidden; and the night made hideous with drinking songs or practice on the piano, as the morning was with the chapel bell.\textsuperscript{13}

By Christmas his books had passed through the press and he was able to retire to the amenities of his cottage and those of

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Essays in Reform} pp. 214-5.

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Memorials} p. 127.
the Athenaeum. It was from the Athenaeum, his 'best permanent address', that he wrote about this time to W.J. Stephens, then pioneering a new school at Eaglesfield after a disagreement with the governing body of Sydney Grammar. In the fragment of the letter which survives he considers his own immediate future and the fortunes of his and Stephen's mutual friends of the old Oxford 'Wise and Good' essay society. He regrets 'much' that he cannot return to Australia, but fears that it is out of the question. He can only hope that his new history in two volumes will sell well enough to allow him to 'continue authorship without absolute loss' in which case he will probably set to work at a third volume. His friends, for their part, seem either poised to take their next step up in the world or to be suffering the effects of over-work.

Fragment of an undated letter in the Mitchell library.
William John Stephens (1829-90) was the son of Rev. William Stephens, of Heversham, Westmoreland. He was educated at Marlborough School, and at Queen's College, Oxford, where he was a scholar from 1848-1853, Fellow from 1853-60, Lecturer in 1854; and Tutor from 1855-6, when he accepted the first headmastership of the Sydney Grammar School at the age of 27.

Although the third volume was never written, the two volumes mentioned here were later expanded and continued to sell, first at £1.2.6 and then at £1.10.0 at least up until 1892. For the last seven years of this period he was still receiving, on an average, £10 p.a. in royalties. (Letter of April 1, 1958 from G. Bell & Sons Ltd., Pearson's publishers.)
Goschen is taking up secular education. He is all the better for a short respite from office, and I hope will do great things. Brodrick is still on the Times staff, but is looking out for a seat in Parliament; as also are Charles Parker and F. Harrison. Arthur Butler by the bye is an exception to the rule of prosperity. He has broken down from over-work at Haileybury, and is obliged fairly to give it up, after having made it one of the best schools in England. I hope Henry Butler [Arthur's brother, also a headmaster] may do better at Harrow; but he too has been rather knocked up. My brother Alleyne has come back from India invalided and with a pension. He was very ill, but is now fairly restored and is trying to get permanent work.

Pearson himself seems to have been well enough at this time, although irresolute and rather short of money, for the preparation of his book had prevented him writing for the press, and the cottage of gentility had still to be maintained between his comings and goings. It was fortunate for him that the movement for the higher education of women should then have been getting under way and that he should have been invited to take part. The two leading figures in the movement were Miss Emily Davies, daughter of the Rector of Gateshead, and Miss Anne Jemima Clough sister of the poet Arthur Hugh Clough.15a Six years earlier, in 1862, Miss Davies had become honorary secretary of a 'Committee for obtaining the admission of Women to University Examinations'. She had then corresponded

15a The following brief account of the movement is based on Adamson, J.W. English Education 1789-1902; (C.U.P., 1930.) pp. 323-7; and Clough, Blanche Athena, A Memoir of Anne Jemima Clough (Arnold, 1897) pp.116-124.
with Miss Clough and together in 1866 they had formed local societies of school-mistresses at London, Liverpool, Manchester and other centres, one of their intentions being to arrange lectures by university teachers. After failing to obtain official support from either Oxford or Cambridge universities they had succeeded in persuading James Stuart, a junior Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, to give a course of weekly lectures in Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Leeds through the months of October and November 1867. This course, which was designed to demonstrate the art and method of teaching by 'elucidating the discovery and meaning of the law of gravitation' had attracted, in all, some 550 young women 'mainly school-mistresses and their elder girl pupils' and had been sufficiently successful to encourage Miss Clough and her friends to create a North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women. Possibly on the recommendation of James Bryce, who was a member of the Council, Pearson was one of three men consulted 'as to the order in which different subjects should be taught', the others being Benjamin Jowett and Professor Newman. He was then invited to take part in the expanded lecture programme for the Spring of 1868. It

16 Memoir of Anne Jemima Clough p.122.
would be incorrect, however, to describe him as a founder of women's higher education in England, just as it would be to describe him as a founder of Christian Socialism or the Working Men's College. He happened to be available at the right time, he had the right kind of talents for the work, it was an approved Liberal cause, and he could do with the money. The initiative in the matter came from others.

The several courses of lectures must have created a good deal of interest and not a few wisecracks in the cities of Manchester and Liverpool. When, at this time, a writer for the Manchester Guardian reviewed a Life of David Garrick from the extraordinarily fertile pen of Mr. Fitzgerald, he could not resist remarking by the way,

Such facility in mastering a subject is, indeed, an enviable gift, and if Mr. Fitzgerald could only be prevailed upon to communicate his secret, his services would be absolutely invaluable to those young ladies who, as rumour has it, are in this very town absorbing successive departments of knowledge in courses of a dozen lectures each.17

The reviewer, however, did not go unchallenged. A few days later there appeared in the same paper a solemn refutation by a 'young lady' signing herself 'W.C.E.' and frankly owning to 'a past life of half the usual term of years'. The reviewer,

17 Manchester Guardian Mar. 14, 1868, Letter of 'W.C.E.'
she claimed, was quite ignorant of the nature of the lecture courses,

The lectures which are now being delivered by Mr. Pearson on early English history are intended to serve merely as pegs whereon to hang a course of reading, or as guide posts to conduct us into untried paths of serious, not to say difficult, study. The students are expected to follow the course of reading so well pointed out by Mr. Pearson, and to think out for themselves much which he merely intends to indicate. The questions set for written examination are designed to draw forth original thought and to compel research, and are not expected to be answered from the mere notes of the lectures. That this work is honestly and earnestly done in some cases I can confidently affirm; one would be bold indeed to say that it is so in every case.18

It seems that Pearson was doing his work with his usual thoroughness, and making a favourable impression on the large audiences of ladies of all ages who came to hear him and write their papers for him. He had the right equipment—a refined appearance, earnestness, and a decorous sense of humour. Professor H.A. Strong, who was appointed from Melbourne to the chair of classics at Liverpool records that Pearson's lectures were still remembered in that city nearly thirty years afterwards.19 The satisfaction appears to have

19 In his introduction to Pearson's, Reviews and Critical Essays 1896.
been mutual. Perhaps Pearson may have wished that the ladies would not be quite so prolific with their written answers, but the experience certainly convinced him that women had the capacity to receive 'the same intellectual training as men'.

A little after the publication of 'W.C.E.'s' letter Pearson's Early and Middle Ages of England appeared in the book shops. Most of the reviews were anonymously innocuous, but not so E.A. Freeman's. Freeman devoted to the History a signed Fortnightly Review article of seven pages. There had been no love lost between the two men ever since Pearson, as co-editor of the National Review in 1862-3, had reduced Freeman's contributions from one a quarter to one in six months as an expression of his disapproval of the latter's attacks on Brewer, Troude, Robertson, Liddell, and Stanley. Now Freeman's chance had come, and, never a conciliatory reviewer, he went about carving up Pearson with more than usual virulence.

His book does not give one the idea of his having any special vocation for history. He seems to have taken up history as a clever man might take up anything. He deals with things in the grand style, the philosophical style, the Prize Essay style ... He shows no sign of having really lived with his authorities or with his heroes. Or rather he has no heroes at all. Heroes are people to whom we look up, and Mr. Pearson looks down upon everybody.

20 Fortnightly Review April 1, 1868 pp. 397-401 in the volume covering January to June.

21 Ibid April 1, 1868, p. 397.
Pearson, in the preface to his work, had written of a 'science of history ... perpetually approaching a certainty which it will only not reach' and had asserted that 'the method under which a vivid narrative from a chronicle has been preferred to a critical induction will gradually be confined to its appropriate sphere in the literature of fiction'. To this Freeman replied

I must ... say that Mr. Pearson has at least the merit of acting on one of his own principles. No one can be more guiltless of anything like 'vivid narrative' ... I suspect that Mr. Pearson rather despised his period. [referring to volume one dealing with the Early Ages] Most people do till they understand it. Philosophers are especially apt to do so. I do not know what the 'science of history' is, but I suspect that it has very little to do either with the old Teutonic constitution or with the grand personal drama of the men who fought on Assandun and Senlac ... 22

He did allow, however, that the second volume formed 'a really good history of the reigns of John, Henry III and Edward I', in style 'somewhat heavy' but 'solid, sensible, in the main accurate ... '

Mr. Pearson [he condescended] has not despised the thirteenth century as he evidently despised the earlier ages ...

Having said this, however, he left the comparatively successful second volume and returned to harry Pearson through his

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22 Fortnightly Review April 1, 1868, p.398.
Early Ages, devoting nearly five pages to the exposure of what he asserted to be errors.

It was an embarrassing attack, particularly as it came while Pearson was still delivering lectures on the Early Ages to his ladies classes in Manchester and Liverpool. As soon as these were completed he returned to Oriel College and published an astringent pamphlet in reply. It was well-reasoned, and he comes out of the quarrel more favourably than Freeman. He admitted that the book had grown out of lectures at King's College, and that it was not based on the years of minute study which Freeman himself had devoted to the Norman conquest, but pleaded that its production was nevertheless justified. He had found, when he began teaching at King's College, that there was no satisfactory manual giving the results of recent researches in a popular form, and had set out to answer the need, drawing on an earlier study he had made of Carolingian history from the original sources, working as best he could at Roman Law, and for the rest drawing on, and where necessary comparing, all available authorities.

But the real quarrel between himself and Freeman, he claimed,

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Pearson, C.H., A Short Answer to Mr. Freeman's Strictures in the 'Fortnightly Review' on the 'History of England During the Early and Middle Ages', (London Bell and Daldy, 1868.) Dated, Oriel College, April 17.
derived from their opposite approaches to the same historical period.

He [Freeman] is an enthusiast for Saxon institutions, and dates the History of England from Hengist and Horsa; while I follow Sir Francis Palgrave in tracing it back to the Roman occupation. ... when Mr. Freeman talks of the 'old Teutonic constitution', I confess he is out of my depth, and I think he is out of his own. Nothing is more tempting than to group all events under a symmetrical theory, and to refer every institution and fact to a Saxon or a Roman original. But the life of a great society does not arrange itself in this manner, and even if the Saxons, when they came to England, made a clean sweep of the cities and the inhabitants, as Mr. Freeman seems to suppose, they must, from the very circumstances of a new settlement, have made some changes on the 'old Teutonic constitution'.24

He then went on to summarize the evidence for continuing Roman influence, quoting his main authorities, and listing a whole series of analogies between Roman and early Saxon law and language. Finally he dealt with Freeman's numerous allegations of error, admitting the justice of one or two, but taking issue with most, either on the grounds that they arose out of Freeman's pedantic orthography, or that it was simply a matter of following an authority of whom Freeman disapproved.

When Mr. Freeman deliberately charged me with a whole series of mistakes, he either knew that his own sweeping statements could be met with the answers I have made, or he did not. If he did not, the tone of inspired dogmatism with which he writes upon these matters is a little ridiculous. If he did, and trusted to my in-

24 A Short Answer etc. p.1.
capacity or unwillingness to reply, he deserves a condemnation which the public at least will not be slow to pass on him.\(^\text{25}\)

Having thus vigorously defended his reputation, he once more shook the dust of England off his feet and departed—this time for the United States. If he had not really been at home in the Early Ages of England—for Freeman was probably correct in supposing that he regarded his first volume as a professional task rather than a labour of love—he clearly delighted in his visit to the New World. As always he had excellent introductions—in New York to the editor of the three-year-old \textit{Nation}; in Boston to Emerson, Longfellow, Agassiz, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Davis Ticknor, James Russell Lowell, and Charles Eliot Norton; in Chicago to Horace White, the Editor of the \textit{Tribune}, and in Washington amongst others to Secretary of State Seward and Judge Chase, both of whom had contested the Republican nomination for the Presidency the year Lincoln was elected (1860). When he went south to Charleston he was able to stay with a planter he had known many years before in Blois. All these men appear to have entertained him warmly. Ticknor talked to him of the problems associated with expanding cities and national debts. Agassiz showed him his collection, 'point-

\(^{25}\) A \textit{Short Answer etc.} p. 20.
ing out the proofs against the Darwinian theory, and now and again ridiculing the superstitions of the religious world', and Emerson took him along to a sort of free-thinking seance. The editor of the Chicago Tribune procured him a ticket for the first Union-Pacific railway excursion to the end of the incomplete trans-continental line at Cheyenne, Wyoming, and William Seward invited him to a cabinet meeting in Washington to meet President Johnson.

Most of what he saw and heard aroused enthusiasm. His ten days in Boston (May 21-30) enjoying what he regarded as the best society in the world, were some of the happiest in his life, and perhaps because of, rather than in spite of his frail constitution and introspective character, he was much attracted by the sheer energy of the men he met in the frontier regions. Many years later he still regarded the navvies who had been constructing the trans-continental railway as the finest set of men he had ever seen and recollected how each man in a Cheyenne dancing saloon which he had visited one night had been a veritable 'Hercules armed'. It also pleased him to discover that Americans were, on the whole, a good deal less overbearing and omniscient than his own countrymen.

26 Memorials p.132.
It was after this visit to America that he first began those speculations which were later, in *National Life and Character*, to bring him his chief renown. If Pearson had a talent for any particular study it was the study of contemporary peoples and their destinies. This was where his natural bent lay, now as in his undergraduate and early graduate days. He was a good traveller. He observed shrewdly, appears to have been a fair linguist, generally found his way into conversation with the best-informed inhabitants, and invariably made a careful collection of statistics. Further, he had a predilection for long-term and large-scale views.

The immediate outcome of this latest journey was an article in the *Contemporary Review* on 'The Land Question in the United States'. In this he took issue with the predictions advanced in the latest *Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office* (Washington, 1867). The Commissioner had implied that there still remained sufficient acres undisposed of or unsold in the territories and states of the Union 'to accommodate over 532,388,000 inhabitants'. In Pearson's view, however, Americans would begin to be 'cramped for land' by the time their population had grown by another 28

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29 Ibid p.346.
twenty millions, in other words 'in little more than ten years'. In support of his argument he drew attention to the small proportion of the remaining land suitable for farming, to the wasteful use of land (in comparison with England), the acceleration of the settlement of the West by the new transcontinental railroads, the 'peacock'ing' of the country by speculators, the stubborn retention of their estates by white planters in the fertile South, and the increasing numbers of Chinese entering the country from the Pacific coast. As the area of unsettled land diminished, he argued, the steady stream of immigrants from both Europe and Asia would be directed, not as formerly into the countryside, but into the tenements of great industrial cities. Land prices would rise, wages would fall, until the working classes, like their Australian counterparts, would insist on protection from the competition of cheap immigrant labour, and foreigners would be forced to regard the Union as closed to them. Against the stereotype of a New World of unlimited promise in which men should feel it 'a joy to live' he placed his view of a middle-aged America about to experience for the first time, on a commensurate scale, the vice and poverty and mass unrest.

Pearson uses the Australian term. He had no love for the traffickers in land. 'Wherever the farmer goes, the land-jobber follows in his train, as the carrion crow waits upon the baggage mule.' (p.353.)
associated with the great cities of the old world. Only then, he suggested, would the value of the great American experiment in a Republican polity be truly known.\footnote{31}{Contemporary Review vol.ix, p.354.}

Altogether he was more right than wrong in his prophecies. It took rather more than ten years for the United States population to increase by another twenty millions (it was 38.8 m. in 1870, 50.1 m. in 1880 and 62.9 m. in 1890) but it was certainly at the time when the population had grown by this amount, in the late 'eighties, that the land supply began to give out, the largest cities began to expand at an unprecedented rate, and Labor began to use pressure to reduce immigration. The Frontier - any region of more than two and less than six people per square mile - was officially declared at an end by the Superintendent of Census in 1890,\footnote{32}{Bernard, W.S. American Immigration Policy: a reappraisal (N.Y. 1950) p.9.} and it was in the 'eighties that the population of New York-Brooklyn jumped from 1.7 to 3.4 million while that of Chicago also doubled itself, rising from 503,000 to 1.1 million.\footnote{33}{Statistical Abstract of the United States 1907 (Statistics Bureau Dept. of Commerce and Labor) pp.56-7.} In 1885, following numerous employers' attempts to break strikes by importing thousands of European labourers for this specific purpose, the Foran anti-contract labor bill was
passed by Congress, largely as a result of pressure from the Knights of Labor.\textsuperscript{34} He was less accurate in estimating the date when immigration from Europe would be severely restricted. This was partly because, thinking in terms of Australian conditions, he overestimated the power of American Labor, and partly because Chinese immigration, which he had imagined as a potent source of population pressure in the western states, was early cut off by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Although subsequent efforts to have restrictions placed on European immigration were made by the American Federation of Labor it was not, of course, until the 1930's, when the natural effect of the depression was added to the calculated effect of quota laws introduced in 1921, 1924 and 1929, that this was markedly reduced.

Having divested himself of his prophecies and solemn warnings Pearson turned to the laborious compilation of maps of England in the first thirteen centuries. Still incensed by Freeman's attack, and uncertain about his future career he applied himself to this task with the same self-martyring zeal which had led him in his undergraduate days to well-nigh starve himself, and which continued to possess him at various periods to the very end of his life. The results of these

labours, which occupied the remaining months of 1868 and the first part of 1869, were the permanent impairment of the sight of his left eye from the too close scrutiny of old maps, and the publication of a large folio volume, which, to the surprise of both author and publisher, sold out in three months and led to a third edition as late as 1888. This collection of maps with their accompanying commentaries he regarded as his 'best piece of historical work'. The free-hand printing of the numerous place names is a little amateurish and occasionally difficult to read, but the maps still repay perusal. He was obviously moved in compiling them by two concerns: that history should be as 'scientific' and factual as possible, and that it should embrace not simply wars, battles, dynasties, and constitutions but the growth of society as a whole - a view which J.R. Green was soon to popularize with his *Short History of the English People* (1874).

With the maps completed there was little to do but retire to the now remodelled cottage at Farnham Royal and read, entertain friends, go horse-riding and make occasional visits to London or Oxford. When Pearson entertained in his 'cottage of gentility' he probably did so with some little

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style. Amongst his guests during this period were the distinguished New Englander Charles Eliot Norton and his wife Susan. He had met the Nortons in Boston on his visit to America and had found both husband and wife charming, regarding the former as the very pattern of the sort of liberal gentleman he himself aspired to be, scholarly, widely cultivated (like Acland he was a close friend of Ruskin) yet thoroughly in sympathy with 'the primitive habits of a New England village, and with the democratic tone of American institutions'.

It was during this period of genteel rustication that Pearson received an astonishing letter from his old friend W.J. Stephens in Sydney, informing him that he, of all people, was being impersonated in New South Wales by a mate of the notorious Thunderbolt who had bailed up a bar eighty miles 'back o' Bourke' and mortally wounded a policeman. The newspaper reports of the trial of 'the criminal Pearson' at the Bathurst Assizes in May 1869, make it clear that this was no ordinary bushranger. Before passing sentence of death the judge had stated that

36 The Nortons had come to England and Europe on a five years' visit bringing their children. It was during these years abroad that Mrs. Norton died. (Norton, S. and Howe, N.A., Letters of Charles Eliot Norton, 2 vol. 1913.)
The prisoner was evidently a man who had had a liberal education, and one whom he believed was most respectably connected. It was a sad and melancholy picture to see one so young in such a position through the pursuit of the worst of crimes.37

After listening to a long homily on seeking forgiveness followed by the sentence of death the prisoner had 'bowed gravely to the Court' before his retirement to the cells. There he had not only written a detailed account of the shooting, exonerating his fellow bushranger, but also 'letters to a noble lady in England, as to his sister, and also to gentlemen whom he designates his "brother officers"'.38 Either in these or other letters he had revealed enough knowledge of the real Pearson's life to prompt Stephens to write for corroboration of the details and perhaps identification of the impersonator. Pearson wrote back on paper prominently stamped with the Athenaeum Club letterhead,

37 Sydney Morning Herald, May 11, 1869 p.2. Report, abridged from the Bathurst Times, of the proceedings in the Bathurst Circuit Court on Tuesday, May 4.

38 S.M.H. June 17, 1869 p.4. The young man, who had claimed at the trial that his case had been prejudiced by the absence of an important witness, was probably hoping to alarm the judge into commuting his sentence to life imprisonment. If this were his aim it met with success. The day of his execution was at first delayed one week 'in order that the Governor and Executive Council may take into consideration the statements forwarded by the Judge who tried the case' (S.M.H. June 17, 1869 p.4) and the sentence was later commuted to 'penal servitude for life, with hard labour, the first three years in irons'. (S.M.H. July 3, 1869 p.5).
My dear Stephens,—Many thanks for your letter. If one is to be hanged, one may as well know of it. I enclose you a short statement of facts bearing upon the points in question which you will perhaps send to the Sydney papers if there seems to be any occasion for it. I am just leaving England for a month's holiday in Sweden but shall send on your letter to my brother who is a barrister and who must do what he thinks best. It is just possible, I think, the young man may be one of his clerks who went to the bad... Meanwhile I am rather grateful to him for having elicited a letter from you which I failed to do, though I have written twice to you, and have also discharged two thick volumes to you which I hope you duly received. [More likely than not Pearson's recently published two-volume History.] 39

Once again the developing careers of their mutual Oxford friends come under review.

You are duly remembered by the wise and good at all our gatherings. You will have seen that Parker got in for Perthshire to the immense astonishment and satisfaction of his friends. I believe he has made a good impression in the house. Goschen is doing very well at the Poor Law Board.40 His rapid promotion excited great jealousies but he is living them down, and his powers of real solid work are being recognised. Brodrick is rather out of heart just now. It was a great disappointment to him not getting in for Woodstock, and he sees no chance of any other opening at present. Fremantle is the same simple good fellow as ever, doing lots of work in a London parish, and getting to be known as a liberal parson. Oxenham I have not seen lately. I believe he is too liberal for his new Church [the Roman Catholic] but is not yet inclined to slip the cable and return. Arthur Butler's health is


40 Goschen had been returned at the head of the poll for the city of London in 1868 and had entered Gladstone's first cabinet as president of the poor law board. He was noted at this time for his zeal in reforming local government. (D.N.B. 1901-11.)
improving. He is now fishing in Scotland, and is going to shoot over the Oriel farm in September. I hope he may soon be able to resume work. I fancy over-nursing himself had something to do with his break-down as well as over-work.

Finally he commends to Stephens the friend who had accompanied him across Europe on his return home from Australia.

I gave a friend, W.C. Pepys, a letter of introduction to you some months ago. I hope he will get to Sydney, and that you will overlook the fact of his being introduced by a convicted bush ranger. He is a very good fellow; like many others wanting occupation and work ... I still wish very much to get back to Australia. Living there fairly spoiled me for England.

The world was moving by and Pearson was standing still, attempting to keep up appearances but in reality in the same position as W.C. Pepys. He was not yet prepared, however, to sacrifice the income of his Oriel Fellowship for another Australian gamble.

In October of the same year employment came. The Moral Sciences Tripos at Cambridge was being reorganized, and a lecturer in Modern History was required. Henry Sidgwick, later Professor of Moral Philosophy, gives a candid enough account of the way in which he offered the lectureship to Pearson.

I knew that Pearson had at the time no permanent work, and thought it would be a great thing if we could secure him. But the position and stipend (200 l. a year) seemed so inadequate to his claims that I did not
venture to offer it him directly. I wrote him a letter ostensibly asking him to recommend a candidate, but so worded as to make clear that he could have it if he liked. He replied accepting; and for two years he resided in Cambridge during term time as Trinity lecturer in Modern History.

I am afraid that, in writing to him, I drew a veil over the probable average calibre of his pupils... 41

The fact was the modern history at Cambridge in 1869 simply did not attract the able undergraduates. It had no scholarships and no prestige. Like Stubbs at Oxford Pearson found that the students who attended his lectures took no interest in anything outside the strait way prescribed by the syllabus. 42

Some of them did not care to work at all, and the others worked in a spirit of the merest cram. I sickened over the drudgery of contriving answers to possible questions in the schools. 43

Sidgwick soon saw that although Pearson 'took great pains with his work' he was frustrated by it. Probably he would have given it up even earlier than he did had he not greatly enjoyed the society he met within and without the college. There was genial talk and spirited argument in the Trinity common room, there was his membership of a short-lived 44

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41 Memorials pp.179-80.
42 D.N.B. (1901-11), article on William Stubbs. In later years Stubbs complained that he had 'scarcely a good class or any of the better men', and that 'the historical teaching of history has been practically left out in favour of the class-getting system of training'.
43 Memorials pp.139-40.
Republican Club in which his 'precise knowledge served as a useful corrective to exuberant imagination',^44 and there were pleasant little dinner parties in his rooms in Nevile's Court and in the homes of married colleagues. He could return to his country cottage out of term time and in 1870 he was able to make his annual journey abroad - this time to Spain. But if he had felt dissatisfied with his academic status and prospects as Professor of Modern History at King's College, London, how much stronger must his discontent have been now! In the Autumn of 1871, at the conclusion of his second year at Cambridge, he announced that he had decided once again to emigrate to Australia. Wearily Sidgwick wrote off to a London friend:

Pearson has just left us to waste his culture on the Bush. So we are looking for a historian. You have not in Editorial capacity come across any impecunious genius, I suppose?^45

It is obvious from the last two pages of Pearson's 'Story of My Life', which ends at this point, that for years afterwards, perhaps to the end of his life, he continued to

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^44 Memorials p.183. Reminiscence of Dr. Jackson, one of the seven original members. In the early 1870's republicanism had several prominent supporters including Sir Charles Dilke, Joseph Chamberlain, Frederic Harrison and Goldwin Smith. See Elisabeth Wallace, Goldwin Smith: Victorian Liberal, (University of Toronto Press, 1957) p.150.

weigh the wisdom of this decision in his mind. As in 1864 he seems to have wavered until the last. The chief ostensible reason for the decision was the deterioration of his eyesight. About Easter of this year he found that, as a delayed result of his preparation of the early maps of England, he had almost lost the sight of his left eye, while his right could not be trusted for heavy work. The doctor who examined him advised that the sooner he gave up books and returned to country life the better. What could be more reasonable than that he should think of his South Australian farm, situated in what he considered one of the prettiest places on earth? Yet even after he had announced his decision he seems to have let it be known that, could a suitable position be found, he might still remain.

I do not know how this lectureship came to an end, [wrote George Brodrick in after years], but I clearly remember his telling me - I think, on that occasion - that, if he could only see his way to secure income of £300 a year, in a congenial post, he would remain in England. I at once wrote to Goschen, [by now First Lord of the Admiralty] saying that I thought it would reflect little honour on his friends if he were forced to go back for want of such a salary, and I am still of that opinion.

\[demorials\] p.160.
Did he really want an academic post - even if it were a good one? Pearson's more influential friends seem to have had their doubts.

The Liberals had come into power in 1868; but I found that, unless I urged my claims by incessant importunity, there was no chance that I should get even the smallest employment. It was sufficient for my friends that I was known not to be in want.47

He had already resigned from the King's College professorship - was it worth his friends' while making an effort to get him into a good Oxford position from which he might retreat in the same fashion? Grant Duff's attitude was probably fairly representative.

We were all extremely sorry when he determined to transfer himself permanently to Australia. We should have wished to see him Professor of Modern History in Oxford. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that he never really liked the life of that place, and I more than doubt whether he would have had anything like as much pleasure out of his residence in the University as he found in Australia.48

Pearson's own account of his rejection of the offer of a newly-founded Oxford Praelectorship in Ancient History indicated the confusion in his mind: 'The appointment was just what I should have liked - a small course of lectures,

47 Memorials p.140.
48 Ibid p.177.
not entailing residence, and a small salary of £200 a year' - this despite the remark to Brodrick about the £300 minimum. Ostensibly he rejected the Praelectorship, not because of the salary, but because he scrupled to lecture in a subject which he had never made a special study, even though 'from the small stipend offered, no man who had made the subject a study was willing to stand'.

I have doubted in later times whether I was not over-scrupulous; but I suppose the result would have been the same in any case. For, about Easter 1871, I discovered that I had almost lost the sight of my left eye ... etc.\(^4\)

In other words he had gone on questioning this decision long after settling in Australia, despite the seemingly decisive factor of his failing eyesight.

Obviously the state of his eyes did not compel him to leave England. Had he been threatened with consumption the case would have been different, but one hardly needs to travel to the Antipodes to rest one's eyes. He was no longer under any illusions about his capacity to make a fortune from the land - indeed, he had calculated that even under good conditions the income he could wring from his farm would not compensate for the surrender of his Oriel fellowship. The

\(^4\) **Memorials** p.140.
fact was that he emigrated to Australia a second time because he was constitutionally unable to bear any routine indefinitely and even the retreats to Farnham Royal and the Continent had become routine. The influence of the Rugby and Evangelical traditions might still be strong enough to screw him down to a single occupation for a limited time - might even drive him to work at it with a kind of puritanical fervour. But never indefinitely. Place him under a public school regimen, confront him year after year with the same sort of lecture class, settle him in an Oxford College, sequester him in an English or South Australian village, ensconce him in a headmaster's study or yoke him to a political party - invariably there came an explosion. Older friends like Goschen and Grant Duff must have known this. If Pearson was talking of going to Australia there was only one thing to do - stand aside and wish him well.
Chapter IV
C.H. PEARSON IN HIS EARLY 'FORTIES

From an undated portrait by the Melbourne photographer J. Botterill of 19, Collins St. East, presented to the S.A. Archives by Miss Mabel Hardy, daughter of Arthur Hardy Esq. As Botterill was not at this address on Pearson's first visit to Australia and had moved out of it by 1875 the photograph must have been taken between Dec. 1871 and Dec. 1874, most probably when Pearson was on his way through to S.A. in 1871.
Chapter IV

NEW AETHER

'The passionate craving after unknown worlds -
New aether, where the languid pulse may beat
Quicker, the brain teem, and the dream be true ... '

Pearson in 'The Canoness',
a poem published in 1871.

On his recent visit to the United States Pearson had
enjoyed new standards of comfort in travel, both by land and
sea, and in writing his subsequent account of the 'Land
Question in the U.S.' had not failed to prophesy a growing
patronage of the route from Europe to the Far East via the
transcontinental railroad that was shortly to join New York
with San Francisco.

... it requires no knowledge of business to foresee that
passengers to China will prefer the route of thirty-five
days by New York, in some of the best-managed steamers
of the world and in the splendid sleeping-cars of the
Western Railways, to sixty days' passage in the Peninsular
and Oriental steamers, which are neither cheap nor well-
managed.1

This was the route he now planned to take on his voyage to
Australia, intending, as he went, to write periodic letters
to the Spectator about his experiences.

1 Contemporary Review, vol. 9, 1868, (Nov.) p. 351
California was the place that interested him most, mainly because of its resemblance to Australia. Whether it was because of the superior quality of the men who had ventured to emigrate there, or the general prosperity, or the universal habit of carrying guns which had persisted until very recently, he found there a 'frank courtesy' in the manners of the 'lower classes' which he had missed elsewhere in America. He found there also the Australian problem of denominational or secular education (with the Irish Catholics agitating strongly for the former) as well as the question whether or no Chinese should be allowed free entrance. On the latter issue he was himself undecided. His liberal training gave him an instinctive sympathy with the notion of free entry, but as in his article on the land question written after his earlier American visit he forced himself to ask whether the principle really would work. The Republicans, who had long defended it were now changing their minds, and he was 'more than doubtful' whether they should be blamed. He did not give much weight to the charges of exceptional immorality which were brought both in California and Australia against the Chinese, but he did question the wisdom of allowing large numbers of an alien and 'inferior' race to enter a country where working-men
would come to regard them with increasing hostility as the price of their labour fell. There was an unsolved negro problem as it was, and in that case the provision of 'bare justice' had only been accomplished at infinite cost.  

Some time about the end of October, after calling in at New Zealand, he sailed through the Heads of Sydney Harbour in a mood of elation which the mud flats and mangrove swamps of the Port Adelaide 'river' can hardly have evoked on his first Australian landfall six years before.

As I steamed up the bay and saw the white houses crowning the hills on either side, the terraced gardens, the mountain spurs that run out into the sea, the old faith came back upon me that this was the loveliest home ever found by a large population.

On the city itself, which was associated in his mind with the hospitality he had enjoyed on his previous visit, he looked with affection. At least the early inhabitants had not imposed on so promising a setting an ugly grid of 'straight broad boulevards intersecting one another with hideous monotony'. Streets, some of them 'narrow enough for the houses to over-shadow the road', had been allowed to grow up along early paths and bullock tracks, and it was still possible for the eye to light occasionally on a decorous red-brick

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Georgian building sandwiched among the stone and plaster structures of more recent years. He feared, however, that these 'irregularities' would be swept away in time by a colonial taste which generally took as its urban model the younger city of Melbourne 'with its massive bluestone palaces, banks and warehouses standing square to the rectilinear streets which traverse hill and valley without swerve'.

Having come straight from the rapidly growing American cities of Chicago and San Francisco it was natural that he should compare them with Australia's largest cities, especially the prodigy Melbourne, which in 1866 had nearly equalled Chicago in size. Melbourne he thought a more impressive city than either of its American rivals - if impressiveness was to be measured by the scale and solidity of buildings and the space devoted to streets and gardens. And in making this judgment he had in mind the old Chicago, undamaged by the calamitous fire which had swept through it less than three months before on October 8 and 9. But the pre-eminence of Melbourne was due to a boom period which appeared to be coming to a close. He saw in Australia 'nothing like the feverish energy of American life'. Expansion was continuing and would continue, but on a diminishing scale, and he reiterated the
view he had advanced in *Essays in Reform* (1867) that 'stolid conservatism' was more to be feared in Australia than 'a reckless spirit of innovation'.

But he had not returned to Australia intending to identify himself with the fortunes of her cities. It was the Bush, and the dream of an ideal life as scholar-farmer that had drawn him back, and by January 3, on which date he resumed the parochial duties of J.P., he had come to rest in Melrose. The township had changed in his absence. His fellow graduate of Oriel, T.H. Twopeny, was now dead. Mrs. Searle had taken her three boys to England for their schooling. There was no resident Anglican Missioner for the outlying districts let alone a curate to attend to local needs. The Church of England was struggling hard to keep its head above water in the whole northern area, and Melrose, having made the effort to erect its own church had almost immediately been denied the presence of a priest. In fact for most of the years of Pearson's absence, from 1866-7 to 1870-1, no records of the church whatsoever had been entered in the Reports of the Adelaide Diocesan Synod, with the exception of a note that £7.11.3 had been collected in 1870-1. Pearson's arrival may well have had something to do with the reappearance of statistics in the

4 S.A. Govt. Gazette.

Three of these new lay readers, including Pearson, were new arrivals to the district, all probably drawn there as much by its beauty as the chances it offered of a reasonable living, for they were none of them the kind of men one would expect to find associated with an average northern South Australian township of under 300 souls. The two other newcomers were Dr. Matthew Moorhouse and Clement Giles. Dr. Moorhouse, a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, had been persuaded to emigrate to South Australia in 1839 by the Rev. William Ridgway Newland, one of the prominent early colonists. Before emigrating he had been appointed Protector of Aborigines by the Imperial Government, a post whose duties he carried out in a markedly humane fashion for many years. In 1856-9 he had lectured in England to encourage emigration to South Australia, and on his return had been elected to the second parliament and appointed Commissioner of Crown Lands. After interesting himself in various country properties he finally settled in 1870, at the age of 57, at 'Bartagunya', a relatively small sheep station in the Flinders Ranges whose paddocks ran down to the outskirts of Melrose village.
For the next six years until his death in 1876, Moorhouse was a kind of unofficial squire of Melrose, taking the lead in all activities and continuing to practise his profession when needed, generally gratuitously. 

Clement Giles belonged to that small circle of South Australian families into which Pearson had immediately been introduced on his earlier arrival in South Australia. His father was the well-known William Giles of 'Beaumont' and one of his many sisters had married F.W. Stokes of 'Coonatto', who in turn was a close friend of Arthur Hardy. He had early been appointed an overseer on a Grant and Stokes station and for several years before settling on his own account in Melrose had been manager of their well-known station 'South Avenue' in the south-east part of the colony. In later years he was elected secretary and later London representative of the Farmer's Co-operative Union, member of the House of Assembly (1887-1902) and in 1917 sole representative of Australian farmers on the compulsory wheat pool. Although his formal education had ceased at the age of fifteen, he was a well-read man. His son Stuart, an early graduate of Adelaide University who still lives on the old Melrose


6 See p. 109 above, footnotes 34-5.
property, remembers him often browsing in the pages of Gibbon and Alison. In the South Australian House of Assembly he was known as a careful student of land and pastoral questions, and no doubt spent many an hour discussing these with his professorial neighbour. Like his brother-in-law F.W. Stokes, and like Pearson himself, he spent his last years in England, where one of his Australian-born sons eventually became Lord Mayor of the City of Westminster.

The fourth lay-reader was F.J. Whitby whom Pearson already knew as the jovial manger of 'Willowie'. With such exceptional men as neighbours, with the amenities and house-parties of 'Coonatto' a short 20 odd miles away, with access to all his books and with the prospect of friends and occasional travellers from overseas coming to stay in the comfortable house he planned to erect at 'Haverhill', it was by no means a life of dismal isolation to which he had committed himself. Indeed it was only a few months after his arrival in Melrose that he met his future wife at a gay 'Coonatto' houseparty.

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7 Alison's many-volumed History of Europe during the Revolution and up to the coup d'état of Louis Napoleon had a great vogue in the mid-nineteenth century as the first comprehensive account of its subject.

8 Obituary notice, S.A. Register, July 28, 1926.

Giles died July 19, 1926.

9 In World War II. A letter this son wrote to his Melrose counterpart on his election is preserved in the township's council chambers.
The circumstances could hardly have been more propitious for the opening stage of a courtship - the celebrated hospitality of 'Coonatto', delightful autumn weather and a gathering of high-spirited intelligent young people including Arthur Hardy's daughter Mabel, John Cockburn, a future premier of the State, then a twenty-one-year old medical student taking a holiday from his studies at King's College London, his brother who was slowly dying of consumption, and Edith Butler, a young English lady of 19 or 20 who was in the colony, like the Cockburns, on a short visit.

Pearson had been introduced in advance by Mrs. Stokes as a 'great acquisition' to the district, a learned and charming man who could tell 'any number of good stories'. On arrival he quickly justified this introduction. Perish the thought that he had written histories of the Middle Ages! He threw himself into the life of the party, went on the long

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10 Mabel Hardy was a talented amateur actress and a woman of some enterprise. When there was a decline in the family fortunes she bought, with a Mrs. Barton of Melbourne, the first typewriter in Adelaide and founded a typewriting service which is still operating. It was she who presented to the S.A. Archives the portrait of Pearson which appears at the head of this chapter. (Information from her niece and namesake Miss Mabel Hardy of Unley Park, South Australia.)

11 John's Notable Australians (1906), entry under 'Cockburn, Sir John Alexander, K.C.M.G.'

12 Memorials p.192. The whole of this account of the courtship is based on Mrs. Pearson's reminiscences.
canters over the open plains on his own spirited little horse 'Vixen', told humorous stories with a dead-pan face, enthusiastically played whist with his host in the evenings and politely listened to the music making. He knew how to make himself agreeable to pleasant young people of either sex and now he put his best powers forward. What could be more appropriate, as he cantered beside Edith Butler, than to bring the conversation round to his favourite poet Robert Browning, and to quote some apposite stanzas from 'The Last Ride Together'. Forget the inhibitions of an evangelical childhood, the removal from Rugby, the plaguing sicknesses, the frustrating doubts and scruples, the narrow life of London lodgings, the tedious lecture classes, the laborious writing of history books. All that mattered was the rhythmical movement of fine horses and youthful riders over an endless grey-green plain.

Then we began to ride. My soul
Smoothed itself out - a long-cramped scroll
Freshening and fluttering in the wind,
Past hopes already lay behind.
What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
So might I gain, so might I miss
Might she have loved me? just as well
She might have hated, who can tell!
Where had I been now if the worst befell?
And here we are riding, she and I.13

13 Robert Browning, 'The Last Ride Together', stanza IV.
The party was such a success that Pearson took the bold step of inviting all the young people over to stay a day and a night at his small wooden cottage at 'Haverhill' which was serving as a temporary homestead until the stone house could be built. To prepare for the sudden influx of visitors he left a day in advance and was standing in front of his cottage ready to welcome them when they drove up - a lonely, rather frail, but not unattractive figure.

I remember him very well as he stood bareheaded on the verandah to receive us - his intellectual face lit up with eager pleasure, his beautifully formed head, silvery white, even then. He was slightly stooping, and his face, with its refined and perfectly cut features, bore signs of physical and mental suffering. His large pale blue, gentle-looking eyes were covered with spectacles. The contrast between him and Mr. Stokes was very marked. Although the same age, Mr. Stokes looked a comparatively young man.14

Although the visit was very quickly over, Pearson and Miss Butler managed to spend the better part of a morning in each other's company - she sketching the cottage and Mount Remarkable, he watching her at work and talking. But there was nothing conclusive about their decorous tête à tête, for in the afternoon they parted with seeming finality - she intending to return soon to England with her father and stepmother, he to devote himself to his farm.

One can be sure that Pearson was now applying himself to the problems of farming with the same scientific enthusiasm he had formerly shown in the designing and construction of his tree-felling machine and in the sinking of his well to the exceptional depth of one hundred and forty feet - and probably with more success. His aim seems to have been a model mixed farm with wheat as the main source of income but with substantial departments devoted to pigs and poultry and possibly fruit trees. The present owner of the property, a hale old man whose father was one of Pearson's neighbours, remembers a 'terrible lot of almond trees' on the flat near the creek, and a massive stockyard, quite the largest in the district with rails eight to nine feet high, which he believes Pearson had constructed for the breaking in of brumbies by native stockmen. He is certain that his present rain gauge used to belong to Pearson who had the responsibility of sending reports to Melbourne at regular intervals.

In addition to the general running of the farm there was the building of the house. The ruins of this building now stand in the middle of a wheatfield near the top of a gentle rise, the walls demolished to provide stone for extensions to the homestead of the present owner of the land. By all
accounts it was a comfortable house, modest in size, but faithfully built and, as houses went in those parts, cool. When it was pulled down in recent years 'loads and loads' of perfectly preserved seaweed were discovered in the ceiling which Pearson, nothing if not thorough, must have had carted up the thirty miles from Port Germein through a pass in the Flinders Ranges. He was just as solicitous to provide warmth in winter, for all six rooms were provided with fireplaces surmounted by the inevitable cedar mantel piece. The three front rooms looked towards the Mount and opened through French windows on to a verandah. The kitchen was housed in a separate building at the rear connected with the house by a covered, flagged pathway, and there was a fair-sized cellar. The house certainly provided all that Pearson required for the life he had contemplated before emigrating — a study with a pleasant view and just enough room to put up guests with comfort. Well before the house was completed he was thinking of friends he might ask up. At the conclusion of a letter to his Sydney friend W.J. Stephens introducing the liberal South Australian divine Archdeacon Marryat, he wrote hopefully,  

For many of the following details I am indebted to Mr. F.J. Smith, the present owner of that section of the original 'Haverhill' estate on which the remains of the house stand, and to Mrs. M. Challinger of Adelaide whose family was the last to inhabit 'Haverhill'.


I am farming and building very much according to programme. How my farming will answer I cannot yet say, but the crops promise to be excellent. My building has been thrown back by the heavy rains, but I hope to have a decent house to receive my friends in. So if you can run over for the Christmas vacation pray do. There is a railway station within 100 miles of me.

Pearson, however, was not to be at home in the Christmas vacation. Towards the end of the year he travelled south, ostensibly at least, to advise on the establishment of a university in Adelaide. The first step had been taken on September 17, when a private meeting of eleven clergymen and eight laymen representing 'almost every section of religious faith' had formed themselves into a University committee 'with power to add to their number, so as to secure a fair representation of all classes in the province'. Possibly on the recommendation of Bishop Short, who chaired the meeting, Pearson had been included amongst the twenty-three additional gentlemen then named. At a subsequent meeting on October 8 he was nominated or elected a member of the Executive Council, and his name appears on the sub-committee which got out the

16 Holograph letter in the Mitchell Library dated August 27. No year is given, but from internal evidence it must have been 1872.

17 Register, Sept. 18, 1872, 5c.

18 Minutes of the Council of the University Association, Sept. 17, 1872.

19 Ibid Oct. 8.
public circular calling for public subscriptions.\textsuperscript{20} What he contributed to the preliminary discussions, however, remains unknown, apart from an interesting minute to the effect that on November 26 he 'spoke in favour of their being no fees for admission to the Lectures'.\textsuperscript{21} If this radical suggestion is any guide he may well have aligned himself with Dean Russell, a fellow admirer of F. D. Maurice and his Working Men's College, who suggested at the first meeting that the proposed University should follow the London Working Men's College and 'arrange for the admission of students from among the artisan and business classes who can only spare their evenings for the purpose'.\textsuperscript{22}

But Pearson was not only concerned at this time with the establishment of Adelaide University. In the appropriate setting of the Adelaide Club he had met Edith Butler's father, Philip Butler Esq. of 'Yattalunga' South Australia and Tickford Abbey, Bucks., a redoubtable Englishman whose general air of command was reinforced by heavy bags under his eyes and white moustaches streaming out from his upper lip to fall in froths of mutton-chop whiskers. Like Arthur Hardy he had come

\textsuperscript{20} Minutes of the Council of the University Association, Oct. 22.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid Nov. 26.
\textsuperscript{22} Register, Sept. 18, 1872, edit.
out to South Australia in gentlemanly style shortly after its foundation and rapidly made a fortune from large sheep runs, some of which he owned in partnership with Alexander Grant of 'Grant and Stokes'. Both he and Grant had married into the gentry of Western Australia, Grant marrying the daughter of Sir James Stirling, founder of the Swan River settlement, he himself the son of the then Surveyor-General, Captain Roe, R.N., a son-in-law of Admiral Lord Lyons.23

In the early 1850's, at the height of the Victorian gold rush, when labour was at a premium, he had built a thirty-roomed mansion on 4,000 acres of freehold land some twenty miles north-east of Adelaide, but his wife, who had returned to England, was not to be tempted out to the colonies again, and he had had to retire from the South Australian scene, to settle eventually in a converted 12th century priory. He had nevertheless retained many of his investments in South Australia, including his costly colonial seat 'Yattalunga'—or as it was more often called locally, 'Butler's Folly'—and he now invited Pearson to join a number of guests he was entertaining there.24

23 Pastoral Pioneers of Australia, I, p. 147.

24 For this and most of the details relating to 'Yattalunga' I am indebted to the present manager of the property, John Berritt, Esq.
PHILIP BUTLER

From a portrait in Pastoral Pioneers of S.A.
'Yattalunga' was made for a generous-sized houseparty. It was large, cool, and exceedingly well appointed - even to the extent of having its own cellars for maturing wine grown on the estate vineyards. Everything had been designed to make English people feel at home. To Edith Butler even the undulating woody country viewed from the front of the house was 'not unlike part of our English county, Sussex', and perhaps she and Pearson, as they went riding and played croquet and sat at the long well-appointed table at dinner, tended to forget just how far away London and the Continent were. As he revived his pleasantest memories - stood once again looking out of Macaulay's library on to his superb walled garden, steamed endlessly down the Volga, explored the streets and galleries of Florence, marched beside a file of Polish insurgents - and as he watched the effect of his words on his young companion, much of the old youthful enthusiasm for Europe must have returned to him. How easy and delightful it must then have been for him to talk of further travel: from a distance the obstructions, like the ditches that separated Wilberforce's house from Clapham common, seemed non-existent.
Mr. Pearson [wrote Edith sadly two decades later] said that he would, if I wished, return to England in a year or two, and that we would go to Rome and Florence, and he would show me the old masters' pictures and statuary, and take me over the grand old historical buildings - a dream, alas! never to be realised.26

But the disappointments were to come: for the moment all was well.

Pearson and his host appear to have got on reasonably well together, although far from in general agreement on political matters.

We had always thought [wrote Edith] that my father's admiration for Gladstone gave him leanings towards Liberalism, but from the advent of Mr. Pearson on the scenes he developed into a violent Conservative, and they had fierce arguments sometimes, neither convincing the other, but both enjoying the fray.27

The important thing was that each spoke the other's language and knew how to argue vigorously without allowing differences of opinion to affect social relations. Whatever Pearson's views, he was clearly a gentleman and man of taste, and those attributes, when coupled with adequate means, were quite sufficient to make him an acceptable son-in-law. He proposed and was accepted. That it was no coolly calculated match is evident from the fact, reported by Sidgwick, that when Pearson

26 Memorial pp.198-9.
communicated the news to the wife of one of his former Cambridge colleagues 'he wrote as if not merely he was happy, but no one could ever have been equally happy before'.

The wedding took place in St. George's, Gawler, on the 10th of December, 1872. It must have been quite a social occasion, but as it took place in the days before the daily and weekly press had begun to devote several columns to such affairs, little record has come down. The Marriage Register in St. George's states that the bridegroom was 42 and the bride 20, that the service was conducted by the Rt. Revd. Augustus Short, Bishop of Adelaide, assisted by the Revd. Canon W.H. Coombs, Rector of Gawler, and that the witnesses were 'P. Cockburn, Gentleman, North Adelaide, and Alice Butler, Yattalunga'. The first-named witness was the young Englishman of 'singular charm', slowly dying of consumption, whom Pearson had met at 'Coonatto'.

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28 Memorials p.185.
29 Mrs. Pearson states that 'Mr. Frederick Pepys, a son of Lord Cottenham, was Mr. Pearson's best man; he had come to Australia for his health, but was slowly dying from consumption'. But Lord Cottenham had no son named Frederick, and the most probable son, the W.C. Pepys whom Pearson had accompanied across Europe, married in 1874 and lived until 1914. Presumably he was present and has been confused with Cockburn. Of the latter, Mrs. Faith Cockburn, a relative by marriage, writes: 'Patrick Cockburn died in 1875 ... He was, I have often heard, a clever and charming man'. (Letter of Aug. 18, 1958.)
After spending a few weeks in Melbourne, and a further period, until the Butlers left for England, enjoying the amenities of 'Yattalunga', the newly married couple finally set off for 'Haverhill'. It must have been something of an anti-climax for the young bride - six rooms instead of thirty, no passage-way or hall, the kitchen and servant's room in an outbuilding, and no well-grown trees for shade and protection - but by no means impossible, especially when furnished with the wedding presents and books they had brought with them. For a short time all appears to have gone well, although Mrs. Pearson is reticent about herself. Her husband, certainly, was as happy as she ever knew him to be. He was invigorated by the dry hot air, the country was looking well after recent rains, his theories with regard to the rearing of poultry were producing 'shoals of eggs', there were cultivated neighbours with whom, while despatching a wild turkey at dinner he could share good stories and laugh 'until the tears came into his eyes', and there were his books to keep him in touch with the larger world.

The idyll, however, was not to last long. No further rain came, the weather grew increasingly hot, flies swarmed, and the locusts came in their millions.30 'Haverhill',

30 Advertiser, Mar. 3, 1873, p.3.
situated as it was on the crest of a low rise, was sadly exposed to every blast of Centralian heat and dust. The north winds that sweep into Adelaide can be fierce enough, but to Edith Pearson, out on the dry plains of the back country, with no protecting gardens and no running water they must have seemed terrible. She became seriously ill and even attempted for a time to live in the cellar. Her husband, who positively flourished on the arid heat, undermined his new-won health in nursing her, and a cousin had to come the 200 miles north to assist. As soon as possible the Pearsons drove south for the remainder of the summer.

It was a nice dilemma that now confronted the would-be scholar-farmer. His means could hardly have extended to a summer house on Mount Lofty such as the Stoke's of 'Coonatto' were shortly to maintain and the Arthur Hardy's already possessed,31 while the alternative of an annual separation for several months was unsatisfactory to say the least. On the other hand he was only now, after investing large sums in the property, beginning to derive some return from his investment, to say nothing of the fact that Melrose agreed with him constitutionally better than any other place he had known. For

31 R. Barr Smith to Arthur Hardy, Aug. 6, 1873. (Letter in S.A. Archives.) Pearson's neighbour, Clement Giles, also had a house up there in later years.
the moment he could only wait and see what turned up, and persuade his wife to return to 'Haverhill' as soon as the weather had permanently cooled.

The Mount Remarkable district in the cooler months of the year could be, as Mrs. Pearson knew from her visit to 'Haverhill' in the spring of 1872 before her engagement, a delightful place, and her life there in the autumn, winter and early spring of 1873 must have compensated in some measure for her ordeal in the summer, particularly as they had several guests to stay for short or long periods, including Lady Charlotte Bacon, daughter of the fifth Earl of Oxford and a South Australian lady of great talent and individuality, Bishop Short, on one of his periodic journeys north, and the Misses Rosamond and Florence Hill, two English ladies, daughters of the Recorder of Birmingham, who were well-known in liberal circles for their interest in social reforms. The Misses Hill, on their return home, wrote a pleasant book called *What We Saw in Australia* in which they gave a lively picture

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32 Reminiscence of Mr. Stuart Giles. Lady Bacon's husband, General Anthony Bacon, had been the first to suggest South Australia as a good site for a new colony.

33 Hill, Rosamond and Florence, *What We Saw in Australia* (London, Macmillan, 1875). Florence Hill was the author, amongst other writings, of *Children of the State; the Training of Juvenile Paupers* (London, 1868).
of their visit to 'Haverhill'. They had made contact with Pearson by the usual means of a letter of introduction from a mutual friend in England, and he had immediately invited them to stay. During their sixteen days at 'Haverhill' they were taken to visit Dr. Moorhouse and his wife at 'Bartagunya', to the Whitby's at 'Willowie' and over the plains to 'Coonatto' where they watched their first big Australian shearing. Their driver on the visit to Dr. Moorhouse was Mrs. Pearson who figures briefly in their account as a spirited reinswoman, negotiating seemingly impossible creek crossings with aplomb.34

Before the two ladies set off to Laura in Pearson's waggonette Bishop Short arrived on one of his rare visits to the North, and this gave them an introduction to the unsectarian character of church worship in Melrose, which may, in this respect, be taken as representative of many an outback Australian township.

There is a large church at Melrose, but the township possesses no clergyman. Mr. Pearson, and other gentlemen living in the neighbourhood, take it in turn to read the prayers and a sermon. Each chooses his favourite author, and much variety in the views expounded from Melrose pulpit is said to be the result. But the Bishop, of course, conducted the service and preached on the Sunday he was at Haverhill. The attendance was crowded, for not only were the usual church-goers there, but the Wesleyan minister had closed his chapel and brought his congregation, no mean contingent, to hear the Bishop.35

34 What We Saw in Australia, p.200.
A township the size of Melrose could barely support one resident minister of religion let alone two or three. Consequently when the Church of England had been unable to station a curate there and the Methodists had sent a minister to fill the gap, Dr. Moorhouse, an Anglican lay reader, had given his full support to him, and in the reports which found their way into the Adelaide dailies is invariably mentioned as the chairman of any Methodist meeting. When, early in 1873, it had seemed impossible to maintain separate denominational Sunday Schools any longer, he and 'some other friends', concerned lest the village children should simply run about wild on Sundays, had thought of opening an 'unsectarian school on Sundays' in the projected Institute Building. To Melrose people who shared Moorhouse's views the Institute indeed had come to stand as a symbol of unsectarian unity, and when on March 27, 1873, after an introductory speech by Pearson, the foundation stone had been laid, the Secretary and Treasurer W.J. Brook had remarked:

There was one grand advantage about Institutes, and it was that they (sic) were allowed in them to breathe freely the fresh air of unsectarianism ... Here may friend meet friend, interchange ideas, and agree to form classes for their general improvement that will tend to elevate them both socially and morally, without violating in any way the rules of any sect or creed.36

36 Advertiser, Mar. 3, 1873, 3.
Pearson's speech on this occasion indicated his continuing interest, already manifested in his 1867 article on Australia, in the problem of educating the scattered families of the outback. Anticipating the work that is now done in New South Wales by the Bush Book Club and by equivalent organizations in other States, he had expressed the hope that the Institute would be able to distribute boxes of books to the neighbouring sheep stations for the use of the employees.

He was not destined, however, to participate much longer in the parochial, though in many ways representative, affairs and problems of Melrose. Even before the departure of the Misses Hill there had appeared in the Melbourne Argus of September 5th a letter recommending his appointment to a newly-created lectureship in history and political economy at the University of Melbourne. This letter, signed 'M.A. Melbourne', was almost certainly by Robert Murray Smith, his old Oxford contemporary and fellow debater in the Oxford Union. The two men had revived their acquaintanceship when Pearson had passed through Melbourne in December 1866 and again in 1872 when he visited the city with his bride, and no

37 Essays in Reform p. 204.
38 Advertister, Mar. 3, 1873, 3.
39 I assume this from the fact that Murray Smith posted a similarly worded letter to the University Council four days later, formally stating Pearson's position with regard to the post.
doubt Pearson had written to him during the year, mentioning the plight in which he found himself after his wife's inability to face the Melrose summer. He was lucky in having Murray Smith to look after his interests, for the latter was an astute politician, and could use his influence as a trustee of the Argus to good effect.

The new lectureship had been created in order to fill the gap left by Dr. Hearn's resignation from the Chair of History and Political economy in order to become Dean of the Faculty of Law. The University was short of money and the idea of the Council seems to have been to pay some local graduate a quarter of Hearn's professorial salary to do three quarters of his work. The tenor of Murray Smith's letter, and of a long Argus editorial which followed it, was that a decline in the status of history teaching in Melbourne was undesirable, that the History Chair should therefore be maintained, and that it should be offered to Pearson, a scholar of 'European reputation' who had only lately been 'sought by Trinity College Cambridge, as the best lecturer in modern history her authorities could select' and was now simply 'rusting himself away in some remote township in South Australia'. As a long shot, both letter and editorial suggested that wealthy

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colonists might well consider bringing honour to themselves and their country by endowing the desired Chair.⁴¹

Before the Melbourne University Council met to consider these proposals, Pearson had commenced his public life in Australia by launching into a series of six lectures on 'The History of England in the Fourteenth Century' delivered at weekly intervals in the Reading Room of the South Australian Institute. The subject, it might be imagined, was not quite the kind to produce much enthusiasm in a colonial town of 42,000 people, particularly when there was an admission fee of 1s. for each lecture.⁴² But the Adelaideians took their culture seriously. The South Australian Literary and Scientific Institution had actually been established before the foundation of the state at a meeting held in London as early as August 1834.⁴³ The Institute building itself, a visible expression of the city's cultural aspirations, had been built in 1859 at a cost of no less than £7,000, rather more than half the sum devoted to the erection of the houses of parliament.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Argus, Sept. 5 & 6, 1873.
⁴² Public Notice in the S.A. Register, Oct. 22, 1873, p.2. Mrs. Pearson's recollections of her husband giving lectures on 'popular subjects' in a crowded Town-hall (Memorials p.203) are quite astray here.
⁴³ Sinnett, F., An Account of the Colony of South Australia, (1862) p.90.
⁴⁴ Bailliere's South Australian Gazetteer (1867) pp.5-6.
A lecture on England in the fourteenth century by a former English Professor was just the kind of function for which the well-proportioned reading room, with its noble cedar-work, had been designed. The intelligentsia of Adelaide, led by the Governor and Lady Musgrave and suite, packed it to the doors.

What was rather more surprising, they continued to do so throughout the series, even on the fifth night which was 'decidedly oppressive ... entirely unfitted for the confinement of a lecture hall'. The chief reason for the lectures' popularity, apart from Pearson's personal charm of manner, was clearly the liveliness of his handling of historical material. From the reports in the Adelaide dailies it appears that he was here actually anticipating the new concept of history which J.R. Green was to popularize in his Short History of the English People, published in the following year (1874). Like Green, he set out, not to give a narrative of events simply, but to portray the life and social structure of England in the fourteenth century, drawing on a wide range of sources, including the writings of Chaucer and Gower and other lesser authors,

Advertiser, Oct. 22, 1873.
"YATTALUNGA' FROM THE WEST
From an undated photograph in possession of John Barritt, Esq. The main entrance was on the other, two-storeyed, side of the house.

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE, ERECTED 1859
'... the Institute, which stands on North Terrace, and has the appearance of an elegant mansion, very suitable to its position in the Belgravia of Adelaide.'

(The Misses Davenport Hill in What we Saw in Australia, 1875).
'the mass of political ballards then published', the public records, archaeology and natural history. So close, indeed, were the viewpoints of the two men, that when these lectures were published as one of a series of Historical Handbooks edited by Oscar Browning, Pearson felt obliged to state that they had been written before he had seen Green's history.

Six days after Pearson had delivered the first of these lectures the Council of Melbourne University met to consider appointments for the coming year. On the morning of the crucial day the Argus carried a sub-leader which once again lauded Pearson's merits and pointed out that the citizens of Adelaide were 'anxiously endeavouring to secure him for their new University'.

That University has yet its way to make, and its commencement has been less fortunate than the friends of education could desire. Such considerations are likely to have their weight with a scholar who loves his reputation and his work more than money. Mr. Pearson's natural place is evidently Melbourne, and not Adelaide.

But eminent scholars, even unworldly ones, have their price, and almost any sacrifice on the part of the university was

47 Pearson, C.H., English History in the Fourteenth Century, (London, 1877); one in a series of Historical Handbooks Ed. by O. Browning (9 vols., Divingtons, London, 1873-84.)


49 Argus, Sept. 29, 1873.
justified if it could provide the two to three hundred a year extra that would persuade him to come to Melbourne. Let the Council reduce expenditure on the ornamental grounds ('we should rather see the University reserve a wilderness than lose a man like Mr. Pearson') or, if that were unacceptable, sell or lease two to three acres of University land on Sydney Road - the University would never miss them. The Argus could hardly have barracked harder.

Thus when, in the afternoon, the Councillors were presented with a formal letter from Murray Smith to the Chancellor there was little in it to surprise them. Mr. Pearson, the distinguished historian, would be willing to accept the vacant lectureship if it were offered to him at such a salary as would warrant him making the move to Melbourne. If there were any further questions Mr. Irving of Wesley College, Mr. Gowan Evans of the Argus office and the writer would be pleased to answer them. The Vice-Chancellor, however, was clearly opposed to Murray Smith’s propositions and methods. After successfully moving for the reduction of the salary of the Lecturer in Logic, Geometry and Trigonometry and Algebra from £300 to £250 he proposed defiantly

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50 University Archives. Letter no. 514 of Sept. 9, 1873.
That the remuneration of the Lecturer in History and Political Economy be £250 a year without fees.\textsuperscript{51}

Discussion ensued, after which an amendment was moved, namely:

That the situation of Lecturer on History and Political Economy be offered to Mr. Charles H. Pearson M.A. Oxford at a salary of £500 per annum without fees - the appointment to date from the 1st of January 1874.

The amendment was carried, the motion negatived, and a telegram despatched to Pearson requesting him to answer immediately. No consideration at all appears to have been given to the applications of two Melbourne University graduates, John Henning Thompson M.A., second master at the Church of England Grammar School, and Charles Tynan, B.A., LL.B., a young barrister who later became Secretary of the State Education Department.\textsuperscript{52}

Although the salary offered was more than twice that which he had received from either King's College London or Trinity, Cambridge, Pearson trod warily. 'I accept', he telegraphed in reply, 'provided lectures do not exceed nine hours a week!' A week later the Chancellor, Sir Redmond Barry, received his first letter from Pearson - a brief and emphatic communication which must have given him pause to think.

\textsuperscript{51} University Archives, minutes of the Council of the University of Melbourne (1872-1877,) Sept. 29, 1873, p.85.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid, letters 538 (Sept. 23, 1873) and 545 (Sept. 20, 1873).
... In the unofficial letters I have had on the subject, I was given to understand that I should only be called upon for three lectures of three hours a week each. Even that amount of time is more than I was required to give at King's College or at Cambridge. I know by experience that such work leaves the lecturer very little time for independent study. I am not prepared to give myself up exclusively to teaching; & I am not certain that if I did so I should be the better teacher.

I am, dear Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
Charles H. Pearson.

As it happened, the Council had never considered giving Pearson more than nine hours of lecturing and when it assembled at a special meeting to consider his letter, after some discussion, it finalized his appointment.

At the conclusion of the lectures he wrote a brief note to the Melbourne University Professorial Board enclosing 'particulars of two or three slight alterations ... in the text-books for 1874-5, and in those for the H.A. Honour degree', requesting information about papers which he was to examine in February, and announcing that he would be unlikely to arrive in Melbourne before early February as he had 'a great deal to arrange before leaving South Australia'. A note in the margin of this letter indicates that one of the slight changes was to be the substitution of his own History.

53 Letter no. 570, Oct. 4, 1873. Mrs. Pearson discloses that her husband was at least as concerned to have time to supplement his income by journalism as to have 'time for independent study'. Memoriais pp. 204-5.

54 Council Minutes, Oct. 13, 1873, p. 92.

55 Letter no. 655, Oct. 28, 1873. See for marginal comment, Minutes of the Professorial Board, Nov. 5, 1873, p. 270.
of England vol. ii for the impossible L.A. Freeman's *History of the Norman Conquest*!

For the next three months he seems to have been living at 'Haverhill', possibly, if his wife held to her refusal to spend another summer in the north, alone. On December 4th he made his last recorded contribution to the public life of the little town by lecturing on the formidable topic 'Hit and Humour' to a meagre audience in the new Institute Hall, and on December 11th, he wrote from 'Haverhill' another letter to Melbourne University enclosing his Exam Paper for the first matriculation exam of February 1874, and explaining that he had been 'unexpectedly hindered by illness and other causes' from sending it in earlier.

What he did between December 11 and early February when he appeared in Melbourne, and what his feelings were as he prepared to take his leave from the house he had just built can only be guessed. His wife says that he was greatly distressed but nobly refrained from saying a word that might indicate this. Stebbing suggests that with his renewed health he would have been eager to enter into a life of larger responsibilities. Most likely they are both right.

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S.A. Register, Dec. 12, 1873, p.7. The village correspondent artlessly explained the poor attendance by remarking that 'Melrosites generally are not rich, and cannot afford to pay for amusements money that is required for housekeeping'. Presumably the money was in aid of the Institute building fund.
this occasion, as on so many others in his restless life, being drawn simultaneously in more than one direction. What is certain is that with his departure from Melrose he left much of the more youthful part of himself behind. The farmer setting out in the grey of the morning to see to his poultry, the suitor reciting Browning on horseback, the jovial host despatching a roast wild duck and laughing until the tears came into his eyes, changes perceptibly into a more austere figure, ambitious, distrustful of pleasure, consumed with an unremitting, at times fierce, devotion to what he considered to be his duty - a man who could exclaim harshly to his wife, when she pleaded with him to rest:

'Rest, rest - there is all eternity to rest in!' \(^{57}\)

\(^{57}\)Memorials p. 208.
Chapter V
Pearson had not emigrated twice to Australia to end his career almost exactly where he had commenced it, tamely lecturing on modern history to a few handfuls of colonial youths aged fifteen and upwards,\(^1\) at a salary little in excess of that paid to the leading head teachers in the State primary school service. This is not to say that he intended to skimp his lectures and give all his energies to journalism and other outside activities. He was too conscious of his reputation as a scholar and of his duty to his students to do that. He was by nature and training virtually unable to skimp anything, but he was not, as he had made clear to his friend Grant Duff in 1864, content to work quietly away in some scholarly backwater 'expecting no return except the consciousness of doing good work'. It was precisely this kind of fate that he had come to Australia to avoid. The 'Haverhill' experiment had recently given him the experience of complete independence and some provincial importance. When he had gone to Adelaide to advise on the founding of the University or to give a series

of public lectures, he had done so as a gentleman farmer and celebrated historian, a man beholden to no-one, and it was not to be expected that he would now settle down quietly in a subordinate position on the staff of Melbourne University. To add to his unrest Mrs. Pearson became seriously ill once again, and one can sense a subdued desperation in the concluding words of a letter to the South Australian Governor, Mr. Musgrave, written on March 19 during what he feared would be his last leisure hour 'for some months to come'.

I am sorry to say Mrs. Pearson has been very ill during most of her stay here, & is only beginning to mend. I fear the heat of Australia is too much for her constitution, & that we shall probably have to return before long to England. I shall not regret leaving Victoria, but am very sorry to think that I shall have to give up my home in South Australia.  

Two early clashes which he had with the University Council and Professorial Board, over relatively trivial issues, reveal his sense of frustration at this time. They also indicate that his old intransigence whenever real or imagined rights were at stake was still a trait with which new associates would have to reckon. The first clash took place before lectures had even commenced, the cause of the trouble

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2 Papers of Sir Anthony Musgrave, in the possession of his grandson, William Musgrave Esq. of Surrey, England. The letter was written primarily to remark on Musgrave's pamphlet *What is Capital* which had been sent to Pearson by the author.
being the February matriculation examination. Matriculation examinees had to be supervised, papers set and marked, and it had become customary for these functions to be performed in an honorary capacity by members of the University staff. As a matriculation examination was held three times a year this involved more than a little of the staff's time, as Pearson would quickly have learnt from his colleagues. Dr. Hearn, now Dean of the Faculty of Law - a man quite as intransigent and ambitious as Pearson - had already informed the President of the Professorial Board that as far as he was concerned Pearson had automatically taken over all his responsibilities in this matter.3

A week after receiving Hearn's letter, the President received another from Pearson 'stating that it was not his intention to examine the History papers of the "Matriculation" Examination without remuneration'.4 Pearson was immediately requested to communicate with the Council 'in order that the results of the Examination might not be delayed'. As there was no quorum at the next meeting of the Council it was not until March 11 that that body was able to read and discuss the letters by Pearson and Hearn, and to direct the Chancellor to draft letters in reply.5 Only

4 Letter no.189, Mar. 3, 1874, McCoy to Registrar.
5 Minutes, Mar. 11, 1874.
on March 21st, precisely one month after sending in his first letter of protest, did Pearson finally acknowledge defeat. From the aptly named Retreat Hotel at Brighton Beach he wrote curtly to the Chancellor,

My dear Sir, — Counsel decides that having set the questions I must look over the answers; so if you will send the papers to 3 Eliza Terrace I will come up on Monday morning and devote myself to them. 6

Clearly the Council now had an addition to the ranks of difficult men on its hands. If, immediately after his appointment, Pearson argued for a month and resorted to legal advice before consenting to mark 65 matriculation papers, 7 what trouble might he not cause when firmly entrenched?

For two months after this initial battle Pearson lectured away quietly. He had taken a house nearly opposite the university gates 8 and from there he walked across to his lectures six mornings a week. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, in a large room half-filled with the University

6 Letter no. 216, Mar. 21, 1874. If Pearson was down Earn was certainly still in the field. On the day before Pearson wrote this note the letter delivered a policy speech to the electors of East Melbourne, following this fait accompli with a letter to the Chancellor denying that his offering himself for a seat in Parliament at the approaching general election was in any way inconsistent with the tenure of his new office of Dean. (Council Minutes Mar. 30, 1874, and Scott p. 30.)

7 Letter no. 771, Oct. 10, 1874, p. 10 of a printed return to an order of the Legislative Assembly, Sept. 30, 1874.

8 No. 3 Eliza Terrace, on the corner of Grattan and Barry Sts. (Melbourne Directory, 1875.)
collection of 'objects of natural history' which was still awaiting removal to the National Museum, he lectured on Ancient History, and on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays on History of the British Empire followed immediately by Political Economy. For History of the British Empire there were thirty three students (twenty six of them non-graduating) for Political Economy ten and for Ancient History twelve, including one of the future architects of federation, John Quick, who was later to number Pearson amongst the 'very able and distinguished professors' who had extended his self-acquired knowledge to unimagined horizons during his early twenties. The classes were not large by present day standards (although they made up more than 30 per cent of the total number of students in 1874), but the programme of lectures was exacting enough. Pearson's new post was no sinecure.

The next clash with authority - a clash which may have proved costly to the university many years later - took place at the beginning of June. Before his arrival in Melbourne Pearson had asked to have Freeman's History of the Norman

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9 Letter no.141, Feb. 3, 1874. Registrar to Pres. Prof. Board.
10 Reminiscence in Melbourne Herald of Jan. 6, 1926.
11 In a book of miscellaneous statistics preserved in the University Archives the number of students attending lectures in 1874 is given as follows: Arts 71, Law 43, Engineering 18, Medicine 42 - a total of 174.
Conquest replaced by his own *History of England* pt. ii as an additional text for Honours in History of the British Empire, and this request had been granted. But Freeman still dominated the matriculation examination with his *General Sketch of European History* which had been introduced as the compulsory text book in the previous year. Although this second book dealt with European and not English history, Pearson, understandably enough, wished to replace it as compulsory text with one by an historian whose general viewpoint was closer to his own. Accordingly, through the Registrar, he now informed the Professorial Board that he wished Edith Thompson's newly-published *History of England*, then listed as one of the optional texts, to become the compulsory text. At a meeting on June 3rd the Board discussed the matter and requested the President 'to see Mr. Pearson and explain the objections to making English History compulsory'. It appears that Pearson was not satisfied by the objections or by the method in which they had been conveyed to him, and demanded or requested the right to present his case to the full Board, for on the following morning, in the Registrar's Office, he confronted the assembled Professors.

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12 First published in 1873 as the second volume in an Historical Course for Schools, ironically under the general editorship of E.A. Freeman. For Pearson it was actually a case of choosing the least offensive of what he considered to be two poor texts.

13 *P.B. Minutes, June 3, 1874*, p. 310.
One can imagine Pearson's sensitivity at this time to any real or imaginary slight, or any curtailment of powers which he had enjoyed at King's College. One can also imagine Hearn's possessiveness towards the subject for which he had so long been responsible. No doubt, too, the other Professors who had long been settled in Melbourne, McCoy and Halford, felt a certain proprietary interest in any matter involving matriculation policy. At all events the outcome of the meeting was a compromise: the same four text books would be set, but they would be divided into two parts - Freeman or Edith Thompson in part A, Dr. William Smith's Smaller History of Greece or his Smaller History of Rome in part B. Even then the change would not take place in the coming term (which was the normal time in the year for text book changes to be made) but exactly twelve months later.

Pearson did not forget this experience. Sixteen years later, when he was Minister of Public Instruction, both the University Senate and the Council wished to appoint a salaried Vice-Chancellor, and the Council sent first one and then a second deputation to request his help in obtaining the

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15 P.B. Minutes, June 4, 1874, p.311. The right of examiners to set their own texts was again raised four years later by the brilliant young lecturer, F.J. Pirani, whose protest led eventually to a judgment from the Visitor, Lord Normanby. (Scott pp.89-90.)
extra £1,500 a year that would be needed from the government. But he was not convinced by the arguments put before him, pointing out that there was already too much interference with the professors, and that a full-time Vice-Chancellor would be more than likely to increase this interference. In his own case, he argued, when he had been lecturing in History in Melbourne University, he had been 'tied hand and foot' neither asked 'what text book he would take or what method he would pursue'. The upshot was that Melbourne University went without a salaried Vice-Chancellor for another forty years.\footnote{Argus, June 5, 1874, 5a.}

On the evening of the day on which he interviewed the Professorial Board Pearson made a notable effort to extend his interests outside the round of regular lectures by chairing a meeting in the Athenaeum, Collins Street, 'for the purpose of initiating a debating club in connexion with the University'.\footnote{Scott p.170, Blainey pp.75-6. Blainey suggests that 'perhaps the fact that the government would have to increase its annual grant by about ten per cent in order to pay the salary of the vice-chancellor was the obstacle ...' It seems likely, however, that Pearson, as a senior member of cabinet, could have obtained the grant if he had felt strongly enough in its favour.} What made the move particularly notable was
the calibre of the young men who were drawn into the club and who used its forum for their first attempts at public speaking. Pearson must have perceived, before he had been lecturing very long, that the generation of students who had just graduated or were about to graduate, was, as a generation, a good deal more gifted than the one gathered into his own lecture classes. The establishment of a debating society might at once bring him into contact with this group and give him another taste of that formal speaking in which he had so delighted twenty years before in the Oxford Union. Exactly what part he played in the foundation of the society can only be surmised, but that it was a leading one seems clear from his presence in the chair at the opening meeting, and at every other fortnightly meeting subsequently held until November 31st of the same year. From the newspaper reports it appears that it was the usual custom, during the first year, for Pearson to sum up the arguments judicially before a vote was put to the meeting, and then, quite often, in response to a request from the members, to make a statement of his own opinions. The only other members of the University staff whose names occur in the reports of debates held during this year, and they occur only occasionally, were the young professor of Classics, H.A. Strong, a
firm friend of Pearson's who collaborated with him in the publication of two textbooks and edited his posthumous collection of essays, and F.J. Pirani the equally youthful Lecturer in Logic, Geometry, Trigonometry and Algebra who was to shock Melbourne two years later by opening a University debate on the possibility that life might have evolved from matter. 19

The list of young men who debated public questions under Pearson's chairmanship and occasionally listened afterwards to his own personal views was indeed a remarkable one. It included Alfred Deakin, 20 then an undergraduate of 17, who was destined before the passing of twelve years to invite Pearson to join his cabinet; William Shiels, a recent graduate in Laws who was to be Premier of Victoria in the 1890's and the author of an important bill, which Pearson actively supported, to extend the rights of women in the matter of divorce; Henry Bournes Higgins, who had graduated in April and was to be a leading promoter of University extension,

18 English Grammar (Samuel Mullen, Melbourne, 1876); Juvenal (Clarendon Press, 1887); Reviews and Critical Essays, (Methuen 1896).

19 Blainey p. 48.

20 Murdoch errs in his biography of Deakin when he gives 1876 as the year in which Deakin first took part in debates under Pearson's chairmanship. (Murdoch, Walter, Alfred Deakin: a Sketch, 1923, p. 22.)
Attorney-General in the first Commonwealth Labour Government and the Arbitration Court Judge responsible for the institution of an Australian basic wage; H.N.P. Wollaston, subsequently appointed first Commonwealth Comptroller-General and Permanent Head of the Department of Trade and Customs;21 Alexander Sutherland, a graduate in Arts of only a few months standing who was to become headmaster and proprietor of the notably successful Carlton College, a leader in the introduction of utilitarian studies into the University22 and the author of a book, much acclaimed overseas, applying evolutionary concepts to moral development;23 Richard Hodgson, another graduate of 1874 who took a doctorate in laws, was commissioned by the British Society for Psychical Research to investigate the claims of Madame Blavatsky and finally became Secretary to the well-known Society for Psychical Research in Boston, New England;24 T.F. Bride, then a Bachelor of Laws of a year's standing and assistant Librarian at the University, ultimately an LL.D. and the Chief Librarian of Melbourne Public Library; Theodore Fink, an undergraduate of 19, who was later to be appointed President of the epoch-

21 John's Notable Australians, 1906.
22 Blainey pp.104-5.
23 The Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct, 1898.
making Royal Commission on Technical Education of 1899-1901, President of another Commission on Melbourne University in 1902, and the influential Chairman of Directors of the Melbourne Herald; George Henry Neighbour (M.A. 1870, LL.B. 1871) sometime Principal of Carlton College and later a King's Counsel and Chief Clerk of the Supreme Court in Victoria; and one of the Topp brothers - either C.A. who became Victorian Public Service Commissioner or S. St. J. who became a leading advocate in the Equity, Insolvency, and Mining Courts of Victoria. When it is borne in mind that these ten men were all much of an age, and that the average number of students graduating from Melbourne University from 1867-1874 was precisely 11.5 (which can be set against the 1,055 graduating in 1955) this little debating club over which Pearson presided seems more remarkable than ever. It is not surprising that he should have said on November 31st, when responding to a vote of thanks 'carried with great heartiness' for his services as chairman, that he considered the debates which he had heard over the past six months 'to have been less rhetorical, but considerably more thoughtful and argumentative than those he used to be familiar with as an undergraduate in the Oxford Union'.

25 Argus Dec. 4, 1874, 7c.
Many of the issues debated were very much alive in Victoria in 1874, and ones on which Pearson himself had decided opinions - 'Is the Double Chamber System Necessary to Representative Government'? (June 16); 'Should Women receive the higher education which is at present confined to men'? (July 14); 'Should the Classics be replaced by More Modern Studies'?; 'Should the Victorian Government Assist Immigration'?; 'Is Democracy the best form of Government'?; 'Should Capital Punishment be Abolished'?; 'Should Members of Parliament Receive Payment'?; 'Is it ever Justifiable to Depart from Truth'?; 'Should Oaths be Abolished in Courts of Justice'?; 'Should the University be placed under the Control of the Government'?

In the brief Argus reports of the meetings Pearson's personal opinions, delivered at the request of the members, are only mentioned with regard to three subjects: he was against assisted immigration (which would have gone against his Free Trade principles), against a departure from truth under any circumstances (claiming, rigorously, that all such

No reports of the first two of these meetings appeared. The subjects in these cases are taken from advertisements giving notice of the meetings. Reports of the subsequent meetings may be found in the following issues of the Argus for 1874: July 29 (5c); Aug. 12 (5d); Aug. 26 (5e); Sept. 9 (5e); Sept. 23 (5d); Oct. 9 (6g); Nov. 20 (7f); Dec. 4 (7c). It is from these reports that the names of the debaters, listed above, have been taken.
departures were invariably 'followed by evil consequences'), and against the immediate abolition of oaths in courts. The report of his statement on the last-mentioned subject shows him thoroughly in character as the judicial chairman, and, incidentally, as a mid-Victorian English liberal.

At the request of the meeting, Mr. Pearson expressed his private opinion, which was that as civilisation proceeded a time would come when oaths would be no longer tolerated, but that considering their practical utility in the present state of society, it would be inadvisable to abolish them as yet from our courts. He thought, however, that the useless oaths at present required by universities and associations of various kinds should be done away with as soon as possible. 27

For the kind of influence he had on the younger members of the Club there is only one witness, although a witness of the first importance. Alfred Deakin states in his Crisis in Victorian Politics, 1879-1881 that it was none other than Pearson who first led him to take politics seriously, and to see the virtues of the liberal leaders of the day.

Referring to the year 1877 he writes,

A philosophical radical as I should have styled myself, I had been repelled from Mr. Berry and his supporters by the caricatures and calumnies of the Argus. If, however, a scholar and a gentlemen, a historian and publicist like Pearson, was prepared to become their ally it was plain that I need have no hesitation in following the same flag. 28

27 Argus, Nov. 20, 1874.
It is clear that for the youthful Deakin, whose only knowledge of the world beyond his colony came from his avid reading of books, Pearson represented certain values which were the exception rather than the rule in colonial society but which nevertheless commanded his respect. Deakin had come to know him in that Athenæum room hired by the debating club as a 'scholar and a gentleman' whose liberalism was quite compatible with the possession of a cultivated judicial mind and a punctilious adherence to the traditional Oxford rules and courtesies of debate. It is reasonable to suppose that some such impression was made on the other young men of exceptional ability who attended these Athenæum meetings, several of whom, like Deakin, were to be distinguished alike for their reforming zeal and their wide culture. Not the least of Pearson's contributions to colonial Melbourne was the infusion into these young first-generation Australians of something of that urbanity in public discourse and affairs which his years in Oxford and London, and his wide travels, had made as much a part of the man as the suits which he continued to order from his Bond Street tailor.

By the time the University Debating Club was founded Pearson was writing for the Age, the uncompromising rival
of the paper which, not so long before, would have had the celebrated University gardens become a wilderness in order to endow him a chair. It was not that Pearson had callously by-passed the *Argus* which had so unreservedly campaigned on his behalf. He had sent it more than one article - only to have each returned as too liberal. One can imagine the dismay of Gowan Evans and Murray Smith when they read these articles and saw what kind of views their old Oxford contemporary now held, and, on the other hand, the anger of Pearson who would have regarded the rejection of his work as not only a slight but a breach of faith. Were not he and Murray Smith both Free-Traders, liberals of the English school? Unfortunately the *Argus*, although it supported English Liberal Free Trade doctrines and a system of national secular education, was essentially the paper of those mercantile and squatting groups which comprised the 'Conservative' interest of the colony. Those who contributed to it were expected, as a matter of course, to conform to local 'conservative' policy. But Pearson was no conformist, and he was determined to supplement his University income somehow. He had therefore offered his services to the rival *Age*, thus commencing an association which was to continue for the remaining twenty

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29 *Memorials* p.205.
years of his life. To his old friends on the *Argus*, who seem to have imagined that he would simply cease to write for the press until he came round to their way of thinking, this was an unpardonable move. Perhaps had they foreseen that he would become so significant a contributor to their rival they may have made greater efforts to come to terms with him, by, for example, confining his contributions largely to literary reviews, and then giving him a free hand. Deakin asserts that one of the proprietors of the *Argus* did express regret some years afterwards that both Pearson and himself had been allowed to 'slip out of their hands'.³⁰

Although Pearson's work was naturally unsigned, and the *Age* has retained no records, it is almost certain that he was responsible for the leading editorial in the issue of July 16, 1874, entitled 'The Proper work of a University'. He was the logical man amongst the leading *Age* contributors to write such a leader, the general conclusions reached and criticisms made agree in all respects with those of a Report which he presented to Parliament three years later,³¹ and the style is convincingly Pearsonian. It may be taken confidently, then, as the first step in his long campaign to...

³⁰ *Victorian Politics* p.6.
reform the university, waged on and off for seven years as journalist, University Councillor, Royal Commissioner, and Member of Parliament. Before the stage becomes too crowded with politicians and school masters it will be as well now to introduce the issues involved and some of the principal combatants.

The main points made in the editorial were as follows:
(1) The function of Melbourne University should be to turn out professional men (excepting clergymen) 'thoroughly prepared to enter upon their respective callings', and in addition to provide 'partial instruction ... to many whom, for various reasons, it cannot profess to educate altogether, such as farmers, miners, and theological candidates'.
(2) The existing university, being founded on British models which 'keep up a course of study which suits clergymen, and is not obviously disadvantageous to squires' was quite unfitted to fulfil this function.
(3) The number of profsors should be increased, not only to provide instruction in the more utilitarian subjects, but so that each professor should be called on to profess no more than one subject and have adequate leisure to keep his knowledge of it up to date. It was quite absurd that one professor should be responsible for the 'whole range of the
natural sciences'.

(4) To ensure that men of ability were not denied a university education, fees should either be abolished or reduced to 'more moderate proportions', particularly those for the medical course which were higher than those required by any English school. Such concessions were especially needed in a young country lacking numerous privately-endowed scholarships.

(5) These ends would not be effected unless power were taken from the present Council, and placed ultimately in the hands of a minister, for

... the council, a small body of gentlemen, mostly outside political life, and leaning to the aristocratic fashion of education, have been afraid to come to Parliament for funds. Any discussion of their administration might lead to taking power out of their hands.

That the Council's fears were justified is conceded by implication, for it is clear that the method of attack contemplated involved a public agitation for new professorships followed by an agreement on the part of the State to provide the necessary annual endowment, on the condition that it should have the right to administer the money. The cost might amount to 'perhaps five thousand a year', but the price would not be a high one for 'getting back control of our first school, and making it efficient'.
How accurate was Pearson in his account of the University, what sort of men did he have to deal with on the Council, and how would they be likely to oppose his plans? The key figure in the University of 1874 was Sir Redmond Barry, a man of 61 who had been Chancellor for all nineteen years of the University's existence. By his energy, his regular attendance at Council meetings, his autocratic character and the support of Council members of his own age who shared his educational values, he had more or less managed to make the evolution of the university conform to his will. He was the third son of Major-General Henry Green Barry of Ballyclough, Co. Cork, and a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. By coming out to Melbourne in 1839 while it was yet in its pristine state as a township serving a vast sheepwalk he had very quickly become a leading barrister and, while yet a young man, a judge of the Supreme Court. When the gold rushes of the early 'fifties had suddenly multiplied the population of Victoria threefold, and swelled Melbourne into a city, he had been in a strong position to play a leading part in the foundation of two institutions which the influx had made possible - the Melbourne public library and the University.
From the very beginning he had pitted all his strength against the values of the new, bustling, get-rich-quick democracy which provided his university with an annual government endowment of £9,000. He had seen the university through the eyes of the Irish Ascendancy and from the long perspective of those who live, imaginatively, in the classical past. It was to be another Trinity College, Dublin, chief agent in creating and civilising a true colonial 'gentry', founded on the rock of the classics. In two letters written shortly after he had become Chancellor to Sir J.F.W. Herschel, Bart., Chairman of an English committee appointed to select the first professors, he had made it clear that he considered the key to the proper functioning of the university to be the Professor of Classics, the man who would be responsible for moulding into form 'the classical taste of our rising country'. Of the particular functions of the Professor of Natural Sciences, the Professor of Mathematics (pure and mixed), and the Professor of Modern History, Modern Literature,

Political Economy, and Logic, Barry had said very little. Providing that they were scholars of repute the main thing had been that they should possess 'such habits and manners as to stamp on their future pupils the character of loyal well-bred English gentleman'. He had concluded with a splendid flourish:

With the youth of this young country (as yet itself unredeemed from the wildness of nature), the first great effort to reclaim the intellect, create the taste, form the manners and confirm the loyalty, depends completely on the temper and spirit with which its University opens its doors and conducts its operations.

In accord with the dictum 'the style is the man' Barry lives in these letters. After reading them one is not surprised to learn that on special occasions he was known to entertain in his house dressed in 'a blue tail-coat with large gilt buttons, silk breeches and stockings, and buckled shoes', regaling his guests with bottles of vintage wine, each inscribed with 'appropriate lines from an ode of Horace, written on parchment which had been allowed to age with the yellow contents'; that as first Chairman of the Trustees of the Public Library he should have set about stocking the shelves with an order to a London bookseller for all the

33 Papers relating to the University of Melbourne, p. 18.
34 Scott p. 7.
works cited in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,\(^{35}\) that he should have hunted for recreation, and worn an enormously high top hat when riding through Melbourne on horseback.

Barry's tastes and values were those of a cultivated eighteenth century country gentleman. Both he and Pearson were representative men - even to their very persons. When they faced each other - Barry imposing and well-fleshed, a symbol of authority and good-living; Pearson sparsely-built, intensely moral, something of an ascetic - the old English (and Anglo-Irish) gentry might have been seen confronting the reforming English middle class. It was not entirely accidental that Pearson's old Oxford friends of the 'Wise and Good' and 'Tugend Bund' societies, most of whom gave themselves to reforms of one kind or another, particularly in the sphere of education, should have been as a rule spare, unworldly men who married late or not at all - and not because, like Barry, they preferred a mistress to a wife.\(^{36}\) Wilberforce Stephen, who framed and carried through the Victorian parliament the first Australian Act for establishing free, compulsory and secular education, and who, like Pearson was


\(^{36}\) Blainey p.2.
descended from a Clapham Sect family, was another colonial representative of the type. Barry, perhaps, was an anachronism - certainly the coming age was all on the side of the spare logical utilitarians - but there was about the man a certain splendour - a classical 'dignity and grace' - which the drab mid-twentieth century can probably better appreciate than a Pearson, intent on his reforms. To the latter, as he was content to write in an unsigned account of Victorian affairs in the New York Nation, Barry was simply 'a pompous and not very wise old gentleman'.

Not surprisingly Melbourne University in 1874 reflected the values of its Chancellor. On the outskirts of the feverish city - which seemed to many an observer to be more American than English - it lay sequestered in its forty acres of garden - a grave two-storeyed Tudor quadrangle designed, as Barry had directed, 'to indicate ... the coll-

37 His portrait appears on the frontispiece to Sweetman, Long and Smyth's History of State Education in Victoria, Melb., 1922. There is an undated newspaper cutting in the Barry papers which reads in part: 'The appearance of Judge Stephen was disappointing; there wasn't enough of him. He looked like an usher in a country school, as if he had been doing penance, or a double term of Lent ... Oh, for a Sir Redmond to have presided on such an occasion ... ' (Enclosed in a letter dated Mar. 21, 1877.)

38 N.Y. Nation, Aug. 5, 1875, p.84.
egiate character of the institution and graced by his and the other members of the Building Committee's arms, carved in stone. It was as much like an Oxford or Cambridge college as colonial circumstances would allow. It certainly had no connection with an established church, and the students arrived for lectures on foot or horseback, but several of the professors lived in the quadrangle and took classes in their private studies, and it was only in the year that Pearson arrived that any distinction was made between the first three years of the Law and Arts courses, and First Year medical students were given the option of taking Elementary Natural Philosophy in lieu of 'Lectures on Greek thrice a week during three Terms [and] on Latin thrice a week during three terms'. Even with these changes the hardest-worked professor in the University was still the Professor of Classics.

The University also resembled its ancient English counterparts in its exclusiveness. The calibre of staff and

39 Scott p.16. G. Joachimi, G.E., junior partner of the architect, unsuccessfully submitted a design for the Adelaide University in the same 'style of the Collegiate Tudor' in 1877. In reply to the strictures of the South Australian Advertiser, he claimed that 'not ... a single voice was raised when the Melbourne University was built in the same style twenty years ago'. (Adv. Feb. 28, 1877, 7b.)

40 Scott p.18.

41 Calendar 1874 p.82.

42 Letter no.771, Oct. 10, 1874. (Contains a printed return to an Order of the Legislative Assembly showing numbers of hours spent in lecturing by staff.)
graduates was high, but the number of the latter was small. During the nineteen years since lectures had commenced only 81 B.A. degrees had been awarded (the first in 1858), 25 LL.B.'s (1865) and 21 M.B.'s (1862) - an annual rate for the previous eight years of 7 B.A.'s, 3 LL.B.'s and 1.5 M.B.'s (this for a population of three quarters of a million).

Eighty per cent of the 620 undergraduates who had enrolled since foundation had not proceeded to degrees - either through a falling off of interest, incapacity, lack of money, or, what was probably the most frequent reason, because continuation of their studies beyond the first or second year, while postponing their receipt of an income, would have made little difference to their prospects as teachers, civil servants, engineers, or barristers. While more than a few of those who did graduate, including some of the most able of the students like Quick, Higgins, and Sutherland, supported themselves by scholarships and part-time jobs, the idea still prevailed amongst those who governed the university that its

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43 Figures taken from the University Calendar for 1874-5, pp. 152-168 where degrees conferred since foundation are listed, year by year. There is some doubt about the reliability of these statistics as they do not correspond with the several lists of Bachelors of Laws, Medicine and Arts on pp. 32-34.

44 Information obtained from University Calendars.
chief function was to give its alumni the 'stamp ... of loyal, well-bred English gentleman', whether they should subsequently take up a profession or no. It receives good expression in a letter written in September 1871 by Sir George Verdon, then Agent-General in London, to his friend Barry. Barry had asked Verdon to act on a committee to select a new Professor of Classics specifically from Oxford, or Cambridge or Trinity College Dublin, and Verdon, in agreeing to do this, speaks of the something, which can scarcely be defined, about the men of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, which the graduates of other universities have not. The same sort of spirit is found in some of the best public schools ... In a new country the necessity for this academic atmosphere which seems to follow men when they have left their universities even, is more apparent than it is here.45

When H.A. Strong - a brilliant son of Winchester and Oxford - had duly been appointed, another of Barry's good friends on the selection committee, Sir Charles Nicholson, a former Chancellor of Sydney University, had written to tell him that he had had a good impression of the new man, but that Barry must not expect 'perfection'.

45 Barry papers. Letter of Sept. 8, 1871.
I do however, take some credit to myself for having saved you from a man, who I believe would have been most unsuited to the position, a disciple of Dilke and a radical of the first water. I told Strong that he would not be allowed to mix himself up with local politics. I believe he has no wish to do so; and I am sure you will not allow a violation of the compact.

It was friends like these who not only served Barry abroad but supported his policies and voted him back into power year after year at home in the Council room. They were men, on the whole, of his own generation. There were twenty members of the University Council and the average age of the thirteen for whom precise information is available was 59, only two years less than his own.47 One can in fact be fairly confident in saying that there were only two men on the Council below the age of 50 - William Henry Cutts M.D., and John McFarland, one of the first three alumni to be awarded a Melbourne degree in 1858, and the only comparatively young man of the twenty. Neither of these men, however, appears to have given Barry any trouble, and there were as yet no school-masters to plague him - only nine stout men of the law, including four brother judges, four men of religion, four medical men, one civil servant, and one nonentity, John Pearson Rowe, who attended no meetings at all from 1874-7.

47 See Appendix A.
The statistics of Council attendances preserved in the University Archives show that only four of the twenty - the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor Dr. Brownless, Judge Rogers and Dr. Mackay - attended two thirds or more of the meetings in 1874. In fact for nearly a third of the meetings there was not even a quorum! It is true that Sir W.F. Stawell, the Chief Justice, was overseas and the Anglican Bishop Perry left for London in April, but even then the figures make a poor show, and it is doubtful whether Stawell's presence in the colony would much have improved them, for on his return he attended less than one fifth of the meetings in 1875-6. Eight members of the Council only managed to attend ten meetings between them - an average of barely one apiece. Thus when Barry arrived to preside over his Council he would most likely be confronted by five venerable faces, three of them belonging to Dr. Brownless, Judge Rogers and Dr. Mackay. The only one of these three who was liable to give him any difficulty was Rogers, and that more because of personal rivalry.

48 The Roman Catholic Archbishop Dr. Goold, Sir Francis Murphy M.L.C., Judge Pohlman, the Reverends J. Hetherington (pastor of the Scots Church Collins St. since 1847) and Alexander Morison (from 1844-64 minister of the only Independent Church in Victoria) and Messrs. Hughes, Rowe, and Anderson (the last named the only active politician on the council).

49 The average number attending meetings in 1874.
than any fundamental disagreement about university policy. For the loyalty of the other two he need have had no qualms: Brownless, the son of Anthony Brownless, Esq. of Paynett's House and Bockingfold Manor, Kent, his hunting companion and a Papal Knight; McKay, a graduate of his own university whose attachment to his Alma Mater was so strong that he was prepared to move, on December 21, 1874, that the new Professor of Mathematics to replace Wilson should be selected by the Provost of Trinity College Dublin from the 8 most Junior Fellows - a motion which even the Council of 1874 could not accept! 50

It was a situation agreeable to Barry and agreeable to a majority of the Council. Barry ruled as a benevolent despot and his friends were content to give him licence. There was no need for them to attend regularly - all that was necessary was their ability to attend if their chief needed their support. And then what a show of force they could make!

Such was the university and such were the men with whom Pearson and those who shared his opinions had to deal. The task of reform was formidable enough, but it offered just the kind of challenge which Pearson needed. Scion of evangelicals that he was he needed a Cause to fulfil himself - a cause 50

Council Minutes.
about which he had no scruples, and which could provide a moral motivation for the political activity he enjoyed. Here at least was one such. If any man in Victoria were fitted by training and temperament to tackle the reform of Melbourne University it was C.H. Pearson.
The Melbourne Ladies' College (in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria) as envisaged by an early draftsman. In Pearson's time only the left-hand quarter of the building, up to and including the conical tower, was erected.
Chapter VI
Chapter VI

THE HIGHER CULTURE OF WOMEN

According to a Statute introduced shortly before his appointment, Pearson, together with the other lecturers in Law, Medicine, and Engineering, had no more than one year's tenure of office. This may have been less of a grievance if the Council had now, as at the end of 1873 automatically reappointed all lecturers who had given satisfactory service. Instead, however, it had decided to declare all posts vacant and advertise them afresh.

It would be interesting, [commented the Age,] to know what object the council have in view, because we are not aware that any of the gentlemen holding such a position intend to resign their office.

The editorial then continued, clearly referring to Pearson,

If the Council desire to get rid of some obnoxious lecturer a more straightforward course might have been taken. There are very few men of European reputation in these colonies; there is at least one among the lecturers at the University; and to dispense with his services would be a disgrace to the council, and a disaster to the colony. The more able a man is, and the more completely master of his subject, the less does he brook to be subjected to the caprices of any irresponsible body, who are never happy but when they

1 University Calendar 1873-4: Statutes, Chap. V, sec. 8. The motion which led to the statute was moved in Council on Jan. 27, 1873.

2 Council Minutes Nov. 10, 1874.
are trying their 'prentice hand on some foolish scheme, of which a rural school board might be ashamed. Will not some member of parliament institute an inquiry into the working of the whole University, and demand that a more rational body than this heterogeneous corps of educational amateurs be invested with the power of governing the University? 3

Whether the Council really did intend to dispense with Pearson's services or the Age was simply making a martyr of him in order to discredit the Council, three things are certain: Pearson was not happy working under the restrictions imposed by the Professorial Board and Council, he would have disliked re-applying for his lectureship, and he was ready to consider any other educational position which offered a substantial increase in salary.

There were two bodies in November 1874 desirous of making him such an offer. As soon as the news about the vacant lectureships reached Adelaide, the South Australian Advertiser proposed that overtures should immediately be made by the newly-appointed University Council. 4 Whether the paper's hint had anything to do with it a telegram was certainly sent on November 19th offering Pearson 'one of the professorships in the newly-founded University' 5 - probably

3 Age, Nov. 12, 1874, 2.
4 Advertiser, Nov. 16, 1874, 2 e-f.
5 Argus, Nov. 21, 1874, 7 c. This report was also reproduced in the S.A. Register of Nov. 26, 1874, 5.
at a salary in the neighbourhood of £800 per annum. It seems likely that there was an agreed policy amongst the prominent founders of the University to offer a Chair to Pearson as soon as the opportunity arose, for at the time this telegram was sent the old University Association had ceased to be and the newly-appointed Council had not held its first meeting to elect a Chancellor.

The other interested body was the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. For the past five years special committees appointed by the General Assembly of the Church had been attempting to resolve the 'many and perplexing difficulties' involved in setting up the first Australian collegiate girls' school offering an education to the daughters of 'the wealthier classes' equivalent to that of the leading colonial boys' schools. From the presentation of the first report on the proposed college by the Committee on Education in November 1869, the highest standards in all matters had been insisted on. The premises were to be of 'considerable magnitude',

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Memorials p. 206. This was the salary mentioned by the Rev. J. Clark when the first proposal to found a professorship of Modern History was made to the Council of the old University Association. Minutes, Nov. 26, 1872.

The final record of the Association is the presentation of its balance sheet on Nov. 11, 1874. The first meeting of the Council was not held until Dec. 11.

school-rooms 'to be commodious, and constructed according to the most approved plans', the teachers to provide 'sound instruction in English Grammar, Literature, and History; in the modern European languages, and the elements of Latin, the fees to be made 'as nearly as possible to approximate to those charged for boys in the Scotch College' and the Principal to be an 'educationist ... who has knowledge and capacity enough to qualify him for a position which, in importance and responsibility, would be second to none either in Church or State'. By the middle of Pearson's first year in Melbourne the Deed of Grant of a splendid site in East Melbourne had at last been secured from the original trustees, and permission had been obtained from the Governor-in-Council to mortgage the land to provide building funds. Only

10 Proceedings of the Commission, May 3, 1870 - Circular letter to Commissioners appointed to select a Principal.
11 Business etc. Nov. 1873, p.46.
13 Proceedings of the Commission, May 1873, p.12. The Rev. Aeneas Macdonald in his One Hundred Years of Presbyterianism in Victoria (the official centenary history pub. in 1937) states on p.83 that this land, originally granted for a church, had been set aside for a girls' school as early as 1859 but that 'not until 1873 was the way clear to begin building'. Had this valuable site not been available, it is more than doubtful whether the college would have been established as early as 1874.
the problem of finding a suitable principal still remained.

While, from the beginning, it had been intended to place the college under an educationist with outstanding qualifications, to be procured if necessary from Great Britain, the Assembly had laid it down in 1869 that the school should be placed under the care of a Principal (who must be a married gentleman) and a Lady Superintendent, who shall be members of the Presbyterian Church; and that the classes be conducted by the Principal, the Superintendent, Lady Assistants, and Visiting Masters. [Italics mine]

This plan had been adhered to until November 1873 when the Principalship had actually been offered to the Rev. Peter Menzies, the leading Presbyterian preacher in Victoria, with the idea of relieving him of the more arduous duties attached to the pastorate of the Scots' Church Collins Street which persistent ill-health had made a too-heavy burden. Peter Menzies, however, had died within a year of the offer being made, and the Assembly had had to take further steps. At this stage, at a meeting of the Commission of the Assembly in May 1874, two factions appear to have formed— one insisting on the appointment of a Presbyterian Principal, the other,

14 Proceedings of the General Assembly Nov. 1869, p. 24, Motion of Rev. Dr. Cairns.

15 Ibid. Resolutions of the Assembly in Committee, pp. 24-6, no. 3.
perhaps with Pearson already in mind, favouring the appointment of a Principal on his merits, irrespective of his denomination. Then, and again in November when the issue came before the General Assembly, the first faction had been the more powerful, succeeding on November 12th in having a committee elected, including the Trustees of the College, 'to nominate a 

... those interested in the higher education of ladies will be glad to learn that there is a probability that this committee will be in a position to recommend to the assembly a change in the constitution of the college, such as will at once secure the religious instruction of the young, and for the principalship the services of a gentleman holding a distinguished position in connexion with the University.'

Such an arrangement was in fact eventually arrived at although not in quite the manner predicted. The special committee went on to recommend for the Principalship the minister of the Presbyterian church in the fashionable suburb of South Yarra, the Rev. John Tait. Tait, however, when the offer was...
formally made to him by the Assembly on the morning of November 19, refused to accept the post unless the constitution of the College were so altered as to give him the 'fullest liberty' to employ 'the best educational talent available for assisting him in conducting the Institution'. The fact that, whether by chance or design, it was on this very day 'known in town' that Pearson had just received a telegram offering an Adelaide chair, gave especial urgency to this condition. To explain his views more fully Tait retired with the advisory committee.

His case was a strong one. It had been decided that the school was to be open to young ladies of all denominations, that the religious instruction should be unsectarian, that the secular teaching should be of the first quality, and that the Assembly should be 'charged with no responsibility, except seeing that it was conducted on such principles as might render it worthy of their patronage'. If Tait were to be personally responsible for the success of so bold a venture he needed to be in a position to choose the very best staff he could. If such a man as Pearson, with his high scholarly attainments, a personal knowledge of what was being

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18 Argus, Nov. 21, 1871, 7 c. See also Age, Nov. 21, 1871, 4-5.
done for the higher education of women in England and an established reputation as a lecturer in Melbourne - if such a man could only be placed in charge of the academic side of the college, it might make all the difference between initial success and failure. For the simple reason that the Universities had not yet been opened to female students, there was no hope of a Lady Superintendent being found in the colony, let alone a Presbyterian Lady Superintendent, who could lay claim to anything like such qualifications. Of course he would have to offer a stipend unprecedented for such a position in Australia - even perhaps in England. But that would be his own calculated risk.

When the Committee returned to the Assembly the Chairman announced that it was prepared to recommend that the Principal should have sole control subject only to the veto of the Standing Committee, and that

the third clause of the Constitution of the Ladies' College be amended by substituting for the words 'Lady Assistants and Visiting Masters', the words 'and such other teachers as may be necessary for the success of the institution'.

To these propositions the Assembly agreed, although not without the Rev. J. Nish, one of the 'fathers' of the college and

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20 See testimony by the Victorian correspondent of the S.A. Advertiser (Dec. 1, 1874, 3 a).

21 Proceedings etc. Nov. 19, 1874, p.41.
a member of the special committee, begging leave to record
his formal dissent in order that he might be
exonerated from all reflections relative to the future
management of the college, and from all charges of
inconsistency in regard to the resolutions which have
been again and again adopted by this assembly concerning
the mode in which the institute should be governed. 22

Tait, however, was now armed with the sanction of the Assembly
and he lost no time in finding Pearson, who was probably not
far away, and offering him the Headmastership of the College -
a new position created specifically for him, carrying an
annual stipend estimated at 'from £1,200 to £1,500'. 23

To Pearson it must have been, as Tait intended it to be,
a very tempting proposition. Such a stipend was well in
excess of that paid to Professors at Melbourne University and
up to three times the size of his own as lecturer. Professor
Irving, his old King's College contemporary, had been unable
to resist a similar offer a few years before and had relin-
quished his Chair of Classics at Melbourne University to
become headmaster of the large and successful Methodist boys'
school Wesley College. But whereas Irving's Chair had been
the most important in an established university, that which
he himself was now offered in Adelaide existed in name only

22 Argus, Nov. 29, 1874, 7 d-e.
23 Memorials p. 206. In 1877 it was £1,400. (Age, June 16, 1877,
in a University which did not yet possess so much as a permanent building. It was true he had not actually taught school-girls. On the other hand he had quite a fair idea of the kind of education provided at Queen's College, London, whose four years' course was generally commenced by young ladies at the age of fourteen. From its foundation in 1848 as the first English institution to cater seriously for higher female education there had been a close connection between Queen's College and his own King's College. The initial steps to found Queen's had been taken by F.D. Maurice and his brother professors from King's and ever since much of the lecturing at the former had been done by the staff of the latter. He himself had for some time before his first visit to Australia been co-examiner to the College in Mental and Moral Philosophy, Ancient History and Medieval and Modern History. The present principal, E.H. Plumptre, an Oxford double-first man whose position was probably the most nearly analogous to that which Tait was now offering him, had formerly been a fellow lecturer at King's. With his experience, his general interest in female education, and


25 Taunton Commission Pt. VI, p. 573. This would have referred to the year 1864.
his knowledge of what was being attempted elsewhere in England he ought to be able to carry out the duties of Headmaster adequately. After all there would be a Principal to manage the business side of things and to look after the religious instruction of the pupils and a Lady Superintendent to handle most of the lesser disciplinary problems associated with the day to day functioning of the school. With the limited function of ensuring that teaching standards were maintained at a high level from the beginning, with an imposing building - even now in the course of construction - to work in, and above all with a stipend that would make him independent of an uncertain supplementary income from journalism, acceptance of the offer could hardly be construed as anything but a step up in his career. Not unsurprisingly he decided to risk the potential hazards and accept the headmastership, a contract which was duly advertised two days later with great prominence in the 'Educational' columns of the *Argus*.

LADIES' COLLEGE

(In Connexion with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria)

Principal Rev. George Tait, B.A.

Head Master - CHARLES H. PEARSON, M.A., late Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, and some time Professor of Modern History in King's College, London.
The Ladies' College has been founded by a resolution of the General Assembly, 'to provide a sound and thorough English education ... etc.'

Even the Rev. J. Nish and his followers could hardly have failed to appreciate that, in such an advertisement, Pearson was a name to conjure with.

It must have been difficult for Pearson's friends in England to keep track of his colonial career. He was no sooner buried in the bush than news came that he was married; no sooner married than he was heard to be lecturing at Melbourne University; no sooner lecturing than he had been appointed headmaster of a Ladies College. Henry Sidgwick, himself much occupied at this time preparing for the opening of Newnham College, Cambridge, would have been both amused and impressed by this latest development. When, a few weeks after Pearson's acceptance of the headmastership, he sat down to write one of his not very frequent letters, in the hope, it seems, of eliciting a criticism of his latest book *The Method of Ethics*, he was still puzzling over the sudden jump from Melrose to Melbourne. Hadn't there been some deficiency in Pearson's eyesight that prevented academic work?

When we heard that you were, after all, to leave the free life of the bush, we could not help wishing that you had stayed in Cambridge, where the reconstructed Historical Tripos is manifesting considerable vitality.

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*Argus*, Nov. 21, 1874, 11g.
I think I told you that we had separated History from Law and ballasted it with Political Philosophy and Economy and International Law in order to make the course a better training for the reasoning Faculties - in fact, to some extent carried out Seeley's idea of identifying History and Politics.27

But there was no question of Cambridge now. Pearson was putting down roots in Melbourne.

One of these roots was soon to be firmly established in the local university by his election to that institution's Council less than a month after the cessation of his lecture-ship and a little over a fortnight before the Ladies' College first opened its doors. Generally, when a seat became vacant through the death or resignation of a member, only one candidate's name was brought forward, but on this occasion there were two, which meant a campaign and a formal division. For this reason, and because Pearson was the first of a series of liberal educationists appointed to the Council in the 70's, the election has a special interest.

Pearson was nominated by Revd. Dr. Bromby M.A. and Revd. Dr. Macdonald M.A.; his opponent, Dr. John Madden - a Melbourne graduate in laws who was later to become Chancellor of the University - by Robert Walsh M.A., and Joseph Henry Hood M.A., two younger men who had only recently been admitted.

27 This letter, printed in Sidgwick's Memoir, p.295, was 'unfinished and unsent, but somehow accidentally preserved'.

THE HIGHER CULTURE OF WOMEN
to the Senate. The first of Pearson's sponsors, Dr. Bromby, was to be an important ally in the campaign for university reform. Although an older man in his final year as first headmaster of the Melbourne Church of England Grammar School he was by no means conservative in his views, and shared Pearson's interest in the higher education of women. He spoke at the Ladies' College speech day in 1877, and it seems more than likely that he was the father of the Misses Eliza and Jenny Bromby who passed the matriculation examination with credit in the years 1872-3 respectively and were subsequently appointed to Pearson's permanent teaching staff. He was also, like Pearson, a liberal in theological matters, and a few years later was to engage in a public doctrinal controversy with the Dean of Melbourne. The second sponsor, Dr. Macdonald, was a well-known Presbyterian who had long ministered in the suburb of South Melbourne, had been moderator of the General Assembly in 1862-3, and, more recently, a writer of leading articles for the Presbyterian monthly, the Christian Review and Messenger. He appears to have been


30 Sutherland, A., Victoria and Its Metropolis, p. 421.
an enthusiastic supporter of the Ladies' College, and of Pearson as its first headmaster.\footnote{Age, Feb. 12, 1875, p.6; report of the inaugural meeting of the Ladies' College.}

The \textit{Age}, in supporting Pearson's candidature, took pains to avoid a slight on Madden. Were membership of the University Council purely honorary, it argued, it would be fitting that the Senate should elect one of its own alumni.

But the questions which come before the University Council are so important, and their consideration requires knowledge of such a peculiar and varied description, that we should regret very much if the Senate were to allow any feelings of provincial exclusiveness to induce them to prefer Dr. Madden to a gentleman with the training and attainments of Mr. Pearson.\footnote{Age, Jan. 18, 1875, 2.}

The parochial conservatism of Melbourne University must be broken down, and this was not a job for an educational novice, however well-intentioned.

Of the two members of the council elected by the Senate, one, Dr. Mackay, is quite as fossilised as any of the original body; while the other, Mr. Macfarland, is, like Dr. Madden, a graduate of Melbourne, and was never identified with any other seat of learning. We trust that advantage will be taken of the present occasion to permanently identify Mr. Pearson with the University of Melbourne.\footnote{Ibid}

At the actual election in the University library on January 27th hardly any mention seems to have been made of candidates' policies, except that, in answer to a question
from the Rev. T. McK. Fraser, Dr. Bromby stated that 'Mr. Pearson was quite willing to resign at the end of five years, should he be elected' whereas Madden's sponsor, Mr. R. Walsh, thought that it would be 'derogatory' to Madden for him 'to bid for election by consenting to hold office for a short time'. Most discussion, however, involved the alternatives: local graduate or Oxford graduate, educationist or lawyer. One of Madden's supporters, Mr. Richard Ireland (B.A. Dublin, M.A. Melbourne and a Melbourne Q.C.) summed up the principal argument for his fellow lawyer when he said:

The point was this, there was a university largely endowed and supported by the public, turning out a number of graduates every year. Was it to be said that none of these were fit to go upon the council; that every office and every appointment was to be filled by men who came from Europe?

To counter this Dr. Bromby urged, like the Age,

that it was desirable to have some one on the council who would give his attention to the practical affairs of the University

adding the significant rider,

that a teacher was one of the best persons to have the management of the highest educational establishment in the country. 'It was urged against Mr. Pearson', said Dr. Bromby, 'that he was a teacher. But what influence could a seat in the council give Mr. Pearson as a teacher?' The rev. gentleman also pointed out that there were already enough lawyers in the governing body.

34 Age, Jan. 28, 1875, 3.
35 Australasian Sketcher, Feb. 20, 1875, p.179.
36 Ibid
Pearson won the election by more than a 2 to 1 majority - 47 votes to 23.\(^{37}\) There was a certain division of interest between local graduates and those of other universities - had a poll been taken of the former alone Pearson's majority would have been proportionately smaller, 16 to 10 - but other factors were more important. For example all but one of the eight senate members who can be identified as masters of independent boys' schools in Melbourne voted for Pearson,\(^{38}\) as did all six members of the University staff who took part in the election\(^{39}\) - a significant testimony to his reputation amongst his late colleagues. The Doctors of Medicine too, including four University staff members, were decidedly in his favour, voting for him 15 to 6.\(^{40}\)

The schoolmaster vote is not difficult to explain. Being closely in touch with the general educational needs of

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\(^{37}\) Senate Minutes, Jan. 27, 1875, pp.115-7. The division lists are given in full in Appendix B.

\(^{38}\) Dr. Bromby (H.M. Melbourne Grammar), and Messrs. Irving (H.M. Wesley), Andrew (second master Wesley), Goldstraw (science master Wesley), J.H. Thompson (second master Melbourne Grammar), R. Morrison (second master Scotch), and either A. Morrison (H.M. Scotch) or his brother G. Morrison (an assistant master in the same school). The exception was George Henry Neighbour, H.M. Carlton College. His legal training (LL.B. 1871) may have swayed him towards Madden.

\(^{39}\) Prof. Halford and Doctors Barker, Bird and Robertson (medicine); Mr. Kernot (head of engineering dept.) and Dr. Dobson (lecturer in Law).

\(^{40}\) See Appendix B.
the colony the leading schoolmasters were particularly sen-
sitive to the obscurantism of the ageing Council and quite
recently had been infuriated by the Council's refusal to act
on the Senate's recommendation that the redundant February
matriculation examination should be abolished. Pearson, whose
liberal educational views and early clash with the Council
over this very examination must have been known to the
Melbourne teaching fraternity, was an ideal man to represent
their interest, all the more so since he had become one of
their number. It is possible that the doctors had learnt of
his early medical studies, or they may, being for the most
part British graduates themselves, simply have preferred him
on personal and cultural grounds. These were more than
likely to have been the factors which won the support of
Walter Lindsay Richardson M.D., the original of the prot-
agonist in his daughter's Australian classic, The Fortunes of
Richard Mahony.

Between his appointment to the headmastership and the
opening of the college on Monday, February 15, he had three
months to tidy up his University affairs, take a holiday in
Tasmania, write a lecture on the Higher Culture of Women,
interview parents, and sketch out the coming year's programme.
He was now the third of the seven original members of the
little 'Wise and Good' society of Oxford days to have the planning of a new school in accordance with liberal ideas. In 1862 Arthur Butler had opened the newly-constituted Haileybury and in 1857 J.W. Stephens had left a comfortable Tutorship at Queen's College to come out to New South Wales to open Sydney Grammar, attracted, in his own words, by the opportunity which the establishment of a perfectly new school in a new country afforded for an attempt at a more rational system of grammar school education than I had ever seen in operation in England.41

Pearson was not quite so dedicated a man as Stephens: the headmastership of a ladies' college would have been one of the last things he imagined in store for him on the two occasions he had sailed for Australia. But his opportunity for pioneering work was just as good. There was only one other school in Australasia with similar pretensions to the Ladies College and that was in New Zealand in the predominantly Presbyterian (originally Free Church) province of Otago - the Dunedin Girls' High School founded four years before by the Provincial Council as an adjunct to the renowned Dunedin

Boys' High School. 2

The absence of schools of equal pretensions did not mean, however, that all would necessarily be plain sailing for the Melbourne Ladies' Scotch College. With a building debt of £10,000 before even the doors had opened and with the high cost of a first-rate staff, it would have to be very successful indeed in attracting pupils and boarders to run at a profit. There were in Melbourne in 1875 a considerable number of privately run Colleges, Schools, Seminaries, Institutes and Houses offering an education for young ladies. In the 'Educational' columns of the Argus of January 13, 1875, twenty-eight such institutions, in addition to the newly-arrived Ladies' College in connection with the Presbyterian

An account of the school and of the steps leading up to its foundation is given in Ross, Rev. C. Stuart, Education and Educationists in Otago, (Dunedin, 1890), chap. VIII. Women appear to have played a much more significant part in its establishment than they did in Melbourne with regard to P.L.C., the initial impetus coming for a Ladies' Association organized by a Miss Dalrymple in 1864, although a Pearsonian individual, Sir John Richardson, first Chancellor of the Otago University, moved the original resolutions in the Council and prepared public opinion by lecturing up and down the country and publishing a pamphlet in 1870 entitled Thoughts on Female Education.

The school's Principal during its first 16 years was Mrs. Margaret Burn, previously Principal of a ladies' college at Geelong Victoria.

The opening of the school did not go unnoticed in Australia. In its issue for Jan. 15, 1874, in a leader on 'The Education of Females', the South Australian Register observed: 'It is much to the credit of Otago, one of the provinces of New Zealand, that it has set an example to Australia, if not to the whole of the British Dominions, in the matter of a superior training seminary for girls.'
Church, advertised their imminent opening. Several of these, like Pearson's school, were situated in the same well-to-do suburb of East Melbourne. The question for Tait and Pearson was: were there sufficient parents in Victoria, and more especially Melbourne who valued a boys' school type of education for their daughters highly enough to withdraw their patronage from the existing ladies' colleges?

The greatest single cause for optimism was the fact that there already existed in Melbourne three good boys' schools maintained principally by Melbourne middle class parents whose sons attended daily. It was precisely such parents who had supported the four London institutions which had pioneered higher education for English girls two decades before - middle class parents whose sons were not, as a rule, like those of the county gentry, accustomed to spend the first part of their lives largely segregated from the opposite sex in public schools and the ancient universities, but were accustomed rather to go each day to a first-class boys' school in the neighbourhood and later to one of the colleges of London University. These parents had supported the Taunton Commission.

E.H. Plumptre, referring to the boys attending King's College: 'a very large number come from proprietary schools, and a few, but not many, from the greater public schools'.
ladies' colleges and schools not so much because of any abstract concern for female rights, but because the daily presence of student sons seemed to make an equivalent education for their daughters - inevitably interested in their brothers' work - both logical and desirable. Significantly, each of the four pioneer London institutions (and incidentally, the Dunedin Girls' High School) had been designed as a female equivalent to an existing or proposed institution for boys or young men - Queen's College (1848) to King's College, Bedford College (1849) to the non-denominational London University College, the North London Collegiate School for Ladies (1850) to the North London Collegiate School for Boys, and the Cheltenham Ladies' College (1853) to Cheltenham (Boys') College.

44 Taunton Commission Ques. no. 11, 581. Evidence of Miss F. M. Buss, headmistress of the North London Collegiate School for Girls. Speaking of a course of lessons given to her girls on Political Economy, Miss Buss said: '... not only did the girls take up the study willingly, but the brothers, who laughed at them first, afterwards took up the subject with them. We found some of the girls reading Mill's Political Economy at a very much more advanced stage than they had in the class they attended'. Although this refers to the mutual interest of brothers and sisters in each other's school-work after the establishment of the girls' schools, it clearly indicates the kind of domestic situation which would have given rise to these schools in the first place.

45 Foundation dates from Clough, B.A., A Memoir of Miss Anne Jemima Clough, p.108.
It was, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the Melbourne Ladies' College, designed as an equivalent to Scotch (boys') College, had a fair chance of meeting with the success of its English counterparts, particularly as the special conditions of colonial middle-class society - the smaller amount of inherited wealth, the comparative scarcity and expense of good servants, the need for younger sons to make their own way - tended to make the traditional view of the wife as mere ornament and child-bearer even less acceptable than in England. Five weeks before the college was due to open, the Argus observed that a girl's education should fit her to be 'the intelligent companion and the valuable helpmate of the man she marries', capable of keeping accounts, nursing infantile and other ailments and intelligently supervising the general running of a house, a woman, in short, whom one of the large number of Victorian bachelors 'with moderate incomes, and without any expectation of being wealthy' could afford to marry. This view was endorsed on the


Argus, Jan. 7, 1875, 4g. The exceptionally low marriage rate at the time, like the servant shortage, was the subject of much discussion. See Melbourne Review, Oct. 1877, p. 390 ff., 'Victorian Matrimony' by W. Balls-Headley, M.D., M.A.
following day in a letter from one of the few Melbourne women to raise her voice on the subject, Mary A. Colclough, a 'doughty philanthropist' recently arrived from Auckland. In forthright style she wrote:

Abandon the superficial, utterly useless, and most expensive gilding now called education, and educate girls so that they may have domestic knowledge, if they are fated to be wives, or be able to stand alone, and not ashamed to stand alone, if they are not.

Convincing evidence that Victorian women did have the capacity to stand alone and compete with the opposite sex, in certain fields at least, could be found in the fact that in the four years since they had been admitted to the matriculation examination, young women had won no less than seven of the twenty three credit passes awarded.

Many such observations, favourable and unfavourable to the success of the college must have been running through Pearson's head as he sat down to write his inaugural lecture.
on 'The Higher Culture of Women'. He would need both to inspire and reassure an audience which would consist not only of the positive supporters of the college in the hall, but of the many hundreds of uncommitted parents who would read the newspaper reports the following morning. There would be the founding fathers of the college, grave Presbyterian elders, proud of their boys' college and ambitious for their girls' college, but most anxious that their action should never be said to have led to what the *Australasian Sketcher* called 'those strange undisciplined irruptions of women into political and social matters that have occasioned so much wonderment and ridicule in other places'. 51 There would be practical enthusiasts like Mary Colclough, mainly concerned about courses in domestic science and the laws of health, and parents equally eager to see their daughters' names listed amongst the successful matriculation candidates, perhaps with the further motive that they would then be able to get them good positions as governesses. There would be wealthy pastoralists and their wives attracted by the prospect of a well-run boarding establishment, but afraid that ample provision might not be made for the teaching of the usual 'accomplishments' - dancing, pianoforte, elocution, painting,

51 *Australasian Sketcher*, May 15, 1875, p. 23.
singing. There would be those, like the Rev. Nish who had been unhappy about the appointment of a non-Presbyterian to the headmastership and were now eager to pounce on the slightest evidence of a secularist bias and others - Methodists, Anglicans, Independents - who would be sceptical of the professed 'undenominationalism' of the teaching - particularly of the Bible instruction.

To the two hundred persons, most of them ladies, who assembled on the afternoon of Thursday, February 11, for the inaugural meeting of the College, Pearson delivered an address that was on the whole reassuring, although parts of it may have confirmed the uneasiness of some of the more conservative of the Presbyterian clergy. Indeed the Moderator, in opening proceedings, went so far as to observe pointedly that the college,

though not of a denominational character, ... would ... be more intimately connected with the Presbyterian Church than with any other denomination, and though they wished to cherish no sectarian spirit, no doubt the professors and masters would bear that in mind. 52

Pearson began by quoting Goethe, that 'greatest and most thoughtful of German poets', but not here as an authority, for Goethe, when asked by the father of a family how he might best keep his daughters happy and out of mischief, had

52 Argus, Feb. 12, 1875, 6c.
recommended that he train each one thoroughly in one of the housewifely arts - while rigorously preventing any literature from the circulating library ever coming into their hands. This served to introduce the first major theme of the address - the social changes that had taken place within a century and their inescapable effects on the lives of women, for 'Since Goethe wrote, Germany, which was among the least educated, has become the best educated of great countries; and the German house-mother, still among the most laborious of practical women, is also among the best examples of the higher culture'. It was no use looking back to the past, or talking complacently of Nature's laws.

Our theories, after all, are of little account when they come into conflict with circumstances; and there are changes going on in the world which are practically settling this question of woman's education. 53

Men might delay, but they could not prevent, the effects on the average woman's life of the invention of the sewing machine, and of the many other machines which did so much of the traditional women's work 'more cheaply and expeditiously in factories'. They were powerless to 'draw a

53 Pearson, C.H., The Higher Culture of Women. A Lecture delivered at St. George's Hall, Feb. 11, 1875 ... on the Opening of the Ladies' College in Connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. Printed by Request. (Melb., Samuel Mullen, 1875) p.4.
cordon sanitaire against newspapers, books, conversation' for if new opinions were in the air they could no more be excluded from the drawing room than the germs of disease. In his best style he ridiculed obscurantist arguments against the admission of women to 'the career open to talents'.

'Nature,' says the conservative theorist, 'has intended women to stay at home and manage their houses, and we will not recognise the fact that a certain considerable percentage of women must for ever remain without houses to manage. They may be teachers, but they shall not have that training and those tests, which make the teaching of men efficient. They may be nurses, but they shall not acquire that medical knowledge without which tenderness and care may sometimes be the most dangerous of allies. It is unfeminine, improper, indelicate, that they should lecture to public audiences, or argue in courts of law; but reason and custom permit that they should amass large fortunes by singing and acting on the public stage.'

Such 'grotesque anomalies of opinion', he believed, could not hope to prevent women eventually trying 'freely in what fields they can contend with men'. Those who looked back nostalgically to the past were doubly deceiving themselves, for the life of the great majority of men and women in the previous century had been 'simple and unattractive, at least, if it was not obscure and squalid'. With all the complacent faith of his day in the evolution of a more refined race of men and women he commented.

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The Higher Culture etc. p. 4.
The merit of women in those days, as a song of Sheridan puts it, was to serve as an excuse for the glass; to be toasts, drunk uproariously by staggering men ... Fielding has been praised as the one novelist of the times who knew what gentlemen were, and Fielding's sketches of a country squire and country rector would be libels upon an average bullock-driver of to-day. Need it be said that drunken and foul-mouthed men were not likely to require ideas, cultivation, or refinement in the women they lived with; or again, that when the standard of gentlemanly behaviour changed, the ideal of womanly excellence would change with it. The sentiment of Mrs. Poyser, in one of George Eliot's novels, that 'God has made the women to match the men', is capable of wide application.55

Despite his advocacy of the right of women to compete on equal terms with men for the 'career open to talents', he was careful to recognise that four fifths of women would marry and spend the greater part of their energies in rearing their family, and that, even when the University did come to admit women to degrees, no more than a tenth of their number would wish to avail themselves of the opportunity. He recognised also, quoting here that 'greater thinker, whom no one will accuse of indifference to intellectual progress - Mr. Herbert Spencer' that health was a higher good than intellectual training, and that the healthy physical development of girls was as important as their mental training.

55 The Higher Culture etc. p.4.
Not only would provision be made for Physical Culture, as Mr. Spencer recommended, but the same gentleman's warning about the dangers of over-application to study would always be kept in mind. He was well aware of the tendency of girls to overwork - had he not himself been offered a ninety page essay by one of the ladies he had lectured to in Manchester accompanied by an apology for not treating the subject more fully! But with care on the part of both teachers and parents it should be perfectly possible to give girls a first-rate education without undermining their health. For his part he would see that the spirit of emulation was restrained, and that, as he had recommended some years before to the first promoters of the higher culture of women in England, examinations should not extend more than a day at the time. On the parents' side, and there was a no-nonsense tone in his voice which may have perturbed some of the more fashionable members of the audience but to the stricter Presbyterians was perhaps the most reassuring part of the whole lecture, he would ask

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Spencer's essay on 'Physical Education' first appeared in the *British Quarterly Review* for April 1859 and was subsequently printed in his *Education* (1861).
that there be no counter-distractions; that half the student's strength be not frittered away upon premature balls and pleasure-parties; above all, that the dangerous excitement of sensational literature be banished from the school-room at home as it assuredly will be from the school reading room.

It was not that he would dissuade from novel-reading 'in its proper place and time'.

It is often the student's best relaxation and many novels are worth studying for their style; not a few convey sound lessons of morality and worldly wisdom, but to expect that indiscriminate novel-reading can be combined with regular work, is to expect that children will combine the indiscriminate eating of pastry with a wholesome appetite for meat.

He could hardly afford now to look back with any complacency to his own rebellious and 'disgracefully idle' days at Rugby spending every spare moment reading indiscriminately through the library, Faerie Queen and all; nor to the further indecisive years of his early manhood taken up with desultory literary activities and 'loitering around art galleries'. When he now talked, as he often did, of a 'consuming ennui' as the bane of the modern woman with more leisure than she knew what to do with, he was doing so with a first-hand knowledge of the condition!

Not surprisingly he now gave full support to conventional 19th century ideas of mental discipline. Disciplined minds and 'the habits of order and precision mathematics and
chemistry give' were what girls needed. They would not take away from school a great deal of factual knowledge, but at least the reasoning and observing faculties of the majority, the housewives to be, would be sufficiently exercised to make them more competent in keeping accounts, treating ailments, using domestic machines, arranging menus in accordance with the best dietetic principles. He spoke rather more sense, and probably raised a few clerical eyebrows, when he went on to suggest that it was also the function of the higher teaching to fit women to understand that knowledge is taking up new ground every day; that we are constantly called upon to reconsider our old positions; and that God's truth is independent of man's interpretation, and will abide though all knowledge be re-constructed. True, they cannot sift the unproved or the half-proved from the proved. And how many men can? Do we not all in these matters look on as outsiders on the great battle of thought, not understanding the tactics, but dimly discerning which side is gaining ground. For a man of ordinary education - for a man even of high education - to assume that he can sum up between Agassiz and Darwin, between Lord Overstone and Mill, between Grote and Curtius, would be preposterous. What he can do is to understand the drift of scientific opinion, and to range himself cautiously, and provisionally, on the side that seems for the time to be best supported. 57

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57 The Higher Culture of Women, p. 15. He here repeats an idea he had propounded twenty years before in a letter to Mrs. Acland. (See p. 67 above.)
Like the novelist Samuel Butler, whose up-breeding was so like his own, he could use a disarmingly earnest manner to pass off quite radical suggestions on an unsuspecting audience. He was, however, wise enough to know that it would be imprudent to leave his audience on the boundaries of knowledge, and he concluded by bringing them back to consider the practical reasons why the College should excel its rivals. The men who had promoted it, he was careful to explain, had not been afflicted with any vulgar admiration of mere size, but they did believe,

arguing from all analogy, that a large institution can be more cheaply and efficiently worked than a small one. They believe it to be an advantage that every teacher should be like a professor or lecturer in a University - confined to one subject, which can be thoroughly mastered. They know that it is much easier to arrange hours in a large than in a small institution. They anticipate a stronger esprit de corps ...  

It was appreciated that for a few 'delicately attuned' individuals the publicity of a great school was insupportable, but he considered that for the great mass of boys and girls 'the mixing in large classes, the sense of being attached to a large community, ought ... to be an important part of education'. The whole scheme was a bold and adventurous one,

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58 Desmond McCarthy made this observation in a B.B.C. broadcast on Butler.

59 The Higher Culture etc. p.18.
but there were good precedents for every aspect of it, and the principles on which it was based were sound.

It is in the very nature of things, that whatever is rough-hewn and new, should carry a certain look of strangeness with it; but [- and here his poetic instinct would out for the final flourish -] if it is shaped of solid material, the very air of heaven will soften it, the dews and mosses will give it colour, and the silent years will inform it with a spiritual grace.

Pearson was undoubtedly a success, now and during the months of practical schoolmastering that followed. The Ladies' College and female education generally were the topics of the day, and his name consequently much on people's lips. He was already something of a public figure through the publicity given to his University appointment in the previous year. Ever since the Aruns had talked of him as the lecturer for whom Oxford and Cambridge had vied, it had become common practice for newspapers to refer to him as the former Professor of Modern History of King's College, London, the scholar with a 'European reputation'. It was therefore not surprising that the same paper should now, in reporting his inaugural lecture on 'The Higher Culture of Women', have taken the liberty of resurrecting the old King's College title and dubbing him 'Professor Pearson': even less surprising that the title should have stuck. It at once
identified and localized him, translating him from the status of an exotic Englishman visiting the colonies to that of a prominent Melbournian - for the title was a provincial one: no English newspaper thought of calling him by any other style than plain 'Mr.' when he visited his home country in later years. 60 There, schoolmasters who bore the style 'professor' were rather looked on askance as belonging vaguely to the category of dancing instructors. In any case to those who knew the difference between King's College and Oxford the original Professorship was not so important a dignity as his Oriel fellowship. But in Victoria, where the authentic University professors were not overshadowed by the Masters and Dons of an ancient collegiate system, Pearson's unofficial emeritus Professorship now commanded general respect. It was a convenient means of distinguishing him amongst the colonial headmasters as a man of exceptional learning and culture.

The success of the college exceeded all expectations, the numbers rising from 60 in the first term to 170 in the fourth. 61 To the work of moulding this astonishing influx

60 Melbourne University held to correct usage for a year. The Council minutes invariably refer to him as 'Mr.' until the meeting on Nov. 29, 1875, and continue to do so, off and on, for the following year.

of young colonial ladies into the semblance of a College.

Pearson gave himself unsparingly, very conscious, no doubt, that this was the first really responsible position he had held since graduating twenty three years before. It was his invariable response to a not entirely agreeable duty. He had nearly sacrificed his sight to his Historical Maps, now he was accustomed to return home in the evening exhausted and practically voiceless from the daily struggle.  

His aim was to found the College tradition on the best features of Rugby and King's College, especially on the notion of self-discipline. At the end of the first year he reported:

So far as mere discipline goes, our calm has been almost unruffled; and the few offences reported - mostly the overflow of high animal spirits - have been easily dealt with. But till that discipline is self-maintained, till our pupils are a law to themselves, not in the highest class only, but through every part of the school, I shall regard our work as only half done. I think we are slowly and surely attaining this result, but I cannot flatter myself that we have yet reached it.

Pearson himself was just the kind of man to make a success of such a system. One can imagine his method in dealing with

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62 Memorials p.207.

63 Annual Report, Dec. 13, 1875, p.5. (In a bound series of printed Annual Reports, 1875-96, held at the school.)

Cf. Herbert Spencer 'Remember that the aim of your discipline should be to produce a self-governing being; not to produce a being to be governed by others'. (In his essay on 'Moral Education', 1858) See Cavenagh, p.152.
a recalcitrant or idle student - the solemn interview, the grave, meticulous courtesy, the intensely serious admonition. To back it all up there was his own example of unsparing activity. One has the impression that he never lectured or spoke in public, when he could help it, without thorough preparation. When, as now, he was called upon not only to teach and lecture to the senior girls, but also to give courses of lectures to women above the school-leaving age, the drain on his never-large reserves of energy must have been severe, and the effects of the rigorous self-discipline necessary for him to keep going evident to all who saw him. The impression he made on Andrew Harper, the assistant master who succeeded him, and who later, as a strict Presbyterian, crossed swords with him over state educational policy, was probably very common.

No one who came under his influence could fail to be the stronger for it. So obviously had he learnt the secret of building up a strong and pure character himself, that those he came into contact with carried away the unshakeable certainty that the higher life of unselfishness is necessarily and always the noblest.64

He lacked the dramatic presence and passionate piety of Dr. Arnold, but he seems to have obtained much the same sort of moral ascendancy over his staff and the more serious-

64 Source unknown but quoted in *Memorials* p. 208.
minded of his pupils. By the end of the second school year he was ready to withdraw his earlier criticism of the college tone, and to commend the pervading 'spirit of unremitting application'. In the Fourth Class no less than half the students had come under his notice during the year as 'working beyond their strength'.

One practical reason why self discipline was so much insisted on by Pearson was the large amount of the senior girls' time taken up in formal lectures. The promoters of the College, he explained in his inaugural lecture, hoped to profit by English experience 'In combining something like University lectures with ordinary school-lessons'. In doing this they were

... only attempting what has succeeded brilliantly in Edinburgh and Glasgow, in Manchester and Liverpool, in Oxford and Cambridge. The difference lies in the greater demand which the lecture makes on the attention and self-command of the pupils.

At Queen's College, Harley Street, at the time of the Taunton Commission (when Pearson had been an examiner), the bulk of the instruction had been given in the form of lectures by nineteen 'professors' each of whom was invariably accompanied in the lecture room by an honorary Lady Visitor.

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65 Annual Report, 1876.
66 College Prospectus 1875-6.
one of a staff of more than thirty - whose duty it was to see that everybody behaved. What mundane testing of the pupils' knowledge was necessary was performed by the eleven lady assistants. In Pearson's school there were no redoubtable Lady Visitors to curb inattention or idle chatter. All depended on the individual lecturer's ability and the prevailing 'tone' of the class.

One can understand Pearson's enthusiasm for this scheme, and for the additional courses of lectures in the afternoon 'for the convenience of ladies who have left School, but desire to carry on their education, or of those who propose to go out as governesses'. All his own teaching, whether at King's College or to the classes of ladies in Manchester and Liverpool, had been done through formal lectures. It was much more congenial to him to stand behind a lectern and there hold forth without interruption than to engage in the exercise marking and question-answer dialogue of the humbler sort of lesson. The scheme also gave to the school something of the character of a combined University and teachers' training college catering for those women who were denied a higher education because of their sex. Indeed it was announced in the College prospectus that

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68 Prospectus 1875-6.
Professor Pearson will arrange to give special examinations to ladies who have attended lectures at the College, and who are anxious to obtain certificates of their competency as teachers.69

It was not, however, strictly true that the lecture system had 'succeeded brilliantly' in all the English centres mentioned by Pearson. Perhaps it had when the classes were entirely composed of older women, many of them teachers themselves. But in an institution like Queen's College, catering for girls between the ages of 14 and 18, it had serious deficiencies, at least according to Mr. Fearon who had reported on the College for the Taunton Commission. He had been content to report that the lectures delivered by the professors had been of excellent quality, but had observed,

Unless I am greatly mistaken the majority of these pupils are not fit for lectures, but are in great need of close and strict schooling [requiring from them] sound and systematic work.70

Even the lectures to women over school-going age, however successful educationally, had not necessarily been so financially. Mark Pattison, the Rector of Lincoln and one of the Oxford liberals who had helped to form Pearson's own opinions, had attempted to form classes in Oxford 'calculated

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69 Prospectus 1875-6.
70 Taunton Commission, Part VI, p. 580.
for intelligent girls of 17 and upwards but had found it impossible, even there, to make classes of a high standard pay for themselves. There were simply too few capable of benefiting or desirous of paying. 71

Unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, both these troubles plagued Pearson's lecture system. The inadequacy was not in the staff of lecturers, which consisted of, in addition to himself, Andrew Harper, B.D., a scholarship winner at both Melbourne and Edinburgh Universities, Charles H. Barton, M.A., a former scholar of Trinity Cambridge and sometime Professor of Mathematics at the Royal College Sandhurst, and, for the afternoon classes only, H.R. Andrew, M.A., Second Master of Wesley College and a graduate of both Melbourne and Cambridge. Nor were the fees prohibitive. 72 The trouble was that sufficient educational spade-work had just not been done in

71 Taunton Commission, Ques. no. 17, 823.

72 The Prospectus for 1875-6 lists them as follows. The lectures marked (**) were held in the afternoon between the hours of 3 and 4. The others were in the morning and intended to 'meet the requirements of candidates for the Matriculation Examination'. Fees quarterly.

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<tr>
<td>Modern History</td>
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<td>+ English History</td>
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<td>+ Geography</td>
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<td>+ Roman History</td>
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Melbourne. With time, as more girls matriculated from the college eager but unable to attend the University, there was good reason to suppose that the scheme of afternoon lectures would expand. For the time being, however, the Education Committee of the Presbyterian General Assembly had to content itself with reporting, at the end of the first experimental year:

Such lectures are largely attended by young ladies at home, but as they are a new thing here the attendance from outside the College was not so large as might have been expected. It is hoped that when their value is better known they will be more extensively appreciated.73

That there were shortcomings in the school lecture system Pearson was honest enough to admit after a year's trial. By then he had concluded that the history lectures would need to be combined 'more and more with the careful working up of text-books'. He was also of the opinion that

The lectures on English literature had been more pleasant than profitable. Permission to attend them had often been asked as a favour; but the examinations showed that the study of classical English text-books must be made a more prominent part of the college course.

Although it was 'unaccountable' to him how the cleverest students should have constantly come to the school 'ignorant of the very elements even of political Geography' he was

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73 Business of the General Assembly, Nov. 1875, xxxi.
ready to accept the situation and introduce the drawing of maps as a regular part of the school studies. It was all too clear that the winning of a reasonable share of the matriculation results, which supporters of the school would naturally come to expect, could only be accomplished by the adoption of a stricter, and humbler, form of schooling - at least within the next few years.

In the first year only one College student passed the November matriculation examination - Alfred Deakin's sister Catherine. The College's success in the second year was no better. In the third year, however, when the sound teaching in the lower classes first began to tell, the number jumped to six and the College decisively led the field of institutions sending up girls for the examination. But by then the College had ceased to pretend to be anything other than a girls' school, and Pearson had resigned. Change and conflict were essential to his well-being: he must needs be reforming or pioneering or inquiring. Perhaps if the lectures had been a marked success and a political issue dear to his heart had not arisen in the colony he might have borne the routine a year or two longer, particularly as his seat

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74 Catherine Deakin subsequently joined the staff. Matric. results in Argus, Dec. 25, 1875, 6.
on the University Council and his occasional contributions to the *Age* provided some scope for his reforming propensities outside the college. Such, however, was not the case.

Yet although during the last eight months of his headmastership (he continued to hold the position until early July, 1877) he divided his energies between the College and politics, it is more than likely that he kept his two roles rigorously apart, giving little indication of the state of his mind to either colleagues or students. And they, despite the unusual circumstances, never appear to have lost their respect for him, even though the conservative press went so far as to suggest that he was a 'communist' and no gentleman. The best indication of this is the wording of the testimonial presented to him by the teachers at his farewell assembly on July 5, 1877. Testimonials are not the most reliable pieces of evidence, but this one reads as if it were meant.

...It is not for us to say how thoroughly you have devoted yourself to the interests of the college, nor how much you have done to establish and consolidate it. ... But we wish to assure you that we have been stimulated in no ordinary degree by your presence among us. We have felt it an honor to be associated with you in our common work, and we shall endeavor in the future to show by the quality of our teaching that your influence has not been lost. ... No one could have been more patient and considerate in dealing with the difficulties about which we have sought your advice, or have exhibited more fairness of mind in estimating what we have tried to do. ... We shall therefore always
look back with pleasure on the time during which we have worked under you, and we rejoice that in a new sphere the people of this country will continue to reap the fruits of your wide experience - A. HARPER, C. H. BARTON, E. M. BROMBY, H. STEWART, S. R. HOOPER, T. BUVELOT, A. GRESHAM, C. S. DEAKIN, A. BUTLER, E. M. BARTON.  

All the evidence suggests that as foundation headmaster of the first girls' school in Australia to offer as thorough an education as could be found in the best schools for boys he was a marked success. He had begun in 1875 with no more than a partially-completed building and was able after two years and a half to leave a large and flourishing school with a firm respect for scholarship and a strong 'public spirit.' This, in itself, was no inconsiderable achievement.

1. Age, July 7, 1877, 5e.
2. Argus, Dec. 20, 1877, 6. Annual report of Pearson's successor, Andrew Harper. Harper paid tribute to the 'very high state of efficiency' in which he had found the school.
Chapter VII
Chapter VII

LAND TAX PURE AND SIMPLE

All Pearson's training had gone to make his liberalism a comprehensive faith, independent of local or personal interests, which he was duty bound to proclaim at all costs whenever circumstances warranted. The higher education of women, with its end the equal status and intellectual independence of the sexes, was an important tenet of his creed, but it was not for him, as it was for Anne Jemima Clough, a cause taking precedence above all others. That he kept the college in East Melbourne firmly in perspective from the very beginning of his headmastership is clear from the series of letters to the New York Nation which he wrote in 1875 at the request of the editor, Godkin, whom he had met six years before on his visit to the United States. The first of these, on 'Australian Politics', he actually posted off before the college had so much as

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1 D.C. Haskell in his New York Nation: Indexes of Titles and Contributors, vols.1-105, 1865-1917, 2 vols, 1951-3, lists the following six letters by Pearson in 1875-6:
- 'A Southern Paradise', May 27, 1875, p.359.
- 'Port Darwin', June 17, 1875, p.407.
- 'Australian Particularism', Aug. 5, 1875, p.84.
- 'The Land Question in Australia', Sept. 30, 1875, p.211.
- 'Recent Australian Explorations', Mar. 9, 1876, p.157.
opened its doors. Fortunately, like the five which followed, it was unsigned, and published in a paper little read in Melbourne, for many of the sentiments were hardly those to be expected from the newly-appointed headmaster of a school specifically designed for the daughters of the 'wealthier classes'.

Through the series he cast a frank gaze about the continent, writing as from one liberal of the world to another, seeking to isolate issues of 'universal interest' and to predict long-term trends. The letters show significant changes in his views since the publication of *Essays in Reform* in 1867. He was still ready to celebrate the beneficial effects of democratic institutions, especially in Tasmania, where within the last thirty years there had taken place 'the transformation of a whole people so largely tainted with crime, into one that will compare with most for decency and the absence of grave offences'. But he was also much more alive to the threats to democracy. The Victorian Upper House, which he had formerly seen as a desirable stabilizing influence he now saw as an obstructive house of privilege, representing

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3. 'A Southern Paradise.'
a 'single interest, that of property, and a single class, that of employers'. Where before he had written almost complacently of the creation of a 'yeomanry' possessed of 'cheap land on a simple tenure' he was now ready to admit that the laws designed for this purpose had failed signally, while, unless laws were soon passed 'to prevent the accumulation of large properties in the hands of individuals' Victoria had 'every chance of seeing four-fifths of the colony divided between the immediate descendants of three or four hundred persons'.

An economist of the English school of course argues that the state has nothing to do with the position or numbers of those who buy land from it, and has no business to interfere with the natural prerogative of capital to employ itself as it likes best.

He, for his part, had sufficient respect for the English school to wish the degree of interference to be as small as possible. He made it clear that he had no time for the extremist views of 'mob orators'. But he did believe that the evil of large estates, owned often by absentee, was grave enough to justify the imposition of a moderately progressive tax on land which might

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4 'Australian Politics.'
5 Ibid
6 'The Land Question in Australia.'
induce our largest land-owners to bring their outlying properties into the market, or at least abstain from buying up fresh land. We could then abolish the system of bounties, and let the farmer select as he liked from the unsold crown lands at something like the market value, or at most with some facilities of deferring payment.

The existing land laws, which authorized the State to part with land worth £6 an acre for £1, while requiring from the selector three years' residence, seemed to him 'at once foolish and demoralizing'.

They have created a whole class that receives a large bounty for living in districts which it would not naturally choose, in order that at the end of three years it may go out of them again at a profit ... Besides, the condition of residence bears hardly upon the large class in towns who would like to invest in and improve land, but who cannot live upon it away from their work.7

There were, in addition, other new problems ahead of Australian democracy. He was amazed at the petty rivalry of the states over the business of Australia's representation at the Philadelphia Exhibition.

'Though we may love Australia much, we love New South Wales more.' 'We do not see that New South Wales has any nationality beyond its own nationality, and we do not say this in any selfish spirit, but with the view that any merit New South Wales may possess may not be absorbed in other nationalities.' ... Curious, is it not? Here are some half-a-dozen colonies settled within a century, and mostly within forty years, by men of the same race, language, and religion, with

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7 An Act passed three years later in 1878 allowing non-resident selection provided for this particular class, which had exerted considerable pressure on the government. (42 Vict., No. 634.)
none of the differences that distinguished New England from Virginia, and with scarcely any division of interests. Yet were the British Government to attempt to join any two together, it would in all likelihood, provoke a rebellion, and no one talks of a federation but as a dream of the future. 8

More serious, in the far north of Australia there was an ominous possibility that a planting society on the old American pattern might arise. The discovery of the vast extent of the western deserts of the continent by Warburton, Forrest, and Ernest Giles, coupled with the decline in mining and the limited area of the premier colony Victoria, led him to believe that

power will gravitate more and more to the States on the eastern and Pacific seaboard; and that our commerce and communications will be more and more towards New Guinea and Polynesia, with Chile and California. The consequences of this are too numerous and too remote to forecast, but one is, I fear, imminent. As we people up towards the northern and tropical parts, there will be a growing desire to introduce slave labor under some plausible and philanthropical name. Already the Argus has suggested that we must develop New Guinea as the Dutch develop Java, by accustoming the natives to the blessings of a forced labour. 9

In the Northern Territory 'several ship-loads of Coolies' had already arrived, and it was possible, if the area continued to be administered by a distant government, 'with no check of public opinion, and with no object except to achieve

8 'Australian Particularism.'
9 'Recent Australian Explorations.'
good financial results' that the plantation system, which had already invaded parts of Queensland, might well overspread a large part of tropical Australia. If that should happen the coming generation might well find itself with a 'war of races' on its hands.10

In the short-term view, however, just as disturbing was the low standard of the democratically elected House of Assembly in Victoria. He was forced in his first letter to report of the session which had just closed 'that the one measure passed which excited any real interest in Parliament was an act to continue the payment of members', and in a later letter that 'the present Ministry [McCulloch's] is not supposed to have any convictions, or any even plausible plan'. His last letter on 'Recent Australian Explorations' he commenced with the remark 'Politics are suspended for a time, and it is with a feeling of positive relief that I turn from our degrading faction-fights ...' Although any alternative to democracy was unthinkable, it was plain to him that if democracy were not to involve itself in ruin it would need to be well led and well educated. Already, from his orthodox liberal viewpoint, the popular party had made a foolish error in advocating a protective tariff (although he was forced to

10 'Fort Darwin.'
admit that 'at present our prosperity is something wonderful, we defy all economical laws ... ') and he feared that it might soon add to this foolishness by emulating the 'system of borrowing on a colossal scale' which the audacious Mr. Vogel had initiated in New Zealand.

It is surely not altogether fanciful to suggest that when Pearson wrote these letters during his first year at the Ladies' College, he was already seriously considering the possibility that he might, sooner or later, be able to compound ambition with duty and enter political life. That he was ambitious to fight the liberal cause on the public stage there is no doubt. Ever since the days at Oxford when he had held the Union to rapt attention with his warnings of 'the new principles and new parties, which would convulse and overthrow the present order of things' he had secretly coveted a parliamentary seat. Indeed, there seems good reason to suppose that at least one major cause of his depression and irresolution as he had tried one thing after another on both sides of the globe came from the fact that his ill-health and inadequate means had prevented him from so much as contesting a seat.11 Friends like Grant Duff and Parker, no more notable amongst the young men of Oxford in the early 1850s, had been able, 11Memorials p.198.
with their wealth and family connections, to stand for
election and win, and the injustice of it rankled secretly
in his mind as bitterly as exclusion from Oxford rankled in
the minds of dissenters.

In the colonies, however, lack of rank and wealth were
no barriers - at least so far as the liberal parties were
concerned, and there was clearly a need for men with his
educational background on the 'liberal' side. As Catherine
Spence was shortly to write,

The lowering of the character of the Legislature, the
corruption of the Civil Service, the enormous difficul-
ties attending reform, are the consequences of that
aloofness (to use George Eliot's new, but expressive
term) which the educated, the refined, and the
scrupulously honourable have maintained with regard
to the troubled sea of politics. 12

There was only one member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly
who was at once a man of wide culture and an avowed liberal,
and that was George Higinbotham, a Trinity College Dublin man,
a former Attorney-General, a future Chief Justice, and the
chairman of the Royal Commission on whose recommendations the
first system of free, compulsory and secular education in the
Empire had been erected. Pearson acknowledges his outstanding
ability and integrity in his Nation letters, but criticises
his reluctance to take responsibility, describing this trait

as 'his one fatal fault'. It is not unlikely that he saw himself playing the part in local politics of a more resolute, more practical Higinbotham.

These letters were all written in 1875, the first five of them before the end of June. Had he continued to write for the Nation one can be sure that his articles would have become progressively more alarmist, for at no time in its history does the tone of the Victorian House of Assembly appear to have been lower. Governments formed and reformed as individual members jockeyed for office, or used their influence to undermine an enemy's power. For the first time in the House's history men were openly paid as agents to solicit ministers in their offices. All parties showed a reckless disregard for traditional parliamentary practice. On January 25th, 1876, those in opposition to the ministry of Sir James McCulloch (the fourth to be formed in this particular parliament) commenced what was known as the Stonewall policy. Claiming, with some justice, that the McCulloch ministry was unconstitutional and did not have the confidence of the country, the Stonewallers met every attempt to proceed to the consideration of business with motions to...

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13 George Paton Smith's address to the electors of Hawthorn, Argus, Feb. 24, 1877.

14 Two of its members had been soundly defeated on going back to their constituents before taking office.
report progress or adjourn. After business had been at a standstill for a fortnight the premier countered the Stonewall with his 'Iron Hand' proposal which enabled any member to stop debate simply by moving that 'the motion be now put'. In such a fashion did Sir James McCulloch and his 'forty gaggers' rule for the remainder of the parliament. In vain did the hero of Eureka, Mr. Peter Lalor, shout at the Speaker, 'This is a corrupt house, and presided over corruptly'\textsuperscript{15} and in vain did another Stonewaller, Mr. McKean, submit to a full week's confinement before withdrawing his remark to the Chairman of Committees: 'We are not going to have this system of favoritism going on'.\textsuperscript{16} The Iron Hand prevailed. But even with such a measure in force there was an unbelievable amount of speech-making on both sides. Parliament, in fact, became a farce, with members rising to their feet on any pretext at all. During the 71 sittings between July 11 and December 22, according to a table published by the Argus, Mr. David Gaunson spoke 340 times, Sir James McCulloch 272 times, Mr. Kerferd 263, Mr. Macpherson 228, and no less than thirteen others more than 100 times, an output which the paper wryly contrasted with Mr. Gladstone's modest 130 speeches in 110

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Vic. Parl. Deb.}, Feb. 8, 1876, p.2154.  

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid}, Mar. 2, 1876, p.2379.
sittings of the House of Commons in a comparable period. To many it seemed as though the British system of parliamentary government by responsible parties was either doomed or in very grave danger. When the party which claimed to be 'liberal' had introduced its Stonewall policy Higinbotham had been so disgusted that he had resigned his seat rather than remain in a House which contained no party he could respect - a course which another of the most capable and experienced members of the Assembly, J.J. Casey, had very nearly followed for the same reason. Two months before he abruptly brought his fourteen years in parliament to a close, Higinbotham had been asked by the Sandridge branch of the Protection League to form and lead a new Liberal Party, and in declining to do so he had written gloomily:

Care for national interests as distinguished from local and personal interests, first on the part of the constituents and next on the part of the representatives of the constituencies in the Legislative Assembly is, in my judgment, an essential condition precedent, and will be found the only possible basis of union, of a really Liberal political party ... I know that my views, both of public policy and of the present paramount duty of Victorian statesmen, would procure for me a very small and wholly insufficient amount of parliamentary support.

17 Argus, Dec. 29, 1876, p.6. The period in the case of the House of Commons had been Feb. 6 - Aug. 4, 1873. The next most frequent speaker after Gladstone was the Hon. A. Bruce, with 89 speeches.

18 See 'Should Absentees be Taxed?' (Melb. Review, Jan. 1877, p.88) by John Winthrop Hackett, later Chancellor and munificent benefactor of the University of W.A.

19 Letter to Henry Parkes, May 26, 1877 (Mitchell Library).

20 The letter, dated Oct. 27, 1875, was printed in the Age of Nov. 4, 1875.
Yet out of sheer reaction to the seeming futilities of parliament, and to some extent in direct response to Higinbotham's letter, decided efforts were being made during 1876, outside parliament, to form parties devoted to national reforms. The day after the publication of Higinbotham's letter the Age remarked,

Is it not time to bestir ourselves and organise another Liberal Association [covering] ... the whole ground of Liberalism - constitutional reform, protection, a land tax, responsible government in fact, not in name and other kindred objects?

In January 1876 a National Reform League was founded in Melbourne, a little after similar leagues had been founded in Ballarat and Sandhurst. In September of the same year certain Melbourne men who had been active in earlier Free Trade Associations of the 'sixties established a Free Trade League, and in the following month a Protection League held its first annual general meeting. All these leagues had a similar aim: to return to parliament at the forthcoming elections in 1877 candidates pledged to their particular policies. The last two leagues both made the tariff the central issue, but the National Reform League put first among its objects reform of the Upper House, followed by a graduated land tax on estates over 640 acres and a measure to regulate mining on private property. By November the campaigning was
well under way with all leagues organizing branches and disseminating propaganda. Two prominent parliamentary members of the Free Trade League, Colin Campbell and Edward Langton, were already touring the country, together with an English trade union organizer, Henry Taylor, whom the league was sponsoring in an effort to convince working men that Protection was harmful to their interests. It was in this month, too, that Graham Berry, the leader of the Opposition, was elected President of the National Reform League.

Such was the situation when, on December 11, 1876, nine days before the College's second annual prize giving, Pearson emerged from his headmaster's study to take a public part in the politics of the day. He did this by inaugurating a series of summer lectures in the Emerald Hill Mechanics' Institute with an address entitled 'The History of Taxation in England, and its Bearing upon Taxation in Victoria'. The Institute was not a political body and Pearson generally maintained a learned tone in keeping with the title, but his political intention was manifest. Repeating the view he had already expressed in one of his letters to the New York Nation, he said, in effect: 'You have a chronic deficit of £200,000 in your revenue; you are also confronted with the prospect of having all your land absorbed by a few hundred

21 Stebbing's account of Pearson's entry into politics (Memorials p.210) is erroneous in several particulars.
rich men; the obvious and necessary solution to both these problems is a progressive land tax, and this should be made the central issue in the coming elections.' Much of this lecture, as might have been expected from the title, was devoted to a consideration of English fiscal practice. He showed that from ancient times the landed proprietors in England had borne a very large proportion of the tax burden and were then (if local rates were included) paying a tax of about three shillings in the pound of their income, as compared with the 3d. in the pound levied on the incomes of professional men. The tax on land was accepted in England because it was customary - land having been bought and sold for generations on the understanding that it would be taxed at a high rate - and because, being a very special form of property, its value grew in proportion as the general wealth of the country grew, irrespective of any improvements affected upon it. There were, he admitted, other legitimate, and effective, methods of raising revenue. As it was, in Victoria all sections of the public paid heavily through the customs. A house tax was an equitable and not easily evaded tax, but it told unfairly against the poorer man. A tax on funded property was more acceptable than a house tax but, as a practical measure, it might defeat its end by driving capital from the
An income tax was the least desirable, although potentially the most fruitful means of bringing in revenue, for it was inquisitorial, difficult to estimate equitably and the most easily evaded. Although a land tax might be estimated according to the ruling market prices, there was no such way of estimating the value of a professional man's income.

The money he had expended on his education must be deducted, the money he had sunk in waiting for a practice, his chances of retaining a hold of popular favor, and his expectation of life.22

The imposition of a land tax was not only expedient but just. On an average the unimproved value of the land alienated by the State in Victoria had trebled in value since its alienation, not because of the industry of its owners, but at the expense of the community at large which had provided markets, built railways, roads and bridges. He estimated this 'unearned increment' to be £14m. or £10m. on the larger holdings. Every year,

putting aside the interest of loans, the returns of which were mainly borne by public works, an average of something like three millions a year was raised, and something like one-third of it was spent upon roads and bridges; in other words, in improving the value of landed property.

Not only, however, should the landed proprietor who automatically profited by this, pay a proportion of the cost

22 Unless otherwise stated this account of Pearson's lecture is based on the report in the Age, Dec. 12, 1876.
more or less equivalent to his gain, but he should pay according to his ability, or in other words on a graduated or 'progressive' scale. At a certain point to be decided on - he suggested 40,000 acres - the scale should rise so sharply as to more or less compel the proprietor to sell what he possessed over that acreage. There were at the moment only eight estates in the colony over that acreage and he would allow the proprietors three years to dispose of their excess. By such a timely and moderate measure the progressive aggregation of estates could be arrested with least distress, before it had become the grave problem it threatened to be. It would be disastrous for the land of a small colony like Victoria to be monopolized by 'a few hundred rich men' within the first few decades of its existence - rich men, moreover, who would tend to be absentee, living in London or Paris on their remittances.

For these reasons he insisted that a progressive land tax should be made the crucial issue at the coming elections. The old perennial, Free Trade or Protection, would be better relegated to the background. He admitted quite frankly that he believed in free trade 'as he believed in the rules of arithmetic, or the laws of grammar' but 'it occurred to him as infinitely more important that the land tax should be put
PROFESSOR PEARSON'S BIRDCAGE TRICK.

Professor. — "When I say three, the bird and cage will entirely vanish. Now watch me well. One, two, three! — Permit me to state that in this trick the bird is not killed — merely disappears till I want it again."
on a sound basis than that a few duties in the tariff should be struck off or diminished'. Indeed he went so far as to suggest, descending here to the level of practical politics, that

... he thought the outcry that was being raised just now about free trade and protection was raised to direct attention from the question of a tax on land. ... the candid politician ... would agree that if the question of tariff reform were made a little less of a party question a compromise of a rational kind might be effected ... 23

.After all, both free-traders and protectionists agreed that a large portion of Victorian revenue 'must be derived in whatever way from Customs.' That being so the free-traders would be well-advised, before they counselled wholesale abolition of Protection, to decide how they proposed to fill not only the existing deficit but the much greater deficit which would result from the carrying out of their proposals.

Ever since the Oxford Union days when he had called on great proprietors, complaining against the abolition of the Corn Laws, to break up their estates into farms, Pearson had taken a special interest in land questions. He had seen the beneficent results of small farms in France, he had taken careful note of land use in the United States, and he had, of course, farmed himself. The land question was by no means

Age, Dec. 12, 1876.
... he advocated [a land tax] because it was undesirable in any country that a few wealthy proprietors should monopolize the soil. (Applause.) And doubly undesirable in a new one. (Renewed applause.) He would hold sacred every compact the State had made; he would infringe no recognised right of ownership; but he would follow English precedent in taxing land, and the authority of Mr. Mill, in placing that burden specially on the increased increment; and the authority of almost every economist of note - of Rogers, of Leone Levi, and of Gladstone - in saying that no tax should be laid on the earnings of industry. [Presumably personal industry of any kind.] If this were another version of the revolutionary watchword, 'War with the palaces, peace to the cottages', he was glad to think that he was in the company of great and wise statesmen. (Great applause.)

It must have been obvious to the audience long before Pearson sat down that an important, if incalculable, political figure was here making his début, and in seconding a vote of thanks, Mr. John Gavan Duffy, M.L.A., later to be one of Pearson's close Melbourne friends, deliberately voiced the question that must have been in everybody's mind by remarking amidst hearty applause that he 'only wished that the Professor could reiterate his admirably-expressed opinions in parliament'.

The Age, of course, was delighted. Had it not always advanced the idea, not only of a land tax, but of a progressive

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Age, Dec. 12, 1876. The rhetoric was not unjustified, as the figures of landowning in the Western District published by the Age in the following week show. These are not reproduced in Appendix C.
land tax? Perhaps, although it was a matter of detail, the Professor might have made the legitimate maximum area of an estate rather lower than 40,000 acres. What did matter, for the moment, was that 'a learned authority of obviously conservative instincts' had publicly proclaimed a progressive land tax necessary.25 A few days later the secretary of the National Reform League, James Mirams, stated candidly in a letter to the same paper, that Pearson's lecture had been 'of the highest value to the Liberal party at the present time in view of the approaching contest at the ballot box'.26 This was no fulsome praise, for the lecture, whether intentionally or not, had been delivered when the Reform League was engaged in the delicate process of bringing about a strategic amalgamation with the Protection League which depended on making the progressive land tax advocated by Pearson a common election 'cry'. It was a delicate process because although the respective memberships of the two leagues to some extent overlapped, the Reform League had a strong backing amongst the farmers and storekeepers and miners in the country districts, while the Protection League drew its predominant support from the manufacturing community and all those who stood to

25 *Age*, editorial, Dec. 13, 1876.
26 Ibid, Dec. 18, 1876, 3.
gain by industrial expansion. Economically the interests of these groups were by no means identical, farmers and miners, to take one example, having no desire to pay duties to protect local manufacturers of agricultural and mining machinery. But a progressive land tax, when combined with reform of the Council, perhaps even used, as the Age was shortly to suggest, as the lever to effect this reform, would appeal to all parties. It would not be a burden to the smaller farmers, it would tend to 'burst up' the great estates, and it would meet the chronic deficit without obliging everybody to pay an income or general property tax. The vital question was whether the zealous protectionists would agree to the land tax taking precedence over the tariff issue. It can be seen therefore, how agreeable Pearson's unexpected, and authoritative, insistence that a progressive land tax be made the central issue must have been to the strategists of the Reform League.

To the conservative Argus, on the other hand, Pearson's address was an abomination. It was not so much what he said

In the account of the amalgamation of the leagues I have drawn largely on Dr. Parnaby's thesis The Economic and Political Development of Victoria, 1827-81. (Thesis held in Melbourne University library.)

Editorial, Feb. 14, 1877.
about the land tax as what he said of the motives and prospects of the free traders that aroused its particular ire. That such a man, after openly confessing that he believed in the laws of free trade as he believed in the laws of arithmetic, should then turn round and talk of the practical futility of attempting to bring in a free-trade tariff at the present time seemed unpardonable treachery, the more so, of course, because it was all too true. The Argus might well say that if people like Pearson depreciated or suppressed what they knew to be well-ascertained scientific truths 'the reign of ignorance promises to be indefinitely prolonged', but practically speaking very few free-traders really believed that the principles they advocated could be introduced without a long period of adjustment. Even Dr. Hearn later admitted, in the course of the campaign, that he did not look to see Free Trade realized within a decade, while candid free-traders were quite well aware that any reduction in duties inevitably meant an even wider deficit in the revenue.

The problem free-traders did not like to face was how this deficit should be filled, and it was here that Pearson's

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Argus, Mar. 24, 1877, 5a. 'Now, of course he was not so unreasonable as to say we were to get free trade all at once, and precisely in the form we required ... He did not desire to cause any injury to any person who might have interests that had grown up under the existing system ...
lecture so embarrassed then. If they were consistent they would have to come out in favour of some form of tax, and this meant, in practical terms, an income tax or a land tax. But if this were made a genuine issue it could not fail to strain if not break the long-standing alliance between merchants (who feared an income tax) and squatters (who feared a land tax) as effectively as the same issue would unite the groups traditionally opposed to them - the manufacturers, artisans, farmers and miners. It seemed, therefore, a devilish suggestion of Pearson's that all free-trade campaigning up and down the country was a mere decoy to draw attention away from the land tax question. Whether he was right or wrong, or whether he even said what he intended, it was certainly in the interest of the conservative alliance not to allow the land tax to hold the centre of the stage. It undoubtedly had the appearance of a very clever slander, and the Argus was only too pleased to take it this way. 'If such words' it said, 'had come from a "brawling demagogue" they would have been passed over in contemptuous silence', and if he who had spoken them had known all the time the true state of affairs then he was

... guilty of language and conduct of which as an educated gentleman he ought to be ashamed; for he is impugning the motives and misrepresenting the actions of gentlemen who have no personal and private objects
to serve; who have preferred to encounter odium and
obloquy rather than surrender one iota of the
principles for which they have been contending. 30

Three days later, however, when twenty 'disinterested'
members of the Free Trade League Council met it was obvious
that Pearson's address had caused them considerable discomfort.
Two motions, one specifically mentioning Pearson, were
introduced with the intent of stating the League's readiness
to support direct taxation in substitution for any protective
duties abolished - and both were withdrawn after debate, one
of them (Mr. Andrew Lyell's) in order that it should be dis­
cussed by a fuller meeting. The Age was not slow to observe
how 'terribly mortified' the free-traders had been by Pearson,
and how the latter had 'cruelly stripped' the disguise off
Langton, their chief propagandist.

For the free-traders are almost to a man identified
with the landed interest, and from their own party
are drawn the bitterest and most persistent opponents
of an equitable land-tax. 31

Now the Age knew perfectly well that there was nothing like
this identity of interest, and, whether or not it had been in
collusion with Pearson all along, it was clearly using the
latter's allegation as a goad to prick those urban free-trade

30 Argus, editorial, Dec. 14, 1876.
31 Age, editorial, Dec. 16, 1876.
interests which dreaded an income tax, into open conflict with the landed interest.

The reverberations of the address were still being felt nine days later when the annual prize-giving of the Ladies' College took place. On the morning of that day Sir Samuel Wilson, the second greatest landowner in Victoria and the recent donor of £30,000 to the University for the purposes of building a great hall, took Pearson to task in a letter to the Argus. He wrote weightily of the 'death blow' which Pearson's proposals, if put into effect, would strike at 'all those hopes of success in obtaining the rich prizes of life which are the principle motives leading to the successful colonisation of new countries', and conjured up a picture of the great pastoralists as trustees of their estates, 'holding them ... in their virgin state, with fertility unimpaired, for the use of future generations'. He saw no reason why the so-called 'unearned increment' should not belong to the owner, advancing the view that the governmental works which contributed to this end 'such as railways, telegraphs, postal enterprise' not only benefited all sections of the community but would eventually return a profit and therefore be no burden at all. He cited a recent Argus leader showing that

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32 Argus, Dec. 20, 1876, 6.
estates of over 5000 acres had only increased by less than a quarter per cent. over the past year\textsuperscript{33} and proclaimed confidently that a natural process of subdivision was now operating which 'in a comparatively short time in the life of the nation would lead to the subdivision of land until the farms are not of sufficient extent to support a family'.

I protest [he concluded] against such doctrines as are preached, especially as coming from one in the responsible position of teacher of the young, and from whose education and acknowledged abilities better things should have been expected.\textsuperscript{34}

With this letter on the minds of all present, the prize-giving during the afternoon must have been held under conditions of some strain, particularly as two of the politicians most likely to suffer from Pearson's proposals, Sir James McCulloch and Mr. James McBain, sat on the platform and delivered speeches. No-one, however, appears to have referred to recent events outside the college, and Pearson was able to bring his second school year to a successful and uneventful conclusion before leaving the colony for a holiday.

A few days before his return to Victoria on January 21st, the Council of the Free Trade League held its deferred meeting, only to remain divided as before on the subject of a land

\textsuperscript{33} Argus, Dec. 19, 1876.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, Dec. 20, 1876.
Mr. Colin Campbell, a fellow Oxonian and the League's Honorary Secretary, was sufficiently moved by Pearson's attack to resign his office in order that the fact that he was a 'small landholder' should not give credence to the imputation of the League being 'engaged under the guise of free-trade in opposing the excessive taxation of landed property'. Then Mr. Andrew Lyell (of Lyell & Gowan, merchants and financial agents, and of Buik, Henderson & Co, wholesale and retail drapers) submitted his deferred motion, observing, before he did so that the firm with which he was connected was one of the largest holders of freehold land in the colony. The motion read:

That while the league has been established solely to promote the abolition of all Customs duties which are restrictive of trade and industry, and which are levied upon the bulk of the population for the benefit of a few, it recognises the fact that unless the public expenditure can be reduced the abolition of such duties will necessarily involve the imposition of a

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35 Reported in the Age, Jan. 17, 1877.
37 Both firms had the same Melbourne address, viz. 46, Elizabeth Street., and both had offices in London.
38 The Lands Commission Report for 1879-80 (cited f.n. 36) does not, however, show Lyell's name, either alone or in association with others, amongst the owners of estates over 1,000 acres. Had the firm sold out by then, or did it 'hold' land in a special sense?
corresponding amount of direct taxation applicable in some form to real and personal property; and it emphatically disclaims the imputation attempted to be thrown upon it by the opponents of its policy — that it has been established, or will be employed, to divert public attention from such direct taxation. 39

Despite the apparent disinterestedness of the mover — one can only say 'apparent' because the proportions of his personal income derived respectively from mercantile and pastoral investments are not available — despite this, the free-traders hedged, and by their hedging inevitably gave credence to Pearson's suggestion. Gregory stated their dilemma badly when he said, 'Some were for a land tax, others for an income tax, and he thought it would be undesirable to divide their forces for the simple sake of answering an absurd imputation'. The meeting, however, was sufficiently disturbed by the 'absurd imputation' to reject Gregory's amendment 'that their object was nothing more than the one set out in their rules'. Langton then moved an amendment but withdrew it after discussion. In the end, rather than have his motion carried by a narrow majority Lyell withdrew it also.

While this obvious dissension gladdened the heart of the Age, the resignation of Campbell and the position adopted by Lyell must have pricked Pearson's conscience a little, for

39 Age, Jan. 17, 1877.
he felt obliged, as soon as he had returned to the colony, to defend and clarify his position in a long letter to the Age.

I cannot conceive what advantage the party will derive from a fresh or crushing defeat; but I can see that a Parliament elected upon a false issue will be as worthless for practical purposes as that which now sits has been. Therefore, whether designedly or not, the Free-Trade League is undoubtedly working in the interests only of those who are opposed to land reform. But I need not say that I quite understand how gentlemen like Mr. Colin Campbell and Mr. Lyell can take a different estimate of the situation. Mr. Langton has challenged a reply of a different kind, and must not complain if I remind him of some facts he would perhaps be glad to forget.40

He then proceeded to detail, with apposite references to the Argus, Langton's political inconsistencies during the parliament which was drawing to its close—his election for West Melbourne in April 1874 with protectionist support after giving guarantees that as little injury as possible would be done to investments in protected industries; his attack, a year later, on Mr. Service's budget for not going further in the direction of Free-Trade, his alliance a few days later with the protectionist leader Berry to overturn the government in which he had lately held office, and his subsequent defence of the gag imposed on Berry's party.
It is for Mr. Langton to explain [he concluded] how conduct of this kind is compatible with accepted notions of party allegiance or with common loyalty to a principle. Till he has done so, I must be pardoned if I regard the Free-Trade League, whose ornament he is, with profound suspicion.\textsuperscript{41}

Once again Pearson played conveniently into the \textit{Age}'s hands. The paper had never had any love for Langton, and at the last meeting of the Free Trade League Council he had the temerity to suggest that the \textit{Age} habitually misrepresented those with whom it disagreed, adding that the situation simply had to be borne without complaint as nothing could ever be done with such a paper. This was an open invitation for what a country journal referred to in retrospect as a 'good, hot, raking fire', and Pearson's letter, restrained in language, well-documented, and written by a comparatively independent observer, made an excellent pretext. So it was that the issue which carried Pearson's letter also carried the notorious editorial commencing 'Of all the noxious vermin that prey upon the political world, the trading politician is the vilest' which led to a libel suit for £5,000 and the actual award of £1,000 damages against the paper. Where Pearson confined himself to inconsistencies of policy, the \textit{Age} alleged outright corruption.

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Age}, Jan. 22, 1877, 3e.
We do not know where we could lay our hands upon a member of Parliament who has more steadfastly and consistently devoted himself to the task of making a merchandise of himself and his high office than Mr. Langton ...

It was not the most gentlemanly of contests into which Pearson was being drawn!

A fortnight after the joint publication of letter and editorial the liberal forces began to organise in earnest. On February 7th the National Reform League inserted in the Age its first notice of a meeting to be held in the Princess Theatre on the 19th 'to review the Political Situation and advocate Protection and a Land Tax'. As Pearson was the key speaker at this 'monster meeting' it seems very likely that he had made his vital decision, and committed himself to an open alignment with the National Reform League some time before the 7th, or well before the College doors re-opened on the 13th. On the 12th, Graham Berry, the leader of the opposition in the still-undissolved Assembly, delivered his personal policy speech in Geelong. To Pearson this must have been a little chastening, not so much because Berry called both the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees 'corrupt' - for by now he must have come to expect that sort of language from friends and foes alike, and after all he himself had not been as

42 Age, Jan. 22, 1877.
discreet as he might have been with the free-traders — but because Berry showed quite clearly that he cared nothing, at least at the moment, for the progressive tax on land. What Berry proposed was simply the identical measure that had brought his 55-day government down in 1875.

It was never put forward [he claimed] as a penal or bursting-up tax; it was a politic and just tax. Its first object was to make good a deficit of £200,000, and to tax a class that had hitherto escaped taxation.43

Now Berry knew very well that the National Reform League, of which he had recently been elected president, was advocating a progressive tax designed just as much to 'burst-up' the great estates as to fill the deficit. What sort of a game was he playing, and what manner of man was he whom Pearson, if he were to enter parliament, would probably have to accept as a leader?

Berry was a notable representative of the self-made, broad-spoken, hard-headed men who had immigrated in the gold rushes of the 'fifties and were just now, after successful years as shopkeepers, mining speculators, land agents, small manufacturers, contractors and farmers coming to assume positions of authority in the colony. He was not, like Pearson or Higinbotham, a theorist, or a statesman accustomed to

43 Age, Feb. 13, 1877.
taking long views. He had, for example, opposed the Education Act of 1872, not because of intellectual or religious scruples, but because he had thought it would cost too much. And although he appealed regularly to the 'people' and the 'working man' he did not by any means consider himself one of the masses. 'I have never' he once remarked in parliament, 'shut my eyes to the superficial knowledge of the masses; I have endeavoured to instruct them'. The people he really represented were the moderately well-to-do, self-made men like himself.

Sir Charles Dilke, who knew him before he emigrated and met him again in 1879, described him in his diary on the latter occasion as 'a rough able man, son of a Chelsea tradesman, himself formerly an unsuccessful tradesman in the King's Road, and brother to an unsuccessful Chelsea auctioneer'. Between 1852, when he arrived in the colony, and 1860 when he was first elected to parliament, he had conducted a general store and wine merchant's business in the suburb of Prahran. Then, after three years as legal manager of the Collingwood Mining Company he had gone in 1866 to Geelong, the headquarters of the high protection party, where he had bought

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and amalgamated two newspapers, the Register and the Advertiser, editing the new paper under the latter name. During his early parliamentary career, according to Alfred Deakin, 'It was palpable that he was needy and aspiring, subordinating his principles to his eagerness for recognition'. He was not the sort of man who would readily trim his policies at the dictate of the Reform League or the Age, unless he saw no other way of holding on to power. Certainly he depended on the backing of the Reform League, and of the Protection League too, but just as certainly these organizations needed his leadership. Now that Higinbotham had gone there was really no one else to whom they could appeal.

In holding to the land tax proposals he had brought forward two years before he appears to have had two principle ends. He genuinely wanted £200,000 p.a. to fill the deficit: and that meant he would have to have his proposal passed by both Assembly and Council. If he proposed a penal tax designed specifically to 'burst up' the great estates there was less likelihood of it being passed in the Assembly (where he might have to depend on the support of the 'Corner').

46 One Hundred Years of Responsible Government in Victoria, 1856-1956, Melbourne, Government Printer, p.53.

moderates led by Service) and much less likelihood of it being passed in the Council. In the second place it appealed to his vanity, or to what the Age called his 'poetic sense of justice' to force the Assembly to swallow in 1877 exactly the same proposal that had brought his government down in 1875. From his subsequent conduct he appears to have regarded the Reform League's cry about 'bursting-up' the great estates as little more than a useful manoeuvre which he could afford to ignore once he was in power. In such a strategy Pearson might be useful as a learned decoy.

In the same week as Berry delivered his Geelong speech the strategic amalgamation of the executives of the Reform and Protection Leagues - 'to conduct the popular cause during the general elections' - took place in Melbourne.48 As a result of this the great public meeting in the Princess Theatre, long planned by the Reform League for the following Monday (the 19th) took on the added significance of a combined show of force. There was a tremendous attendance. According to the Age no less than three thousand 'eager and orderly listeners' crowded every part of the building - auditorium, galleries, even the stage itself. The proceedings, of course, followed a pre-arranged pattern. The policy of 'narrowing

48 Age, Feb. 17, 1877, 4g.
down the principles to be advocated and contended for into a small and simple compass' had already been decided. All the meeting could do was inspire the convinced, reassure the apprehensive, and present to the colony a confident and unified front. The two principle resolutions put forward, the first by Berry, the second by Pearson, were so worded and introduced as to offend as few liberal supporters as possible. Berry introduced his motion first:

That the meeting affirms that a protective policy has proved highly beneficial to the colony, and resolves to support it by every constitutional means.

As explained above, protection was not endorsed with equal warmth by all sections of the liberal alliance, and Berry skilfully left his resolution to the end of his speech and spent most of the time speaking of the injuries done to the people by the upper house - a subject on which there was strong and unanimous feeling. As a final preparation for the resolution itself he spoke of the bridging over of 'a division in the Liberal camp that might have caused differences of opinion, and have proved a source of weakness' and went on, reassuringly, to state that 'in maintaining the principle of protection it was probable the maximum amount of duties would not be increased'.
After Berry's resolution had been seconded it was Pearson's turn. It might be supposed, on the basis of Deakin's vignette of Pearson patiently lecturing to a small crowd of workmen in a suburban hotel,\textsuperscript{49} that the latter would have been a laborious and hesitant speaker when confronted by three thousand determined, bowler-hatted, 'rough and able' men. But this was not the case at all. He was obviously exhilarated as he had not been since his Oxford Union days. Even the hostile Argus had to admit that 'as a rhetorical effort, Professor Pearson's speech ... was a great success'.\textsuperscript{50} He first set about accounting for his presence before such an audience.

He said he should have hesitated at any other time to accept the honor of appearing before them. In times when Parliament was sitting, in uneventful and quiet times, he was well content to leave politics to those Parliamentary leaders whom the country had singled out; but in times like the present, when we were on the eve of a dissolution of Parliament, when the whole policy of the country was about to be recast, when burning questions were before the world, he felt that even our political leaders had to fall back upon the country. (Cheers.)\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Victorian Politics}, p.4. Deakin was also present at the Princess Theatre meeting, and he later recorded that when he saw Pearson standing side by side with Berry on the platform all his conservative pre-conceptions 'rapidly went by the board'. (Walter Murdoch, \textit{Alfred Deakin}, p.57.)

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Argus}, editorial, Feb. 22, 1877.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Age}, Feb. 20, 1877.
Then, methodically, he read out the motion 'he had been asked to bring forward'.

That inasmuch as serious danger threatens the best interests of the colony, by reason of the aggregation of large estates in few hands, and bearing in mind the fact that hitherto the revenue of the colony has received no aid or assistance from this description of property, this meeting is of opinion that a tax, equal in amount to that advocated by the National Reform League, should be imposed.\(^\text{52}\)

Taking the two parts of the motion in order, he began by challenging the assertion of Sir Samuel Wilson and the Argus that the tendency to disperse was as great as the tendency to accumulate - a tendency which they had suggested could be verified locally by the land statistics of 1875. Certainly, conceded Pearson, the tendency to accumulate appears to have paused in Victoria, but they only had to look a little outside the boundaries of the colony to find the reason.

In a neighboring colony, he might be permitted to say so, as it was patent to all - (cheers) - the authorities were parting with enormous tracts of land, and it was equally well known that the largest purchasers were Victorian men. These men, owning their little freeholds of 20,000, 30,000 or 100,000 acres in Victoria were buying large quantities in Riverina. (Laughter and cheers) The tendency to accumulate was checked in Victoria merely because, even with the assistance of their bankers, men were unable to buy land everywhere at the same time. (Laughter and cheers)\(^\text{53}\)

\(^{52}\) Age, Feb. 20, 1877.

\(^{53}\) Ibid.
What was incontrovertible was the fact, recently revealed by the statistics of Mr. Hayter, that in Victoria 'half the land which had been alienated was in the hands of some 700 proprietors' whereas even in England, where the process of accumulation had been going on so very much longer 'half the soil of the country was divided amongst 4,500 proprietors'. How absurd it was for Froude to assert, in a recent number of an English journal,\(^5\) that a yeomanry could not exist beside a squirearchy, but must emigrate to Canada or Australia. What Froude was saying, in effect, was that the English yeomanry,

... were to know no home, no rest, no haven of peace; that the earth and the fulness thereof was not for them, but only for the rich

- a rhetorical flight which was rewarded by loud cheering.

Then, descending to his more usual device of irony, he claimed that 'while he profoundly respected those men who regarded themselves as trustees of property for the benefit of mankind' he was concerned quite as much for the well-being of the great landowner as for his tenants.

\(^5\) *Fraser's Magazine,* 94:671. 'Uses of a Landed Gentry.'
It was not good for any man to have that power which the English squire possessed; it was not good that he should be able to destroy villages, form sheepwalks and deer parks, shut up schools, refuse a site for a dissenting chapel, or a Catholic Church, or to interfere with the marriages of the people. (Cheers.) Yet this kind of thing had been witnessed in our own country. And if it was not good for the rich to have this power in their hands, it was not good for the poor to be put under men with such power. (Cheers.)

He drew the meeting's attention to the flourishing condition of the French peasantry since subdivision had been enforced by law, and laughed at the 'cuckoo cry of communism' which some Victorians were raising as if the limiting of large properties were something new and dangerous in politics. All the liberals were proposing was something like a very moderate form of the Mortmain law passed in the time of Edward the First. Or if more recent precedents were required from 'the most conservative country in the world' they might consider the law passed in the 1840's dealing with encumbered estates in Ireland by which 'in ten years 3000 estates, or one-seventh of the property of the kingdom, was disposed of', or a more recent law passed in 1870 giving Irish peasants the right to the value of their labour and improvements. After apologising for detaining everybody so long and being encouraged by cries of 'Go on', he once more ran over the arguments he had used at Emerald Hill in support of a tax specifically on land. He

Lee, Feb. 20, 1877.
concluded by insisting that 'The shibboleth of political liberals was ... that they should go in for the land tax pure and simple'.

After he had taken his seat amidst 'prolonged cheering' Mr. James Munro, M.L.A., the League Vice President, attempted to cope with the anti-climax by making the ambiguous remark... they had listened to such an excellent address from Professor Pearson that he should like that they should all go home at once to think it out for themselves - (cheers) - but as they were there for the purpose of laying open the whole programme of the National Reform and Protection League, it was necessary to wait and hear the speakers who were to follow.56

He himself was the next speaker, and to enliven proceedings he pretended to have been reminded by Pearson of the firing of peasants' cottages on the Duke of Sutherland's estate which he had witnessed as a small boy. But this graphic account was not merely by way of illustration of the evils of large estates, for he continued,

That was in Scotland, in the county of Sutherland; and this act was done by the direction of whom did they think? (Cries of Who?) Sellar, a relative of a gentleman who occupied at the present time a high position in Victoria. (Great laughter and cheering.)57

The point of the story depended on the fact that the Victorian Sellar referred to was a partner in the pastoral enterprises

56 Age, Feb. 20, 1877.
57 Ibid.
of the premier, Sir James McCulloch. It was left to a later speaker, Mr. McKean, to furnish the further, and equally irrelevant information that the father of the premier's partner had actually been in the dock for murder committed during the notorious evictions from the Sutherland estate. After this more homely style the meeting proceeded to its close.
Chapter VIII

BOROONDDARA

The Princess Theatre rally was held on the evening of Monday, February 19th. On the following Wednesday afternoon Pearson was visited by Mr. Charles Dalley, Secretary of a committee which had recently been formed in the district of Boroondara to select a candidate to represent the Liberal interest. Dalley came to invite Pearson to come forward with two other potential candidates to present his views to a public meeting in the Hawthorn Town Hall on the next evening. The invitation seems to have taken him aback, for he refused to give an answer then and there. That evening, however, he wrote the following letter to Dalley:

Dear Sir, - The friends I have consulted are of opinion that I ought to receive a strong requisition from Boroondara before offering myself there. It is thought that since the boundaries of the district have been changed the strength of the Liberal party there can only be ascertained in this way. I shall therefore not present myself at the meeting to-morrow evening; but as my political opinions must be thoroughly well-known, this will not much matter.1

Pearson, then, had clearly determined to enter politics at this stage: it was simply a matter of finding a suitable district. This, however, as he must have realised after

1 Age, Feb. 23, 1877, 3c.
reading the *Age* report of the meeting he had declined to attend, would not be an easy business at all. It was one thing to be 'the recognised lion of the party' on the land question,² quite another to enter the highly competitive field of candidates seeking election in the liberal interest. However much an acquisition to the liberal forces he might be, his election would inevitably mean that some stalwart party supporter or other would be denied entrance to the Assembly. Of course he had the right to offer himself anywhere he chose, but it would never do for him to oppose a sitting liberal, nor one of the candidates who had received 'official' approval from the Reform and Protection League executive. On the other hand, to the various election committees who might give him their support he was an unknown quantity. Had he not said at Emerald Hill that he believed firmly in Free Trade? Perhaps this was only one of several unpopular beliefs he held? And would such a man be readily amenable to local pressures once he was elected? Very likely not! All these difficulties came to the surface at the Hawthorn meeting.

The position in Boroondara was briefly this. The electorate was one of a number which had been newly formed by a recent re-determining of boundaries. Under the former system

² *S.A. Register*, Feb. 26, 1877, 5e; letter from its Victorian correspondent.
it had formed roughly half of the electorate of South Bourke which had then returned two members, and it now took in the outer fringes of eastern suburbia at Hawthorn and Lew together with considerable areas devoted to market gardening, dairying and mixed farming. The sub-dividing and building boom of the 'eighties was still to come, although the railway to Hawthorn was encouraging increasing numbers of moderately well-to-do citizens to build their 'villa residences' in the area. Having neither a specifically rural industrial or commercial character, it was the sort of district in which a candidate's personal standing meant just as much if not more than his adherence to a party platform.\textsuperscript{3} The present ministerialist or 'conservative' candidate for the district was George Paton Smith, who had first been elected for South Bourke eleven years before, had been Attorney-General under McCulloch in 1868-9, had not sought re-election in 1871, but had been elected \textit{unopposed} for the same electorate in 1874, together with his running mate J.B. Crews. It may be supposed that when the old electorate was divided Smith did not choose to stand for the half in which his supporters were weakest. Quite apart from such considerations, he was, on his own merits, one of the ablest of the candidates in the field, although the apparent

inconsistencies in his conduct during the last parliament had undoubtedly caused his popularity to wane.

It was the last factor, ostensibly, which had encouraged Mr. John Hanlon Knipe to go about getting himself nominated as a liberal opposition candidate. Knipe was accurately described in the supplement to *Victorian Men of the Time* (1878) as 'in the true sense of the expression a thoroughly self-taught man, both in business and other respects'. He had emigrated from London to Adelaide in 1853 at the age of 25, and had there learnt the auctioneering business. He had joined the rush to Bendigo in 1854 but after failure at digging had opened a general store. A little later he had made money as an auctioneer and extensive land speculator at Ballarat which he had then used at Bendigo to form the first quartz-mining company on the joint-stock principle in Victoria. The following year, 1860, he had built the well-known Bendigo landmark Knipe's Castle (or Folly), had then followed a new gold rush to New Zealand and finally settled in Melbourne in 1862 since which time he had 'subdivided, christened, and sold all the important large freehold estates in the suburbs ... '. One gathers from this and other sources,⁴ that he had not only made a great deal of money but took every opportunity to

⁴ See esp. *Victoria and Its Metropolis II*, p. 556.
advertise his success. It was eminently fitting that he should have been the leader of the deputation which later in the year prevailed on the government to erect that enormous monument to Victoria's 19th century opulence, the Exhibition Building.

Knipe lived in Boroondara, had in fact thrice refused to be nominated as mayor of Hawthorn, and four days before the Princess Theatre meeting he had taken it upon himself to call a public meeting in Lower Hawthorn in order that 'preliminary steps should be taken for the selection of a liberal candidate ...' Before calling for nominations for a committee to recommend candidates to a public meeting to be held in the same place a week later, he had pointedly observed

... that he had been promised the support of the National Reform League if he wished to contest East Melbourne, but he would prefer being chosen for a constituency with which he was more identified - as well he might have, for East Melbourne was the very citadel of conservatism. It was the secretary of the committee appointed at this preliminary meeting who had approached Pearson.

Such was the state of affairs when the liberals of Hawthorn gathered a second time, on Thursday February 22, to hear the prospective candidates their committee had induced

5 Age, Feb. 16, 1877, 2g.
6 Ibid
to 'come forward'. Dalley opened proceedings by explaining that he had approached three gentlemen, Messrs. Knipe, Willder and Pearson, and went on to read Pearson's letter. Mr. Derbin Willder and Mr. J.M. Knipe then stated their views. Willder was straightforward enough but Knipe obviously seemed to be labouring under some external compulsion, probably from the Reform League, to say things in Pearson's favour. He confessed that he had never had the pleasure of seeing Pearson or hearing him speak, but he thought, after reading the able speech he had delivered at the Princess Theatre that he was the right sort of gentleman to contest Boroondara in the Liberal interest. 

So convinced had he been of Pearson's fitness that he had told Dalley that if money were required he would personally arrange with the committee to pay all expenses—a remark which drew the inevitable cheers. He wanted it to be known that although he personally had had three meetings altogether—the initial one at Lower Hawthorn, and subsequent ones at Camberwell and Kew 'at which latter meeting a resolution was passed to the effect that he was a fit and proper person to come forward as a candidate' his sympathies were entirely with Professor Pearson, and although he was not aware that the professor had expressed any opinion as regarded protection or the abolition of duties on the necessaries of
life' he took it for granted that his presence on the Princess Theatre platform was a sufficient guarantee that he did represent the Liberal interest. He was therefore confident that the meeting would be justified in pledging their support to Pearson and promptly moved a suitable motion to that effect. This was immediately seconded by Mr. Willder who took the opportunity to mention that he 'had received very flattering promises from Creswick, and as he was connected with mining interests he thought he might as well make up his mind to stand for that constituency instead of Boroondara'.

To a number of gentlemen in the hall this was rushing things much too fast. A Mr. Charles Staff said it seemed to him that 'things had been cut and dried for the meeting' and a Mr. Thomas Johnson agreed that they had been 'befooled'.

What brought Mr. Willder there that night, he should like to know, when that gentleman had made up his mind to go to Creswick. (Laughter, and 'Hear, hear'.) The fact was, Mr. Willder came to Boroondara to feel his way, and now they had both Knipe and him ready to go on, but declaring they would make way for Professor Pearson. (Cheers and laughter.) The fact was they did not want Professor Pearson to come to Boroondara, for they had men in the district as able and willing to do their business in Parliament as he was.7

Upon the resolution being put to the meeting it was lost, according to the Argus 50 to 10 or 12, according to the Age Argus, Feb. 23, 1877. The Age did not report this speech.
EGLOONDARA 325

to C, which result caused the Chairman, who seems to have been a party to the whole manoeuvre, to state amidst some interruption, 'that it did not follow that because the resolution had been lost at that meeting that the Liberal party of Borroondara had decided against Professor Pearson coming forward'. This, however, did not prevent a majority of the meeting proposing Knipe as a fit and proper person to come forward as a candidate for their suffrages, nor did it prevent Knipe from announcing that 'although he would have preferred to see Professor Pearson chosen, he would now take up the running and contest the electorate'.

On Saturday, at the end of this eventful week, the Age announced that Pearson, having learnt that 'some of the more influential supporters of the Ladies' College' had been bringing strong pressure to bear to have him removed from the headmastership, had agreed to resign at the end of the current half-year (i.e. in July), although the terms of his contract with the Principal protected him against dismissal on such grounds. Who the 'influential supporters' were the paper did not state. Stebbing refers to a 'cabal in the governing body'. As the minutes of the Standing Committee on the College have disappeared, all that can be said is that this

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8 Age, Feb. 24, 1877.
9 Memorials p. 209.
Committee included at least three proprietors of more than 30,000 acres, one of them, James McBean, being the convenor. It was a great opportunity for making Pearson out as a martyr for his opinions and the Age did not fail to take it. There was, it suggested, a sectarianism in politics just as there was in theologies; for had Pearson supported the other side on the political issues of the day 'he would have been as free to speak or to lecture on behalf of the land-monopolists as Professor Eearn himself'.

Political life in Victoria just now can have but few attractions for the men of culture and refined associations. Mr. Miginbothan, with all his earnestness, has been sickened of it, and it would be no discredit to others to shrink from the test that has proved too much for him. The treatment which Professor Pearson has received on the threshold of his career is only a foretaste of the treatment that he must expect to receive to the end of the chapter. The wealthy lower orders do not easily forgive what they are pleased to consider an act of desertion from their side.

This attack on the 'bigotry' of the College authorities received unexpected support from Adelaide. Only four days after the announcement the paper was able to report:

10 J. Cumming, M.L.C., J. McBean, M.L.A., and John Matheson, are shown by the Lands Commission Report of 1879 (cited p. 301 f.n. 36) to have owned the following acres of freehold respectively: 55,059 worth £194,706; 40,183 worth £119,680; 30,529 worth £111,021. McBean was in addition managing director of the Australian Mortgage Land & Finance Co. Ltd. and a director of the Colonial Bank, while Matheson had been General Manager of the Bank of Victoria since 1853.

11 Age, editorial, Feb. 27, 1877.
Professor Pearson’s services are apparently better appreciated in South Australia than they are by the trustees of the Melbourne Ladies’ College. No sooner was it known in Adelaide that he had resigned his connection with the Ladies’ College than the Bishop of Adelaide, as Chancellor of the University, telegraphed him an offer of a professorship in that University. It is understood, however, that Professor Pearson will prefer politics to a professorship.  

Pearson must certainly have impressed the Adelaidians in 1873, for this was the third time of asking! One is led to wonder, however, in view of the fact that there was no University Council meeting between the announcement of the resignation and the making of the offer, and no mention of the offer in the minutes of the following meeting, precisely what form the 'offer' really took. There is a mention of Pearson in the minutes of a meeting held nearly a month after the reported offer, but it is in connection with a proposed course of public lectures, not a professorship.  

The most credible interpretation seems to be that the Chancellor did send a telegram, but privately, simply sounding Pearson out.

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12 Aug., Feb. 28, 1877.

13 Adelaide University Council minutes, Mar. 23, 1877. 'The Report of the Lecture Committee was considered. The Chancellor read a letter from Mr. Pearson offering to deliver, as requested, [italics mine] a course of Public Lectures. The Chancellor was requested to communicate again with Mr. Pearson as to the time of delivering his lectures and other details, and the question of his honorarium was deferred until next meeting. Read letter of the 10th inst. from the Dean of Adelaide suggesting a course of lectures. To be informed that the council cannot definitely reply to him till after they have heard from Mr. Pearson.'
would he be interested to receive an offer of a chair? - and that Pearson, playing for time, and for some form of insurance again against unemployment in July, had suggested a series of public lectures instead. When this statute precautionary move is borne in mind, together with the fact that Adelaide University in 1877 was only one year old, still lacked a building and could boast no more than eleven matriculated students, it may be seen that Pearson's sacrifice in rejecting the reported offer of a chair was not as great as the Age would have had its readers suppose.

The week following his resignation, and his supposed rejection of the Adelaide offer, must have been an anxious one. It was very generally believed that the Liberals would be victorious in May so that if he could only win a seat in the Assembly he might reasonably hope, such was his present status in the party, to be appointed Minister of Education, at a salary of £1,500, with all the power to effect educational reforms which that office would bring. Yet the seat still had to be won, and the ten or twelve hands raised in his

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14 There were also 20 non-matriculated students, 22 of whom were ladies, although only 8 of these sat for examination in one or more subjects. (Annual Report of the University, S.A. Parl. Papers, 1878, no.41, and Statistical Register of South Australia, 1877, Pt. VI, p.25.)

15 Melbourne Punch, Mar. 8, 1877, p.91, supposed Berry to be considering Pearson as a rival for the Chief Secretaryship.
favour at Hawthorn were not the best of omens. Then, even if he were to succeed, Berry might let him down. The very notion he had put forward with such zeal in the Princess Theatre had not been his own, but one thrust upon him which did no more than hint at the 'progressive' principle, and left all the details to be filled in by a League executive presided over by Berry. Even if he did obtain the Education portfolio, would Berry and his self-made colleagues have any time, or money, for his theories?

It was not as though these questions went unvoiced, for he had, in a very able, much travelled journalist who wrote under the pseudonym 'The Vagabond', a kind of Devil's Advocate. 'The Vagabond' devoted several articles in the anti-liberal Melbourne Punch to Pearson's dilemma. He dug up the latter's article on Australian Institutions contributed years before to Essays in Reform and quoted it back at its author, and asked him whether he was not simply idealizing the men for whom he claimed to be working. Could not the

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Julian Thomas, LL.D. 1840-96. Thomas was the son of a Virginian attorney. He had spent several years in London barely keeping alive on journalism, had worked on the Welsh railways, been imprisoned while participating in the Franco-Prussian war, married the widow of a rich Virginian planter, and after the marriage failed, had come to Melbourne in 1875. He had already made a name there by his forceful exposures of conditions in gaols, hospitals and asylums. His interest in Pearson was clearly more than a professional one. (Obituary notices in the Age, Argus, 5 & 7 Sept. 1896.)
emphatic preference of the liberals of Boroondara for a man like Knipe make him see that he would be far better advised to work quietly away from his reforms outside the political arena? The Age had already suggested that Pearson could expect no mercy from 'the wealthy lower orders'. Now the 'Vagabond' came along to warn him that his liberal friends of the moment might prove no less merciless.

My Dear Professor - what could have induced you to embark upon the troubled sea of practical politics, and to cast in your lot with men for whom familiarity can only breed contempt, and who will soon become jealous of you, and, after a time, will turn and rend you? ... Your complexion, your walk, your very eye-glass, will be held up to public reprobation; and you will discover, when too late, what a terrible mistake you made in giving your confidence to men who feel no scruple whatever in abusing it, when the interests of the faction demand it. You see the sort of treatment Mr. G.P. Smith is experiencing at the hands of former friends and how can you expect to escape similar usage, should you also claim to exercise the right of private judgement in matters political ... You will probably back out of the miserable melee, with broken health, wounded feelings, and soured temper, and a strong tendency to misanthropy ...

Mr. Graham Berry's predecessor as a popular leader, was a man named Osborne, an assisted immigrant, who made enough money by keeping two brothels in Melbourne to retire to England upon. I have heard him inveigh against the middle and upper classes, because they wore shirt collars and kid gloves. I afterwards met him in a public conveyance, dressed like a London gent, and resting his gloved hands on a silver-mounted walking cane. He seemed to improve externally; but in mind and manners he was unaltered ...

17 See below p. 337
And so with your political chief. He was a green-grocer once; he is a green-grocer still. It is not his fault but his misfortune. And this is the man you have chosen to serve under! Proh pudor. Yours more in sorrow than anger.18

Melbourne Punch.

With so uncertain a future before him it is not surprising that Pearson should, apparently, have lost his nerve early in March and allowed himself to accept an offer from Knir to retire in his favour. The Age had done its best since the Princess Theatre meeting to encourage the National Reform and Protection League to find him a reasonably safe seat. In an editorial commenting on his resignation it had specifically asked what the Liberal party intended to do to ensure that the blow fell harmless, observing pointedly: 'They are in the majority at the ballot-box. They must have plenty of seats at their disposal ...'19 The day before it had reported that Pearson had been 'mentioned as likely to be the gentleman selected' by the local liberal party to run with a Mr. Tucker in the newly-created Fitzroy electorate.20 The following day it quoted the Ballarat Courier as saying that a 'strong desire' had arisen in Ballarat West, 'to ask Professor Pearson to contest the third seat for that

18 Melbourne Punch, Mar. 1877, p.108.
19 Age, Feb. 27, 1877.
constituency', adding its own comment 'no doubt more of it will be heard at the meeting of the Liberal party'. On Thursday March 1st, it reported of this meeting, held on the previous Tuesday:

It was resolved that a public meeting be held within three weeks to select candidates to run with Mr. James in Ballarat East, and with Messrs. Smith & Fincham in Ballarat West. The item of general business most worthy of notice was a motion submitted by Mr. Hedges, to invite Professor Pearson to lecture in Ballarat on the land question, which was agreed to.

All three electorates mentioned here - Fitzroy, Ballarat East and Ballarat West - were liberal strongholds, and the men who were eventually chosen by the party to fill the vacancies were in fact comfortably elected. Why then did Pearson, with more than two full months to pass before the election, go down to Hawthorn on the evening of the very day that the Age reported the Ballarat invitation and there allow Hinde to retire formally in his favour? Only a week had passed since he had insisted on a 'strong requisition' from Boroondara before he would offer himself there, and it was

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21 *Age*, Feb. 28, 1877, 2 f.
22 Ibid., Mar. 1, 1877, 2 g.
23 aggregor, R. (Principal, South Melb. College) for Fitzroy; Bell, H. (Contractor) for Ballarat West; Brophy, D. (Hotel prop. and ex-mayor) for Ballarat East.
only a week since the meeting which he had refused to attend had rejected him decisively in favour of Knipe. The only guarantee of support he had received came from the few hands raised in his favour on that occasion - at the most twenty, possibly no more than ten. Now here he was rising to his feet, to the accompaniment of 'deafening applause', to confess that 'up to five o'clock that afternoon he had not made up his mind as to what he would do, but the magnanimous conduct of Mr. Knipe had induced him to determine to offer his services to the constituency'. 24 What else can one suppose but that the National Reform and Protection League, taking advantage of his confused state of mind and playing on his self-sacrificing 'better nature' had allotted him a task, which, in Alfred Deakin's words, 'no-one else was likely to face', 25 and that, after tossing it over and over, he had suddenly made his decision, fatalistically, at the flag end of the school day? It seems likely that Knipe had been induced by the League to play his part by a refusal to grant

24 _Age_, Mar. 2, 1877, 2 f.
him any support if he insisted on standing for Boroondara, combined with an appeal to his vanity. According to the Victorian correspondent of the South Australian Advertiser, Knipe

... probably knew that there was not the remotest chance of the electors returning him, but the opportunity of becoming the sponsor for a real live professor was too good to be missed, and so he 'retired in Mr. Pearson's favor'.

It was a blatant volte-face, but at least it would spare him the indignity of having to hawk himself around from constituency to constituency like his counterpart on the 'conservative' side, Dr. Hearn. Perhaps the odds were against him in Boroondara, but this in itself had its decided compensations. If, as Sir Charles Gavan Duffy contended in a letter urging him to stand for Boroondara, he really were the only liberal whose qualifications promised 'the least chance of success', then this would give him an independence which he could never possess in such a constituency as Ballarat.

Advertiser, Mar. 9, 1877, 5 f-g.

Age, Apr. 6, 1877. 'Will not some free-trade constituency take pity upon Dr. Hearn and put him into Parliament? ... it is a cruel thing that the champion of the cause should be allowed to wander about the political world as seatless as a cherub, and as disconsolate as a Peri, while the rank and file are comfortably provided for ...'

Memorials, p. 211. Duffy, a former member of the House of Commons, was then standing for a seat as safe for him as Boroondara was insecure for Pearson.
West where he would be firmly directed by his two running mates and a powerful local committee. If he succeeded in Boroondara it would be a personal triumph, if he failed, there would still be the kudos of the martyr as consolation. Surely this state of mind is revealed in his words to his supporters after the result had been announced:

Although he had had opportunities of appealing to other electorates, knowing that he was supported and worked for in the most energetic manner by some fifty or 100 gentlemen in Boroondara, he felt that it was not for him to desert them, or even to mention to them that he had had offers from other places; and he stayed to fight the battle to the last, as he would do again under similar circumstances. 29

The same sort of thing had happened before and was to happen again in his life. He would allow his ambition license for a time, and then, when he was on the point of gaining his end - a fellowship at All Souls, a prelectorship of Ancient History, a portfolio, an Agent-Generalship - the scrupulous, fastidious side of his character would assert itself and he would renounce the prize.

The man to whom he had now thrown down his challenge, George Paton Smith, was yet another self-made gold digger of the 'fifties', although his rise in the world had not followed

29 Age, May 29, 1877.
He had early taken up the trade of
linendraper of Bendigo, but had relinquished this in 1857 to
try his hand at journalism in Melbourne. After a few months
on the *Age* he had had two years as law reporter on the *Argus*,
then a further period on the *Leader* (the *Age* weekly). During
this period, and while acting in a new sub-editorial position
on the *Age*, he had doggedly persevered with his studies and
qualified himself for the bar. In 1865, with *Age* support, he
had entered parliament for South Bourke but subsequently, only
a few months after being appointed editor, had been disowned
by the paper. Thenceforward he had devoted himself to law
and had come in time to hold not only the largest share of
the business in the County Court but also a very fair pos-
tion at the Supreme Court bar. McCulloch had appointed him
Attorney-General in his 1868-9 government, and would have
appointed him Minister of Justice when he again gained con-
trol of the government in 1876 had Smith's health not
prevented him taking office. He appears to have been an
independent man with a strong will and strong emotions - the
sort of man who makes firm friends and bitter enemies. In
1870 a fellow barrister, Mr. Gerald Supple, had nearly shot

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The following biographical account is based on obituary
notices in the *Age* and *Argus*, Dec. 7, 1877.
him dead on a city pavement in revenge for real or imagined wrongs. 31

During the 1877 campaign the mere mention of G.F. Smith's name at a 'liberal' meeting was enough to call forth a chorus of groans and hisses, while the Age, which was largely responsible for this feeling, was prepared to descend to the very depths of abuse in attacking its former editor. Just at the time when Pearson announced his intention of contesting Doroondara Smith was representing Langton in his libel suit against the Age, and in one of his addresses he referred to the paper as 'sordid and corrupt'. In return the Age published an editorial referring to certain barristers

... self taught as far as their teaching goes; of no social training and no generous impulses; sprung from the fox-hound; who carry the smell of the kennel in which they were reared into all the associations of life, and betray their native instincts in their hangdog faces and skulking gait; renegades by nature when it is only necessary to bribe with a bone to make them desert their masters, and curlike snap at the hand they had just been fawning upon ... 32

31 Being very short-sighted Supple missed his target and ended by killing a bystander who grappled with him.

32 Age, Mar. 6, 1877. In view of the fact that Smith was then just emerging from an attack of jaundice which had brought him repeatedly to the verge of death and left him with a dreadful pallor, the reference to 'hangdog faces and skulking gait' may well have been a crueler thrust than it seems. Smith actually died from this disease at the end of the year.
The chief grievance of the *Age* against Smith was that as he had risen in the legal world, he had refused to take his political orders from the paper, and had insisted on his right to form his own policies and to follow whichever man he thought fittest to rule. In the outgoing parliament he had more than once rejected an offer of the Attorney-Generalship from Berry for the simple reason that he did not think that Berry was fit to govern.\(^{33}\) It is not easy to arrive at a just estimate of his character. The *Age* editorial suggests that he may have come to adopt an unnecessarily supercilious attitude to those of his self-made contemporaries who had been less successful than he in concealing their origins. Undoubtedly he had a bitter tongue. His speeches, however, which the *Argus* generally reported in full, have the stamp of a man who believed what he said.

Inevitably more print was lavished on the contest between Pearson and Smith than on any other. Intellectually they were two of the ablest men standing for election, and the very independence of their views, which had given both of them the reputation of renegades, made every speech newsworthy. On a number of issues they were in broad general agreement, in fact it was one of several ironies in this election that

\(^{33}\text{*Argus*, Feb. 24, 1877.}\)
Pearson should have had more in common with his opponent than with many a nominal 'liberal'. Both men took a grave view of the low tone of the Assembly, and of the chronic instability of governments. They both opposed payment of members and the employment of Stonewall tactics. Although they disagreed over the 'progressive' principle in taxation they agreed that great estates were harmful to the colony, that land should bear a proportion of the cost of government, and that incomes should on no account be taxed. Finally they both claimed to be free-traders who were prepared, in the interests of stability, to continue protection for certain well-developed industries for a limited period. It was not surprising that Smith should have been taken aback by Pearson's unexpected presence in Boroondara.

Without doubt [he remarked of Pearson to the electors of Hawthorn] he was a gentleman very desirable to have in Parliament, no matter what views he might entertain, because his learning and position would always entitle him to respect; but in choosing this constituency he must have believed either that he was absolutely fitter than anyone else to represent it, or that he (Mr. Smith) was absolutely unfit, because there were many constituencies almost vacant to which he could have appealed with every prospect of success. Had the two opponents stood for different constituencies ... there would have been two good men in Parliament instead of only one, as would now be the case.34

34 Argus, Mar. 17, 1877.
They did differ, however, and it was a vital difference, in their attitude to politics. Smith was an old colonist whose twenty years' experience as journalist, lawyer and M.P. had soured his former idealism. He could see no hope for a liberal party ruled by men like Berry and Woods and he had no compunction in supporting measures to silence men whom he considered to be mere political adventurers. He told the electors of Hawthorn that he rejoiced in the name of 'gagger' and if returned to Parliament would do his best to 'make the iron hand a permanent institution'.

His cynicism, however, was consistent for he placed little faith in the propertied classes who generally 'did absolutely nothing to advance the country'. In his view the only hope for parliament lay in the electors coming to their senses and sending up men of honesty and ability as representatives, irrespective of their class, or wealth, or adherence to a particular party. Only get a sufficient number of such men in the Assembly, he argued, and good government would follow. He was thoroughly suspicious of the highly organized National Reform and Protection League, especially as its leaders were not disinterested citizens but prominent

35 Argus, Feb. 24, 1877.
36 Ibid.
politicians ambitious for office. In his opinion the real issue in the 1877 election was not the platform of the League but whether or not Mr. Graham Berry, the League's 'principal wire-puller', should be Chief Secretary. He himself had no intention of supporting Berry or any of his satellites, and he reserved the right to decide later whether he would support Sir James McCulloch.

The electors would take him as a man took a wife, for better or for worse, for the term of three years. They would hear his opinions, and elect him or not as they thought proper ... he might say that he was independent of this Government as of any other ... He supported them because he believed that they were the most capable set of men the house could afford.37

U.P. Smith was just the opponent to highlight Pearson's political dilemma. In contrast to Smith Pearson was fresh to the colony and to political life, and although his experiences had already tempered his idealism somewhat, his crusading zeal and his liberal faith in the potentialities of ordinary men still remained strong. Like Smith he had no love of mob orators, and 'deeply regretted' Berry's 'Stonewall' policy.38 He had already, in one of his Nation articles, described the leading liberal Woods as 'a very

38 Political Opinions on Some Subjects of the Day, Melbourne, Fergusson & Moore, Printers, April 1877. (The pamphlet was reviewed in the Age of April 21, 5 c.)
inferior politician', and no one was more conscious than he of
the loss that the Assembly had suffered from the recent
retirements of Wilberforce Stephen, J.G. Francis (a former
premier) and George Higinbotham. At the same time, however,
he was utterly opposed to Smith's proposal 'to make the iron
hand a permanent institution', citing, in illustration of its
evil potentialities, the vindictive misuse of their majority
by the representatives of the northern states after the
American civil war. These men had carried

... in the space of ten minutes a measure suspending
civil rights, against the veto of the president, and
against the express wish of several members to speak.
was that system [he asked the electors of Lower
Hawthorn] - a system by which the liberties of a
population of many millions were taken away - one
which should be adopted here? ... There never was a
case which the few members who did care to speak on
behalf of the conquered people should have been
listened to more patiently. 

He was also in fundamental disagreement with Smith on the
question of party allegiance, believing firmly that the reforms
urgently needed in Victoria - reform of the system of land
ownership, of the Council, of the education structure, of the
civil service - could only be achieved by united action on
one issue at a time, which implied some form of party
organization and a readiness amongst liberals to submerge

39 Address to the electors of Balwyn. Age, May 1, 1877.
40 Age, April 30, 1877.
differences. For these reasons he gave his allegiance to the Reform and Protection League, correctly discerning that the absence of any equivalent to the English party system was at least half the cause of the malaise in Victorian politics. In an attack on Smith's conception of the independent rights of representatives, he observed that in England

... men were now elected as Conservatives or Liberals, and were expected to stick to their respective flags. But they all knew that such was not the case here. Our legislators were so magnanimous that they would band themselves together under any leader who was able to command a majority ... Let them rely on this exaggerated theory of independence of members, and it would lead to nothing else than to coalitions of the kind they had witnessed.\(^4\)

All the same he must have realized that the newly-amalgamated League was by no means the only factor in the situation, and that if he were to succeed in effecting anything he would have to come to terms not only with the League, but with Berry personally, with the Age, and with the electors of Boroondara. He had his positive faith: the question still remained how far he would have to compromise it to achieve practical ends.

Throughout the 1877 campaign one can see him struggling with this dilemma— not always successfully. In his first major speech in the Hawthorn Town Hall he deliberately posed

\(^{4}\) Address at Kew, reported in the Age of Mar. 22, 1877.
the problem that had faced Higinbotham and Sir Charles Gavan Duffy before him, the problem of reconciling free-trade principles with allegiance to a protectionist liberal party. Gavan Duffy had gone to the extent of writing directly to John Stuart Mill for guidance and it was Mill's reasoning that Pearson now adopted.42

Though he was a free-trader, he was a democrat. He believed that the people had a right to settle the question of the tariff for themselves. If that question came on for settlement he would resign his seat, that the electors might determine the subject. (Hear, hear.) He had never been able to understand the distinction that was drawn between a representative and a delegate. It appeared to be considered that a gentleman who disregarded the wishes of his constituents was a representative, but those who obeyed them were delegates. (Cheers and laughter.) The business of a representative, was a most important one - it was to carry into effect the wishes of those who sent him to Parliament. (Cheers.) He might put new lights before his constituents, and consult with them from time to time, and use his intelligence and influence to lead and enlarge their ideas if his views were better than theirs; but he should on no account use his position to override their deliberate will, or act in a manner, when elected, in which he could not act if he had to submit himself to them. (Cheers.)43

42 Elliot, Letters of John Stuart Mill, ii, 66: (Mill to Duffy Oct. 2, 1866). A conscientious politician '... may, and often ought to be, willing to put his opinion in abeyance on a political question which he deems to be, in the circumstances of the time and place, of secondary importance; which may be the case with any question that does not in one's own judgment involve any fundamental principle of morality. But in consenting to waive his opinion, it seems to me an indispensable condition that he should not disguise it... Insincere professions are the one cardinal sin in a representative government'.

43 See, Mar. 9, 1877.
This was all very well, but when Mr. Patrick O'Brien, who had represented the district in the first Victorian parliament of 1856, asked his opinion on the system of payment of members Pearson palpably floundered.

Professor Pearson replied that he was sorry he had not remembered to speak upon that point, for it was certainly one of considerable importance. He was in favor of the system, on the ground that he did not see otherwise how they could get poor men returned to Parliament, and also because he thought that work not paid for was badly done. (Applause and dissent.) At the same time, while he said that, he also would say it was just one of those points which a constituency had a perfect right to decide for its own member. So far as he was concerned, it mattered not which way they decided, and he was perfectly willing to vote against the system should the constituency wish it. The experiment had not, perhaps, answered very well: let them, if they desired it, try the experiment of no payment for the next three years.

Mr. O'Brien, amidst some interruption, persisted in repeating the question ... They had had too much trimming in the colony, and he hoped that the professor was not going to trim upon that point ...

Professor Pearson replied that he considered he had had an unmistakeable expression of feeling from the constituency on the matter, and he would therefore pledge himself to vote against it. (Applause and hisses.)

O'Brien's question exposed the weakness of his position. To many liberals of the day, chief among them Berry, payment of members was not a side issue at all but an important plank in liberal policy. What therefore was he to do? Should he

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Age, Mar. 9, 1877.
follow Berry, obey what he guessed to be the wishes of his constituents, or simply adopt G.P. Smith's policy of saying what he believed and taking the consequences? On this particular subject he took the second course, coming out quite strongly against payment in a pamphlet he later published summarizing his opinions. 45

It was at this time, when he was feeling his way in Boroondara, that he received a letter signed jointly by his fellow headmasters and late university colleagues. These gentlemen evidently regarded his resignation from the Ladies' College under pressure as a precedent grave enough to warrant a letter of protest, addressed to Pearson, but intended to be published, as indeed it was, in the Age.

It ran:

Dear Professor Pearson, - We, engaged as you have been, in the work of education in this colony, wish to express our sincere regret that you have deemed it your duty to resign the appointment which you have held at the Ladies' College. We express no opinion on your political views, which many of us are far from sharing, but we should be sorry that anyone should forget that educators have by no means laid aside the duties of citizens in accepting educational work. We know, as few except your pupils and their parents can know, the extent of the

45 Political Opinions on Some Subjects of the Day, p. 14. 'I have decided to vote against payment of members. I am very doubtful, whether it will not be necessary some day to revert to it ... But in face of the scandal caused by the resolution of the present Parliament not to dissolve under any circumstances, I am certain that a majority of the country is sick of paid representatives.' He had not mentioned this 'scandal' at his political meeting.
loss which education will suffer deprived of your earnest zeal and eminent attainments. We would fain express a hope that this calamity may be averted.

A.H. IAVING [Late H.A. Wesley College.]
EDWARD B. MORRIS [H.R. Melbourne Grammar]
H.A. STRONG [Professor of Classics.]
FREDERICK McCoy [" Natural Sciences."
N.C. KERNOT [Lecturer in charge of Engineering Dept.]
W.E. HENRI [Dean of the Faculty of Law.]
ALEX. MORRISON [H.R. Scotch College.]
J.S. BIRKINGTO [Lecturer in History.]

Another memorial, with the second sentence somewhat differently worded, was subscribed by Professors BURSON [Mathematics] and ALLEN [H.R. Wesley College.]

Dr. LOEHR [Lecturer in Law] and Mr. PIRINI [Lecturer in Logic].

The letter must have taken some time to organize, and may actually have been drafted in the first place before Pearson had commenced his election campaign. His reply, which Professor Strong forwarded to the Age nearly a fortnight after it was written, was, to say the least of it, curiously worded.

14th March. 9 Burlington Terrace.

Gentlemen, - I am very grateful to you for the wish you have so kindly expressed that I should remain working among you in Melbourne. No man can have a higher honor than such an expression of opinion that he is doing honest work from the leaders of his profession. Having said what I had to say on a question of the day in which I was deeply interested, I was quite willing to withdraw from active interference in politics. The interests of education are so absorbing, its work so laborious, that the political

Age, Mar. 20, 1877. The published letter was undated.
activity of the headmaster of a large school must always be circumscribed within narrow bounds. I regret that the liberty of speaking out - a liberty which such men as Arnold, Temple and Maurice have successfully asserted in England - should have been for a moment disputed here. But I feel certain that the thinking part of the community is as far from wishing to proscribe freedom of speech as any of ourselves from advocating habitual intermeddling in politics as compatible with the duties of a headmaster. I am, gentlemen, yours gratefully, Charles H. Pearson.

How Pearson's fellow educationists construed this it is difficult to imagine. He seems to be trying to have his cake and eat it too - to appear at once a martyr expelled for his opinions and a self-sacrificing schoolmaster who had voluntarily resigned rather than allow his school to suffer from his political ambitions. Is one to believe that he told the governing body that he was 'quite willing to withdraw from active interference in politics', providing he remained in the headmastership, and meant it? He had, after all, been ready to entertain the idea of contesting a seat only two days after the Princess Theatre meeting and three days before the Age announced his intention to resign, and had subsequently, so it had been reported, refused the offer of an Adelaide professorship in order to continue with his political career. In view of the fact that he went on conducting the Ladies' College and drawing his salary throughout

Age, Mar. 27, 1877.
his Boroondara campaign (which might surely be described as 'habitual intermeddling in politics') and for nearly two months after polling day, it is difficult not to sense something false in the pose of the martyr, and to suspect that in fact Pearson had driven a fairly shrewd bargain with the Standing Committee. Surely, if his contract protected him, he was not the sort of man to surrender meekly on such an issue unless it suited him to do so?

The Argus, which remembered all too clearly the help it had given him when he wanted a job in the University, and to a lesser degree, when he was angling for the headmastership of the Ladies' College, pretended to have no illusions on this score. In an editorial published two days after the rival Age had printed the letter from the headmasters and dons it gave its own version of Pearson's career since his arrival in South Australia in 1871 to take up farming. The tenor of it was that Pearson, an 'English historian of more than average merit' had renounced his class and turned political adventurer. Particular attention was paid to the Emerald Hill lecture when, it was asserted, he had first shown himself 'capable of insulting a society of gentleman' by casting aspersions on the motives of the Free Trade League. 'It was

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Argus, Mar. 22, 1877.
thought at the time ... and subsequent events have shown
the reasonableness of the forecast, that the learned gentle
man had made up his mind to enter political life, and was
bidding very high for popular support'. One can detect here
the shrewd, embittered view of Pearson's old Oxford contem
poraries, and erstwhile friends, Gowan Evans and Murray
Smith. They knew at first hand of Pearson's successes in
the Union, had no doubt heard men predict a rosy future for
him, and seen him drop out of sight, working the treadmill
in King's College. They were in a better position than most
Melbourne men to divine the political ambition which undoubt
edly existed.

Was Pearson's trouble that he disliked acknowledging,
even to himself, his very real ambition to cut a figure in
the world, to command a substantial salary, to sway men with
his rhetoric, to draft and execute radical laws? The
Pearson who was plunging into colonial politics in 1877 still
retained some of the attitudes and values of the young man
who had called on the Oxford Union to approach politics with
'religious awe'. It was essential to his self-confidence
that he should be able to appear, not only to others but to
himself, a man of unimpeachable integrity and altruism, and
by and large this characteristic led to his best work, but it
could lead at times both to dissembling and to an unwarranted
display of moral muscles.

It was because he was this sort of man that he must have
been acutely sensitive to the hisses which had greeted his
solution to the question of payment of members. This,
certainly, was the last attempt at a compromise he made in
the election, and indeed he now positively went out of his
way to take issue with the Age, to which, incidentally, he
had not contributed for eight months. The paper had already
been sufficiently embarrassed by his free-trade principles and
his criticism of the Stonewall. Now he came forward to
qualify his criticism of two of McCulloch's ministers for
continuing in office some months after they had been defeated
by adding that unfortunately 'they were not the first to
introduce the custom, and that in Mr. Berry's Ministry Mr.
Trench sat in the same way without representing a constituency'.

To answer a veiled imputation by Smith that he was daily
writing protectionist articles for the Age, although a free-
trader, Pearson told a meeting at Kew. 'I was proud to
say that for years past he had had a literary connexion
with the Age and Leader ... [However] his occupations had
been so absorbing and severe that his contributions had been
far fewer than he could have wished. During the last eight
months he had not written a single article for the Age, and
only one during the last three months for Leader.' He was
also at pains to make it clear that literary writers like
himself were not employed by the press as journalistic
barristers. (Age, Mar. 21, 1877, 3i.)

Address at Lower Hawthorn, Age, Mar. 30, 1877, 3e.
Then, too, he insisted on having his own opinions on reform of the civil service, annual parliaments, and a plebiscite. On April 18th, the day after Pearson attended a meeting at Scotch College to support the principle of competition for all appointments made under the Civil Service Act, the Age defended the custom of appointing supernumeraries with the observation:

> It is bad enough to have three or four hundred men entitled to pensions and retiring allowances. The public would not look with much complacency upon ten or twelve hundred.

Pearson, however, had already said that he believed civil servants in Victoria should be more highly paid, and on the eve of the election he made a particular point of elaborating on this.

Another subject he hoped the new Government would turn its early attention to would be an amended Civil Service Act, by means of which supernumeraries should be placed on a permanent footing when their services were continuously required, and that they should have an appeal to an independent tribunal to protect them from the tyranny and injustice of political or permanent heads. He would also like appointments to be made from the State schools. No greater encouragement and no more valuable prizes could be offered to students than such rewards.

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51 Age, Apr. 18, 1877, 2 f-g. Mr. Morrison, the principal, presided, and there were also present Sir George Verdon, Dr. Bromby, Professors Irving, Strong, and Morris, Messrs. J.G. Francis (the former premier) F. Longmore and others.

52 Ibid, editorial.

53 In his first speech at Hawthorn on Mar. 8.

54 Age, May 11, 1877.
On the question of parliamentary reform the disagreement was rather sharper. The Age still supported the old Quanzist demand for annual parliaments, which it regarded as a panacea for all existing parliamentary ills. When Pearson argued against this scheme in an election address at Camberwell the Age changed its usual policy of reporting him in full and gave him half a column instead. Pearson however, refused to take the hint and wrote stiffly to the editor:

Sir, - Will you allow me to state briefly in your columns the reasons why I prefer a plebiscite to annual parliaments. Your report of my speech at Camberwell has omitted this part of my argument, and I am afraid I cannot have made it sufficiently clear ... 55

He argued that annual elections of both Assembly and Council would only have the effect of increasing the power of the latter. The membership of the Council would still tend to change very slowly, whereas the Assembly would have to cope with an annual influx of novices. Furthermore, with an obstructionist Council and a new election regularly intervening with all its side issues it would prove very difficult to get any one important bill passed. The plebiscite he proposed was not the only way of resolving deadlocks, but the best.

55 Age, Apr. 2, 1877.
It would take the opinion of the people on the question before the two Houses, with no disturbance from side-issues; and either House would be very slow to expose itself to defeat by the popular vote. The Assembly would not send up 'bogus' bills, and the Council would not veto measures that it knew to be supported by public sentiment.\(^{56}\)

All the while these side-issues were being discussed, the weary argument over the progressive land tax went on, not only between Pearson and Smith, but between candidates and newspapers all over the colony. The agricultural editor of the Leader, John Lamont Low, continued to give the same lecture he had first delivered in Ballarat on September 16th of the previous year, carrying round with him still the same giant wall map illustrating the evils of large estates. When Pearson went out to support him in a Melbourne suburb he had already spoken twenty two times.\(^{57}\) Wily McCulloch, after delaying his policy speech as long as possible, abandoned his former income tax scheme and came out with a proposal for a general land tax, slightly progressive, to be levied on land of all values whether in town or country.\(^{58}\) Sir Charles Gavan Duffy added his own distinctive contribution to the discussion.

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56 *Age*, Apr. 2, 1877.
57 *Age*, Mar. 14, 1877, 3 b.
58 Ibid. Apr. 26, 1877. Unlike the National Reform and Protection League, McCulloch couched his proposals in precise terms - a 5% tax on land up to the annual value of £200 with a remission on the first £30; 7½% tax on land of annual value of more than £200.
by envisaging an ideal society of small-holders on the Belgian or Swiss model. 59

Pearson himself quoted personal experiences of the evils of large estates in England.

He had been a medical student [he told one of his meetings] and had ascertained from personal observation and inquiry that many of the maladies prevailing in the agricultural districts were caused by the want of proper nutrition; and the worst and most numerous cases occurred on the estates of the wealthy aristocracy. 50

In a learned article for the Melbourne Review comparing the standards of well-being enjoyed respectively by the agricultural populations of France (where subdivision had long been enforced by law) and England, he wrote of the latter

I could point to one large estate where the last owner, having imbibed the principles of Malthus, enforced them upon his tenantry by compelling everyone who married without leave to quit the property. I know another, where cottages, as they fall in, are systematically pulled down, and the labourers obliged to emigrate to the nearest town; while the owner of a third has depopulated the country for two or three miles round his own house, forcing the labourers to walk miles to their work that the view from his drawing-room windows may not be spoiled by the smoke from a cottage chimney ... 61

For his part G.P. Smith shared the fears of Pearson and Gavan Duffy and others that such evils might come about

59 Address to the electors of Sale, Age, Mar. 17, 1877, 7.
60 Age, Mar. 2, 1877.
in Victoria, but he questioned whether the progressive tax advocated by these gentlemen was the right means of preventing them. First of all he challenged Pearson to say precisely how he expected to collect his tax. To this Pearson responded with an example:

Suppose, for instance a man returned his land as having cost £10,000, that £10,000 had been expended on it in improvements, and that the actual value was £40,000. It was agreed the improvements should not be taxed, and it was a mere matter of detail whether the added value and the original cost combined should be taxed, or only the former.62

When Smith commented scornfully that he could think of fifty ways of evading such a tax, Pearson could only retort that lawyers had always found ways of evading any tax, and go on to repeat the suggestion he had first made at Emerald Hill, namely, that the State should have the right to buy up any estate at the owner’s evaluation, and should sometimes exercise it. Smith also queried whether such a penal tax, quite apart from its practicality, was either necessary or just. He noted that the English laws of primogeniture and entail did not apply in Victoria, and asked whether it would not be wiser to wait until the ‘natural’ tendency of land either to accumulate or disintegrate was clearer, particularly in view of the fact that half the soil of Victoria still

62 *Age*, Mar. 22, 1877.
unaliendated. Unlike Pearson, who preferred to deal in generalities or quote English examples, Smith actually listed six large estates which had recently been subdivided on their owners' deaths, one of them, a very fertile Western District property, having been purchased by 80 'industrious occupants' at an average price of from £30 - £40 per acre. He was also able to cite the benevolent landlordism of the colony's largest landowner, W.J. Clarke, who had broken up the estates he had inherited from his father into farms and spent great sums of money on improving the productivity of his land by introducing the latest methods and machinery. Was it not better, Smith asked, 'for a struggling man to be under Mr. Clarke as a tenant, rather than a small landowner in the grip of a mortgagee?'. In view of these circumstances he proposed to do no more, for the time being, than compel large landowners to divide their estates into blocks by re-opening all public roads which they had unlawfully enclosed.

The moment this was done, the process of subdivision would commence. These landowners would soon find that it would pay them better to let their land to industrious enterprising tenants, than keep it in their own hands making little use of it.

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63 Argus, Feb. 24, 1877.
64 The enclosure of public roads was no small abuse in the colony. Dow estimated that some half a million acres were involved. Age, Jan. 5, 1877.
65 Argus, Feb. 24, 1877.
This, of course, was just what Pearson feared - the transformation of a society of pastoralists into an entrenched aristocracy of great landlords. W.J. Clarke might be benevolent enough but would his heirs, more than likely absentee, necessarily share his virtues? Perhaps Pearson did apply his English and continental experience somewhat uncritically to Victorian conditions, perhaps there were more effective and equitable ways of filling the deficit and discouraging the growth of great estates. Nevertheless it may be noted that the 'natural' process of sub-division of which his opponents talked so glibly (none more foolishly than Sir Samuel Wilson) did not produce the results predicted, and that subsequent Australian and New Zealand governments have

The most practical criticism of Pearson's scheme came from Catherine Helen Spence, an old South Australian friend. In an article entitled 'Graduated Succession Duties' in the Melbourne Review (Oct. 1877, p.433 ff.) she expressed the fear that his proposed tax would 'lead to dummyism and frauds beyond any ever seen before' and that it would be much more liberal to allow all men freedom to accumulate and bequeath, while taxing their estates in such a way as to encourage dispersion after their death. She proposed to make the scale of the existing system of graduated succession duties much steeper, rising from 10% for sums not exceeding £100 up to 20% for sums exceeding £250,000, and to apply the tax to individual bequests rather than to total estates. This was more consistent with J.S. Mill's fiscal views than Pearson's scheme. Mill did, as Pearson claimed, commend taxation of unearned increment, but the only graduated tax he specifically sanctioned was one on inheritance. Mill, J.S., Principles of Political Economy, With Some of their Applications to Social Philosophy, edited by W.J. Ashley (Longmans, London, 1909) pp.509, 817-18.
certainly felt obliged to take deliberate steps to break up large estates, either by progressive taxation, or by resumption, especially for soldier settlement. It should also be said to his credit that he was realistic enough to see that the only way to get bona fide 'yeomen' on the land was to sell it at its real value. In fact he had the strongest desire to introduce free-trade in land; providing, and this was to be the effect of his land tax, there was a constant check on the tendency towards accumulation.

Polling day came on May 11, and Graham Berry and his followers won 62 of the 86 Assembly seats, a proportion unexceeded in the remaining years of the century. The 'wire-pullers' of the National Reform and Protection League had done their work with exemplary thoroughness. While the

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67 His friend from 'Coonatto' days, Dr. John Cockburn, attempted, when Premier of South Australian in 1890, to introduce a 'bursting-up' tax, but, although he had been returned to power on this issue was foiled by his nominal parliamentary supporters. Ballance was much more successful in New Zealand in 1891. (Reeves, W.P., State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, (London, 1902, reprinted 1923) vol.1, pp.257-262.) Thirty years after Pearson had campaigned for a progressive land tax in Victoria Mr. W.A. Watt justified a similar measure in almost identical terms. His bill was dropped, however, when the Commonwealth passed its land tax legislation in 1910. (Garland, J.H., Australian Land Taxation, M.U.P., 1934, pp.30-31.)

68 'I say that Graham Berry was returned to this House with the largest majority that ever followed a Minister ...' John Madden, V.P. Debates, 1897, 87/760.
papers were discussing Pearson's theories, the League had quietly established a whole network of branches, selected its candidates, allotted them districts and disciplined, as far as it could, any man calling himself a liberal who threatened to split the vote. Such thorough-going party organization had never been seen before in Australia. As a result the secretary was able to report:

The league had 71 candidates running for 71 seats. Of those seats 55 were gained - 50 of them by our own candidates, and five by gentlemen equally bound to the party and programme, but who did not happen to be selected by the organization ... 69

No less than 30 men were elected to parliament for the first time, 25 of them in the liberal interest - and yet, in all this welter of new men - contractors, farmers, mining agents, provincial journalists, storekeepers - the name of Pearson was not to be found. 70 The 'recognised lion of the party on the land question' had lost by 70 votes, 720 to 650. The lamentations of the Age were loud, but it could not miss the opportunity of wagging its wise finger.

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69 Argus, June 1, 1877, 7 e.

70 Table showing the occupations and districts of all new members, Age, May 14, 1877. The University men, in fact, were rejected all round - the two Oxonians Pearson and Murray Smith, and the three Trinity College Dublin men, Dixon, O'Loghlen, and Dr. Hearn all failing to gain seats. As Higinbotham (Dublin) and Wilberforce Stephen (Cambridge) had already retired from politics, there can hardly have been a graduate in the Assembly.
The defeat of Professor Pearson at the hands of Mr. G.P. Smith is the sole disaster in the long and brilliant series of victories won yesterday. But although regretting that in the discussion of the land tax the House will lose his assistance, it cannot be forgotten that upon one point, and that the important one of protection, the views of Mr. Pearson were opposed to those of the Liberal party. 71

Under these circumstances, however, and in view of the fact that to quote the Age's own words, Boroondara was 'a constituency carefully carved and cut out at the late change in the Electoral Act to accommodate Mr. G.P. Smith' 72 Pearson made an excellent fight. Indeed, when G.P. Smith died at the end of the year, and Knipe, an ardent protectionist, at last had his chance, he was beaten to the post by no less than 253 votes! 73

It was felt by the Liberals that some sort of appreciation should be shown to Pearson, so they tendered him a Spiree, with all the leading Liberals on the platform - Berry, Woods, Munro, Dow, Mirans - as well as his two old acquaintances Knipe and Wilder neither of whom, incidentally, had been successful. Pearson made a speech briefly outlining the development of his liberal creed and denying the assertions then current 'that he had been contesting a constituency

71 Age, editorial, May 12, 1877.
72 Age, editorial, Mar. 9, 1877.
73 Argus, Dec. 25, 1877, 5 a. The new member elected was Murray Smith.
in which he had no chance of success', and Berry got up to say:

He knew of no event which had been attended with greater results than the outspoken way in which Professor Pearson ... had come forward when he did, descending into the political arena, and giving his testimony to the evils of land monopoly and the terrible dangers which confronted the young community ...

If this gave Pearson any consolation it was very short-lived, for only two days later Berry announced in Geelong that he intended to introduce exactly the same land tax bill on which he had been defeated by McCulloch twenty months before. In vain did the Age try to frustrate this move by writing, on the previous day, that if the leaders of the liberal party tried to conciliate their enemies instead of keeping faith with their friends the effect on public confidence would be 'most deplorable'.

Nothing can be more clear than the programme which the Reform League laid before the country, and by which its members are pledged to secure the passing of a progressive land tax on the

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Age, May 29, 1877, 7.
natural value of all land, to be arranged for purposes of taxation in four classes.75

But as far as Berry was now concerned, the Age and even the National Reform and Protection League over which he still presided, might never have existed. The claim of G.P. Smith that the real issue in 1877 was whether or no Graham Berry should be Chief Secretary seemed all too amply justified.

Pearson, quixotic politician that he was, had now lost everything - headmastership, parliamentary seat, the chance of a portfolio, the society of a great many former friends and been made to look a fool for his pains. Not least of these sacrifices was the social ostracism inflicted on himself and his wife. As his Oxford acquaintance Goldwin Smith had recently discovered to his cost in Toronto, the English unwillingness to allow political differences to destroy

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Age, editorial, May 30, 1877. W.P. Reeves (op. cit. I, pp.25-5) although noting that the Victorian land tax imposed in 1877 'was the advanced guard of the series of not too successful attacks which the Progressives have made on land monopoly in the seven colonies' does not appreciate that the mildly graduated tax assessed on sheep-carrying capacity introduced by Berry was far from being the 'bursting-up' tax assessed on unimproved land value advocated by Progressives before the election. Garland also (op. cit. pp.29-30, 33-4) fails to mention this difference. Pearson was certainly an exception to his rule that 'Australia ... generally, worked out her projects in a spirit of insular preoccupation'. (p.1) It may be noted that, like Pearson and Berry, Hughes and Fisher were divided on the function of the Commonwealth Land Tax of 1910, Hughes claiming that it was intended to 'penalise the owners of the big estates', Fisher, in the more responsible position of party leader, that it was essentially a revenue tax. (Turner, H.G., The First Decade of the Commonwealth, Melb., 1911, p.285.)
social relations hardly existed in the colonies. In Melbourne and Toronto any man, however cultivated, who dared dispute publicly the prevailing views of 'society' was immediately banished, and to Pearson, with his decided taste for the civilised amenities, his wide literary and speculative interests, and his delight in good-tempered argument, this was a heavy sentence indeed. He had, after all, married into the family of one of the largest of the South Australian absentee squatters, and while in that State, however attached he had been to the people of Belrose, had made 'Coonatto' and 'Yattalunga' his homes from home. Now he was socially isolated, left in fact with nothing to sustain him but the liberal faith which, together with his personal ambition, and prompted him to enter politics in the first place.

That he now refused to follow Higinbotham and renounce politics in disgust is a testimony to the strength of this faith. If at times his motives seem confused there is no

76 Elisabeth Wallace, Goldwin Smith: Victorian Liberal, Toronto, 1957, p. 74. 'Within three years of his arrival in Canada, by his plain speaking against Liberals and Conservatives alike, Goldwin Smith managed to estrange himself from both parties. Smith's Canadian career offers an interesting parallel to Pearson's in Australia. In the 1860's both men, bachelors in their mid forties and thirties respectively, left University teaching posts in England to emigrate - Smith to lecture at Cornell University in the U.S., Pearson to farm in South Australia. In 1871 Smith settled in Toronto and two years later Pearson settled in Melbourne. Thenceforth, for many years, both these former Oxford dons regularly agitated their respective cities with forthright statements of opinion on a great variety of subjects.
doubt at all about his belief in responsible, democratic government. His Australian experiences had produced and were to go on producing changes in his political and social ideas, but the fundamental change which had taken place on his first visit to Melrose in 1864-66 remained firm. He had seen, in the 'primitive democracy' of that little South Australian town and its surrounding district what few Englishmen of his acquaintance had ever been able to comprehend - 'the infinite capabilities of self-respect and generous feeling that show themselves in the English labourer when he lives under free institutions in a new land'.

A society of responsible, self-respecting men and women, at the dictate of neither squire nor parson, demagogue nor Governor, well-educated, practised in self-government - this was now his ideal, and at the heart of it lay the liberal doctrine of individual responsibility. He had justified his presence on the Princess Theatre platform three months before by an appeal to this doctrine, and now, in perhaps the most striking speech of his career he appealed to it again.

The occasion was a meeting of some 300 members of the National Reform and Protection League to hear and adopt the secretary's report on the late election. Pearson was asked

to move the adoption of the report, and in doing so he took
the opportunity not only to reprove the new political leaders
for their disregard of the League, but to lay before the
liberal party a comprehensive scheme of reform and develop­
ment. Speaking with the frankness, urgency and authority of
a man who has given everything for a cause which he new sees
endangered, he began by confronting the new political leaders
with their responsibility to the voters who had swept them
into power.

They had contended during the last battle - not
against a single individual, but against a system -
McCulloch's if they liked to call it so, but still
a type of Conservatism that was perfectly distinguish­
able ... Their fight, therefore, had been one against
principles, not against persons, and he hoped and
believed that the present leaders of the Liberal party
understood clearly that they came into power, not to
reward the personal popularity of any leader, however
well merited; but to institute lasting measures of
organic change. (Loud cheers.) ... any land taxation
system introduced - he said it deliberately - must
be a progressive one. (Cheers.) ... He confessed
that he imagined that the constituencies had spoken
out conclusively on this point.78

If there were any uncertainty on this point, he added, then
the constituencies must express their feelings even more
emphatically. Furthermore, they must all realise, politicians
and electors alike, their national responsibility on this
matter of the land and its use.

78 Age, June 1, 1877.
We held this continent by no better title deeds against the savages who were its rightful owners than because a few thousand hunters had no right to monopolise to their own use land that could support many millions of civilised beings. (Loud cheers.) On the same principle that the shepherd drove out the hunter from this country must the shepherd in his turn be succeeded by the agriculturist, the mechanic, the miner and the tradesman. 79

This giving of precedence to ethical over purely economic considerations recurred as he went on to expound the remainder of his proposed long-term liberal programme. He had clearly, in preparing this speech, been attempting to think out the practical implications of the new liberalism of men like Cliffe Leslie and his follower David Syme, whose Outlines of an Industrial Science, published less than a year before in England, was still the occasion of much overseas discussion and comment. 80. Indeed he had almost certainly discussed the

79 80 Age, June 1, 1877.

M. Beer, A History of British Socialism, London, (1919) one volume edition, 1948, ii, p. 231. 'This new British school of social science, whose pioneers were Ruskin, Cliffe Leslie, David Syme, J.K. Ingram, Toynbee, and Cunningham, owed its theoretic origin partly to the influence of the Christian Socialists of the earlier decades; partly to Comte and the English Positivists; and partly to the German Historical school of Kries, Moscher, Kautz, and Schmoller.' Pearson had early been attracted to Christian Socialism by its founder, had been much influenced by Ruskin's close friend Henry Acland, and repeatedly quotes Cliffe Leslie in his Melbourne Review article 'On Property in Land'. The more immediate influence of David Syme is obvious.
proofs of this book with Syme and may well have revised them. In the Outlines Syme had rejected the old laissez-faire political economy and insisted that 'society should in regard to ability of judging as to its own interests, be put upon the same footing as the individual.' He would not allow the principle of self-interest, whether enlightened or not, to suppress the 'social affections' and destroy all morality. Taking a similar stand Pearson now pleaded for a complete, free system of education 'from the State school to the grammar school, and from the grammar school to the university' in order that the new democracy should not fail for want of 'trained engineers, lawyers and statesmen'. Equally advanced was his view of the state's obligations with regard to the social and industrial welfare of its citizens. Bearing in mind the year - 1877; bearing in mind too the cool way in which he had been able to write of the operation of the English poor laws not so very long before, this section of his speech is quite remarkable.

31 Alfred Beakin, who came to know Syme in the following year, wrote in some of Syme's Autobiographical Notes: 'He always handed his proofs to his friends for comments, additions and corrections - Windsor lent him invaluable aid by brushing up his phrases and breaking his long sentences - Prof. Pearson advised and probably also revised chiefly in regard to style ...' (p.54 of a typescript copy in possession of Professor La Fauze of Melbourne.)


33 In his review of Victor Hugo's Les Miserables. See p.45 above.
He thought a great deal might be achieved by the Government in the direction of the organization of the labor laws. Take such questions as regulations against over-time, regulations against the excessive working of children or women, laws against the importation of foreign immigrants to glut the labor market. (Cheers.) On all these matters he conceived the State had a right to have a voice. No doubt if a question relating solely to the internal management of a trade could be settled by amicable arbitration between the employer and the employed - by such councils of arbitration as had been adopted in some trades in England - that would be far better than troubling Parliament about the matter. But in many cases it was impossible to achieve this result; and they must not, by abstract theories as to the limits of Parliamentary interference, exclude the action of legislation ... And another point which he would just indicate, and which he thought a democratic Government had before it as a noble work in this country, was the making of provision against sickness and old age. No one of them, he supposed, would advocate that anything like the poor law system of England - which in its way was an advance on some former systems - should be established here. What they did want, he thought was that every man should be recognised by the State as having a right in return for his taxation to an insurance against old age and sickness; ... Aid should be given to him, not as a pauper, but as an independent citizen who had borne his share of the burdens of the State. Our idea of a democratic community, an idea which we could not realise at once, but which he hoped would be realised some time in the future - perhaps fifty years hence - was one of a country in which no man who wanted bread should starve; in which no man should be denied work who required it; in which no woman should be induced to sell herself through want; in which no man should be afraid to speak out what he thought through fear of his employer; in which the rights of the employed should not be encroached upon by a privileged class. (Loud cheers.)
From the editorial reaction of both the leading Melbourne papers it seems likely that no-one else in Victoria, probably in Australia, had put forward from the public platform such an advanced 'idea of a democratic community' before.

It is the speech [commented the Age] of a man who sees where the moral and political forces of the day are tending, and who hopes to do his party, and his generation for that matter, a little service by gathering together in a focus all those vague and vapory ideas which float about the social atmosphere in a nebulous condition waiting for condensation into public opinion ... Speeches of this sort are educational agencies of a high order, for they bring those who listen to them face to face with the problems that it is their interest to solve, even though they may not suggest to them the best means of solving them.85

But the Argus, on this occasion, may have the last say, for in its ironical effort to laugh the whole speech off as a lunar fantasy, it spoke truer than it ever intended.

When the state shall have risen to this noble conception of its grandmotherly functions, and shall have embodied its exalted ideas in its public policy ... a grateful posterity, fully alive, we trust, to the obligations which it owes to its trustiest and best benefactor, will associate its advent with the honoured name of Professor Pearson ... 86

The Argus might rightly regard Pearson, backed as he was by Syne and the Age, as a potential chief agent in the extension of the State's powers in Victoria - a strategist more to

85 Age, June 5, 1877.
86 Argus, June 2, 1877.
be feared in the long run than the adroit tactician Berry. It was not so much what Pearson did as what he said that mattered. Every speech, every Age editorial, every article in the Melbourne Review might be expected to insinuate this abhorrent 'idea of a democratic community' a little further into some Victorian minds. Once its features had won general acceptance it would only be a matter of time before legislation followed.
Chapter IX
As soon as Pearson's defeat at the polls had become known the inevitable speculation had begun about his future prospects in Victoria. On May 14 the Age had published a letter by a resident of Fitzroy, one of the 'safe' districts for which he might well have stood, suggesting that ...

... the present position of the professor ought to give the country a thought, and lead to rewarding a worthy gentleman and profound scholar - one who has suffered fighting for justice done the people ...

In this correspondent's view, the ideal position was 'permanent head of the Education office'. Three weeks later, just after the speech to the National Reform and Protection League, and the day before the new Minister of Mines and Public Instruction was due to make his policy speech at the opening of a new State school at Wangaratta, the paper itself seemed to be hinting at a similar idea, for at the end of an editorial advocating numerous reforms in the State education system it suggested that the Minister should 'seek such assistance outside of the department as may enable him to carry into effect the intentions of the Legislature'.

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1 Age, June 4.
Whether the editorial was coercive in intent, or was simply meant as a first cautious step in breaking the news of a plan which had already been formulated, the new Minister, William Collard Smith, certainly echoed both the criticism of the department and the idea of 'assistance outside', the latter, however, only after a solemn protestation that the idea was all his own, and had not been 'put forward as the result of any consultation with any other members of the Government'. It was his opinion that

... an admirable arrangement would be the appointment of a gentleman, or gentlemen, 'of high qualifications' to go about the country to observe the working of the act, [the Education Act of 1872] to supply the Minister with suggestions to bring it to perfection.2

The Argus, in an editorial commenting on this speech, did not hesitate to suggest that the mention of 'gentlemen' was a blind and that the Minister had no-one but Pearson in mind.

On the following Saturday, June 9, Pearson and his friend Professor Strong had 'a lengthened interview' with the Minister of Education. The Age was guarded in its interpretation, but 'believed' that Strong had been

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2 Argus, June 6, 1877, 6.
empowered to speak with authority on behalf of the professorial board. We have no absolutely reliable data, but have good reason to believe that a determination will be arrived at to affiliate the University to the school system of Victoria, and that public instruction, from the State schools to the University, will be made absolutely free ... 3

Four days later Pearson had another long interview, this time with Berry present, during the course of which he consented to accept a Royal Commission at a fee of £1,000 to 'draw up a report, containing suggestions for the thorough organisation of the Education department, and also drawing out a plan for connecting the national school system with the University'.

There was no hiding the political character of this appointment! Berry's own liberal-protectionist paper, the Geelong Advertiser commented: '... we hold that it reflects infinite credit on the Ministry that it has thus avenged Professor Pearson on his assailants' - the assailants being the men who were supposed to have driven him out of the Ladies' College. 5 A clever cartoon in the anti-liberal Melbourne Punch showed Berry, dressed in a grocer's apron (an allusion to his former occupation) handing a bag

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3 Age, June 11, 1877, 5a.
4 Ibid, June 14, 1877, 2g.
5 The Argus gleefully reprinted the whole passage as part of an attack on Pearson's 'opportunism'. (June 18, 1877.)
containing £1,000 across a counter to a top-hatted, impassive-faced Pearson, the two men clutching a large receipt inscribed:

Jerry Braham [Punch's pseudonym for Berry] - Dr. to Prof. Pearson - To contesting Boroondara - To advocating Land Tax etc.  

In the midst of the hubub a well-meaning Age correspondent asked why the 'constitutional' press of Melbourne was making so much fuss about Pearson when it had remained silent only a short time before when the McCulloch Government, although in articulo mortis, 'had the unparalleled audacity to make ten appointments of £500 a year each'.  

Needless to say the prevalence of such patronage and jobbery did not change the nature of Pearson's appointment.

Precisely how he came to be given the Commission not long after delivering a public rebuke to Berry is difficult to surmise, although pressure from both the Age and the executive of the National Reform and Protection League may have played a part. He himself seems to have been responsible for propagating in Victoria the idea of a complete system of State education, offering what T.H. Huxley had recently called 'a ladder, reaching from the gutter to the university, along which every child ... should have the chance of

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6 Melbourne Punch,
7 Age, Mar. 2, 1877, 3.
JOB 1.

BOUGHT AND PAID FOR.
climbing as far as he was fit to go. He had been talking about dispensing with university fees at least as early as 1872 (in connection with the foundation of Adelaide University) and had expressed the hope in his very first political speech in Boroondara that the University would be thrown open to all classes, so that youths of talent could rise from the middle schools that would intervene between the common schools and the University, and attain to the highest distinctions academic honors could confer.

He had repeated the idea again in his post-election speech to the National Reform and Protection League. One can understand how he, for his part, was prepared to accept the appointment. He needed employment, and he was still sufficiently interested in Victorian politics to wish to find it within the colony. Moreover equality of opportunity (which more than anything else depended on the existence of Huxley's educational ladder) was an essential component of his 'idea of a democratic community'. If, now, he had

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8 Huxley originally gave expression to this idea when a member of the London School Board. He repeated it in an address to the London Working Men's Club and Institute Union on Dec. 1, 1877, which was reprinted in the Fortnightly Review for Jan. 1878. The arrival of copies of the latter in Melbourne shortly before Pearson completed his Inquiry, enabled him to quote Huxley's apposite words in his Report.

9 Age, Mar. 2, 1877.
scrupled to accept a Commission which would effectively make him, in the Age's words 'Minister of Education for the time being' with power to draw up a blue-print for what could be the most advanced State system of education in the English-speaking world, he would not only have been foolish, but, according to his own lights, almost immoral.

The formal terms of his Commission, issued on June 25th, authorized and empowered him to enquire into and report upon (1) 'The best and most economic mode of constituting education in Victoria entirely free'; (2) 'The state and condition of the present machinery for public instruction'; (3) 'The status, remuneration and general efficiency of the teachers'; (4) 'The mode and extent of instruction in the State schools, and the system best fitted to enlarge the operations of those schools'; (5) 'The formation or extension of training institutes, technological and night schools'; (6) 'And generally to enquire and report as to any improvement which may be calculated to increase the efficiency of education in the colony of Victoria.'

Although, however, the establishment of an entirely free system of education

10 Age, June 14, 1877, 2g.

11 V.P. Papers, 1877-8, III, no.105, Report on the State of Public Education in Victoria, and Suggestions as to the Best Means of Improving It, p.XI. All references citing page nos. are to this Parliamentary Paper and not to the separate volume issued by the Govt. Printer.
appeared to receive priority, the newspapers of the day indicate that most Victorians were principally concerned with sections two and three. And understandably enough. The Empire's first system of free, compulsory and secular education was proving a costly innovation. Children of school-going age formed a high proportion of the total population - no less than 24 per cent in 1877\textsuperscript{12} - and in order to realize the ideal of a school within walking distance of every child the State had already, in the four years the Act had been operating, constructed 579 new schools at a cost of £381,082, while extending and re-equipping a large number of existing buildings.\textsuperscript{13} Now the inevitable disillusion was setting in. School buildings were very fine, and might well be, as Major Smith had recently called them 'landmarks in the civilization of Victoria', but the feeling was very general that taxpayers were not getting value for their money. It was notorious that the compulsory provisions of the Act were not being enforced,\textsuperscript{14} and it was

\textsuperscript{12}196,047 children in a population of 818,935. (V.P. Papers, 1877-8, II, paper 47, p.V. Total pop. from Demography Bulletin no.67, 1949, pp.154-5.)

\textsuperscript{13}V.P. Papers, 1877-8, II, paper 47, p.VII.

\textsuperscript{14}Even in Geelong, one of the largest Victorian country towns, there were no prosecutions at all in the first four years following passage of the Act, and then it was only a matter of a few parents being fined five shillings. (Age, July 12, 1877, 3a.)
generally suspected that the average school attendance was little better than that under the old Board system. Furthermore allegations were freely being made that many of the teachers were unqualified for their work, that the teaching, even in the best schools was largely mechanical, and that the officials who ran the department were inefficient and supercilious in their dealings with both teachers and Boards of Advice. Then again, the State's 3,400 teachers, who had recently combined to form an Institute, were full of grievances about status, compensation for losses in income through joining the State system, training facilities, 'payment by results', promotion, and the arbitrary acts of the Education Office. Some unpleasant evidence was also coming to light of gross injustices in the State's system of coping with its 800 orphaned, neglected and delinquent children.

15 This was corroborated by the Return showing attendance at State Schools moved for by Mr. Mirams, liberal member for Collingwood, and printed on Aug. 21, 1877. (V.P. Papers, 1877-8, I, p.731.)

16 See Age editorial June 4, 1877, and subsequent letters, reports and editorials in issues of June 6,8,22,26,29, July 3,6,7,10,11,12,14,30.

17 See reports of inaugural meeting and first annual general meeting of the Victorian Institute of Teachers in the Age of Jan.13 and June 26, 1877.

18 See letters of 'Bohemian', Argus, Apr. 23, Age, June 8 and Sept.29, 1877; also reports of Ophthalmia in the Royal Park industrial school, Age, June 22,29, and the letter of 'Clamans in Deserta', Age, Dec.15, 1877.
Many people, it seems, expected Pearson to be a sort of destroying angel of the Liberal Party, sweeping unhindered by fellow Commissioners through the Education Department, rooting out the arrogant, dismissing the incompetent and redundant, and cutting dramatically into the running costs, especially in the head office. In one Age correspondent's view

The reforms which the investigations of Professor Pearson will suggest may be measured from the terror which his appointment has inspired ... 19

Another, who contributed a series of letters analysing the state of the department, possibly at the Age's invitation, claimed that he had been at some pains to discover the drift of opinion on Pearson's appointment and had found a strong feeling

... that now at length our costly department will cease to be maintained for the benefit of clerks, secretaries, inspectors and messengers, and will henceforth take into account pupils, teachers, and the educational interests of the public.20

The scandalous fact that salaries due to the State's 3,400 teachers for the month of June were still not paid by the time Pearson commenced his duties on July 13, although all civil servants, including those in the

19 Age, July 6, 1877.
20 Ibid July 7. Letter of 'X. Plain'.
Education Office, had promptly received theirs, only served to heighten these expectations. 21

Pearson commenced his inquiries on July 13, 22 exactly a month after the Commission was first announced, and a week after his final assembly at the Ladies' College, 23 although a deputation from the committee of the Victorian Institute of Teachers had already interviewed him by appointment to advocate a number of changes, in particular the establishment of a Chair of Education and the handing over of teachers' examinations to the University. 24 In the eight months which elapsed before his final Report was laid on the table of the House of Assembly on March 20, 1878, he looked into and produced a preliminary report on the working of the education office, 25 produced another preliminary report on attendance at State Schools, 26 inspected seventy-two elementary schools scattered across the colony from Coleraine in the far west to Gippsland in the east, 27 conferred or corresponded with a great many boards of advice, inspected the rival schools of

21 Age, July 12. A Government Notice had appeared on July 4, simply stating that 'allowances' due to teachers simply could not be paid 'until supplies shall have been voted by Parliament'.

22 Age, July 12, 1877.

23 Ibid July 7. (Discussed p.174 above.)


25 Ibid July 18, 2g.

26 Completed Aug. 16, pub. in Age, Aug.27.

27 Ibid Sept.11 & Dec.6. He himself mentions the figure, but does not enumerate.
mines at Ballarat and Bendigo, and the technological college at Geelong,\(^{28}\) hammered out a 'Bill to extend the Powers and Benefits of the University of Melbourne' section by section at eight meetings of the University Council or its Executive Committee,\(^{29}\) closely questioned the officials responsible for the running of the three State industrial schools and inspected the Roman Catholic Convent of the Good Shepherd, Abbotsford and the Protestant Orphanage, Brighton, visited the 'Ragged School' in an alley off Little Bourke St. in the Chinese brothel quarter, travelled up to Dookie with the Secretary of Agriculture to inspect the land set aside for an experimental farm, and watched some of the hundreds who regularly attended the 22 self-supporting schools of design laboriously copying 'engravings and lithographs of dubious or no value'.\(^{30}\) By Christmas he was reported to be suffering from overwork and was unable to be present at the annual prize-giving of the Carlton State school.\(^{31}\) Domestic factors, however, may have contributed as much as the Commission itself to this ill-health, for on September his wife had given birth to a second child, while throughout the

\(^{28}\) *Age*, July 21, Aug. 1, 2, 9.

\(^{29}\) Council Minutes, Aug. 20, 27, 31; Sept. 27, Dec. 24, 1877.

Executive Committee Minutes, Oct. 1, 8, Nov. 19, 1877.

\(^{30}\) *Report* p. 152.

\(^{31}\) *Age*, Dec. 25, 1877.
whole exacting period former friends continued rigorously to ostracise both himself and his wife. Stebbing reports that in the period immediately following the birth of the baby, when Pearson was away from home and the elder daughter ill 'not a soul called to inquire after the young mother or her sick child'.

His final 179 page Report on the State of Public Education in Victoria and Suggestions as to the Best Means of Improving it was almost four times the length of that which the eleven-man Higinbotham commission had presented in 1867, and on the basis of which the pioneering 1872 Act had been erected. The Higinbotham report proper, however, had been published together with 308 pages of minutes of evidence and 44 pages of appendices, whereas Pearson's consisted almost entirely of his own personal findings and views. He certainly heard any amount of evidence and presumably one of the duties of his secretary, Mr. A.T. Lewis, a barrister who later became a school Inspector, was to keep a record of this, but it was not taken under strictly formal conditions and has not been preserved in education department archives. Not surprisingly Pearson was concerned more with

32 Memorials p.260.
suggesting than reporting, and it was partly for this reason, and partly because the vexed question of religious education had not come into the scope of his inquiry, that the O'Loghlen government, which followed Berry's, set up a massive fifteen-man commission under the chairmanship of Judge Rogers to supplement and review his work three years later.

It is to the report of this later commission, presented on June 26, 1884, or more particularly to its six hundred odd pages of minutes of evidence, and to the daily press, and to the annual reports of school inspectors, that one needs to go to gain anything like a full idea, in specific concrete terms, of the State education system as it actually was during its first decade: to hear the chanting of the classes as they learned their work by rote, (as one Age correspondent put it 'shouting simultaneously the same words, again and again and again, twenty times perhaps, in harsh, boisterous and unnatural tones, which, to unaccustomed ears, are fairly intolerable') to understand the difference between a 'slap' on the hand with a cane, and a 'flogging',

35 Age, July 14, 1877, letter of 'X. Plain'.
36 See report of the Minister's interview with a deputation representing the Teacher's Institute on restricting the right of giving corporal punishment to head teachers, (Age, Sept. 14, 1877.)
to know of all the devices which teachers adopted to avoid loss in their 'results' examination, and their frustration when a liverish inspector cut their income by asking 'trick' questions; to sense what it meant for a child to be charged with the crime of being 'destitute and neglected' bundled into a gaol or lock up, accompanied by a policeman to one of the industrial schools, there to succumb almost inevitably to 'ringworm, ophthalmia or a horrible disease for which doubtless there is a scientific name, but which is ordinarily known as sore ears' so that within a month he is hardly recognisable 'with his head shaved and dressed with iodine, his eyes (lately so bold and impudent-looking) now half-closed and filled with a vile discharge'; to understand, on the brighter side, the pride of Victorian people in their new schools, to see their processions through the streets on opening days complete with band, board of advice, Oddfellows, Foresters and Firebrigade, to appreciate the heroic scale of a building programme which had provided nearly every suburb in Melbourne with a solid brick or stone school by 1878 (many of which are still in use today) and

37 See teachers' letters to the Age, Nov. 27 & Dec. 1, 1877, and Rogers-Templeton Commission Report, Q.11073.
38 Age, Dec. 15, 1877, letter of 'Clamans in Deserta'.
39 Argus, June 6, 1877 (opening of Wangaratta State School.)
40 Ibid Jan. 1878, editorial.
scattered hundreds of smaller schools broadcast through the bush. Pearson reports most of these things, but usually in the form of a matter-of-fact statement, with at the most one or two generalized illustrations. What one misses so often is the sort of evidence which he himself gave in response to cross-questioning from the Rogers Commission on the marking of school rolls.

In the Sandhurst district ... children came at ten and went out at eleven to take their fathers' dinner, and in the country districts I know that the master kept them just after lunch, called the roll at two o'clock, and then dismissed them for the day.\(^{41}\)

Immediately the achievement of regular school attendance becomes a human as well as an abstract administrative problem.

Because of the absence of specific indictments, and for many other reasons, the Report, politically speaking, was a damp squib when it was finally printed. For one thing he had already published preliminary reports on the two subjects which most interested the general public and the politicians - the efficiency of the head office, and school attendance. His report on the former, dramatically issued within four days of commencing his inquiries had made it clear that those who expected a head hunt were going to be disappointed. He was certainly critical of the budgeting

\(^{41}\) Rogers-Templeton Commission, Q.11203.
methods of the office, and suggested that in order to ensure prompt payment of teachers' salaries on the last day of every month headmasters should be allowed to send in their returns at least a week in advance. But far from suggesting reductions in staff, or castigating departmental organization, he reported 'in a generally favorable manner as to the mode in which the clerical work is performed', considered the staff insufficient and recommended that the whole office be removed as soon as possible from its cramped quarters in the old Model School to the new Government offices at the back of the Treasury. Even the Minister, W.C. Smith, who had censured the inefficiency of the head office in his Wangaratta speech, had later to concede in a debate on the Education Vote that the apparent dilatoriness of the office was due, principally, to a very marked rise in the amount of correspondence it had had to handle.

Smith, actually, was far more of a handicap than an ally in the furtherance of his proposals. The new Minister had no special qualifications at all for the Education portfolio. He was the son of the manager of a large Liverpool Age, July 18, 1877, 2g.

V.P. Deb. 26/1100. He quoted figures showing that between the years of 1876 and 1877 the number of unregistered letters handled had risen from 6,204 to 24,487, while registered letters, reports, etc. had risen from 36,395 to 39,740.
cotton mill, had joined the gold rush to Ballarat as a young man of 22 and early established himself there as a large mining speculator. He had held office as mayor and risen to command the Ballarat Rangers, a local volunteer force, with the rank of Major. Outside Ballarat his reputation rested principally on his prominent part in the passing of a new local government Act, and on his drastic reduction of the running cost of the Department of Mines during his short term as a member of the 1875 Berry administration. He looked, as might be expected, a man of abounding self-confidence - broad-shouldered, portly, with a vigorous, voluminous beard. He was a veritable mayor's mayor and there was nothing he enjoyed more than condescending to deputations, dispensing patronage, and conducting efficiency campaigns. Deakin suggests that his principles were 'those which he had found necessary to secure his seat in Ballarat and his place in the Cabinet' and that he was 'more devoted to his chief and a better interpreter of the average voter' than his fellow Cabinet members.  

In his Ministerial policy speech at Wangaratta Smith had said that

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The Crisis in Victorian Politics, pp.15-16.
... he wanted all the teachers to believe that they had a firm friend in the Minister of Education who would see justice done to them from the highest to the lowest.

His emphasis then had been on reform of the Education Office for the sake of the teachers. When the debate on the Education Vote had come up later in the year, however, his lack of any real sympathy with the teaching profession had been all too evident.

By grumbling, by pertinacity, by writing to the newspapers, by bringing influence to bear upon honorable members of this House, and in other ways, they have managed to obtain from the State for their four hours' work per day for five days of the week remuneration which is altogether unjustifiable... I don't see why teachers ought to be paid more than members of this House, who have to sacrifice time and business to attend to their legislative duties... 46

A few minutes later he had connected these remarks with Pearson's Commission in the following sinister words:

I believe that sufficient money may be saved from the high salaries not only to establish intermediate schools, but to pay the paltry sum which the University fees amount to.47

The Age, interestingly enough, had been strongly critical of Smith's views and figures, pointing out that nearly all town and suburban schools were open for five, not four

45 Argus, June 5, 1877, 5.
46 V.P. Deb. 26/1098.
hours a day, apart from 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) hours for mid-day recess, that
the work was more exacting than that of ordinary civil
servants, and that head teachers were 'required to devote
at least six hours a week to the instruction of pupil
teachers'.

The *Age*, however, as Berry had already demonstrated on
the matter of the progressive land tax, did not dictate the
policy of this government, and when, in January 1878, as
Pearson had been drawing towards the close of his work, the
Government had decided on wholesale dismissals of public
servants in an attempt to coerce the Legislative Council
into accepting the principle of payment of members, Smith
had come into his own. The Education Department had been
'considered to be too important to be dealt with straight
off' but by the end of the month one 'batch' had met its
fate, including all but four of the sixteen inspectors, the
Secretary, Accountant, and Chief Clerk. 48 On the 28th Smith
had addressed a great meeting in his home town swelled by
the addition of some 400-500 persons who had been brought
by special train from Berry's stronghold, Geelong. To
this congenial audience he had observed:

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48 Education Dept. archives, Public Library of Victoria,
1878, Special Bundle, letter no. 78/3188, Jan. 28. Their
subsequent letters offering to do all kinds of work for
absurdly small sums ranging from 30/- to £5 make melancholy
reading, although at least two, G. Wilson Brown and Thomas
Brodribb, both of whom later rejoined the Department and
rose to be Secretary, refused to abase themselves.
The needed reductions in the civil service could never have been made except under the pressure of this excitement ... He had begun in the Education department at the top of the tree, and he would stake his reputation as a public man that in a few months he would effect such a change that the department would give more satisfaction than ever it had done before. If the gentlemen now placed in charge were not competent they would have to go also ... No doubt some competent officers had been included in the dismissals, especially at the Education office, but he felt that he could not dispense with part only, or he might find in those left an obstruction to the carrying out of the necessary reforms ... He would change the supercilious manner of the civil servants. 49

Three days later notices of dismissal had been given to 63 teachers of singing and 26 teachers of drawing. 50 Meanwhile Smith's proteges had begun to move into the top positions. It was subsequently calculated by the Rogers-Templeton Commission that Smith, for all his talk about staff reductions, had been by far the greatest dispenser of Ministerial patronage in the history of the department up to 1884. It was Smith who introduced a special column into the departmental 'schedule of appointments' in which were to be entered requests of Members of Parliament for a person to be promoted, 51 and it was he who authorized in the three years 1878-80 no less than 461 appointments 'without the

49 Argus, Jan. 29, 1878, 6.
50 Archives, Special Bundle, 1878, 78/4203, Jan. 31.
recommendation of the permanent officers of the Department' and 31 appointments actually 'contrary to the recommendation of the permanent officers of the Department'.

Under circumstances such as these, with such a man in charge of the State's education system, it is little wonder that Pearson's Report failed to make much immediate impact on either the general public or the government. One suspects, however, that Pearson half anticipated this, and wrote his Report in rather the same spirit as he had delivered his prophetic speech to the National Reform and Protection League, concerned at least to sow the seeds of ideas if not to bring about immediate radical changes - seeds which might later germinate not only in Victoria but in neighbouring colonies and even beyond the seas. Smith himself said at the Carlton State school prize-giving on December 24:

Not only in Victoria, but in many of the other colonies, the report would be awaited with great interest; this he had reason to know from conversations with the leading public men of several of the neighbouring colonies, particularly with Chief Justice Way, of South Australia.

Mr. Thomas Brodribb, a departmental inspector in 1877 and later Secretary, mentions that the Governor of South Australia at the time, Sir William Jervois, 'in a lecture

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53 Age, Dec. 25, 1877.
he gave at the University of Adelaide, recommended that the
suggestions contained in it should be carried out in that
'Colony'. It would also go, of course, to the Secretary
of State for the Colonies, and to such old friends as
Grant Duff, who noted in his diary the following year, when
Pearson was in England,

Charles Pearson came down to lunch, and told us all
much about Australian affairs. I read, the other
day, a large part of his admirable report on educa­
tion to the Victorian Government, which is in entire
harmony with my Plea for a Rational Education, and
refers to it a good deal.

and copies would surely go to M. Camille de Montmahoux, who
came out to Victoria from the French Government while Pearson
was engaged in his enquiries and was conducted by the latter
on a tour of inspection of the State school system.

Memorials p.316. I have searched in vain for a report
of this lecture.

V.P.Papers, 1878, III, no.66, Despatch Respecting Professor
Pearson's Report, signed by Sir M.E. Hicks Beach and dated
Downing street, 19th August 1878. It concludes: 'I have
read this able and exhaustive report with much interest,
and have caused a copy to be forwarded to the Education
Department.'

Grant Duff, Sir M.E., Notes from a Diary, 1873-1881, vol.
II, p.119 (entry for March 10, 1879). His article 'A
Plea for a Rational Education' appeared in the Fortnightly

Rogers-Templeton Commission, Final Report, Q.11222. Pearson
mentioned that M. de Montmahoux was 'completely brought
round' to the idea of co-education by observing the Victo­
rian State system. The fact that the French Government sub­
sequently conferred on Pearson the title 'Officier d'
Instruction Publique', suggests that his views may well have
been regarded with more than academic interest in that
country, where the whole education system was about to
undergo radical reforms.
This two-fold concern - to provide a practical report which should at the same time be a permanent repository for his educational lore - is reflected by the arrangement of the material: 32 pages offering 'a general summary' of the changes considered desirable, \(1\frac{1}{4}\) pages treating individual subjects 'minutely and at length' and showing the way in which changes could be brought about. In the latter nothing that is remotely relevant is omitted; personal memories of the educational systems of Norway and Sweden, Germany and Massachusetts; statistics of technical institutions in New York, Italy and Austria; philosophical justifications for the principles of compulsion and utility in colonial education; a lament on the aesthetic starvation to which all native-born colonials were doomed 'shut out from all the culture which twenty centuries of civilization have naturalized in every party of Western Europe'; and a great many wise observations, drawn from his own extensive experience as lecturer and teacher, on secondary and university education, the functions of a teacher's institution, etc. etc. It must be said, however, that the lack of correspondence between the sections in the two parts, the inevitable redundancies, and the scattering of his proposed regulations through the text are vexatious to any reader.
wishing to make a serious estimate of the whole, and can hardly have helped to persuade the practical politicians of the day. The style also tends to be more elaborate and bookish than the subject matter demanded, although direct and memorable on many occasions.

Despite its shortcomings it still stands as a remarkable document. The most original, and interesting, sections are those dealing with secondary and university education - to which his personal experience was really confined - although his schemes for reforming the existing elementary system laid down a number of very sane principles. Assuming that the first educational pre-requisite for Victoria was the efficient elementary instruction of all children, irrespective of the wealth or religion of their parents, he insisted, in the first place, on the principle of regular attendance. It was not enough to ensure that all children between the ages of 6 - 15 satisfied the existing law's very modest requirement of attendance for any thirty days each quarter. At the same time it had to be recognized that the difficulty of keeping children at school steeply increased in proportion to their wage-earning capacity. He concluded, therefore:
The strict discipline that shall compel education in the shortest possible time, will be incomparably cheaper to the taxpayer than the mistaken tenderness that spreads education over a great number of years. Meanwhile the State also will gain, as its schools will be less crowded, and the energy of its teachers less heavily taxed with intermittent scholars. 58

The other great requirement was capable, intelligent, teaching. To effect these ends, he proposed (1) a marked increase in the minimum number of school days on which each child had to attend, from 30 to 50 days a quarter for children aged 6-9, from 30 a quarter to 80 a half year for children aged from 9-12, after which, until the child passed the standard, or reached the age of 15, the existing minimum of 30 days a quarter should apply; (2) compulsory registration of all children of school-going age at the appropriate State school with responsibility for policing the compulsory provisions resting on the local school boards of advice rather than the head office; (3) compulsory examination at the ages of nine and twelve, of all children not attending State school, those proving unable to reach a minimum standard at two successive half-yearly examinations to be obliged to attend a State school until the standard could be reached; (4) a new classification of teachers designed to encourage each teacher to take the

highest university examination he could; (5) a revised 'results' examination which should discourage 'stuffing' of rolls, give a premium to intelligent teaching, and only affect a sixth rather than a third of each teacher's salary; and (6) the appointment, after 1882, of none but graduates to inspectorships, and then preferably men with not less than five years' teaching experience in State schools. In order to ensure an education for the habitually truant, 'so-called "gutter children"' of certain slum areas, without taking the severe, and to the State costly, step of committing them to residential industrial schools, he proposed that Victoria should join England in experimenting with day industrial schools which should daily provide four hours instruction, two hours manual work, and two hours recess (during which a good dinner should be given free to each child), the parents theoretically paying a shilling a week on pain of three days' gaol for persistent refusal.

The most debatable of these proposals was the increase of powers he proposed to give to the local school boards of advice. In 1876-7 there were 308 school districts in Victoria, 299 of them with duly constituted boards of advice. 59 With 1,275 State schools, 60 this meant, on an

59 V.P.Papers, 1877-8, II Annual Report of Minister of Public Instruction, p.vi.
60 Ibid p.iii.
average, four schools to each board of advice, although
with the great differences in the size of schools and in
their distance from one another this figure varied consider­
ably in practice. The Act of 1872 prescribed that the
Boards should be elected by ratepayers and should consist of

... not less than five nor more than seven persons
one of whom shall be correspondent, and the members
of such board shall hold office for a period of
three years, but any member may be at any time
removed by the Governor in Council. (Clause 15)

Some measure of the degree of public interest at the time
Pearson made his enquiries may be gathered from the fact
that although 802 new members were elected in 1876 only 76
of the elections were contested, and 260 remaining vacancies
had to be filled by nominees of the Governor in Council!

Pearson interviewed representatives of boards of advice
wherever he went, and corresponded with many others, and he
concluded that the general apathy about their activities,
and the disinclination of many well-qualified persons to
stand for election was due to the fact that the boards lacked
a significant role once the sites for new schools had been
decided, and the buildings erected. He therefore proposed
that the boards should not only be given real power to take
action through the truant officer or chief police officer
of a district to prosecute parents evading the compulsory
clauses of the Act, but that they should annually be granted a sum to effect petty repairs promptly in the schools of their districts, that they should be used by the department to supervise the planting of trees, be encouraged to award prizes, have the right of objecting to the appointment to their district of a schoolmaster of 'tainted character', (although he would take away their original power of suspending teachers) and be given the discretion of determining the hour of recess, and within limits, the occurrence of the prescribed holiday periods to fit in most conveniently with local conditions. He would also retain their existing right of supervising the use of school buildings after school hours.

His concern to increase the powers of boards of advice underlines one of his principal dilemmas in colonial politics; how to extend State interference for the benefit of all, or to protect the helpless and handicapped, without at the same time undermining individuality and self-reliance. He saw that what people received, or appeared to receive gratis from the State, they also tended to take for granted. He saw too, that the head office of a colony-wide system tended constantly to aggrandize its powers of surveillance, even down to the minutest details, like the mending of a
door handle in a remote bush school. This particular decentralization of authority which he was now proposing was, therefore, as much a matter of faith as of utility for him. He believed, against the opinion of most of the teachers and education department officials, that local participation in the State system could be made to work, and he held to this belief tenaciously, arguing, in defence of his scheme:

The school boards in England and the district committees in Massachusetts exercise incomparably greater powers than those our own boards will receive if my scheme be adopted in its entirety. We have centralized even more than France, where the departmental council, though responsible to the Minister is a governing body.61

When in 1883 the Rogers Commission asked his opinion on the suggestion that boards of advice should be identified with municipal or borough councils he would have none of it.

My experience of them is, that they very often are a very superior set of people. I have known country barristers and bankers, for instance, upon them; and I think the electors like to choose a first-class man in that way for a board of advice.62

When it was put to him that 'to a very great extent ... the schoolmasters seem to have rather pooh-poohed boards of advice, as not taking much interest in the schools', that the colony simply did not contain 2000 persons capable of

62 Q. 11115.
manning the boards, and that the best men did not offer themselves in the country districts he remained unshaken in his 1878 position: that the system would work if the right powers were granted, and if adequate precautions were taken to keep the inevitable percentage of unsatisfactory boards from abusing their powers. One such precaution, outlined in his Report, was the quartering of a truancy officer on any district in which the average attendance was persistently under 80% until it reached the minimum level.

A healthy society, for Pearson, was a restless, energetic, explorative society in which individuals should constantly be striving to develop their capacities. Happiness, for him, lay in development rather than comfortable, and perhaps illusive, security. What he had always feared for Australia was that its potentialities might be frustrated by 'the conservative apathy of men partially shut out from the world, and coming to believe that the trodden way is the best'. That he was thinking along these lines while writing his report is revealed by the one apposite public address he appears to have given during the eight months—an address to the citizens of Ballarat who had gathered on September 2, 1877 for the opening of a new building for State school 695. To his audience, and through the press

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63 Q. 11116-11139.
64 *Essays in Reform*, (1867) p.216.
to the colony in general, he then held up the model of New England, an area poorer in natural resources than Victoria yet blessed with a complete, free system of education, and, in consequence, with machinery and operatives of world rank.

He wished them to be infected with Yankee restlessness... Let every ploughman aim at being a freehold farmer, every mason a builder, every blacksmith an engineer.65

One can see him, in his 1878 Report, attempting to reform or nullify anything in the existing system that he considered to make for dull uniformity or apathy and advocating, on the other hand, whatever practical scheme or teaching method he thought would bring out the talents and energies of children and teachers or encourage the participation of parents.

To counter, for example, the colonial assumption that a 'good' elementary-school class should be passive and fearful of the teacher, he wrote

When I visited schools in America, nothing impressed me more than the general excellence of the recitation, and the fearlessness with which questions in class were answered. At American public meetings the general fluency of comparatively untried speakers is common matter of remark among Englishmen. Shyness, in fact, seems to be unknown, except by report as 'the English malady'. I think much of this facility in expression is attributable to the early training in the State schools. Mere children are taught to speak out so that they may be heard by a large number in a large room, and are, in consequence, obliged to practise modulating the voice, speaking articulately, and speaking slowly.66

words which may well be placed beside those of the American educationist, Freeman Butts, reporting on Australian primary schools 78 years later: 'Many children spoke so softly or so timidly that they could not be heard in the classroom.'

His opinion on the function of a teachers' college remains equally pertinent. He was opposed to any notion that there should be a Professor of Paedogogy presiding over an institution unconnected with the University.

... it is very important that teachers should be trained, not as a caste apart, but as men and women having a need for common culture with the members of other professions; that they should mix in the same lecture-rooms with their fellow citizens, and should take the first steps towards a degree, to obtain which in after years will be the object of an honorable ambition.

For the sake of teachers who might otherwise be isolated for years in the bush, he proposed the setting aside in the College of 'forty sets of rooms ... for the accommodation of head and assistant teachers who may wish to pursue their studies at the University', adding, in defence of this move:

I know no greater mistake than to suppose that a man or woman can be over-educated for the position of teacher in a primary school, or that it requires less real ability to explain the elements of knowledge to unformed minds than to carry pupils with developed intelligence through the more advanced branches.

68 Report p.141.
69 Ibid p.143.
The college, as he imagined it, would be a good deal more than a training institution.

I am most anxious that the Training College should to some extent perform the functions of a teachers' institute. Its library should, I think, be well stocked with the last reports on teaching, and open to all members of the profession; nor do I see why a reading-room, a conversation-room, and a coffee-room should not be added. It should be the object of the department to promote a strong esprit de corps among its subordinates, so that men and women may be kept in the service by something besides the hope of promotion.70

A similar wisdom informs his extensive account of the sort of education which the State should provide or subsidize at the secondary level. He did not wish the State to buy up all existing grammar schools and provide education free for all, partly because of the prohibitive cost, partly because

... it is most desirable that a body of highly trained teachers should continue to work outside of State control, pursuing their own methods, and in some instances imparting knowledge which it might not lie within the State's province to impart.71

In his view, as he had explained in his Ballarat speech, the great need of Victoria was the trained practical services of first-class craftsmen, metallurgists, chemists, scientific farmers, navigators, engineers, school teachers, accountants, doctors, dentists, veterinary surgeons -

70 Report p.143.
71 Ibid p.11.
services which were largely being lost to the colony because the State's responsibilities towards secondary education went no further than the annual award of eight exhibitions to assist outstanding State school pupils through a grammar school and university education. These exhibitions, however, only covered part of the cost of such an education, and already 10 of the 38 awarded since the system began had been forfeited.72

To rectify this situation the two most urgent needs in Pearson's opinion were assistance for good 'middle class' schools which were struggling to survive in country towns, and the provision of new State High Schools in certain country districts and city suburbs where secondary schools were then non-existent or inadequate. It was his view that

Every township of three thousand contains fifty or a hundred families who would wish their children to continue their education three, four, or five years beyond the age of twelve, when the standard of the primary schools ought to have been attained. If the State does not assist these families to support a high school they will commonly be unable to do it.

He proposed, therefore, to divide the colony into 29 districts - twelve of these consisting of larger towns containing already existing grammar schools, thirteen of

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PEARSON'S SCHEME OF STATE HIGH SCHOOLS, 1878

○ BOARDING SCHOOLS
■ SUBURBAN DAY SCHOOLS
○ EXISTING 'MIDDLE CLASS' SCHOOLS TO BE SUBSIDIZED BY THE STATE

VICTORIA

ST. ARNAUD
EAGLEHAWK
SANDHURST (BENDIGO)

STAWELL
MARYBOROUGH
TALBOT
RYMTON
CLUNIES
DAYLESFORD

ARARAT
BALLARAT
ESSendon

HAMILTON

CASTLEMAINE
MELBOURNE
RICHMOND
CARLTON
W. MELBOURNE
EMERALD HILL
BRIGHTON

SHEPPARTON
BEELINGWORTH

BENALLA

COLAC
WARRNAMBOOL
Belfast (Pt Faery)

PORTLAND

GEELONG

50 MILES

BOUNCA
country districts proper, and four of Melbourne suburbs. In each of the twelve larger towns an existing school should be nominated as a high school for which sums to be expended by the State on scholarships and the payment of half-fees should act as a subsidy. In each of the thirteen country districts, arranged to contain a population of from 30-40,000 the State should construct a co-educational high school to be completely under its own control. Each of these should consist of a house for a headmaster, classrooms for 80 and dormitories for 20, for

In the case of these districts the State will also be bound to pay the boarding expenses of those children who live more than two miles and a half from the school, or to provide them with railway passes, if any live within easy distance by rail of the school.73

The staff in each case should consist of a headmaster, a trained lady assistant, and a pupil teacher. To support both kinds of schools he proposed that the State should award secondary school scholarships worth £10 p.a. at the rate of one for every two thousand of the total population (approximately 400 in all, or 100 new awards each year) and in addition that it should pay half fees for all children proceeding to high schools after attending a special 'upper sixth class' in a State elementary school. On this basis he estimated that the headmasters of the State high schools

73 Report p.97.
should receive at the least an income of £500 p.a. and possibly up to £800 in the country and £1,200 in the city.

The whole scheme, which he estimated to cost £20,000 p.a. - or only 5% of the annual vote of £450,000 for the existing elementary system - was thoroughly in keeping with his belief in the virtues of incentives and individual responsibility. It rewarded merit and encouraged diligence in scholars, it established new State schools only where absolutely necessary, and while doing much to assist parents did not allow them to take the higher education of their children for granted.

School will measure itself against school, and every board of advice will be anxious that its own district should compete on favourable terms with its neighbours. Make admission to the high school matter of right for all equally, and the advantage of this stimulus will be lost. The cheaper system is also, I am convinced, incomparably the more efficient.74

Furthermore the excellent income which the headmasters of the State high schools might expect to enjoy, coupled with the restriction of such headmasterships to graduates, preferably headmasters and inspectors in the existing service, would act as a strong incentive to young teachers (or trainees) to study for a University degree, and to graduates in charge of elementary schools to obtain the best possible reports on their work. At the same time the State would

ensure a secondary education for practically all its children of above average ability.

The proposed new high schools were specifically designed for children who would require a more 'practical' education than those attending the existing grammar schools, and the curriculum was modified accordingly. The changes he proposed can most readily be appreciated in the following table.\[75\]

I append the following scheme of the time allotted to the chief subjects of study in the 6th, 5th, and 4th forms of five of our largest schools; so that ... the reader ... may compare what is done with what I think preferable:

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<td>Melb. C. of E. Grammar</td>
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<td>Geelong Grammar</td>
<td>7½-11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hawthorn Grammar</td>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>4-7</td>
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<td>Scotch</td>
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<td>Wesley</td>
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<td>Proposed High School</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>(History included in English: Physical Geog. and maps - 3)</td>
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It will be noted that he proposed to cut the time spent on Classics to half the average of the grammar schools, devote about the same time to English literature and English History but give three lessons to Physical Geography and maps, increase the time devoted to French, keep the number of mathematics lessons to the average minimum of the grammar schools and greatly increase the time to be given to science - a fourfold increase on Melbourne Grammar and at least double the time spent at Scotch and Wesley Colleges. Greek he proposed to omit entirely from the ordinary course, providing only that it should be taught to State scholars for whom a knowledge of the language was a necessary condition of entry to the University (an unfortunate condition in his opinion).

The educational principle on which this new curriculum rested may be found enunciated on page 89 of the Report:

Without disputing the theory that the chief object of education is to strengthen the faculties rather than to store the mind, I hold that it is possible to do both, and that a system which would launch a young man upon life with a trained but unstored intelligence is like a system of medicine which would give tonics and withhold food.

As Dr. E.L. French shows in his Secondary Education in the Australian Social Order, 1780-1898, Pearson had in mind here the faculty psychology of Sir William Hamilton and

Thomas Reid which argued that it was the function of education to train the five faculties of reason, memory, attention, observation and imagination. This theory, which regarded each 'faculty' as a sort of intellectual muscle, which could be developed by one set of exercises and then applied to a whole host of functions, was as much a respectable tenet of belief for mid-nineteenth century educationists as free-trade was for political economists. The man who first appears to have introduced a little common-sense into its application was Herbert Spencer, who wrote in the first of his **Essays in Education** (1861)

> It would be utterly contrary to the beautiful economy of Nature, if one kind of culture were needed for the gaining of information and another kind were needed as a mental gymnastic. Everywhere throughout creation we find faculties developed through the performance of those functions which it is their office to perform; not through the performance of artificial exercises devised to fit them for those functions.

It is more than likely that Pearson was following Spencer in this matter, although it is possible he did not have the latter consciously in mind. He had certainly read the **Essays in Education**, and may well have known its author personally through their common membership of the Athenæum.

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78 Cavenagh, op. cit. p.52.
It is difficult to say how much the faculty psychology affected Pearson's educational practice and theory, although there are good reasons for supposing that very often he advocated one particular study or method primarily because in his own experience as teacher or student he had found it useful or satisfying, and that in such cases the conventional phrases of the faculty psychology simply provided him with a ready means of rationalizing views which were already formed. For example he was a firm advocate of practical science teaching in a well-equipped laboratory, and in justifying this view he remarked in his Report:

Under a teacher like Professor Hoffman, of Berlin, the Socratic method of enquiry why the experimenter had used one test and passed by another, and how he arrived at his conclusion, was as sharp training for the reasoning faculties as I have ever undergone.79

He might just as well have said that this was the best way he had come across of learning how to conduct chemical analysis intelligently. Again, during his first year as headmaster of the Ladies' College he decided that certain girls with a marked taste for music or drawing should give up part of the regular curriculum for extra work at the piano or easel. In justifying this sensible move in his annual report he wrote:

79 Report p.98. This was presumably the 'Hofmann' mentioned as one of his chemistry lecturers at the London School of Mines when he was studying medicine at St. George's Hospital in 1854. (Memorials p.81.)
I have spoken of Music and Drawing as branches of Education; for I cannot consent to regard them as mere accomplishments. The first trains the attention in a degree second only to Mathematics; the second is an admirable adjunct or introduction to Physical Science, by the demand it makes on the power of accurate observation.

It sounds grotesque, yet a moment later he goes on to say

... girls gain a few hours by not learning Greek, and devote a great many more than they gain to work which will train their minds - will make them more cultivated and womanly - but which will not tell at Examinations.

No one can know whether he was more concerned to make the young ladies more cultivated and womanly or to train their minds: what mattered was that girls with special abilities were given the opportunity to develop them.

Faculty psychology or not there was a good deal of wisdom in his proposals for the curricula of the high schools. He would have less time than usual spent on analysis in English lessons and more on teaching students to express themselves simply and directly on matters about which they were competent to write. He would rather have a student learn French really well than attempt to learn French and Latin together and remain ignorant of both. In either case he reprobated the custom of shutting the student up with a vocabulary and grammar and getting him to pore over a short text until it was virtually known by heart.

80 Annual Report dated Dec. 13, 1875, held at the College.
Instead he would encourage him by all possible means—the best translations, illustrations showing the life of the people concerned, intelligent guessing at meanings—to read widely in the best authors as soon as possible. He was emphatic that the History taught should be confined to the British Empire since 1700, that it should be linked with a study of physical geography, and that special emphasis in both subjects should be placed on Australia. He would prefer 'training the mind of a future farmer or merchant on chemistry and botany to taking him through the integral and differential calculus' and advocated the equipping of each high school with a good laboratory for chemical analysis, a microscope for botanical field classes, and a museum which could be furnished to a considerable extent by the pupils themselves, not as a lumber-room of curiosities, but as a systematic collection of botanical, geological and other specimens belonging strictly to the district.

It was an authoritative piece of writing, both because his personal experience was so extensive, and because he

Report p.99. It may be noted, as a further instance of the way in which ideas are disseminated, that Pearson almost certainly inherited his interest in such questions from his old teacher J.S. Brewer, whose first lecture-course in the newly-opened London Working Men's College had been on 'geography as related to English history'.

(Adamson, J.W., English Education, 1789-1902, p.167.)
could back his opinions up at almost every point by quoting one or other leading educationist whom he knew as a friend or teacher - Conington, Goldwin Smith, Sidgwick, Grant Duff on the uses of ancient and modern languages, Hofmann on the teaching of chemical analysis, Agassiz, (the Swiss-American naturalist whom he had met in Boston in 1868) on school museums. It is not difficult to sense, while reading these pages, why the young men and women whom he actually taught, and his fellow teachers and lecturers, thought so highly of him as an educator, and one can be sure, particularly as the report was published and bound separately, that whatever the government thought of his practical scheme for high schools, his views on secondary education in general were by no means neglected by those professionally concerned.

Of the existing provision made by the State for its 800 orphaned and delinquent children Pearson was scathingly critical, thoroughly supporting, although in less graphic language, the views of 'Bohemian' and 'Clamans in Deserta' published in the Age before and during his enquiries. The class teaching on the male side of the Coburg or Jika Jika Reformatory which contained altogether 200 boys and 35 girls, he found some of the worst he had seen anywhere in the colony, while on the female side he discovered that
... girls who have been sentenced for petty larcency are put to associate with girls who have been taken from Chinese brothels.\textsuperscript{82}

At Sunbury, an institution which contained both boys who had lost their parents and boys who had been charged with vagrancy or who had got out of the control of their parents, 400 in all, he found the situation 'bleak', the land 'badly watered and infested with wire-worm', the results of the teaching 'very meagre' and the results of the farming, in which, together with baking, tailoring and bootmaking the boys were trained, 'not very great'. At Royal Park, primarily a female equivalent of Sunbury containing 200 girls, he found the inmates to 'suffer from eye-disease and skin-disease to a degree that calls for searching investigation'.

The children from Sunbury and Royal Park were customarily apprenticed out between the ages of 12-15, not to the best situations available but to the employer who had first applied. In addition to the two abuses that these children had often not reached the required educational standard and that officials were in the habit of apprenticing them as servants to themselves, Pearson found that, once 'apprenticed', they received a wage greatly below that of another child of the same age and that they had hardly any redress for wrongs suffered at the hands of their employers.

\textsuperscript{82} Report p.155.
It is certain that employers frequently regard themselves as armed with excessive power over the children - keep back their wages, beat them, withhold proper food, and overwork them. There is no real security against these abuses. The police are ordered not to interfere if they can avoid it; the clergy have declined to report on licensed children in their districts, and the visiting committees of ladies are apt to neglect their work and when they perform it to question the employers instead of the children, or the children in presence of the employers. The late acting superintendent, Mr. Neal, informed me that he did not think the fact of an employer having thrashed a boy ten or twelve times in a year any reason why that employer should not have children assigned to him.\textsuperscript{83}

For these several ills he proposed the following remedies. In the first place he would abolish the two orphanages cum truant schools at Sunbury and Royal Park, transferring the Roman Catholic girls to the Convent of the Good Shepherd, Abbotsford, which he had found excellently run, and boarding-out the remainder in private homes, using the good offices of the Protestant Orphanage at Brighton which had already commenced such a programme. The boarding-out of orphans had actually been advocated some time before by the Age in an editorial on July 27, 1876. As this referred to a book entitled \textit{Children of the State: the training of juvenile paupers} by the Miss Florence Hill who had visited 'Haverhill' in 1873 it may well have been written by Pearson. In any case he would have been thoroughly acquainted with the book, \textsuperscript{83} Report p.169.
and with the practical success of the system it advocated in Scotland and in New York where 1000 children had been placed in families in 1875 under the auspices of the Children's Aid Society, and of the American Female Guardian Society. 84

In the second place he proposed that the State should have its own depot to which children consigned to an 'industrial school' should be sent to be watched for two or three weeks, until their characters are known. Vicious boys and girls should then be sent to a reformatory (under an improved system of management), unless an orphanage will take charge of them, as it will in some cases. 85

For those 'few inmates from among the children who are not good enough for an orphanage and who yet seem too good for Coburg' he proposed residence in one of the projected Day Industrial Schools, 86 each headmaster taking about half a dozen boarders. When a boarded-out child had passed his educational standard and was ready for employment, the foster parents should then have the first claim to their labour under the present condition of feeding and clothing them, allowing them a trifle as pocket-money, and funding a fair sum yearly, which they may be paid later on, with the orphanage. 87

84 Age, July 27, 1876.
85 Report p. 156.
86 See p. 398 above.
87 Report p. 160.
Whatever happened, children should not be given back at this stage to parents or relatives who had earlier refused to undertake their responsibilities but would now be only too ready to intercept the profits of their offspring's labour.

Reform of the University, on which the whole proposed educational structure rested, had been a pre-occupation of his ever since he had lectured there in 1874. Fortuitously the Council vacancy which he himself had filled in January 1875 had been closely followed by two more, each of which had been filled by a fellow headmaster, the first by his old King's College contemporary M.H. Irving, the second by Dr. Bromby. Although only three amongst twenty, these men had been able, by their regular attendance at meetings (in 1876 their attendances made up a third of the total)⁸⁸ their practical knowledge, and the support of the Age, to wield an influence out of all proportion to their number.

The Age had stated its policy of University reform in general terms in July 1874, and it had lost no opportunity subsequently of reiterating or expanding its ideas. It had used the ineffectual attempts of the Council to find an adequate local successor to Pearson to canvass the principle of open competition for all appointments. The commencement of lectures in 1875 had enabled it to draw attention to the

⁸⁸ See Appendix A.
need for cheap, secular, University Colleges. When there had been a revival of agitation for admission of women it had taken the opportunity to observe that the presence of women in the University would make all the more imperative the founding of a school of modern languages (for 'the ancient gods and goddesses were in fact, as Mr. Calverley says, "extremely incorrect"'). The duty of Councillors to resign or seek re-election every five years, the need for a 'middle-class' as distinct from a matriculation examination, the virtues of the Scotch and German universities, the removal of the University to a more central site, the desirability of doubling the present staff by giving the University 'let us say, something like the staff of the worst provided University in Europe' - all received publicity at appropriate moments. From the close resemblance of these articles to sections of Pearson's Royal Commission Report, from certain stylistic tricks, especially the use of sarcasm, and from the frequent references to English and continental practice, it seems more than likely that Pearson was their author.

Within the Council itself the reformers had certainly maintained as much pressure as they had been able, helped notably in 1876-7 by the absence overseas of Sir Redmond

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89 See Age editorials in issues for Jan. 6, Mar. 18, June 11, July 14, 1875.
Barry. Pearson had early moved for the creation of an Executive Committee designed more or less to take over Barry's functions, and had himself regularly attended its weekly meetings.\(^90\) On May 29, 1876 the 'School Master element' had very nearly succeeded in ousting the absent Barry from the Chancellorship altogether. Only a desperate rearguard action by the Vice-Chancellor Brownless, had been able to foil them. Brownless's letter to Barry putting him in possession of the whole 'insidious & cowardly but yet determined effort' reveals something of the passion which must have gone into the struggle:

... when I found the motion placed on the paper I considered it no more than a loyal duty to the Chief under whom I had served so many years to gather together his old friends, who I am happy to say came at my call and presented on the day of battle a phalanx which caused the enemy to retreat from his position ... I think you will find what I said about the School Master element in the Council in my last letter prove to be quite correct for they appear to be daily plotting changes of all kinds & between them and Judge Rogers I think I shall have no very pleasant time during your absence ... \(^91\)

One of the 'changes' the schoolmasters had had in mind was the removal of the entire university to another site in Jolimont or St. Kilda, partly to centralise it, partly to

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\(^{90}\) Council Minutes, March 27, 1876. A separate Minute Book was kept for the Executive Committee.

\(^{91}\) Barry papers, Brownless to Barry, June 13, 1876.
free more money for an expanded teaching programme and partly to prevent the establishment of a system of residential religious colleges. Two things had given this urgency: the imminent affiliation of Trinity College with the University, and the imminent erection of the great hall donated by Sir Samuel Wilson. There had been a leader on the subject in the *Age* of June 2, 1876, and on November 27, 1876 Pearson had moved in the Council:

> That a deputation be appointed to wait on the Premier to urge upon him that the Government should give the University a new and more central site and take the present buildings and grounds off its hands at a valuation.

After discussion, however, he had withdrawn it, and although Professor Andrew had subsequently taken up the cause in the Senate, a vote on April 11 had decisively rejected it, 48 votes to 12.92

So matters had stood when he received his Royal Commission. Not surprisingly one of his first acts had been to write to the religious bodies who owned the as yet unused blocks of land set aside for colleges. One of these letters, as *The Calendar of Ormond College 1882* clearly shows, had the unintended result of frightening the Presbyterians into

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92 *Age*, April 12, 1877. The motion was put up by Professor H.M. Andrew, another schoolmaster. It was he who stated 'on good authority' that Pearson's motion had been deliberately put on one side.
taking immediate action to found a college. The letter which provided the vital impulse certainly had the tone of one who did not intend to be trifled with.

Education Department,
Melbourne, 29th August, 1877.

Dear Sir, - I understand that you are Chairman of a Committee which is entrusted with the care of a ground set apart by the State for the purpose of building a College in connection with the Presbyterian Church, and affiliated to the University of Melbourne.

Will you kindly inform me, after consultation with your Committee - First, whether the Church proposes to take any immediate steps towards the erection of such a College; and, secondly, whether, in the event of its not contemplating such action, it would be disposed to make an arrangement with the State, by which the land should be sold, half the proceeds going to the State for University purposes, while the other half was handed over to the Presbyterian Church, to be applied in whatever way the Church should deem desirable.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
CHARLES H. PEARSON,
'Commissioner of Education.'

'Alex. Morrison, Esq., LL.D.,
Scotch College, Melbourne.'

'On receipt of this communication' - so the Calendar runs - 'the Committee at once gave the matter their serious consideration ... '

The whole subject was fully considered and discussed at the meeting of the General Assembly held in November 1877, and the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:-

1. That the Church should, without any delay, proceed to erection of an Affiliated College on the ground set apart for that purpose in the University Reserve, and that a sum of £10,000 be raised towards the erection of this College.

2.
In such a way were the steps taken to confirm the collegiate system of Melbourne University, and to confirm that division in the student body, religious and social, which Pearson feared. In his Report, however, while accepting the inevitability of the collegiate system, he advanced positive and far-sighted proposals to supplement it within that part of the university open to all. Under a scheme by which the Council proposed to give an allowance in lieu of a house to every professor, the university would have three houses within the original quadrangle on its hands.

One house might be set apart for the teaching staff, one for male and another for female students; of course under regulations framed and enforced by the council. I see no reason why such houses, in which there might be writing-rooms and reading-rooms, and in which lunch and dinner might be provided at moderate charges, should not serve as efficient substitutes for the collegiate system, which, however it may prosper, can never, from its costly nature, provide for more than a portion of the students.

Half the good of a university is in the social intercourse it promotes ... 94

Pearson did succeed, however, in achieving the necessary preliminary to any radical reform of the university, namely acceptance by the Council of an appropriate draft Bill 'To extend the Powers and Benefits of the University of Melbourne'. This was certainly his greatest single practical achievement as Commissioner, for the Bill was radical indeed

94 Report p.132.
in its provisions: new Council members to be elected by the Senate for five years only; the Council to be extended by the addition of two Melbourne graduates nominated by the Governor in Council and eight staff members elected by the teaching body; women to be admitted to all the corporate privileges of the university; all lecture fees to be abolished (except for 'attendance upon any course of dissection and of work in the chemical laboratory'); the addition of two new professors and 7 new lecturers to the staff of the school of medicine and the creation of an entirely new faculty of engineering and practical science, (comprehending a veterinary school, an agricultural college and the existing school of mines) so that the university would not only be able to qualify students to hold arts and medical degrees, but engineering and science degrees, and certificates of merit or competence in teaching, mining, agriculture, forestry, veterinary science, pharmacy, dentistry, technology, navigation and commerce. The whole scheme was to involve an increase in the annual State endowment from £10,000 p.a. to £33,000 p.a. in addition to which a further grant of £5,000 would be needed to cover 40 four-year scholarships at £50 p.a. and 60 one-year scholarships at the same rate, designed to encourage gifted secondary school children to avail
themselves of the new courses. It is interesting to note, appropos the recent trend of opinion in Australia away from the idea of universities of technology, that Pearson came to a similar conclusion in 1877, rejecting then the Continental practice of erecting separate polytechnic schools with the observation:

There are obvious reasons why we should not divide our teaching here. Such a course, making two establishments and two governments necessary in place of one, would be at once costly and awkward, and its direct effect would be to suggest the idea of a distinction between various branches of intellectual culture, while the tendency of all discovery is to show their inter-dependence and common affinities.95

It might be added that Pearson's methods in getting his draft Bill approved by the Council did not go unquestioned. After the Bill had been considered section by section, first by the Council, then, in its strictly financial aspects by the Executive Committee (on which all Council members had the right to sit, but which generally had an attendance of about five or less) and after a committee had been formed, on Pearson's motion, to see that the Bill 'as approved by the Council' should be faithfully reproduced by the Government Draftsman, the conservative-minded Rusden sprang a mine. Taking advantage of Pearson's absence, and the presence, once again, of Barry in the Chair, he moved successfully on February 4th 1878

95 Report p.132.
That the Bill submitted to the Council by Professor Pearson not having been presented in a complete shape for the consideration of the Council as promised it is essential that it should be submitted to the next or to some subsequent meeting for the consideration of the Council before being submitted to Parliament.

Whether or not Pearson had given a precise promise to present the Bill in its complete shape there is no doubt at all that he completely ignored this resolution, and went right ahead without further ado to place his complete Report, embodying the draft Bill, on the Table of the House – to Rusden’s enormous, and understandable, indignation. A letter which the latter penned to the Registrar on the following day, March 21, led to the following resolution being passed at the next Council meeting:

... that a special call of the Council be made for Monday the 6th of May in order that the Bill may be submitted in a complete shape to the Council for its consideration on that day.96

Ironically Rusden himself was unable to be present on that day, but to advance his cause he drafted a second, and much longer letter to the Registrar. According to this, when Pearson first showed his proposed Bill to the Council it was

... then arranged and promise was made that the incomplete Draft Bill should be examined and that afterwards a complete Bill (incorporating scientifically all the provisions of the existing Act of Incorporation which were to be retained) should be submitted for examination and discussion and decision in the Council.

96 Minutes, April 1, 1878.
There were many meetings held, and at some of them points were discussed with a bare quorum present. Opinions of four of even of three members of Council stood therefore temporarily as the opinions of the whole.

Relying on the fulfilment of the promise above alluded to I was myself occasionally, and I suppose it possible that in like manner other members were, absent at some preliminary meetings.97

One of the preliminary meetings which he no doubt had in mind was that at which the crucial section admitting women to the privileges of the university had been passed by a vote of only eight members of the Council, 5 to 3.98 He brought the letter to a close with a solemn warning to the Council and a ceremonial washing of his own hands, alluding to Hamlet's words to Claudius immediately before the play scene: 'your majesty, and we that have free souls ... ' etc.

The ending of the story, however, was quite unceremonious. The roll was solemnly called on May 6th and only ten members answered their names. Barry and Rusden were notable absentees. The latter's letter was read and discussed and then Professor Irving moved and Professor Pearson seconded that the relevant order of the day 'be discharged from the Notice Paper'. Rogers made an attempt to postpone the matter yet again in the hope of a better attendance but his amendment was defeated 6: 3, with Dr. Motherwell abstaining. Irving's motion was then put and carried and there was an end to it.

97 University Archives, Rusden to Registrar, Apr. 30, No. 263.
98 Council Minutes, Aug. 27, 1877.
If only Pearson had been able to manoeuvre the Government as efficiently as he manoeuvred the University Council, what a metamorphosis Victorian education would have undergone in 1878! He certainly did what he could to work out a compromise. When the Rogers Commission later questioned him about one feature of his Report he replied:

Of course you must remember that in all those matters I had to consider, to a certain extent, what was likely to be carried out as well as what was actually best. I asked for as much as I thought it possible to get ... 99

He knew Smith and Berry well enough to know that their chief concern was to reduce expenditure. If he had had any illusions on this matter they would never have lasted after Smith's speeches at the time of the dismissal of the civil servants. What he proposed to do therefore was to follow out the suggestion made by Smith during the debate on the Education vote and pay for his high schools, expanded University, training college, and scholarships very largely out of reductions in teachers' salaries. By this means he proposed to save no less than £49,000 p.a. or nearly 18 per cent of the total salaries bill. 100 Another £13,000 was to be saved

99 V.P. Papers, 1884, III, No. 47, Q.11077.
100 Report p.30. Total salaries bill, July 1, 1876 - June 30, 1877 was £276,510. (V.P. Papers 1877-8, I, C3.) Three quarters of the gross amount saved was to come from reductions in salaries and a quarter from 'slightly increasing' the size of classes.
by dismissing full and part-time teachers of drawing and singing, with the corollary that all regular teachers should be required to teach these subjects. 101

No doubt he justified these cuts to himself by invoking the greatest happiness of the greatest number principle. Knowing the Government's indisposition to spend any greater amounts on education and believing that it was vital to Victoria to have the complete educational system he recommended, he presumably decided that the lesser interest of the teachers would just have to be sacrificed. Yet he had said in his Report:

As a rule the State's worst bargains are not those who earn most, but those who, being only partially qualified, earn least ... 102

and so many of his provisions for the teachers were in their favour - classification according to qualifications, promotion according to merit and on the basis of published inspectors' reports, the right of appeal in certain cases, an expanded teachers' college, limitation of the results system. And his attack on men who too readily estimated the amount of work done by a teacher by a glance at the time-table could

They were actually dismissed two months before Pearson's Report was tabled. Although the summary mode of their dismissal was unjust, this seems to have been a reasonable economy, as the classes tended to be too large to be of much value, and often had to be held at inconvenient hours. A number of the dismissed teachers were later re-employed, as Pearson suggested they might be, to train the regular teachers.

Report p.73.
Ministry of Education — "The composition is disgraceful, the proposals are unfair and unjust, and would ruin our educational system if carried into effect. In short, the whole report is a blunder, and fit only to be put behind the fire."
well have been taken as a direct reprimand to Smith for his remarks in Parliament.\textsuperscript{103} Nevertheless the bald fact remained - £49,000 was to be saved out of salaries, and it can hardly have given much comfort to teachers to learn that if the high school system were established there would be a general promotion, and that if the average attendance more or less doubled the amounts paid to them by way of 'results' would be increased in proportion. Pearson's desperately difficult situation vis-à-vis Smith and the Government over the whole business is admirably expressed in Carrington's Melbourne Punch cartoon.\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{103} Report p.74.
\textsuperscript{104} F.T.D. Carrington b. London, 1843. Received his first lesson in drawing from George Cruickshank, and went through the South Kensington Course. Came to Australia to dig for gold but eventually joined Melbourne Punch in 1866 and remained on the staff for 21 years. (Mennell) G.W. Rusden justly remarks in his History of Australia (III, p.307) that Carrington 'threw genius' into his cartoons. All those reproduced in his thesis are from his pen.
Chapter X
A week after the Report was laid on the table of the House, the Minister of Public Instruction was asked when he would be prepared to invite Members to take it into consideration. The reply was a model of evasion: 'Major Smith said he would take care that the subject was not brought forward for consideration without due notice.1

As time passed and it became increasingly obvious that the bulk of the Report was destined for the pigeonhole, excepting one or two suggestions relating to the inspectorate and the head office, and of course the convenient proposal to reduce teachers' salaries, Pearson must have been very tempted to cut the painter and return to England. His wife and children actually took ship and departed. 'Then', says Stebbing, 'rather unexpectedly he was invited to contest Castlemaine; and he was returned on June 7, 1878 ...'2

The town of Castlemaine lay 78 miles N.N.W. of Melbourne with which it was connected by rail. According

1 V.P. Deb. 27/2307, Mar. 26, 1878.
2 Memorials p.215.
to Garnet Walch's *Victoria in 1880* it was a substantial town, well laid out in tree-planted streets, lit with gas, and endowed with 'numerous evidences of commercial activity in the shape of a large foundry, woollen mill, soap and candle manufactories, flour mills, tanneries, breweries, &c., &c.' The district had been the scene of many early gold rushes, and there were still, according to Walch, some 5,000 miners in the area, one-third of them Chinese, although fertile farms, orchards and vineyards now contributed a good deal to its prosperity. Naturally the combination of mining, industry and agriculture made it a blue-ribbon liberal seat.

The manner in which Pearson came to represent this constituency, and thus for the first time enter parliament, can hardly have been a matter of pride to him. The whole thing was transparently engineered from Melbourne. On May 22, 1878, some 26 electors gathered in the Cumberland Hotel in Castlemaine at the invitation of one of the two sitting members, Mr. James Farrell. Speaking 'with evident emotion' Mr. Farrell told his friends that he thought the present lull in politics was an opportune time for him to bring his thirteen years as their representative to a close. Before

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long the meeting had resolved itself into a committee to select a suitable candidate in the Liberal interest, and a motion was before the chair that Professor Pearson should be invited to contest the constituency. Despite the opposition of a minority, who claimed that Farrell's resignation was a complete surprise to them, and that such a meeting had no right to dictate to the liberals of the district in this way, the motion was passed 20:6, one of its advocates explaining that they needed to act quickly 'to avoid an opponent slipping in'. The following evening the Mount Alexander Mail's Melbourne correspondent reported that Pearson had accepted the offer of a 'portion of the electors of Castlemaine' by telegram.

Obviously the Government had decided that it could not afford to allow Pearson to slip out of the colony at a time when his support could be most useful in the great issue of the day - reform of the Upper House. He, for his part, would have found it very difficult to resist an opportunity of taking part in such a struggle. The 'end justifies the means' formula must have been as persuasive now as it had been a year before when he accepted the Royal Commission.

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4 Mount Alexander Mail (Castlemaine), editorial, May 23, 1878.
5 Ibid, May 24 ('Items of News').
All the same it was a compromise of a rather graver kind, and the Castlemaine electors in general were not at all happy about the 'curt and mysterious manner' in which Mr. Farrell had resigned his seat. There was talk of 'hole-in-the-corner' tactics, of 'cut and dry resolutions' presented by 'some gentlemen who have not been recognised as leaders', and of the district's previous experience of 'Melbourne adventurers'. There were also rumours about Farrell's motives and immediate destiny. It was generally assumed that some sort of 'timely reward for a long course of service in the liberal interest' would be found for him - perhaps an inspectorship of lunatic asylums, perhaps a newly-created chief inspectorship of public houses. (What he finally received, after the necessary six months 'quarantine' period, was the post of Parliamentary Librarian!)

To confuse matters the youthful president of the Australian Natives' Association, Mr. W. Gaunson, brother of the voluble David Gaunson M.P., announced his intention to stand as an independent liberal. Within three days he was on the stage of the Theatre Royal in Castlemaine, unaccompanied by any supporters, stating that he wished to 'test the claims

6 It had earlier been offered to the novelist Marcus Clarke, but he had refused it. (Elliott, B.R., Marcus Clarke, Oxford, 1958, p. 219.) The salary was £600 p.a., twice that received by M.L.A.'s.
of a native-born Australian to enter the arena of politics' and that he refused to be excluded from standing by the decision of 17 electors. Pearson, sitting back in Melbourne, seems to have taken fright at this stage, for he now made it known that he would not appear in Castlemaine without a 'requisition'. Only after 277 names had been gathered, and published in the local press, did he catch the train north.

It was a short, sharp contest, three-cornered before it finished, for a local resident named Chapman also decided to enter the field as an independent liberal. Pearson naturally made an impression as a speaker, but it was undoubtedly the sentiment expressed in the following election advertisement which won him a comfortable majority:

ELECTORS

Can it be denied that we have
Received more local favours in
one year from the present Government than during ten years from Previous Government.

VOTE FOR PEARSON

Support the Berry Government

VOTE FOR PEARSON

who

Sacrificed £1400 a year to do
Battle for the Peoples' Rights.

Mt. Alexander Mail, June 7, 1878.
Although all candidates claimed to be liberals, only Pearson, 'the 100% Ministerial candidate', could be expected to work effectively for the local interest. Castlemaine men were evidently not impressed when Mr. David Gaunson M.P., speaking on behalf of his brother, claimed that

... if Mr. Pearson was elected it would cause a serious split in the ranks of the liberal party. If he was made Minister of Education it would give great offence to many who would consider themselves overlooked.¹

On voting day rain somewhat curbed the exuberance of electors, but crowds assembled under the verandahs down the main street and offered good-natured banter to new arrivals drawing up to the polls in the numerous cabs plying for the rival candidates. As the returns came in excitement grew and eventually, in answer to numerous calls from the great crowd which had assembled round the Cumberland Hotel, Pearson came out at 7 p.m. and spoke his victory piece.

It must have been an exhilarating moment, even if the means to victory had been a little shabby. He now had a new lease of political life which would enable him to continue playing a part at the centre of events which were attracting attention well beyond the borders of Victoria.

His Education Report was on its way to England, destined ²

Mt. Alexander Mail, June 5, 1878.
for the Education Office, he had just posted off a letter to the New York *Nation* on 'The late dead-lock in Victoria'⁹ and he had the satisfaction of knowing that Cliffe Leslie had recently quoted his views on the taxation of land with approval, linking his name with that of Emile de Laveleye.¹⁰ Some of his fellow liberals in Victoria, it was true, tended to be exasperatingly conservative when it came to adopting a progressive land tax or a complete system of State education, or the un-British device of a *plebiscite*, but the party leaders had not as yet set their faces finally against any of these proposals, and there was still a chance that they might all be accepted. Above all there was hope that the party might stand firmly united long enough to reform the Upper House. Of all the 'speculative questions' that so attracted him to colonial politics, none exercised a greater fascination than this. He had actually begun campaigning for reform four years earlier. In a letter to

⁹ *N.Y. Nation*, July 25, 1878, p.54.

¹⁰ Laveleye, Emile de, *Primitive Property* (trans. from the French by G.R.L. Marriott, with an introduction by T.E. Cliffe Leslie. London, 1878). The reference to Pearson occurs on pp. xxii-ii of the introduction: 'In the case of young colonies ... it is no invasion of the principles on which individual property rests, to concede to writers like M. de Laveleye and Mr. Pearson, that a few score of the first comers into an immense territory ought not to be suffered to engross to themselves and their descendants the greater part of the land.'
the liberal-minded South Australian Governor Mr. Musgrave, posted off within weeks of his arrival in Melbourne, he had written:

We are having some very interesting discussions in Melbourne just now: one in particular, about the propriety of reforming the constitution, by providing that the two Houses shall meet & vote together if a bill twice passed in the Assembly is twice thrown out in the Council. I am contributing a little to the historical argument on the side of the proposed reform. But I confess, if it were practicable, I should very much prefer to see the Second House abolished altogether. I can understand a Second Chamber which is to represent rank like the House of Peers, or the independence of federated States like the American Senate. But a Second Chamber in a new country seems to me unnecessary & only fitted for obstruction ... 11

Presumably his part in the campaign at this stage had consisted of anonymous articles in the Age. A few months after this, just before taking up his headmastership, he had alluded to the same subject in a letter to the New York Nation.

Some philosophical conservatives hold that the Council represents the critical or deliberative element, and that its function is to prevent indiscreet legislation. Unluckily, it is notorious that no man good enough to get a seat in the Assembly will accept one in the Council; and it seems peculiar to entrust our second-rate men with a veto upon the measures of the ablest. The truer theory, I believe, is that the Council represents a single interest, that of property, and a single class, that of employers. It is elected by a limited constituency of electors, with a high qualification; its members are either moneyed men or

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possess the confidence of the moneyed class; and it never fails to veto any measure that appears to touch existing rights or to threaten uneven taxation. Having this single view before it, it is much more unanimous than the Assembly; and as its members are elected for ten years, they can defy public opinion.12

As any change in the Constitution depended on two-thirds majorities in both Houses, genuinely democratic government was virtually impossible within Victoria itself, short of the Assembly attempting to pass legislation without the concurrence of the Council, and in defiance of the Commissioners of Audit and the Judiciary. During 1878 there was a pretence of attempting to find a solution to the chronic stalemate: bills were brought forward by each House and sent to the other for consideration, but to no avail. In October Pearson participated in a conference between representatives of each House, but nothing came of it. The essentials of the situation were expressed in the report which Sir Charles Sladen presented to the Council on its conclusion:

The following basis of negotiation was submitted and insisted on by the Committee representing the Assembly as the condition precedent to any scheme of Reform being entertained, viz:–

(1) That the annual Appropriation Bill should in no circumstances be rejected by the Council.

(2) That definite legislative finality should be provided with respect to all other Bills.

On the other hand, your Committee refused to consider any proposal that implied any legislative inferiority in your Honourable House and that was inconsistent with its independence. In these circumstances, no further negotiations were possible.

It was after this impasse had been reached that the Berry Ministry came forward with a definite proposal for an 'Embassy' to England.

Like the device of a plebiscite, which Berry had adopted in his Constitutional reform bill as a means of resolving deadlocks, the 'Embassy' seems to have been more Pearson's idea than his leader's. Pearson, in fact, would have been a difficult man for his fellow liberals to argue against on the whole question of reform. On local matters like land taxation and the provision of new schools they might be on more even terms, but when it came to British parliamentary history and the constitutional practices of countries like Norway and Switzerland they would have

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13 Dr. Parnaby, op. cit. p.445, suggests that Berry adopted the plebiscite idea under pressure from Syme and the Age. This may have been so, but it is worth noting that Pearson had advocated the plebiscite during his Boroondara campaign and had then been taken to task by the Age for preferring it to the old Chartist idea of annual parliaments. (See above pp.353-4) It is not unlikely that he was responsible for talking Syme round.

14 Switzerland had successfully used the plebiscite twice within the previous six years, on the one occasion to revise the Federal Constitution, on the other to decide the civil marriage question.
found it more than difficult to cope with him. When, for example, the opposition leader Service suggested that 'delay' was the principle of the British constitution, and challenged any member to name a British Act which had taken less than a year to pass, Pearson took his opportunity and lavished on the House what must have been one of the most instructive addresses in its experience.  

It must have been equally difficult to discount his estimate of the likely reception an 'Embassy' would receive in England, although there was much less unanimity about this than about the desired end. The more extreme liberals would much have preferred, or so they said, that the Assembly should take the matter of reform into its own hands, even at the risk of bloodshed and separation from England. Speaking in the Assembly on July 31 the Attorney-General, O'Loghlen, had referred pointedly to the American revolution and hinted that it might be necessary to deport Council members over the Murray and invite the Governor to go on board a steamer in the bay. On the other hand the most conservative members of the Assembly, led by Service, believed that it was still the Assembly's duty to continue to seek a compromise by amending the reform bills which the Council had sent down.  

V.P. Debates, 28/356, Aug. 1, 1878.
Pearson took up a stand mid-way between these positions. With the memory of the Chartist procession still clear in his mind, he had a strong aversion to anything suggesting civil violence or departure from the rule of law. According to his wife he had protested strongly to Berry and Bowen against the summary dismissal of the civil servants on and following Black Wednesday, although his belief in party solidarity had prevented him making these protests public. He must have known his colleagues well enough to realize that the consequences for Victoria would be disastrous if they commenced wielding arbitrary power. At the same time he was adamant that the Assembly should have legislative finality. Everything that mattered to him in Victorian politics depended, or could depend, on this. An appeal to the Imperial Government for an Act enabling some reform of the Constitution seemed to offer the best hope of a peaceful, legal solution. He still had great faith in the reasonableness of the House of Commons, and he had various friends with influence in high places. He could take Berry round to dinners, write letters to the Times, publish and distribute a pamphlet giving a history of the relations between the two Houses. At least it would be worth trying.

Memorials p. 318.
After the loss of the American colonies, England had been markedly conciliatory in her treatment of Canada. The Canadians had successfully asked for responsible government. They had wanted an elective Upper House and had got it. When they had changed their minds and wanted a nominee Upper House, once again their demand had been granted. Why should not Victoria receive similar treatment? Surely England would see that the party to be conciliated in Victoria was not that which aimed only at exporting wool and preserved meats, but that which desired to 'cover the country with homesteads, with railways, and with a swarming population' - to create, in effect, a potential ally of great consequence?  

The major defect in the plan was that there had been no appeal to the people on this single issue. Council reform had not been the principal issue at the 1877 election, and although Pearson had spoken, in August, 1878, of Commissioners going home to England with a reform bill confirmed by the 'deliberate voice of the nation' there had been no subsequent dissolution, and no attempt to take a plebiscite. Pearson might well claim that there was not a Member of the Assembly who did not support the two principles: 'that the Appropriation Bill shall not be interfered with by the

17 V.P. Debates, 29/1720, Nov. 7, 1878.
18 Ibid 28/357, Aug. 1, 1878.
Council, and that there shall be finality in matters of general legislation.' Nevertheless the awkward lack of a distinct popular mandate remained. Mr. Kerferd, a former premier, commented shrewdly when the Embassy was first debated:

Giving the Secretary of State for the Colonies credit for the possession of ordinary wisdom and intelligence, I am satisfied that unless we can show him that we have made up our own minds as to the nature of the reform we want, he will not interfere at all, and the ambassadors will come back and say to us - 'Gentlemen, you must go to the country, because we ourselves must determine upon some scheme before the Imperial Parliament can be asked to help us.'

The subsequent arrival of a despatch from Hicks-Beach gave striking confirmation to Kerferd's view, for it said quite plainly that intervention by the Imperial Parliament could not be considered except 'in the last resort as the only remaining means of carrying into effect the deliberately expressed will of the people of Victoria upon an issue plainly presented to them'. Unfortunately, although this despatch arrived early on December 5th, it was not transmitted by the Governor to the Ministry (some said deliberately) until after the prorogation of Parliament on the following day. There was thus no chance of debating a new plan of campaign, and

19 V.P. Debates, 29/1724, Nov. 7, 1878.
Berry and Pearson had little option, if they wished to save face, but to proceed to England.

Before they left they were given a great farewell banquet in the Town Hall at which 700 sat down. It was supposed to demonstrate the solidarity and intensity of colonial feeling, but the large number of country supporters present was to be explained less by their passion for reform than by the fact that the organizers, by drawing on the public purse, had been able to guarantee all holders of a 30/- ticket not only a dinner but also free return rail transport from any part of the colony. Although, under pressure from the Age, and almost certainly from Pearson behind the scenes, Ministers eventually combined to pay the additional cost back into the treasury from their own pockets, this all too characteristic piece of 'Berryism' can hardly have added to Pearson's confidence on the eve of departure.

After a two months' voyage, in which they had ample time to prepare the 'complete case' which Berry had mentioned at the banquet, the Commissioners arrived in England on February 15, 1879. Three days later they were tardily greeted by the Agent-General, Sir Archibald Michie, and on

20 Memorials p. 318.
21 Many public meetings in city and country had earlier condemned the Embassy. See Haddon, F.W., The Constitutional Difficulty in Victoria (London 1879), p. 11.
22 Mt. Alexander Mail, April 30, 1879.
the 26th they had their first interview with Hicks-Beach. To this they took a letter written from their London hotel, explaining why they had persisted in coming, and outlining the measure which the Victorian Ministry, after mature deliberation, had 'finally decided upon as most proper for the Assembly to request, and for the Imperial Parliament to grant'. The emphasis was all on moderation.

> It can scarcely be called an extreme measure to propose that a Bill carried in the Assembly by an absolute majority, on the second and third readings, afterwards submitted to the constituencies, and again carried in the new House by absolute majorities, should at last pass into law.23

The Assembly, the letter concluded, had no doubt that the Constitution Act conferred sufficient powers on it 'to practically establish the principle for which they contend' but preferred, if possible, not to have to exercise those powers 'at times and under circumstances when the public mind becomes unduly if not dangerously excited'.

Their case sounded reasonable enough, but they were not to have the field to themselves, for early in March there arrived in London F.W. Haddon, editor of the Argus. In a letter to the Times, written from the Reform Club on March 20, Haddon set out to discount the general impression which

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23 V.P. Papers, 1879/80, v.2, No.43. Ironically this proposal closely resembled the provisions in the British Act of 1911 limiting the powers of the Lords.
he had found prevailing in London that Berry and Pearson represented the Victorian people. Before he had done, four more letters had been published, he had interviewed all the principle newspaper editors and many leading British statesmen, and had sent to Cabinet, to every member of the two Houses of Parliament, and to every editor of a political newspaper in the country, an eighteen-page pamphlet giving a history of the constitutional conflict from the Council's point of view. He told the story of the farewell banquet in the Town Hall, instanced various demonstrations against the 'Embassy', quoted 'inflammatory' statements by Victorian liberals, and most important insisted that the Council was ready to accept moderate reform, citing as evidence two Bills which that body had actually sent down to the Assembly in the last Victorian session. The Council he portrayed was not an obscurantist, self-interested body, but a responsible, conciliatory House of review, acting

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24 *Times*, April 5, 5f; 10, 11b; 11, 4c; 16, 10e; 17, 4f.

25 Haddon, F.W., *The Constitutional Difficulty in Victoria etc.* (London, 1879.) The details of his campaign are given by Mennell.

26 A Constitution Act Amendment Bill, and a Constitution of Council Bill, both introduced by Sir Charles Sladen, were sent down to the Assembly on Sept. 17, some three weeks before Berry's counter Bill reached the Council.
as a desirable curb on the often ill-considered legislation of a youthful democracy - ironically the impression Pearson himself had formed on his first brief visit to the colony in 1865.

Pearson fought back as well as he could with two letters to the Times and a pamphlet of his own - shorter, more readable, but not seemingly as authoritative as his opponent's because less exhaustive. He knew that the Council did not intend, whatever it said, to weaken itself to the extent that it could not veto legislation obnoxious to large landowners. Haddon himself had cited a progressive land tax as an example of the sort of 'extreme' legislation which a Council should curb. But it was not easy to demonstrate this. All he could do was point to the record of the Council, its past protestations and its subsequent practice, and make an attempt to bring home its stand by translating it roughly into English terms. After outlining the Council's conduct in 1878, culminating in an ultimatum


28 Haddon, op. cit., p.17. Pearson himself clearly regarded the Council's fear of such a tax as the immediate cause of the crisis. (V.P. Debates, 28/351, Aug. 1, 1878.) Grant Duff's report in his diary of a breakfast he had with Pearson at this time suggests that Pearson had then talked as much about the need for land reform as the constitutional crisis. Grant Duff, Sir M.E., Notes from a Diary, 1873-1881, v.2, p.116-7.
sent down to the Assembly on November 27, he wrote:

It is not easy to give an exact parallel from English history, but it is a very close illustration to suppose that the Upper House had contemptuously refused to discuss the first Reform Bill, had sent down a claim to co-ordinate power over Money Bills with the Commons in all points except their origination, but had tried to disarm popular indignation by a proposal that all peers should in future be elected out of the Baronage, like Scotch Peers, for a single Parliament. 29

To Haddon's assertion that the Council was prepared to allow all Appropriation bills to pass provided that they contained no new questions of policy he replied:

... there is scarcely a new item on the Estimates that cannot be shown or imagined to involve a new principle. Some of your readers will recollect that the change which practically transferred the control of national education to the Lord's in Council was made (in 1839) by an item on the Estimates. 30

Give the Council the slightest loophole and there would be no end of litigation. Whatever was proposed, the new Constitution must allow the will of the majority of people to prevail, and not that of the sixth who elected the Council. Surely the scheme which he and Berry had proposed to Hicks-Beach was as sound and reasonable a method of arriving at genuinely democratic government in Victoria as could be devised?

29 Times, April 15, 1879, 11d.
30 Ibid April 18, 1879, 4e.
But the *Times*, sitting in judgment at the conclusion of the debate, pronounced against the 'Embassy', advising Berry to return home and negotiate with the Council on the basis of the compromise plan which Haddon was now offering on its behalf. The paper no doubt saw clearly enough that if the Imperial Parliament allowed the Victorian people to have their way there would be no Council, or no effective Council - Haddon himself admitted as much - and had decided, from the accounts of Victorian affairs furnished by Haddon and its own Melbourne correspondent, that the colonists were not yet politically mature enough to govern themselves without restraint. The manner in which the Assembly had attempted to coerce the Council into accepting payment of members, the dismissal of the senior civil servants, the adoption of a protective tariff - even the inability of Government to suppress the Kelly gang — all must have seemed symptoms of immaturity. Non-intervention might just conceivably lead to civil disturbance, but the threat was surely exaggerated. It would be best to wait and see.

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31 *Times*, April 18, 1879, 9d.

32 Pamphlet cited, p.7.

33 A report of its exploits at Jerilderie was printed opposite a letter on the Victorian constitutional difficulty in the *Times* of April 9, 1879, p.6.
A great many of those who followed the debate probably came to this conclusion, which an actual meeting with Berry would only confirm. George Brodrick, who had spent years writing leading articles for the Times, and belonged strictly to the old philosophical radical school, shook his head in dismay after giving a dinner party in honour of the two Commissioners, for there had been a warm discussion on Free Trade, and Berry had maintained 'with Pearson's silent assent, that moderate Protective duties had not only a steadying but a lowering influence on the average price of commodities in the colony'. How could his old friend possibly work in harmony with a man who could uphold so elementary an error as that! Even Dilke, who had known Berry from the days when he was an unsuccessful grocer in the King's Road, Chelsea, and arranged a public meeting in his honour, had had to note in his diary after two earlier private meetings:

My interviews convinced me that the letter H was likely to disappear in the democracies of the future. The name of the Colonial Secretary of State was a difficulty, for Berry insisted upon calling him 'Sir Hem. Icks Beach.'

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34 Memorials p.160.
35 Times May 1, 1879, 10e.
36 British Museum Add. M.S. 43934, ff. 11-13. This passage is not reproduced in Gwyn and Tuckwell's Life.
The line of distinguished persons who met Berry - Hicks-Beach, Disraeli, Gladstone, the Earl of Kimberley (Colonial Secretary in Gladstone's 1868-74 government) and the Prince of Wales himself - must all have regarded him with more than usual interest. Pearson they could place, more or less, as a cultivated doctrinaire liberal, but Berry, an H-dropping Prime Minister, was a disturbing portent. They would have been courtesy itself, of course, but disinclined to commit themselves to supporting him. When Berry was bold enough to claim that Gladstone looked with favour on his mission to England, the latter wrote coldly to the *Times*, which had sent him a report of the claim:

I think you will see that I could not with propriety contradict a statement of Mr. Berry's resting on rumour and perfectly undefined. No conversation of a practical nature has been held by me with him, but he may have formed his own opinion as to the bearings of my mind. I do not doubt he will have gathered from me that I think the deliberate judgment of the greater number will ultimately prevail - I do not know what it may be - and that it is eminently desirable that the matter should be amicably settled on the spot and without resort to us.38

This was also the conclusion of Hicks-Beach, although at his last meeting with the Commissioners on Saturday May 3 he refused to allow them to see the actual despatch

37 *Age*, April 30, 1879, 'News of the Day.'
38 *Times*, June 13, 1879, 9e.
COLLAPSED!
TWO MUCH "GAR"—COMING DOWN AGAIN.
containing this, and Berry had to set off for Victoria on the following Tuesday knowing that he could only learn its contents when Lord Normanby, the new Governor, delivered it into his hands in Melbourne.

There was still, however, the House of Commons, and Pearson was appointed to remain behind until a motion of the member for Exeter, Mr. A. Mills, relating to the constitutional issue, should be debated. Naturally Hicks-Beach's final despatch was vital to this, but all Mills could elicit from him on May 8 was that it would be 'shortly laid on the Table, probably before it is received in Victoria'. Mills's motion was due to be debated on June 20, and again, on June 16 he asked Hicks-Beach when the House would be able to read the despatch and any subsequent correspondence. This time, however, the Colonial Secretary of State made it clear that nothing would be done until the despatch reached Melbourne in about ten days time. On the 19th he asked his 'hon. Friend' the member for Exeter whether he still intended to proceed with his motion on the following day, in view of the 'delay in the publication of the last portion of the Correspondence on the subject', and Mills replied that he would not proceed at present but trusted that he might bring

39 Commons Debates (3rd ser. v. 245, column 1959.)
forward the following Resolution 'after the whole of the Correspondence was in the hands of hon. Members':

That, in the opinion of this House, Imperial intervention in the constitution of Colonies possessing representative government is undesirable and inconsistent with the rights of self-government granted to those Colonies, unless such intervention is officially solicited by both branches of the Colonial Legislature.  

This, however, as Hicks-Beech surely knew, was only wishful thinking: once lost, the opportunity for a debate would not recur.

It was a neat stratagem, well calculated to destroy Pearson's last illusions about English 'reasonableness' and readiness to entertain new ideas. Gloomily he and his wife, and their three daughters - for a third child had been born in London in April - set off for Melbourne, he to take up what remained of his political career, she to face once again the snubs and ostracism.
Chapter XI.
Back in Victoria Pearson fought the fight out as best he could. He grasped eagerly at a section of Hicks-Beach's final Despatch, which, in his view, gave a decided threat of interference by the Imperial Parliament if the Council rejected a 'moderate and reasonable compromise,'¹ and had the satisfaction of writing a letter to the Times correcting the predictions which it had made, schooled by Haddon, as to the Council's readiness to compromise.² But while he might vindicate the stand he had taken in London, the odds were heavily against an outright victory in Victoria. Time, the most important factor in the conflict, was running out, and the abstract idea of democratic government meant less to most Victorians than it meant to him. Feeling could be roused, but not sustained and directed to the single end of reform over the course of a long and difficult campaign. Democrats in Victoria were so more by the force of facts than conviction. In a long article entitled 'Democracy in Victoria' published in the Fortnightly Review while he was in London, he had

¹ V.P. Debates, Sept. 11, 1879, p.974.
² Times, Dec. 16, 1879. Letter dated 'Melbourne, Oct. 30.'
written resignedly:

The struggling working-men of five-and-twenty years back have become in thousands of instances substantial yeomen, or partners in mining enterprise, or foremen of factories, or store-keepers. Democracy has given them what they want, and they feel grateful to it, and would resent any open attack upon it, but are not disposed to carry it out in new directions, to supplement a Land Act by a progressive land tax, or to add high schools to primary schools.1

He might have added: 'or to put reform of the Council before all other considerations until achieved.' Apart from the fact that the 'apparent indignity of carrying an appeal to England' was keenly felt by many Liberal supporters,2 all sorts of cross-issues confused the situation - the personal ambitions of back-benchers like James Munro, eager to wrest power from Berry, Catholic agitation for State support of denominational schools, the importunity of small manufacturers, resulting, despite Berry's earlier assurances,3 in the imposition of a new tariff greatly increasing the degree of 'protection' to many items. The Times might justly comment, when publishing Pearson's letter, and another from its own Melbourne correspondent, that the constitutional controversy

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1 Fortnightly Review, May 1879, p.696.

2 In an article written many years later Pearson gave this as the chief reason for the disintegration of the Liberal Party. (Australia and the Royal Veto," London Speaker 1890, Vol.1, pp. 458-9.)

3 See p.310 above.
in Victoria was 'one of great perplexity and entanglement.'
As a result, the Reform Bill finally passed into law in
1881, after the Assembly had twice gone to the country and
Berry had patched together a temporary coalition, was more
a defeat than a victory. The Council franchise was
extended to ratepayers and the tenure of members reduced,
but its powers - chief evil in Pearson's eyes - remained
unaltered, and the enlargement of the franchise gave it
more claim than ever to be a sort of co-ordinate House of
Commons. 2

Despite this failure, and his inability to obtain
any greater status in Berry's 1880-1881 government than
Minister without portfolio and salary, these years
immediately following the return of the 'Embassy' were not
barren of positive achievement. Before his self-imposed
five-year term as member of the University Council expired
in January 1880, Pearson had the satisfaction of moving
successfully for the admission of women to the privileges
of the University, confirming the earlier vote taken when

1 Times, Dec. 16, 1879, editorial.
2 Parnaby, op. cit., pp. 452, 454-5. See also Serle, Geoffrey,
'The Victorian Legislative Council, 1856-1950', Historical
his draft bill was under consideration\(^1\) - the satisfaction, 
too, of knowing that the Council had definitely decided to 
establish chairs of chemistry, engineering, and natural 
philosophy.\(^2\) His original draft bill, introduced in 
October 1878, failed to reach the second reading stage, 
but after two more attempts, and after chairing a Select 
Committee on the subject, he managed to have those sections 
of it relating to reform of the University Council and 
admission of women made the basis of a new Act.\(^3\) Although, 
as a result of the Select Committee, the Act did not embody 
his original recommendation that membership of the Council 
should be extended by the addition of two Government 
nominees and eight staff representatives, it did ensure that 
all members of Council subsequently elected should hold office

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\(^1\) Council Minutes, Oct. 20, 1879. It was touch and go though. Had the Vice-Chancellor not made a mistake in giving a casting vote in favour of an earlier motion by Dr. Bromby, the decision would have gone against admission, 5:4. But the Council would only allow the Vice-Chancellor to change his mind on condition that any other amendments might be moved and voted upon. Pearson then moved an amendment identical with Bromby's motion, except for a slight change in the date of admission. But although the Vice-Chancellor now voted against, two others also took the opportunity to change their minds, so that the final vote was 6:3 in favour. Rusden, having failed to obtain a Special Call of the Council before any voting at all took place, subsequently challenged the legality of the proceedings, but without success. (Minutes, Nov. 3, 1879.)

\(^2\) Blainey, p.100.

\(^3\) Act No. 691. An Act to amend the law relating to the University of Melbourne. June 7, 1881.
for five years only unless re-elected, that the Senate might, if it wished, elect three members from the staff, and that any Council member's tenure of office should be forfeited automatically by non-attendance at meetings, without permission, over a period of six months. In short it effectively wrote the doom of the kind of Council Barry had so long ruled. It also left no shadow of doubt as to the legal right of females to take any University examination.

Another cause for satisfaction during these years was the thorough reform of the Industrial and Reformatory Schools. It took time, and as with so many changes initiated by the Berry government, the methods employed were not entirely above suspicion, but one by one the crying evils were eliminated. The barbaric boys' reformatory at Jika, with its hideous 'dark' cells and revolting 'hospital', was closed, and the boys placed in an unwalled institution at Ballarat under the charge of an enlightened superintendent; the boarding out system was accelerated, new regulations were gazetted 'generally regulating the apprenticing, licensing

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1 See Report of the Board appointed to enquire into certain charges against Mr. H. F. Neal, late Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, V.P. Papers, 1880-1, v. 3, No. 77.

2 Ibid. For the state of Jika see esp. evidence of James Howlin Graves, and Pearson's cross-examination of Dr. Morrison, headmaster of Scotch College.
out and boarding out of children from Industrial Schools, and the powers of management formerly held by the Inspector General of Industrial and Reformatory Schools were placed in the hands of a Committee of Inspectors under Pearson's chairmanship. Events then moved smartly, and Pearson was able to report later with evident pleasure:

The first work the Committee took in hand was to board out all the children in the State Industrial Schools at Royal Park and at Geelong, to the number of 136 at the former establishment, and 39 at the latter: not including the new committals, who number about 30 in every month. Within seven weeks all these children were settled in satisfactory homes, and the large barracks were evacuated.

After 1881, however, he entered a lean period. With the break-up of the Liberal party the Assembly lapsed into its pre-1877 state, its members governed once again less by principles than by personal loyalties and ambitions. There was a widespread feeling, both in and out of the House that compromise was preferable in most cases to the conflicts which had marked the years of Berry's government, and coalitions became the rule. This was not the sort of political climate in which Pearson flourished, and jealousy

1. V.P. Papers, 1880-1, v. 3, No. 15.
2 V.P. Papers, 1880-1, v. 4, No. 101. Report dated June 15, 1881, and signed by Pearson, Gavin G. Brown, A. C. Brownless (the University Vice-Chancellor) and A. Woolley.
and distrust of his radicalism denied him a portfolio in the 1883-6 Service-Berry Ministry. As a result he had to continue depending for income on the £300 p.a. he received as an M.L.A. and on what he could earn as chief leading article writer for the Age. His contributions were much valued by the paper and accordingly paid for at the highest rates,¹ but it meant that to maintain his family in the manner to which he and his wife had been accustomed, his journalist's pen could never rest.

There were, it is true, other interests. He was appointed a Trustee of the Melbourne Public Library, Museum and National Gallery in August 1881, and in 1882 was elected with W. M. K. Vale as a representative of the Trustees on the provisional committee and later the permanent Council of the Melbourne Working Men's College. By the provisional committee he was elected Honorary Secretary, and in this capacity convened the public meeting in the Town Hall which initiated a general appeal for funds to raise the £5,000 which Francis Ormond demanded before

¹ Deakin, Alfred, Autobiographical Notes, p.52. 'By 1879 and after I received the highest rate paid except to Prof. Pearson.'
donating a like sum himself.\footnote{For accounts of the founding of the Melbourne Working Men's College see 'The Working Men's College' a typescript history, probably by W. E. Murphy, (Item 4 in a box of uncatalogued papers relating to the Melbourne Trades Hall and Literary Institute in the Mitchell Library - Uncat. MSS. Set 189); Carlton Advertiser May 27, 1882 (leader by W. E. Murphy on the Town Hall conference); the College Prospectus for 1887; Armstrong, E. La Touche, The Book of the Public Library, 1856-1906, p. 46; and Minute Books and other papers held in the Royal Melbourne Technical College archives.} Once, however, the necessary sum had been collected, and the site of the College decided upon - opposite the Library rather than adjacent to the Trades Hall - his interest waned, just as it did with respect to the Library once a determined campaign to open the Museums and Picture Galleries on Sundays had been defeated by Government intervention in 1883.\footnote{Pearson's leading part in this campaign is recorded in the Minutes of the Trustees, April 23, 30, May 4, 28, July 6, 1883. Thereafter, although he remained a Trustee until the end of 1890, he attended very few meetings.} It was always the case with him. While reform and change were in the air his zeal was second to none: when it came to a matter of routine management he stepped quietly out of the picture.

But there was no ready escape from the routine of journalism and politics, and as he felt his life becoming more and more given over to provincialities he became increasingly obsessed with the thought of the career he might have made, or still conceivably might make in England.
Sidgwick again attempted to attract him back to Cambridge in 1883 with an account of a revitalized History school, but an adequate stipend, all too necessary now, could not be found, and the plan had to fall through.\footnote{Memorials, p. 181.} His sense of frustration was perhaps as acute now as at any time in his life. He was denied power on the one hand, and opportunities for travel and scholarship on the other. There seemed no possibility of ever resuming the old 'Haverhill' life, although he still retained possession of the farm, nor of returning to England permanently with his family. At the conclusion of a letter written in July 1883 to the Cambridge Librarian, Henry Bradshaw, primarily on a question of scholarship which the latter had raised, he took the opportunity to unburden himself of an inner distress which would no doubt have been carefully hidden from Melbourne associates:

I bitterly regret that I have no leisure to make the third edition of my Maps which is now coming out more perfect. I can only correct a few misprints. It was among my dreams to write a long paper working out this theory of river names ... However I am handed over to journalism and Colonial politics, and must abide by the fate which has been of my own making.

How I wish I could come over again and look up my Cambridge friends. It was quite a pleasure to see your name again even though you taxed me with not having looked at the passage I referred to. I dare say
Sidgwick may have told you that Mrs. Pearson is in England just now; partly to see her family, and partly for the health of our youngest child. I find it more and more difficult to get away from work.

I see Sidgwick has just brought out an opus magnum on Political Economy. I hope to read it during the next month. Where I have glanced it seems very good. How is Furnivall getting on? I do so little more literary work now, that I do not often see his name: but I gather from occasional notices that he is still equal to a free fight.

I wish you would come out here, and lecture on libraries. I have just been beaten in a desperate attempt to open our public library on Sunday. Our Puritanism is that of the English and Scotch lower classes.²

By 1885 he could stand Victoria no longer and set off alone for England, as his wife had done in 1883. Sidgwick met him there and noted in his diary:

Spent the night at Bryce's; met Lord Acton... Had a pleasant talk to Bryce about his book on the United States. I think it ought to be the book of the season next year... C. H. Pearson was there, believing in Australia as much as ever, but personally much disposed to return to England, if the mother-country would make him a good offer.³

Dilke did, as it happened, offer him a local government Inspectorship but he was not yet prepared to relinquish Australia for this. An article he wrote at this time for Macmillan's Magazine advising Englishmen with small fixed

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1 A pioneer editor of the New English Dictionary, founder of the Early English Text Society etc. Pearson probably came to know him through their mutual interest in the London Working Men's College.

2 Bradshaw papers, Cambridge University Library. Pearson to Bradshaw, July 14, 1883.

3 Entry for March 7, 1885. Memoir, p. 404.
incomes to emigrate to Australia rather than attempt to live in cheap comfort on the Continent reads very much like a rationalization of his own decision to return to Victoria. Once again he sounded the theme which had earlier drawn him into public life - the colonial 'sense of manifest destiny.' Now that he had been able to refresh his memory of the comparative rigidity of English society, with its 'highly organised institutions and complicated interests' the potentialities and actual achievements of Victoria and her sister colonies seem to have struck him with renewed force. He had been expecting too much too soon, and had forgotten how much more slowly reforms came in England. Perhaps, when he returned, he might find better scope for his energies, and parliament might once again return to consider larger issues. He was clearly still hopeful for his High School scheme and excited by the recent events in New Guinea and the plans of France to send some 10,000-15,000 recidivists to New Caledonia.

Now it seems as if we were being drawn suddenly into the vortex of European politics, and constrained to interest ourselves in German plans of colonization and Russian designs upon India.

1 'A Hint to People with Modest Means', Macmillan's Magazine, June 1885, pp.112-118.

2 In this same year, 1885, he made an attempt to avert these plans with a strongly-worded contribution to a French journal - 'L'Australie dans ses rapports avec la France et l'Allemagne' The pages of the article are preserved in the Mitchell Library, but the name of the journal is not given.
Throughout the article he wrote as a Victorian rather than as an Englishman and his concluding words would surely have met with the warm approval of the Australian Natives Association.

...though it is not a matter of great moment to Australians, whether the British tourist condemns or patronises them from the observation of six weeks in the leading clubs, half a dozen dinner parties, and two or three picnics in the bush, it may interfere a little with the happiness of intending colonists, if they carry a sense of magnificent superiority into their new homes.

In February of the following year, after Deakin had agreed with Gillies to form another coalition, Pearson was offered the long-coveted Education portfolio. Although shortly before he had taken the lead, within the Liberal caucus, in opposing the formation of a new coalition, preferring rather that the Liberals should go to the country on a strict party platform, he accepted the offer to the accompaniment of a good deal of barracking.¹ Foremost amongst the barrackers was his old Castlemaine running mate, J. B. Patterson, a former Castlemaine slaughterman endowed with what Deakin called a 'dauntless resolve to rise.'²

Ever since the formation of Berry's 1880 Ministry there had been a bitter enmity between the two men, which an utter

¹ *Age*, Jan. 20, 1886, 5d. 'The Ministerial Crisis: Liberal Caucus.'

² *Victorian Politics*, p.30.
"S'DEATH!"

CASTLEMAINE SLAUGHTERER.—“NOW, THEN, BRING OUT YOUR MINISTRIES.”
dissimilarity in appearance, personality and attainments only helped to keep alive. Pearson had then been convinced that his fellow member had used underhand methods to prevent him receiving a portfolio (or the Agency General which had been offered as an alternative). At the next general election in 1883 he had severed his connection with Castlemaine, standing instead for the East Bourke Boroughs, a constituency stretching out from the North Western suburbs of Melbourne, and when, immediately after this election Berry had been negotiating his coalition with Service, Pearson had let it be known that if Patterson were chosen while he were left out he would regard it as a personal insult. Patterson had not been chosen and in 1886 was again denied office after a desperate attempt to form a Ministry of his own. He now made no secret of his feelings for his sometime 'worthy colleague' and at a public meeting near Castlemaine revenged himself as best he could.

Mr. Patterson was very amusing in his remarks upon Professor Pearson, who, he said, would be quite willing to go north, [i.e. join Gillies] if the dollars lay that way. (Laughter) He referred to

1 Memorials, p. 222.
2 Mt. Alexander Mail, Feb. 14, 1880.
the Professor as the funniest man in Parliament. A few days ago he (the Professor) laid down with great profundity of principle party lines, clear and well-defined... Since his retirement he had never been missed by his old constituency. (Laughter.) And he could boast that he had never made an enemy nor a single friend.¹

Although the Mt. Alexander Mail had stated in 1883 at the time Pearson severed his connection with Castlemaine, that he had 'steadily grown in popularity with the constituency'² much of this was undoubtedly true. Pearson later admitted in a letter to Deakin that had he been 'absolutely independent' he would have preferred not to take office³ and it was true enough that he did not make many close friends in Victoria.⁴

Fortunately he continued to hold the respect of the teachers, and the Australasian Schoolmaster welcomed his appointment.

Of all our politicians, he knows most about the Education Department, and we are not surprised that he should have been guilty of a little inconsistency in accepting office after denouncing the coalition, when suddenly he saw an opportunity of carrying his views into effect. For he has views.⁵

¹ Mount Alexander Mail, Feb. 20, 1886.
³ Letter of August 16, 1892. (Deakin papers in custody of Professor J. A. La Nauze, Melbourne University.)
⁴ Mrs. Pearson to Deakin, May 29, 1900.
The journal went on to express the hope that his much-maligned Royal Commission Report had not after all found its way into the waste-paper basket but rather into a pigeon hole, and that the proposals he had then advanced might now be put into effect.

We venture to think, and our opinion is shared by competent authorities, that the work was admirably done, and that the report was and is very valuable. The journal's hopes were not disappointed. During the four and a half years he was in office (a longer period than any previous Minister had held the portfolio) Pearson persuaded the Government to found 200 scholarships to assist able children through a secondary education, directed the compilation of new Readers 'specially adapted to the requirements and circumstances of Australian children,' saw to the erection of the first wings of the new Teachers' Training College on that corner of the University grounds which he had earlier proposed as a suitable site, encouraged local self-help by allotting annually to each Board of Advice a certain sum to be spent on repairs or improvements (such as tree-planting), and above all fostered technical education. He sanctioned a series of lectures to teachers on 'the Kindergarten system of instruction' by a Mrs. Goulden, a 'highly recommended expert', and was pleased to note in his final Annual Report that the system was 'slowly but surely
growing in favour, many teachers recognizing in it some of the earliest stages and effects of technical instruction. He also arranged for lectures on Cookery to some 300-400 girls in Melbourne, and lectures on the teaching of Agricultural Science by the Mr. Wallace who had shown him over the Dookie experimental farm in 1877. He introduced elementary science lessons, approved the spending of large sums on the erection of chemical, biological and mechanical laboratories at Melbourne University, and even larger sums to aid in the establishment of the Melbourne Working Men's College (which was at last opened in 1887) the Gordon Technical College in Geelong, and Schools of Arts in Sale and Kyneton. The sum granted to non-departmental technical institutions rose from £11,098 in 1887/8 to £33,804 in 1889/90.

His remarks at the opening of the Gordon Technical College indicate that this notable stress on technical education was prompted by the most far-sighted view of Victoria's needs. Still retaining, though not openly alluding to his Free Trade principles, he warned his audience that sooner or later Victorians would have to think in terms of competing with the cheap-labour countries to the north, and that the only way they could do so without sacrificing their living standards would be by 'putting brains at their fingers' ends.'

The Age report has 'business' instead of 'brains' but the editorial commenting on the speech uses the latter word, which is clearly the correct one.
All the processes of manufacture and of all the industries should be learnt in order that we could compete with others... The day was coming when the manufacturer and the artisan would require to be as highly educated as the student, whether of medicine or of law. The student and the working man would, in fact, have to work together, for (in) these days of industrial difficulties the farmers would have to seek the student for an indication of soil, and so in other branches of labor.¹

Not all his policies, however, met with general approval. He had announced in 1877, not long after beginning his Royal Commission enquiries, that he considered it unlikely that the 'results' system could be dispensed with entirely² and for the first three years he was in office he held stubbornly to this point of view, in the face of persistent agitation by the Teachers' Association.³ Only after the most exhaustive enquiries in the neighbouring colonies of N.S.W. and S.A. (where the system had been abolished) and the sending out of an elaborate questionnaire to all inspectors and leading headmasters did he decide in favour of abolition rather than

¹ Age, Nov. 15, 1887, 5g.
² Ibid, July 18, 1877, 2g.
³ Within two months of taking office he received a deputation on the matter appointed by 'the largest and most unanimous conference of teachers that has ever been brought together in Victoria.' Australasian Schoolmaster, March 1886, p.329.
He was equally stubborn in refusing to redress the manifest grievance of a group of former pupil teachers, who, because they commenced their training at the Teachers' College immediately before the 1883 Public Service Act took effect, were actually being paid less than contemporaries who had 'twice failed to qualify for admission to the Central College' and had been appointed straight to country schools 'on their licences' - the lowest qualification. In spite of repeated representations he refused to ask the Treasurer to place a special sum on the Estimates, and would only give the trainees the cold comfort that 'though some of the licensed teachers seemed now to be in a better position, in 10 or 20 years the case would be reversed.'² In this matter, and in his reluctance to do away entirely with 'payment by results', and in his reduction of the minimum school leaving age from 15 to 13 'specially with the object of enabling children at a sufficiently early age to

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1 The answers to this questionnaire provide an excellent commentary on the working of the system. Departmental archives, 1889, Sp. Bundle 822A, 89/19252, 89/20351 etc. For Pearson's views see V. P. Debates, 43/669-70, and Education Department Report, 1890. pp. xxxix-xl.

begin learning a trade,\(^1\) - even in his refusal to recommend an increase in the University grant to provide for a salaried Vice-Chancellor - he was clearly reasoning along English liberal lines.\(^2\) Although, after making a thorough study of education in Ontario, Canada, he was now convinced that that Province's system of local control achieved results greatly inferior to those obtained in Victoria, the children being worse taught, the teachers scandalously underpaid, and poor districts unjustly penalised,\(^3\) he was still equally convinced that Government expenditure on the centralized Victorian system needed careful watching if the taxpayers were to be sure of obtaining the best value for their money. It was an axiom with him that the total interest of the community must always take precedence over sectional interests, whether of teachers or taught. This, however, is to explain, not necessarily to defend his particular decisions. The interests of the general public were certainly not best served by his treatment of the pupil teachers, for their successors simply refused to enter the new Training College

\(^1\) Though he coupled this with an increase in the minimum compulsory attendance from 30 to 40 days in a quarter 'so as to cause children to arrive sooner at the necessary standard of education...!' Education Department Report, 1890, p.xiv.

\(^2\) His settled convictions, in the case of the Vice Chancellor, being reinforced by his earlier experiences as a lecturer. See pp. 206-7 above.

in the expected numbers.¹

The effect of all these decisions and policies on public opinion was quite trifling, however, when compared with the effect of his refusal to permit undenominational Bible instruction in school hours. The Eighties were years of great material prosperity, and the community generally, not having to take so much care now over making ends meet, forsook the old economic and constitutional issues of the 60's and 70's for acrimonious debates on religious questions - preservation of the Sabbath, reform of the divorce laws, the nature of miracles, the doctrine of the Atonement, and above all study of the Bible in State schools. The last-named issue was by no means new, the recently-formed National Scripture Education League having simply taken up the work of the old Bible in State Schools League, but it was in 1889 that it came to a head.

On June 11, 1889, Pearson introduced for the third time an Education Law Further Amendment Bill which he had failed to carry through Parliament in 1886 and 1887. Between July 16 and July 23 petitions flooded into the House praying that provision should be made in the bill for the introduction into the State schools curriculum of the

¹ Education Department Report, 1890, p. xxxv.
Irish National Scripture lesson books then in use in the State schools of New South Wales, and for the restoration of passages referring to Christianity which had been excised from the Nelson series of readers in 1876, under the direction of Mr. Ramsay, then Minister of Public Instruction.1

On July 25, Mr. Anderson, the parliamentary spokesman of the National Scripture Education League, moved that the following new clause be added to the bill before the House:

One-fifth of the number of the persons whose names for the time being are on the citizens' roll of any city, or the burgess' roll of any town or borough, or the voters' roll of any municipality, may petition the Governor in Council to cause a poll to be taken to determine whether or not the Irish National Scripture lesson books shall be used in the curriculum of the State school or schools situated in such city, town, borough, or municipality.2

There is no question that these were the best books then available, if scriptural instruction were to be introduced. They had been compiled originally under joint Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian patronage. The extracts were well-chosen and substantial. There were intelligent footnotes explaining historical references, social customs, etc.,

1 The Daily Telegraph succeeded in giving a great many Victorians the notion that Pearson had been responsible for these excisions. (See report of a speech by Mr. Andrew Harper, D.T. Mar. 22, 1889, and Harper's subsequent charge that he had been misreported, D.T. Mar. 23, p.6). The facts of the matter are given by G. W. Brown in reply to Q. 593 by the Rogers-Templeton Commission. A full list of the excisions is given in Votes and Proc. of the Leg. Council, 1879-80, A 13.

2 V. P. Debates 60/724.
and parallel passages, often from both the New and Old Testaments, showing different references to the same subject. The lists of words, if well explained by teachers, could also make for the more intelligent reading of the Scriptures. Archbishop Whately had very likely been right when he suggested that the Irish children who studied these books, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, knew the Bible better than their Protestant fellows in England. The National Scripture Education League was also no doubt right in supposing that a worthwhile knowledge of the Bible could only come to the bulk of Victorian children through regular instruction in the State schools by experienced school teachers.

The whole issue produced a very complex reaction in Pearson. As Minister of Public Instruction he was well aware that some two thirds of Catholic children, or approximately 20,000 still attended Victorian State schools. To preserve the national character of the schools he was desperately anxious to retain these children, and for this reason alone was unwilling to follow New South Wales, where the Roman Catholic school system was much more developed and the introduction of the Scripture Lessons
less likely to change the status quo.¹ He was also aware as a practical politician that something like 600 of the State's school teachers were Roman Catholics, that a recent conference of State school teachers had refused to receive a delegation from the National Scripture Education League, that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy in Ireland had long ago repudiated the Irish National Scripture Lessons, and that most members of the Victorian Assembly were now persuaded that the safest course on the secular provisions of the Education Act was inaction.

But the issue touched him on a deeper level than this. Like many another liberal of his and the following generation, he had become progressively less sure about the traditional Christian doctrines. He was still as convinced as he had been in the 1850's that science could neither prove nor disprove fundamental religious truths, and in a letter to Canon Robert Potter arising from a discussion of Mrs. Humphrey Ward's Robert Elsmere stated that he held the doctrine of the

¹ As late as 1900 the number of Religious teaching in Victorian Roman Catholic schools was only half the number teaching in equivalent schools in N.S.W. - 786 as to 2004. Fogarty, T. P., The Principles, Origin and Development of Catholic Education in Australia (Ph.D. thesis in Melb. Uni. library) vol. II, p. 387.
Incarnation

... as the only way of understanding the mystery of the Universe. A God who should be law without sympathy and will, would be to me an impossible and immoral conception.¹

Yet he craved more certainty.

Where I am despondent - you would, I think, say unduly despondent - is that I have not found any one who answers the theological doubts of the age satisfactorily. The old forms are dying out, and in place of some new thought we are treated to ingenious compromises or mediaeval revivals. I speak, however, as one of the unlearned in these matters. Still, I think my difficulty is one that is very commonly felt.

Although still a regular reader of the Bible, he had long before accepted, and defended, Jowett's views on biblical inspiration as expressed in Essays and Reviews, and flatly disbelieved in eternal damnation. From his point of view, Bible reading by children, especially of the Old Testament, could be positively harmful unless carefully and critically guided. For this reason he did not send his own children to Sunday School, and when personally instructing them confined himself to the New Testament.² His position here was stated quite clearly in the pamphlet he had written on the Ontario school system:

Personally, I would never allow my own children to be taught an emasculated theology by a careless or unbelieving instructor.... Still, if I found that the

¹ Memorials, p. 236.
clergy of all denominations could really unite in some moderate proposal, and would reward the State for accepting it by using their whole influence in support of the National School System, I should certainly be prepared to make a small concession in exchange for a great good.¹

It was a clever condition, well calculated to make members of the various clerical deputations who came to see him grind their teeth, but he meant it seriously, and was not without sympathy for their plight. He certainly felt the liberal appeal of the local option argument, but feared an increase in sectarian feeling as a result of the repeated campaigns, and instinctively recoiled from the inevitable discomfiture of minorities. Even more did he appreciate the argument of Matthew Arnold, himself no orthodox believer, that regular and intelligent Bible study could enrich and elevate the cultural life of a nation. Yet he was not persuaded that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages, and firmly rejected the commonly expressed view that absence of such study would lead to the dissolution of civilised society. To Canon Potter he wrote on this point:

You say that if a portion of society becomes dissolute, it will die out. Yes, if it carries debauchery to an extreme; but I assume a world in which the tone will be laxity tempered by common sense and good taste.²

¹ The Ontario School System, p. 2.
² Memorials, p. 236.
There was a strong element of determinism in his view of the problem. He saw the tide of faith drawing inexorably out.

I do not believe in the magical efficacy of religious precepts painted up on the wall, of a single prayer gabbled over at school opening, or even of Bible lessons ... which have been so chosen as to exclude everything that is distinctive in faith.¹

Whatever the shortcomings of strictly secular education, he could see no 'half-way house' between it and denominational education.²

He might have made one of his best speeches in opposing Anderson's motion, but the tone of the attacks recently made on him had not disposed him to sustained eloquence, or to a baring of his private convictions, and he made instead the speech of an impatient politician who knows where he is going and is not over-scrupulous how he gets there. His political master-stroke was a 'revelation', made with a 'feeling of profound humiliation,' that the chief sponsor of the Irish National Scripture Lessons, the Anglican Archbishop Whately, had told Nassau Senior, in a conversation reported by the latter and revised by himself, that the Lessons had proved an invaluable means of proselytizing Irish Catholics.

¹ The Ontario School System, p.2.
If Anderson's local option proposal on the use of the Irish Lessons ever did have a chance of passing, this piece of information certainly doomed it to failure. The Australian Catholic Truth Society was so delighted with the speech that it published it entire in pamphlet form, with bold sectional headings of its own devising.

Not surprisingly the speech inaugurated a bitter spate of pamphlets. On the whole it was a miserable controversy, with twisted quotations, misrepresentation, and more than a little cheap abuse. The one controversialist who came out of it creditably was Andrew Harper, an assistant master under Pearson during the early years of the Presbyterian Ladies' College, and his successor as headmaster. Not only did Harper put the general case for Bible instruction in State Schools with skill and dignity, but he went on to demonstrate quite convincingly a number of serious scholarly errors Pearson had made in the course of his Whately 'revelation.' He showed that Whately had not revised the particular conversation quoted by Pearson, as the latter had claimed; that the conversation Whately had revised contained two additional and crucial sentences showing

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that he had openly predicted at the beginning that the Lessons would favour Protestantism and that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin had then flatly disagreed with him; that a Presbyterian, Dr. Carlile, and not Whately, had been principally responsible for preparing the Irish National lessons; that the Lessons had been continued in use until at least 1865 and that Whately, consequently, had not resigned from the National Education Board in 1853 in protest against their withdrawal (again as stated by Pearson.)

Although Harper did not destroy Pearson's main contention, and the League's campaign met with such little success in the Assembly that there was barely a quorum when the vote was finally taken, the exposure of these errors must rather have offset the kudos of the honorary LL.D. recently conferred on Pearson by the University of St. Andrews. There seems no reason to suspect deliberate duplicity on his part. With regard to the 'conversation' he had obviously quoted from Miss Whately's Life of her father, probably because he had it on the shelves, and had not bothered to check the words in Senior's Conversations, where they alone had Whately's own authority.¹

The other mistakes presumably resulted from a similar carelessness. But the parade of scholarly learning in making the revelation, and the dramatic effect intended, quite justified Harper's censure.

There are signs throughout this controversy that he was feeling the strain of politics. He had rarely enjoyed good health, and was now nearly sixty. In a portrait taken about this time the large head is held erect on the small drooping shoulders, and a sort of determination 'never to submit or yield' is indelibly stamped on the features. More here than in the earlier portraits can one sense the Puritan lineage of the man. But the signs of age are unmistakeable, and one can imagine a certain testiness in dealing with those with whom he disagreed. At any rate this was the last important colonial issue in which he took a central part, and after the passage of the Education Law Amendment Bill, his principal work in Victoria was finished. The Gillies-Deakin coalition resigned office on November 5, 1890, and he did not stand at the elections held early in 1892.

This, however, is not to say that he ceased to think, or to influence. Early in 1890 he wrote to Bryce congratulating him on his marriage (at the age of 52) and answering a query on Federation.
A photograph taken in later years.
To ask me about Federation is to turn the tap on in a way that may be rather dangerous for your own peace.

The idea of a few Englishmen that the Australians wish to be represented in the Imperial Parliament and would consent to surrender some of their own self-government in return is ridiculous in the extreme. We cannot afford to send our best men to England; if they went, they would be out of touch with us in a couple of years. A quick succession of first-rate Agents General could not easily be managed: and for the colonies to be represented by wealthy absentees, like Sir Samuel Wilson and Mr. Henniker Heaton, would be the first step to separation. Practically we must remain as we are with I think only two possible changes (1) Federation under a Governor General, who should be allowed a certain initiative in foreign policy, such as the Governors of India enjoyed;¹ and (2) occasional conferences between special delegates from our Colonies and the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

My belief is that the connection of England and Australia rests, predominantly, on motives of self-interest, which neither community thoroughly appreciates for the moment. Prevost Paradot said long ago that either England or Australia was bound to be the dominant power in Southern Asia. Australia of course cannot be for a century to come, and meanwhile it is matter of life and death to us that no power except England should hold India and Singapore, and matter of deep concern to England that in case of an Indian mutiny or invasion of India, Australia should not be neutral like the United States, its Irishmen sympathising with the enemies of Great Britain, but the active ally and the recruiting ground of England.

¹ His friend Governor Musgrave had fought for this power in Queensland in 1888. See McNaughtan, I.D. in Greenwood, Gordon (ed.) Australia: a Social and Political History (Sydney, 1955) p.130.
Neither are our powers of giving aid altogether despicable. We have a larger male population in proportion to our numbers than any European State and if we raised men on the German or French system could raise 140,000 to the million; 400,000, or 560,000 altogether. I think we should raise 100,000 at least in the event of an European war; and that out of these we could spare half after the first alarm was over for service in India. Where could England recruit such another corps and what would not be the moral effect of such a corps d'armée emerging so to speak from the Southern Seas and disembarking at Calcutta or Bombay?

What we really need, I think, is only that England should recognise these common interests. The tone of the Colonial Office is sometimes formal, and sometimes courteous and sometimes even cordial, but generally gives the impression that English Statesmen think they are giving us something for which they get no return. Rely upon it you would soon discover how the imagination of Europe was impressed if Australia separated from you in all quietness and good will. We are the reserve of your offensive power; only to be used in the last moment, but capable of being used then with tremendous force.

As for naval and military co-operation, we shall always prefer to have our own forces under native officers; but we in Victoria are not averse to provisional schemes under which we pay our part towards the maintenance of a British flotilla. I think, however, that arrangements will not be repeated.

From December 1889 to August 1892, when he finally left the colony, he contributed a series of 24 letters to the newly-founded London Speaker at the invitation of the editor.

1 In the Great War 417,000 Australian men enlisted for service, 329,000 serving overseas. Shaw, A. G. L., The Story of Australia (London 1955) p.221.

2 Bryce papers, Bodleian. Pearson to Bryce, March 12, 1890.
Sir T. Wemyss Reid. These show him to have remained until his departure intensely interested in the developments taking place around him - the revived efforts to achieve Federation, the drift of Victoria towards depression, and above all the changing character and power of the working classes. These were portents of the new Australia he had been labouring to build, and they were not entirely reassuring. He viewed with increasing distrust the expansion of the civil service and its political influence through the 'Cleons of the Assembly' who were always ready, when short of a popular cry, to propose an increase in the wages of civil servants. The railway service in particular came in for censure, its 'fatal blot' being that the 'Commissioners are not allowed to engage the best men they can find, or to dismiss lazy and insubordinate hands, or to pay the market rate of wages.' He would always remain a democrat, and he sympathized with trade unions up to a point, but he had an instinctive dislike of mass movements, and anything tending to civil disorder or restriction of individual freedom. He did not hesitate to blame the ship-


2 Speaker, II, p. 214.
owners for the commencement of the maritime strike, but thoroughly supported Deakin in calling out troops to preserve order - had probably urged him to do so - and described Higinbotham's gift of £50 to the strike fund and a promise of £10 a week until the employers agreed to a conference as 'a wrong-headed act by a man of generous impulses.'

He thought the imposition of heavy entrance fees by Unions 'indefensible' but was apprehensive of the power they would enjoy when fees were lowered. Yet after the strike in Victoria was over his old confidence in Victorian working men revived and he expressed the belief that generally they were 'intelligent and temperate enough to be trusted with even more political power than they possess.'

Even the remarkable Labour victory in New South Wales in June 1891, which took him by surprise, did not shake this confidence, though it gave rise to a new fear that the interests of the class of small farmers, called into being by Liberal legislation, might be prejudiced by the imposition, under Labour pressure, of an indiscriminate land tax or an insistence on the eight-hour working day for labourers.

1 Ibid, II, p. 579.
engaged in harvesting.\textsuperscript{1} Altogether he suspected that the events of 1890-91 would lead, out of sheer expediency, to 'some great experiment in the direction of State Socialism,'\textsuperscript{2} Had, in his opinion, the State owned the Newcastle coalfields and the Melbourne gasworks the strike would have been averted.

These, and many other impressions and speculations which had been in his mind for greater or less periods of time, all found their way into the book which he wrote during the months of 1891 and early 1892. This was a last desperate attempt to fulfil something of the brilliant promise of his Oxford years. He had served his turn as the practical politician: now it was the turn of the scholar, and the prophet. For he set out with the uninhibited aim of predicting the not so distant future of the world. Ever since his Oxford days he had played with prediction, and on his extensive travels, especially during and after his American visit in 1869, had kept a careful note of statistics, happenings and legislation which seemed to indicate future trends. He had noted the rapid filling up of the United States, the universal growth of large cities, notably in

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{1} Speaker, Vol. V, pp. 78-80.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{2} Ibid, Vol. II, pp. 579-80.}
Australia, the remarkable industry of the Chinese in California and Melbourne, in which latter place they had virtually obtained a monopoly of the furniture-making trade, the more rapid rate of increase of American negroes, South African natives and South and Central American Indians and mixed bloods over whites living in their midst, and above all the remarkable extent to which the State had come to interfere in the lives of its citizens in the British self-governing colonies of Australia and New Zealand.

On the basis of his observations he made two main conclusions: that the so-called 'higher races of men, or those which are held to have attained the highest forms of civilisation' would soon find themselves 'elbowed and hustled and perhaps even thrust aside' by Asian, African and Central and South American peoples whom they had come to look on as 'servile'; and that in their own native lands in the temperate zones there would be less and less scope for initiative, discovery and the production of great art. The children would be educated to a standard pattern in State schools, the youths would be conscripted for compulsory periods of training in large standing armies, and a great many of the adults would live and work in huge, cramped, egalitarian, hygienic cities.
Much of this was simply de Tocqueville and J. S. Mill carried on a stage further, in the light of more recent social developments in the newest of the self-governing countries, Pearson does, however, have a strong claim to be the first English writer of the later Nineteenth century to predict, with any degree of elaboration, the rise of the non-white peoples of the world, not only to self-governing status, but, after adopting European industrial and military techniques, to a power status equivalent to that of their sometime overlords. The whole book, however, was written with conviction, and in many places with an extraordinary intensity derived partly, perhaps, from the fact that he felt himself 'under sentence of death' while at work on the latter stages, but more from his awareness that he had given a great deal of his own energy to the creation of this coming world which he found in so many of its aspects appalling.

His whole life, in fact, had been a paradox. He had not been a democrat by instinct but by conviction, and even then the conviction had come in the first instance through association with a rural community of small farmers, shop-keepers and bush labourers - not with urban trade unionists. It was for this reason that he had always been so eager to build up a sturdy, independent yeomanry and in
1885 had attempted to persuade men of modest independent means to emigrate. Although of Puritan stock, and with a personal craving for religious certainty, no man had been more prominent than he in Victoria in upholding the principle of strict secular instruction. He was himself a thorough-going individualist yet he had been the first, perhaps, in Australia, to elaborate the concept of a welfare State on a public platform, and had devoted himself to the extension of a State system of education which would necessarily, even with the safeguards he had tried to introduce, lead to a greater standardization of opinion and manners. Although for long a searcher after that all-round cultivation recommended by Goethe, and convinced at times, that the world might well be lost for art's sake, he had chosen to spend half his life in a country in which, as he had written in 1885, 'art is really unknown, and where it would be much better for the popular taste if the art collections that exist had never been formed.' Although a mediaeval scholar, a more than competent linguist in French, German, Russian and Norwegian (he read Ibsen in the original before Ibsenism became popular in England) and a devotee of English poetry, he

had spent a very large part of his time in later years sitting through tedious debates and writing endless newspaper articles.

Yet, and this is vital to an assessment of his life, he did not reject the validity of his Victorian career at its conclusion. English liberals, he reiterated in the book, had no option but to carry on with their reforms, with their search for religious truth, with the spread of European law, and hygiene, and industry to the 'lower' races, even though in doing so they were creating a world which they might find unpalatable. It was a view he had espoused forty years before in the Oxford Union. Either the educated and well-to-do undertook to improve the condition of the masses, or England enjoyed a continental type revolution. Sooner or later the changes would come: it was the function of liberals, as Tocqueville had suggested, to see that they came in as orderly and humane a way as possible. They could never hope to put the clock back.

A statesman who should try to revert to the old order, because he considered the uniform routine of our State

1 See p. 33 above.
2 Tocqueville, Alexis de, Democracy in America (World's Classics edn.) p. 10.
Schools destructive of originality, would soon find that he had to contend with very powerful interests.  

The best that the European powers who were casting rapacious eyes on Africa could hope for in the long run, was that 'European ideas shall one day be paramount from the Red Sea to the Atlantic.' It was this attitude which had controlled his whole colonial career. Men must have the right to govern themselves, but it is essential that they should have a free education system enabling them to do so without disaster. It was inevitable that such a system should be highly centralised, but it might be modified to allow as much play as possible for individual judgment and responsibility. And so on.

But the pain remained. The 'age of reason or of a sublimated humanity' would come, with its 'well-ordered polities, security to labour, education, freedom from gross superstitions, improved health and longer life', but the world would be

... left without deep convictions or enthusiasm, without the regenerating influence of the ardour for political reform and the fervour of pious faith which have quickened men for centuries past.


as nothing else has quickened them, with a passion purifying the soul.¹

For men like himself, if not for the majority, such a world had little attraction.

The Medea of Corneille, face to face with supreme misfortune, was able to say that there at least remained to her herself. But that which is the saving hope of a strong character is the denial of hope to a generation of weak men. What is a society that has no purpose beyond supplying the day's needs, and amusing the day's vacuity, to do with the terrible burden of personality? It is doomed to live on into the ages, with all that the best-ordered polity can secure it, with all inherited treasures of beauty, with a faith in science that is perpetually mocked by weaker and weaker results, and with no spiritual sense to understand what surrounds it, with the mind's vision growing dim, with the apprehension of art dwarfed to taking comfort in bric-à-brac, with no hope or suggestion of sight beyond the grave.

In the old age of the plant the roots continue to thicken out and deepen down, when there is neither blossom nor fruit. ... Yet there seems no reason why men of this kind should not perpetuate the race, increasing and multiplying, till every rood of earth maintains its man, and the savour of vacant lives will go up to God from every home.²

He wrote feverishly, throwing into the book an extraordinary, though not entirely justified, wealth of allusion. When he completed it he was seriously unwell, and suffering financially from the effects of the depression. His plan

¹ Ibid p. 355.
HARVEST

had been to take the manuscript to England, find a publisher, and make a last home in the land of his birth. But the depression meant that he could neither sell nor let the house in which he had been foolish enough to invest heavily, and in his desperation he wrote to Bryce asking him whether he could attempt to place the manuscript. Bryce obliged, and Macmillan undertook publication.\(^1\)

By August 1892 he had been unable to throw off a 'troublesome cough'\(^2\) and was more or less compelled on medical advice to leave Victoria for a sea voyage, little though he could afford to do so. He was to go first to Colombo, where his family would join him, and proceed to Europe. It was not a cheerful departure. The colony, with whose fortunes his own had been locked for so long had never seemed in worse plight, while he personally was leaving some £3000 of investments behind him with little hope of ever realizing £2000 of them.\(^3\) Although he was given a dinner and a farewell address with George Higginbotham's name appropriately heading the subscribed signatures, he felt that few Victorians were much concerned.

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1 Bryce papers. Letters from Pearson to Bryce of March 21, and June 20, 1892.
2 Pearson to Deakin, July 31, 1892.
3 Letter to Deakin.
Out at sea, however, he eagerly read and replied to a letter from Deakin.

Largs Bay, August 16/92.

My dear Deakin

I must thank you very much for your letter. Between illness and money losses I have been in a state of great depression for months past; and though the kindness of my friends at my leaving was very great, every farewell left me a little sadder. In such a state one is very much cheered to get the assurance that one will be remembered for oneself, and a little also for one's work. Had I been absolutely independent I should have preferred not to take office; but I am now very glad I did, and think I owe something to its training. It has also brought me into much more cordial relations with several men than I could otherwise have had. You perhaps do not belong to this category; as we were friends from the first. I have followed your career all along with great interest; and shall continue to watch it closely as long as I live. It is no flattery to say, that I think you are the only man in politics under fifty years of age from whom the country has anything to hope: the only man who has ideas as well as eloquence and administrative ability. Still, I sincerely trust, that you will stay at the bar long enough to make a moderate competence, before you take a leading position again. There is nothing to risk, for you can command the highest place in Parliament whenever you wish for it. I will write to you from time to time from England, and will give you my views of men and books. I shall hope for an exchange.

Ever sincerely your's

Charles H. Pearson.

Not long after his arrival in England, the Victorian premier Shiels, under pressure from Syme, Deakin and Gillies,
offered him what he was given to understand was the permanent position of Secretary to the Agent-General, at a salary of £850 p.a. This was very different from the £2,550 p.a. he would have received had there been men in power able and willing to fulfil the promise made long before in 1881 to appoint him to the Agent-Generalship itself as soon as the opportunity came, but although this was also vacant he was now in no position to refuse the lesser office. Unfortunately, however, his old bête noir Patterson almost immediately afterwards achieved 'the great object of his ambition' by replacing Shiels as Premier. In his speech preceding the vote of no-confidence, Patterson made much of the unjustified expense of Pearson's appointment, and by May 19, 1893, the latter had received the first of a series of threats to superannuate him. On December 21, 1893, after another such threat, he wrote to Deakin:

I have not yet had the official notice that I am superannuated, but no doubt it is on its way, and I have cleared my room in anticipation. P's statement that I do no work and that he never sees my name to a letter is extravagantly false.

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1 V.P. Papers, 1893, Vol. I, No. 5 (Blue Book) p. 34.
2 V.P. Papers, 1895-6, Vol. II, No. 2 (Blue Book) p. 35. (Gillies' salary as Agent General in 1894.)
The work at the Office varies very much, and there are idle days, but during April, May, and June, I used to be rushed by alarmed investors in Australian securities, and by solicitors, who came to consult me about our Laws. During August and September I ran the Office, Sir A. Clarke being away.¹

During this period he had taken almost the entire responsibility for floating a difficult £2M. conversion loan (although it should be added that the extraordinary rapidity with which it was filled was criticized at the time)² and he insisted that the fact must have been well-known to Patterson, because he had signed all the letters to him from the Agent-General. However it was not Patterson's antagonism which distressed him most.

He behaved abominably in 1880-1, but since then he has had no great cause to love me. Other men, from whom I had no reason to expect it, have been far more hostile and disingenuous. If I ever wasted time in regretting the past I should deeply regret the years I spent in Victoria. Politics here are just as parochial just now, but the tone of private honour is essentially higher.

The success of his book, however, which exceeded all

² The Australasian Insurance and Banking Record, Oct. 19, 1893, p. 926, commenting on the denial by the London and Westminster bank of the Times charge that a syndicate had been involved, said: 'But a conversion loan which passes in a few hours into the hands of intermediaries is rather a misnomer, and possibly a lesson in the art of prospectus-writing would prove of benefit.' Whether Pearson was directly concerned here is uncertain, although he was not unpractised in swift moves for the sake of what he considered to be worthy ends.
expectations, was more than a counter to the distress occasioned by these Victorian antagonisms. He had lived for the book, and it seemed now to be the publication of the season. A first edition of 1,250 was soon exhausted, a reprint of a further 750 copies ordered, and a new edition planned for the following year. Practically all the newspapers and journals noticed it, many at considerable length, and his critics included Huxley, Frederic Harrison, Frederic Greenwood (who had persuaded Disraeli to buy the Suez canal shares) Sir Alfred Lyall (who had administered Lord Ripon's local self-government scheme in the North West Provinces and Oudh) Llewellyn Davies, Hutton, Grant Duff, Mahaffy. Coming when it did at the full tide of imperialist sentiment, it produced the shock he had expected, and he became a celebrity.

But only for a brief time. The book had given him the best of introductions to the journalistic world, and he wrote unremittingly for the press in an attempt to pay off his everlasting calls, retrieve his financial position, and put something aside for his family. In January, 1894, however, the final definite notice of his superannuation came, and the situation rapidly worsened. For the last time in his life he began to put out feelers
for a new position, writing to Bryce on January 15, 1894, '... I shall be very glad to take anything else that may turn up and for which I may be reasonably fitted even at some loss of salary.' Bryce made what enquiries he could but the answers were not encouraging. On February 10, Pearson wrote to Lady Musgrave, widow of the Governor whom he had first met in South Australia twenty years before:

The notice you saw in the Times is not quite correct, though it is substantially so. I am not going to retire, but I am going to be superannuated. My health I am glad to say is good, but the effect of this change upon me will be that I shall have to give up independent literary work, and devote myself to hack work of various kinds. Also, we must let our London house if we can, and go to some cheap place in the suburbs.

His life savings had now dwindled to a bare £500, and he had no option but to work on doggedly at the Office until the day of his superannuation. It was desperately

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1 Pearson to Bryce, Jan. 19, 1894.
2 Musgrave family papers.
3 Probate of his Will on the 18th of July 1894 revealed a Personal Estate with the gross value of £511. 14. 4 (Copy extracted from the Principal Probate Registry of the High Court of Justice.) The Melbourne firm of Solicitors, now Malleson Stewart & Co., which drew up the Will on July 26, 1892, states that as no duty was payable in Victoria when the Will was resealed there on Sept. 10, 1914, 'his assets in this State could not have been very large.'
important for his pride, too, that his old Ministerial colleague Gillies, who had at last accepted the Agent Generalship, should be able to see when he arrived how false the allegations of unfitness had been. When the weather worsened, and sickness returned he refused to take the Riviera holiday ordered by his doctors with the words 'I cannot afford it now.' On April 16, in another letter to Lady Musgrave, he wrote:

I have been so ill during the last six weeks, that it is all I can do to come down to this Office. A week ago I went to a new doctor, and hope he is doing something for me, but it must be slow work till the weather changes. I have an incessant cough.

A little over a month later he handed over to Gillies, and almost immediately took to his bed. He died on May 29th, with the brave words, completely in character with his life: 'I am about to solve the great theological question.'

In one sense it was a miserable end, and for his widow and young family a great bitterness. Yet it was not his fate to be satisfied - his own restless nature, the circumstances of his up-bringing and the period in which he lived determined that - and there was much truth in Sir William Ashley's suggestion that he was

1 Mrs. Pearson to Deakin, June 7, 1894.
felix opportunitate mortis.¹ His work in Victoria was done, he had written his book and had lived to see it acclaimed and discussed from St. Petersburg to Tennessee. He would never have been able to follow up this success, and was spared the fate of a hack journalist slowly decaying in 'some cheap place in the suburbs.' If his adopted country appeared to have spurned him at the end, his positive achievements and his influence remained as a memorial. He had entered on colonial public life with mature convictions, and by holding to these with a Puritan fixity of intent had been able to accomplish much where a less decided and resolute man would have failed. And this success was not merely to be measured in terms of practical reforms. Even more than a reformer had he been an educator. In Deakin's view, Victoria 'in summing up its obligations to Mr. Pearson, needed to throw into the credit scale of the account an immense amount of other men's actions and words of which he had really been the parent.'² In lecture halls, in the columns of the Age, on the floor of the House, at innumerable election meetings he tirelessly enunciated principles and ideals which, for all his later despondency, remain vital

² Memorials, p. 291.
elements in the Australian tradition. No Australian was more aware of the importance of this work than Deakin, and some words of his, taken from a tribute written in the year of the foundation of the Commonwealth, make an appropriate epitaph.

In the front rank of a stalwart, sun-browned, rough-hewn race of adventurers and toilers engaged in conquering a continent, we are shown in silhouette the stooping figure of a scholar, refinement written in every line of his face, eager in step, his eyes fixed, not too hopefully, far ahead, but always advancing, his courage unshaken, and his aims high.1

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APPENDIX A. TO ACCOMPANY CHAPTER IV.

Table to show age, year of nomination or election, and attendances from 1874-1877 of members of the Council of Melbourne University. Ages given are for the year 1874.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCILLOR</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>1874</th>
<th>1875</th>
<th>1876</th>
<th>1877</th>
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<tr>
<td>x Sir Redmond Barry</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>absent on leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Dr. A.C. Brownless</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Sir W.F. Stawell</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Archbishop Goold</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Bishop Perry</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(left for London 26/4/74, succeeded by Irving)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Sir Francis Murphy</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Judge Pohlman</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>x G.W. Rusden</td>
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<td>1853</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>x Revd. Irving Hetherington</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(Died: succeeded by Bromby)</td>
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<td>x Revd. A. Morison</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>x Daniel A. Hughes</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(Resigned: succeeded by Pearson)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>x Dr. W.H. Cutts</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>1861</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>x Judge Stephen</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7 (absent on leave)</td>
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<tr>
<td>x Dr. Motherwell</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Dr. McKay</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>= John McFarland</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNCILLOR</td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>YEAR</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>1877</td>
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<td>------</td>
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<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Hon. R.S. Anderson</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Professor Pearson</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Irving</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(22)</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Bromby</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes.**

* absent overseas, although presumably without requesting leave.
* x nominated member.
* = elected member.

(_) attendances numbering more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total number of meetings.

1874: 24 meetings 7 no quorums. Total attendances 151.
1875: 25 meetings 4 no quorums. " " 216.
1876: 24 meetings 5 no quorums. " " 180.
1877: 32 meetings 11 no quorums. " " 229.

Attendance figures are taken from a book of miscellaneous statistics preserved in the University Archives, nomination and election dates from University Calendars, and ages from various sources of biographical information including Mennell, *Victorian Men of the Time* (1877), Heaton, and Sutherland's *Victoria and Its Metropolis*.
ELECTION OF A MEMBER OF COUNCIL

Candidates:

(1) Charles Henry Pearson M.A.
   Nominated by Revd. Dr. Bromby M.A.
   Revd. Dr. Macdonald M.A.

(2) John Madden LL.D.
   Nominated by Robert Walsh M.A.
   Joseph Henry Hood M.A.

The Chairman put the question 'That Mr. Pearson be elected a member of the Council'.

Senate divided.

The original minutes supply surnames only. The additional information here is taken from University Calendars.

Ayes 47

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Status</th>
<th>University granting first degree</th>
<th>Yr. of admission to Senate</th>
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<td>Mr. H.M. Andrew</td>
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<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. E. Barker</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. P.B. Bennie</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. S.H. Bindon</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. S.D. Bird</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>St. Andrews</td>
<td>1862</td>
</tr>
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<td>&quot; Joseph Black</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1863</td>
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<tr>
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<td>M.A.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1873</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot; G.W.G. Butler</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1872</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot; John Carmichael</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; S.L. Chase</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Cantab.</td>
<td>1864</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Yr. of admission to Senate</td>
</tr>
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<td>1867</td>
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<td>1867</td>
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<td>Dr. Daniel Curdie</td>
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<td>1870</td>
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<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1868</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. John Day</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>Giessen</td>
<td>1869</td>
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<td>&quot; F.S. Dobson</td>
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<td>1867</td>
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<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1874</td>
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<td>Mr. W.R. Fletcher</td>
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<td>London</td>
<td>1857</td>
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<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1863</td>
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<td>M.A.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1874</td>
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<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1867</td>
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<td>Dr. J.W. Hadden</td>
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<td>1867</td>
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<td>Prof. G.B. Halford</td>
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<td>St. Andrews</td>
<td>1863</td>
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<td>Mr. M.H. Irving</td>
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<td>1868</td>
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<td>Dr. W.L. Richardson</td>
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<td>1866</td>
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<td>M.D.?</td>
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<td>Dublin</td>
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<td>Cantab.</td>
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**NOES 23**

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<td>1864</td>
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<td>1869</td>
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<td>1874</td>
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</table>

And so it was resolved in the affirmative and the Chairman declared Mr. Pearson duly elected a member of the Council.
In its issue for December 20, 1876, the Age provided some statistics of landowning in the five fertile Western District counties of Grant, Grenville, Polwarth, Ripon and Hampden. It claimed that in these counties, which were contiguous, and lay immediately to the south of the chief gold-mining area in Victoria, no less than 2,428,080 of the 3,321,510 acres alienated altogether consisted of holdings ranging in size from 5,000 to over 100,000 acres, leaving 'for the class of agricultural settlers ... only the small remnant of 893,430 acres...1 The paper's 'authentic list' of some of the largest landowners read as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austin and Maidment</td>
<td>44,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Neil</td>
<td>28,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chirnside, A. &amp; L</td>
<td>86,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chirnside, A.</td>
<td>77,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumming, William</td>
<td>31,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macpherson, J.</td>
<td>26,833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macpherson, J. &amp; A.</td>
<td>34,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robertson, John</td>
<td>24,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robertson, M. &amp; P.</td>
<td>24,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staughton Bros.</td>
<td>30,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staughton, H.</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simson, Robert</td>
<td>26,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ware, John</td>
<td>62,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, John</td>
<td>38,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Alex</td>
<td>36,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Samuel</td>
<td>108,442</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'These are only a few. In the county of Hampden alone, which contains altogether 1,000,000 acres, there are no less than 863,000 acres in the possession of forty individual proprietors in estates ranging from 5000 to upwards of 60,000 acres each. And yet, with these facts staring us in the face, we are asked to believe that land monopoly in this country holds out no portentous prospect of ill in the future, and that those who condemn these vast accumulations of acres in few hands, and who counsel their being subjected to the tax-gatherer, are despoilers and communists. Public opinion in this country, however, is not to be scared by absurd misrepresentations of this kind...'

These facts should be related to Dr. Parnaby's calculation that some 4,000 miners left the Victorian mining districts each year during the period 1870-1876, 6,000 departing from Ballarat alone. (Op. cit., pp. 205-211.)