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THE SIGNIFICANT PAST IN AUSTRALIAN THOUGHT

Some Studies in Nineteenth Century Australian Thought and its British Background

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Preface

In conceptual terms the aim of this thesis is relatively straightforward and unproblematic: to investigate which aspects of the human past had meaning, relevance and value for nineteeth century Australians, and thus, in the phrase preferred in the thesis, constituted their significant past. Yet, although the task is not difficult to define, it is far from easy to accomplish. The first difficulty is lack of direct access to the thinking of the large majority of the population who left no written records of their thought about the past, or about anything else. Almost by definition those who were prominent in public life or in authorship were untypical of people as a whole.

The second difficulty is that during the nineteenth century the Australian colonies constituted, despite their penal origins, a highly open society in Popper's sense, not only utterly different in that repect, as in most others, from the closed societies formed by Aboriginal groups which previously held sway, but also very different from most other past or contemporary societies, in which traditional patterns of thought about the past changed very little from generation to generation. An integral part of their openness was the very real possibility of deciding which past traditions and ways of life to retain and which to discard. This is not to suggest that nineteenth century Australians could, if they wished, simply start anew as though the past had not been. Some aspects of the past might, indeed, form part of a damnosa hereditas, even if all wished to bury and forget them completely. For the historian or political analyst, the more open the society, the more difficult is it likely to be to make defensible generalizations about the thought of any hypostatized group, let alone of the society as a whole.

Yet this difficulty has the compensating advantage that, where disagreement and dispute exist, ideas and values are likely to be much more explicitly expressed than in more closed societies. It is also reasonable to infer that the freer are publishing and elections, the more likely it is that choice of reading matter and of political candidates who offer manifestos and programmes will reflect the thoughts of those who read and vote.

A third difficulty is that thinking about the past does not fit neatly into a single scholarly discipline, even history. Literature and much of religious thought and engagement form for many people a more central part of what they value and find significant in the human past than do the fate of nations or of political movements. A determined effort has been made in the thesis to show the overlap and interpenetration of thinking about the significant past in the worlds, so often compartmentalized by scholars, of explorers, poets, novelists, politicians, theologians, historians, anthropologists and educationists. In addition, even the small penal settlement in which the new Australia had its origins contained a massive and complex legacy of historically-rooted ideas and institutions. The British cultural legacy included powerful Biblical and Christian elements, together with important classical influences - the Bulletin's campaigns during the last two decades of the century against direct British influence and the dead weight of the Biblical and classical past were testimony to their continuing vitality. This legacy continued to be further reinforced or modified by ongoing immigration and cultural transmission from Great Britain and Ireland. In particular, the increasing rejection during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of the value of non-European ways of life, whether those held to be

civilized but decadent, or supposed primitive and savage, and of decadent societies or those of primitive and savage ones, and of the relevance of their history or culture, was powerfully injected into nineteenth century Australian thought, reaching its zenith in the White Australian policies of the Federation period. The attempt made here to relate the pre-Contact structure of British thinking about the significant past to nineteenth century colonial experience, as well as to relate to each other strands in that experience usually considered in isolation, is fraught with the danger of excessive diffuseness. It is difficult for the author to be certain that the danger has been avoided.

The thesis does not provide exhaustive accounts of the thought of the people chosen as representative, but it is hoped that each study illuminates important aspects of men or movements which have been neglected or ignored. There are large numbers of excellent monographs on Australian politicians, divines, writers, etc. and on specific areas or layers of Australian society, but problems of synthesis, except by means of procrustean <u>a priori</u> categorization, have, if anything, increased recently.

In the thesis no privilege is offered to any particular standpoint among the many which were represented in nineteenth century Australia. One of the main ploys in cultural and political struggle was to try to define one's own group as truly Australian, and others as not so, or at least less so, and in such contests the fight was at least as much about interpretations of the past as about rival visions of the future. The attempt has been made to give fair weight to all individuals and groups who made a public impact on the way in which Australians thought about the past and accorded it significance.

Because of the very real danger that one's own preferences and pre-conceptions may distort historical understanding, nineteenth century Australians have been given full opportunity to speak for themselves. It is because of a determination not to quote out of context that the thesis has become somewhat lengthy, not because of prolixity of authorial comment.

Perhaps the thesis needs to be defended against narrowness as well as against excessive breadth. It has been fashionable to claim during the 1980s that Australia is not only a multicultural society now, both in the trite sense that nearly a quarter of the population now has its origins outside Great Britain and Ireland and in the wider sense that the hundred or so ethnic languages and cultures represented in Australia have a powerful influence on public life, law and government, but was so a century or more ago as well. In this study there is no treatment of any of the nineteenth century ethnic minorities, although members of each of these certainly had a different conception of historical significance from that of the mainstream society. This omission is not the consequence of indifference, let alone contempt, for the Germans of the Barossa Valley, the Italians of the North Queensland sugar fields, or the Chinese of the gold rushes or the Chinatowns; it is simply a recognition that they played no part in the shaping of public thought and discussion about the significant past, although, particularly in the case of the Chinese, their historical role, was very much at the centre of contention. Similarly the relatively low representation of women in the thesis simply reflects the cultural reality of nineteenth century Australia, despite its pioneering status in votes for women and in their admission to many previously male preserves.

Attention is given to pre-Contact Aboriginal thinking about their non-mythical past, or, rather, to the reasons for why there was little of such thinking and to the massive gap between Aborigines and new Australians in the conceptualization of the structure and history of the world and of the place of man in it. More attention has been given to nineteenth century ideas about the place of the Aborigines in history, to critical experiences which themselves soon became part of the significant past, and to Aborigine responses to British colonization.

Aborigines were increasingly on the margin of the minds of most Australians; much more central in late nineteenth century Australian thought was the relationship of the British colonies to the parent British culture. Apart from significant minority interest in American history during the years when demands were being advanced for full internal self-government, the main historical questions concerned applications of and adaptations to British institutions and thought to Australian conditions.

The two main centres of opposition to English political traditions were Irish-Australian Catholicism and radical republicanism, but in public debate each of these relied largely on arguments from within the British tradition. Roman Catholics found few arguments for religious equality or for the toleration of error in their own traditions, and few examples in avowedly Roman Catholic states. Radicals and republicans were divided as to whether the main evil in the British political tradition was that the State was too powerful and oppressive, and should be opposed on libertarian grounds, or too weak and inefficient to be able to combat social injustices effectively. Every effort has been made to ensure that a representative range of nineteenth century Australians is considered in the thesis.

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DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree of diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain material previously published or written by another author, except where due reference is made in the text.

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(GORDON GEOFFREY PARTINGTON)

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Chapter One

The Significant Past in Late Eighteenth Century British Thought: The Universal Context.

Introduction

When the British colonization of Australia began, the outward forms of law and belief in Britain were little different from those a century and more earlier. Cobbett wrote as late as 1802 (letter to Windham cited in Clark, 1985, pp.89-90),

> When, from the top of any high hill, one looks round the country, and sees the multitude of regularly distributed spires, one not only ceases to wonder that order and religion are maintained, but one is astonished that any such thing as disaffection or irreligion should prevail.

The Coronation Oath prescribed by 1 W & M c6 and by the Act of Union of 1707 bound the sovereign to maintain not merely Christianity, but 'the Protestant reformed religion established by law'. Full membership of English society required membership of the Church of England, since the Toleration Act of 1691, although exempting Dissenters (other than Papists and anti-Trinitarians) from penal laws regarding religion, did not accord any positive right to religious belief outside the established church. Yet, in practice, there was a very wide range of opinion both held and freely expressed in Britain on almost every significant political and religious question, including great diversity about the content and significance of the human past. An enormous contrast existed between the variety of standpoint and intensity of debate about historical questions in late eighteenth century Britain and the lack of interest in their own, let alone in any other, historical past displayed by Australian Aborigines.

There was, of course, widespread historical curiosity among Britain's

continental neighbours too, but in the second half of the eighteenth century England, and even more particularly Scotland, held precedence in historical enquiry. This precedence owed most, perhaps, to the greater and indeed previously unequalled freedom of investigation and debate they enjoyed. Many great minds of the France of the Enlightenment discussed what was most interesting and instructive in the human past, but even as late as 1769 the zoologist and savant George Louis Le Clerk, Comte de Buffon, was forced by the Catholic Church to recant fourteen of his propositions, on the grounds that they were contrary to the Pentateuch and thus to the faith of the Church. It was not until 1835 that the heliocentric doctrines associated with Copernicus, Bruno, Kepler, Galileo and Newton were tacitly sanctioned by the Holy See with the removal of their works from the Index Librorum Prohibitorum.

During the eighteenth century educated Britons came increasingly to view their own time and place as superior to other societies: to ancient civilizations, to Asian civilizations, and to the various modes of primitivism encountered in America, in Africa and in the Pacific. This superiority was judged to be evident in political freedom, in equality before the law, in security against foreign aggression or domestic danger, in levels of knowledge, and in control over nature and productive forces.

The Origins of Mankind

One of the characteristics of 'open societies', as depicted by Popper (1945), is that in them even those who hold the most dogmatic beliefs about human society or the nature of the universe cannot hold them in entirely traditional or non-reflective ways. In such societies adherents to

traditional religious beliefs are constantly made aware that these are not universally held; as a result their beliefs need reinforcement and cannot simply be taken for granted. In eighteenth century Europe few were more zealous than the Jesuits in urging that new knowledge about human groups or the material world fortified orthodox doctrine, but in Britain Anglicans, Presbyterians and Deists also sought further justification for their beliefs from the findings of explorers, ethnographers and classical scholars. Even the most extreme Evangelicals, who might have concluded from the dire and pervasive effects of the Fall that little significance could be attached to the civil history of any particular City of Destruction, held that accurate knowledge of biblical history and of the main events of the Reformation was an obligation of the saved, if not a precondition of salvation. Disputes about the dating of the Creation and the Deluge, together with arguments about just how these momentous events should be understood, were as fiercely contested in eighteenth century Britain as were questions more immediate in time and place.

Orthodox opinion within the Established Church at the end of the eighteenth century still held with Archbishop Ussher that the Creation had taken place in 4004 B.C. at the autumnal equinox, a date chosen on the principle that there had been four millenia from the Creation to the Incarnation and on Kepler's placement of the Incarnation in 4 B.C. Neither Descartes nor Newton dissented from the concept of a six millenial time span for the world, since each in his own way held that God had created a universe entire and perfect from its inception, in which the laws of mathematics or of physics operated ceaselessly and unchangingly. Pioneering geologists, too, such as Robert Hooke and Nils Steensen (Steno) developed various catastropharian theories to fit into the Genesis framework the

mighty changes they realised the earth's crust had undergone. The poet Cowper defended the traditional Christian view against critics or sceptics as follows,

> Some drill and bore
> The solid earth, and from the strata there
> Extract a register, by which we learn
> That He who made it, and revealed its date
> To Moses, was mistaken in its age.

The eighteenth century in western Europe witnessed not only challenges to the dating and interpretation of the Creation and the Deluge, but wide ranging debates about every facet of religious faith. Most of these debates strengthened confidence among the educated in the relative superiority of their own society and its mores. The revival by John Trenchard and by Lord Shaftesbury of the ancient Epicurean argument that, as Lucretius had put it, timor deos fecit (fear created the Gods), helped to discredit contemporary primitivism as well as classical paganism; the argument when used by Hume was also a weapon against monotheism and Christianity.

Allegorical and euhemerist interpretations of myths and religious beliefs gained wider currency during the eighteenth century. Thomas Burnet (1722, cited in Collier 1968, p.75), physician to Charles II and later chaplain to William III, argued that Moses had been forced to resort to allegory in Genesis and the other books of the Pentateuch attributed to him, because the Israelites were as yet incapable of apprehending the full truth. Burnet's sophisticated version of progressive revelation placed the Israelites above their neighbours, though well below Moses, in their religious understanding, but Burnet and his fellow exegesists also in one sense placed themselves above Moses and above every religious tradition. John Hutchinson (1724) gained many

imitators for his method of reconciling the Pentateuch with recent scientific findings: this involved the systematic redefinition of scriptural language, so that 'chaos', 'spirit' and 'motion', for example, were aligned to contemporary concepts in physics and geology. Samuel Pike, an Independent Minister, argued (1753) similarly that all recent scientific discoveries were readily deducible from the Bible, provided that previously mistranslated or misunderstood texts were apprehended aright. The short-term gain of demonstrating that whatever could be inducted from observation and experiment was also to be logically inferred from Holy Writ concealed a long-term danger that Holy Writ might be omitted completely and attention confined to observation and experiment. Less pious allegorists such as Denis Diderot and Charles Dupuis, who interpreted classical paganism and contemporary primitivism as sexual symbolism, enabled French libertines and the English rakes of the Hellfire Club to claim a venerable tradition for their licentiousness, but weakened the prestige of classical culture among the respectable.

A similar effect resulted from euhemerism. Sir Isaac Newton and Nicolas Freret quarrelled fiercely with each other about biblical and classical chronology, yet both assumed that the stories of Chiron, Jason and even the Chimera concerned apotheosised mortals whose actual earthly deeds and their dates might be discovered by careful analysis of ancient texts and traditions. Jean Le Clerc and Pierre Bayle used the euhemerist method not only to demythologise pagan gods and demigods, but to question biblical miracles and the stories of the Christian saints.

Perhaps more important than the conflict between allegorists and euhemerists about the meaning and status of myths or of religious traditions were disputes about monogenesis and, more widely, about the general nature of

primitive religion, a subject of constant topical interest as new primitives were in each decade brought within range of European investigation. The orthodox Christian view was that all mankind sprang first from Adam and subsequently from Noah. The view of the Church Fathers had been that heathen rites and beliefs were a corrupted version of true religion foisted on foolish idolaters by demons and fallen angels, who were however incapable of devising a completely new religion. The sons of Adam and those of Noah had, because of Original Sin, fallen into wickedness. Thus as the human race, first from the Garden of Eden and then from Noah's Ark, gradually spread throughout the world, it was not to be wondered at, orthodox doctrine held, that knowledge of the true God who made himself known unto Adam and Noah had become steadily weaker. The Children of Israel had received through Abraham, Isaac,Jacob, Moses and the Prophets further direct Revelation, but this had not been vouchsafed for any other race until the Incarnation and the Christian era, and for some races not at all.

The European voyages of discovery led to some questioning of monogenesis. For example, how and when Negroes had become black troubled many scholars. The Song of Solomon puts into the mouth of a Negro the explanation that, 'I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me', but as early as 1554 Richard Eden, (Hakluyt, (1903-5, VI, p.176), pondered on the considerable differences between American Indians (Amerindians henceforth) and African Negroes who lived in the same latitudes. In 1578 the explorer George Best suggested a genetic rather than a climatic explanation (Hakluyt, 1903-5, VII, p.262),

> I myself have seen an Ethiopian [sic] as blacke as a cole brought into England, who taking an English wife, begat a sonne in all respects as blacke as the father was, although England were his native country, and an English woman his mother; whereby it seemeth that blackness proceedeth rather of some natural infection of that

man.

Best's own explanation was that Noah has cursed Ham that all his 'posteritie after him should be so blacke and lothsome, that it might remaine a spectacle of disobedience to all the world'.

The apparent antiquity of Asian societies posed a sharper threat to monogenesis than did the pigmentation of Negroes. Traditional diffusionists, such as Etienne Fourmont, still sought to show that all languages had originated in Hebrew, so that Lot of Genesis, for example, had become the Phoenician Lota and then the Greek Atlas. Jacob Bryant claimed that all religious systems contained a Noah figure and that diffusion from Babel was the best explanation for the diversity of human languages. Bishop Berkeley held that the Parsees and the Brahmins, perhaps all the 'gentiles', showed 'manifest traces' of beliefs derived from the Pentateuch. The wisdom displayed by the sages of China led William Whiston, the English mathematician, to conclude that Noah and the first Chinese Emperor Fo-Hi were one and the same person. Whiston also suggested that Chinese, not Hebrew, was the original language imparted by God, since Noah was too pious to help build the Tower of Babel and had passed on his languages and wisdom, superior to that of his sons, to the Chinese. Samuel Stuckford adopted this theory in his 1728 Sacred and Profane History of the World.

Jean Baptiste Du Halde and his fellow Jesuit missionaries in China were very willing to recognize Old Testament elements in Chinese beliefs as a bridge for converting them to Christianity. Du Halde held that China had enjoyed something very like its existing civilization for about four thousand years, an antiquity made plausible by evidence that Chinese scholars had

recorded a solar eclipse in 2155 B.C. Du Halde claimed that this dating was fully compatible with the chronology of the Septuagint and with the settlement of China by 'sons of Noah' after the Deluge.

The Jesuits in China were accused, both by Dominican missions within the Catholic Church and by Protestant critics, of a syncretism which was next to heretical, if not entirely so. In London the Royal Society in 1729 denied that Chinese chronology could be traced back any earlier than 400 B.C. or that Chinese scholars could have recorded the eclipse cited by Du Halde. The astronomer George Costard suggested that it was only very recently, probably from the Jesuits themselves, that the Chinese had learned how to make such calculations.

Other critics suggested that Du Halde had not gone far enough: by the end of the century theories had been advanced that the original centre of diffusion was China, Egypt, Phoenicia, Babylonia or India. Sir William Jones (1786), who first suggested that similarities between Sanscrit, Latin, Greek, and very likely the 'Gothick' and 'Celtick' languages as well, indicated an early Indo-European language, suggested that the Indians, the Arabs and the Tartars might have been the three chief peoples descended from the sons of Noah. The French Orientalist Louis Mathieu Langles argued that the Pentateuch and the five Chinese Books of kings were both derived from the five Hindu Vedas.

Beliefs about monogenesis and about the nature of primitive religion were only loosely aligned in the eighteenth century. A belief in admirable forms of primitive monotheism was orthodox among Catholics and Protestants alike, but was also shared by deist adherents of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, including

John Toland, Anthony Collins and Lords Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke. The deists had to tackle, without benefit of the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, the problem of why this original beneficient monotheism had generated so many monstrous perversions. John Toland claimed (1704, p.7),

> The most antient Egyptians, Persians, and Romans, the first Patriarchs of the Hebrews, with several other Nations and Sects had no sacred Images or Statues, no peculiar Places or costly Fashions of Worship; the plain Easiness of their Religion being most agreeable to the Simplicity of the Divine Nature, an indifference of Place and Time were the best expressions of infinite Power and Omnipresence.

To account for the multitudinous superstitions they abominated, the deists offered the full gamut of psychological and sociological possibilities. As Manuel notes (1959, p.62),

> Whenever the orthodox said sin, the Deists substituted feebleness and disease. Wherever the Puritans had thundered depravity, the Deists dolefully described error, a failure of the mechanism of true perception, a disorder of the senses, a confusion in the brain. Human reason, though it could grasp the truth, was weak; it could not hold it firmly; other aspects of man's nature - his imagination, his concupiscence - led him astray, so that he was lost as in a labyrinth of uncontrolled passions.

Yet the first and central principle of the eighteenth century Enlightenment came to be Uniformitarianism. Deists and the Enlightened generally held that reason is at root one and the same, although to be sure many or most people at any given moment might be highly unreasonable. Lovejoy insisted (1955, p.80) that,

> it is perhaps still necessary to repeat that in the most frequent of the normative uses of the term "nature" in the Enlightenment, the principal element in the signification of the word is uniformity. Despite its sixty-odd other senses, it was primarily and chiefly

> because of this connotation that "nature" was the sacred word of the Enlightenment.

The scholarly Bishop William Warburton saw no need for monogenesis, which, he held, was (1788, ii p.671),

> an old inveterate error, that a similitude of customs and manners amongst the various tribes of mankind most remote from one another, must arise from some communication. Whereas human nature, without any other help, will in the same circumstances, always exhibit the same appearances.

Similarly William Robertson, a Scottish historian with a keen interest in patterns of belief in India and in North America, wrote (Gilbert, 1972, p.154) that, 'the human mind, whenever it is placed in the same situation, will, in ages the most distant, assume the same forms and be distinguished by the same manners'.

Edmund Burke suggested that knowledge of newly discovered primitive societies made it less important to spend time on historical enquiry. He wrote (Guttridge, 1961, pp. 350-1),

> We need no longer go to history to trace it in all its stages and periods. History from its comparative youth, is but a poor instructor ... But now the great map of mankind is unrolld at once; and there is no state or Gradatin of barbarism, and no mode of refinement which we have not at the same instant under our View.

Here Burke echoed Bolingbroke's view (1752, i, p.118) that 'ancient history never will gain credit with any reasonable man'. David Hume, although one of the leading historians of his day, was also a convinced uniformitarian. Hume argued that mankind, in all times and places, remained much the same, so that the study of history, far from disclosing anything new about human nature,

only confirmed the constant and general principles which governed it.

Hume, however, rejected the notion that true primitive monotheism had fallen into corruption, and doubted the existence of any innate sense of deity in man. Closely circumscribed by brute needs, early men, he held, could not perceive that there might be unity among apparently diverse elements in nature. Man, in Hume's view, (1964, 4,p.316) had been dominated by,

> the anxious concern for happiness, the dread of future misery, the terror of death, the thirst for revenge, the appetite for food and other necessaries.

Hume argued in The Natural History of Religion that polytheism necessarily preceded monotheism, a conception only attained after long experience of the uniform working of natural laws. Even more disturbingly for orthodox Christians, Hume argued that more advanced forms of theism never entirely discarded the base emotions associated with the origins of religious belief. The ignorant masses were only lightly touched by reason: 'men have a natural tendency to rise from idolatry to theism, and to sink again from theism to idolatry' (1964, 4.,p.334). In the fanatics and enthusiasts of his own time and place, Hume discerned fears, superstitions and self-deception similar to those of early man and of the savages of Africa, the Americas and the Pacific.

Neither monogenesis nor polygenesis, and, for that matter, neither a belief in primitive monotheism nor in primitive polytheism and savage superstition, correlated highly with the valuation eighteenth century thinkers placed on their own society in comparison with others. Some monogenesists

celebrated the fundamental unity of mankind, but others bemoaned that many races had lost the wisdom once available to their forebears; some polygenesists held that races with different origins were in principle equally worthy of esteem and should only be judged by their own standards, but others that some races were so wretched that they could scarcely be considered fully human. Some primitive monotheists were exalted by the thought that even the least congenial belief might contain some element of pristine truth, whereas others were dismayed by the tangle of superstitions into which so much of mankind had fallen. Some primitive polytheists gained hope from every advance beyond aboriginal error, whereas others doubted whether more than a small minority of mankind could ever attain reason or wisdom.

Conceptual dilemmas abounded. Believers in primitive sense and virtue had to find explanations for their subsequent rarity. Rousseau's paradox that 'Man is born free, but everywhere men are in chains', extended beyond freedom. Christians, deists and atheists alike, were forced to ponder why the world is as it is. Such speculations were by no means peculiar to that age, but by and large the eighteenth century British prided themselves on being more reflective than their ancestors, and more aware of a range of possible explanations for mysteries concerning the world and the place of man in it. They also believed that they had far more to teach than to learn from the other peoples of the world.

Explanations of Human Differences

The eighteenth century saw a profusion of new theories seeking to explain human differences. Montesquieu argued in L'Esprit des Lois, translated into English in 1748,that human progress required an environment which was neither

too severe nor too bountiful. In the first case no effort could avail, in the second no exertion was necessary. It was in temperate zones of moderate fertility, such as Western Europe, that Montesquieu and his British disciples, especially these of the Scottish Enlightenment, held that human genius had most flourished and would continue to do so.

Adam Ferguson followed Montesquieu in distinguishing 'barbarians' from 'savages'. They defined barbarians as being capable of forming organised states, at least temporarily, but of being unable to create adequate frameworks for the steady advance of civilization. Many peoples of this character were nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralists, such as the Tartars and Mongols of Central Asia, who could overthrow more advanced civilizations, but were incapable of developing their own very far. Settled communities based on agriculture rather than pastoralism seemed to Ferguson to be the pre-requisite for civilized societies worthy of detailed study. Watkin Tench (1793, p.212) implied that Ferguson's works, including An Essay on the History of Civil Society, were part of the preliminary reading recommended before their voyage to the leaders of the First Fleet. Tench (1793, pp.123-4) also refers to Oliver Goldsmith's 1774 History of the Earth and Animated Nature, a work proclaiming that the subjection of nature by man and his development of arts and crafts are part of God's conscious plan. Goldsmith urged (1840, vol. 1, pp.144-5),

> A world thus furnished with advantages on one side, and inconveniences on the other, is the proper abode of reason, is the fittest to exercise the industry of a free and thinking creature. Those evils which art can remedy, and prescience guard against, are a proper call for the exertion of his faculties; and they tend still more to assimilate him to his creator. God beholds with pleasure that being which he has made, converting the wretchedness of his natural situation into a theatre of triumph; bringing all the headlong tribes of nature into subjection to his will; and producing that order and uniformity upon earth, of which his own heavenly fabric is so bright.

If harsh pastoral terrain arrested development at the stage of barbarism, fertility and abundance too easily gained, especially if combined with enervating heat, was held to inhibit intellectual rigour and physical exertion in the civilizations of India. A standard eighteenth century British view was stated in Thomas Salmon's New Geographical and Historical Grammar, in William Robertson's revised 1772 edition as follows (p.430),

> The warmth of these Eastern climates has doubtless ever contributed to the indolence and effeminacy of its inhabitants; it may be doubted whether they ever had the industry and active spirits of the inhabitants of Europe, who found the necessity of labour for their support, which the Asiatics had less occasion for, through the luxuriancy of their soil.

Bengal was frequently adduced as an example of Asiatic decadence. As Robert Orme put in in 1805 (p. 472),

> having so few wants and receiving even the luxuries of other nations with little labour from their own soil, the Indian must become the most effeminate inhabitant of the globe.

Such explanations were crude tools with which to explain the alternation of rapid progress and of stagnation which seemed to have characterised several Asiatic societies during periods of constant climatic and other environmental conditions. The French savant Jean Bailly accounted for this by postulating that sturdy invaders from challenging conditions overcame effete states in torrid zones and advanced their culture significantly, but then fell victims themselves to torpor.

Montesquieu did not press his own environmentalist theories too hard,

while the Scottish philosopher William Falconer suggested that such factors could not explain 'particular', but only 'general' features of a society. David Hume urged that religious belief, education and government, were more significant than physical environment. Hume's 'moral' factors were, however, very similar to the 'economic' factors adduced by Adam Smith. Indeed, the leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment discussed in a thoroughly undogmatic and profound fashion the reciprocal effect of the human mind and the development of the mode of subsistence.

Adam Smith advanced a four-stage model of socio-economic development: ages first of hunters, then of shepherds, thirdly of agriculture, and finally of commerce. This last stage, in which the shrewd acquisitiveness of independent and freely competing entrepreneurs, in both agriculture and manufacture, could expand wealth on an unprecedented scale, was, Smith deemed, the best as well as the latest. In comparing the great landed proprietors with the new entrepreneurs Smith wrote (1950, I, p.389-90),

> A revolution of the greatest importance to the public happiness, was in this manner brought about by two different orders of people, who had not the least intention to serve the public. To gratify the most childish vanity was the sole motive of the great proprietors. The merchants and artificers, much less ridiculous, acted merely from a view to their own interest, and in pursuit of their own pedlar principle of turning a penny wherever a penny was to be got. Neither of them had either knowledge or foresight of that great revolution which the folly of the one, and the industry of the other, was gradually bringing about.

Smith was full of praise for the efforts of the small farmer, whose merits he placed well above those of the workman limited in range by division of labour, effective as that arrangement may be for the wealth of nations. Sentiments such as the following helped Smith to remain an influential figure among struggling farmers, Australian as well as British, for many decades, and

perhaps contributed to the cult of the Bushman (1950, I., p.1289),

> The man who works upon brass and iron, works with instruments and upon materials of which the temper is always the same or very nearly the same. But the man who ploughs the ground with a team of horses or oxen, works with instruments of which the health, strength and temper, are very different upon different occasions. The condition of the materials which he works upon too is as variable as that of the instruments which he works with, and both require to be managed with much judgement and discretion. The common ploughman, though generally regarded as the pattern of stupidity and ignorance, is seldom defective in this judgment and discretion.... How much the lower ranks of people in the country are really superior to those of the town, is well known to every man whom either business or curiosity has led to converse much with both.

Overall, however, Smith's stage theory of development and his analysis of the way in which the wealth of nations was created immensely strengthened confidence in the value of the new industrialization of which Britain was undoubtedly the leading pioneer. Furthermore, the works of Adam Smith and other leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment were prominent in Australian libraries during the early colonial period. Dixon (1986, p.2) notes that William M'Garvie's Circulating Library contained William Robertson's A View of the Progress of Society in Europe and Gilbert Stuart's A View of Society in Europe in its Progress from Rudeness to Refinement, that Robert Howe possessed Lord Kames' Sketches of the History of Man, that John Oxley had a copy of Adam Ferguson's An Essay on the History of Civil Society, and that Adam Smith's own Wealth of Nations appeared at least once in every library catalogue of the period.

Lord Kames argued (Lehmann, 1971, p.184) that,

> Hunting and fishing in order for sustenance, were the original occupations of men. The shepherd life succeeded; and the next stage was that of agriculture. These progressive changes in the order now mentioned, may be traced in all nations, so far as we have any remains of their original history ... it was agriculture which first

produced a regular system of government.

Lord Kames did not bemoan the passing of hunters, primitive or contemporary, who had 'led the life of a dog, or of a savage, violently active in the field, supinely indolent at home'. He welcomed 'the change from the hunter to the farmer, from the destroyer of animals to the feeder of pigs' (cited in Feingold, 1978, p.48). Such a taxonomy of human societies fitted well into the theoretical framework of the Great Chain of Being, in which, as John Locke put it, 'in all the visible corporal world we see no chasms or gaps'. In the age in which they colonized Australia, few people in Britain doubted the high status of their society in that Chain, nor did they fear to place other societies in appropriate inferior positions.

The Superiority of the Present over the Past

Collingwood noted that Locke and Hume liberated history from the lumber-room in which it had been placed by the Cartesian doctrine of innate ideas. Collingwood argued persuasively (1945, p.72),

> If all knowledge consists in making explicit our innate ideas, and if all such ideas are present as potentialities in every human mind, all possible knowledge can theoretically be produced afresh by every human being for himself by his own unaided efforts, and there is no need for that corporate building-up of the body of knowledge which is the special work of history. If all knowledge is based on experience, it is an historical product; truth, as Bacon had already reasserted, is the daughter of time; the best knowledge is a fruit of the ripest and richest experience. Thus an historical view of knowledge is already implicit in the first book of Locke's Essay.

Collingwood noted too (1945, p.75) that Hume's scepticism was most damaging to those forms of knowledge, the natural sciences, 'whose claims were most dogmatic and absolute', but that it 'placed history on a footing at least

as sound as that of any other science'. Collingwood went on, however, to expose the limiting effects of uniformitarianism on Hume and Gibbon, the two most eminent British historians of the century. In essence neither had much interest in, or sympathy for, peoples and periods they deemed irrational; even more for them than for Erasmus and Renaissance thinkers 'medieval' and 'feudal' were pejorative expressions, denoting the dominance of superstition and barbarity. As Peter Gay (1967, p.279) put it, the Enlightenment philosophers,

> saw the Renaissance as the first act of a great drama in which the Enlightenment itself was the last - the great drama of the disenchantment of the European mind.

Gibbon's 'Golden Age', far removed from the primitive, was the Antonine period, after which civilization, he held, was increasingly eroded by Christianity and barbarism, until the Renaissance revival of classical thought, conceived as the prelude to his own age of Enlightenment. Collingwood (p.80) suggests that the Enlightenment historians had 'no conception of historical origins or process', so that their own age appeared as 'a sheer miracle, unprepared in the previous course of events and uncaused by any cause that could be adequate to such an effect'. Pope's epigram that 'the proper study of mankind is man' gives only limited encouragement to historical study if 'true human nature' has always been the same, although often concealed or distorted by artificial impediments. There is, indeed, a fundamental ambiguity in the basic concept of natural Enlightenment thought, since only in rare conditions, such as those in Fifth Century Athens, Augustan Rome and the France of Louis XIV, to choose Voltaire's examples of high civilization, had the natural fully surfaced. Basil Willey argued, (1961. p.10) that,

> .....If "natural" means what is original or primitive, natural religion would be that which was most deeply grounded in prehistory and the collective unconscious, while deism of the Stoical or eighteenth century varieties would appear as a late product of civilized sophistication. But, for our deists, "natural" meant what is congenial to the mind of an abstract Man whose traits corresponded to those of the honnete homme, the man of parts and sense, who had become the moral norm of the age.

This static concept of an unchanging essence of human nature could become a component in a doctrine of progress, such as that of Condorcet. To be sure Christian thinkers, such as St. Augustine of Hippo, Hooker, Raleigh and Bossuet saw at work in human history the providential hand of God, while the expansion of Christianity as a world religion in the post-Columbus age encouraged the emergence of a concept of progress in more recent Christian thought. Yet Christian thinkers had little interest in non-Christian thought, other than that of Greece and Rome, except as errors to be overcome. Protestant thinkers were more likely than Catholic to reject as irrational those beliefs and practices they judged to be post-biblical accretions acquired by Christianity in the course of proselytizing the heathen, but less likely to challenge beliefs which had apparent warranty from the scriptures. The Catholic Church, in the person of Pope Gregory XIII, introduced the calendar reform to which he gave his name in 1582; England followed only in 1752, early enough, however, not to confuse future Australians with worries about the dating of the First Fleet.

The philosophers of the Enlightenment showed very little interest in peoples or periods which failed to display the norms of reason perfected in their own day, but this rejection of the past was less extreme in Britain than in France. The French philosophers by and large followed Voltaire in wanting

to 'ecraser l' infame', an infamy which covered the history and laws of the French monarchy as well as the doctrines of the Catholic Church, whereas most British thinkers held that there was much in their own constitutional tradition worth retaining. Paine was among the very few prominent radicals in Britain to dismiss as irrelevant the values of the past; the majority, such as Cobbett, founded their political claims on rights and privileges which, they asserted earlier English generations had possessed.

The Augustan Age in Britain for the most part chose Classical Greece and Rome as its significant past. The grammar studied in the Grammar and in the 'Great' or 'Public' Schools was predominantly Latin grammar; the motifs in Wedgwood's pottery and in Adam's architecture were overwhelmingly classical. Leading Roman and, more especially, Greek thinkers had, of course, long been held in esteem in Christendom. Aristotle, particularly during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and Plato, especially during the fifteenth and sixteenth, had commanded the close attention and high respect of the best minds within Western Christendom. Two different battles between 'Ancients' and 'Moderns' were fought during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The first, a literary conflict, saw Charles Perrault and the French 'Moderns' hold that the Unities and the other rules of classical drama and poetry were more perfectly followed by Racine, Corneille and their disciples than by any Greek or Roman authors. In the second contest, it was knowledge of the natural world rather than of human conduct that was at stake.

Francis Bacon, the champion of observation, experiment and the empirical method, was the master-spirit of the 'Moderns' in this second struggle, arguing,

> Men have been kept back as by a kind of enchantment from progress in the sciences by reverence for antiquity, by the authority of men accounted great in philosophy, and then by general consent

The ancient world, so revered by medieval schoolmen and Renaissance humanists, was, in Bacon's view, merely the childhood of humanity and must make way for a more adult understanding: 'the age of the centuries is the youth of the world'.

Yet, in Bacon's time, medicine was still dominated by Galen and mechanics by Archimedes, although new knowledge soon made their surviving work obsolete. By the age of Cook and Phillip that domination had been completely overthrown: God had let Newton be and all was light; no more candles needed to be borrowed from Greek science or Roman engineering. Thus, although the classical world was the significant past of the dominant modes of late eighteenth century thought, the present no longer held that classical past in awe. When Gibbon rejoiced in his Autobiography that he had not been born under 'slavery' or 'barbarism', he did not concede superiority over Georgian England to the Antonine period he so admired, let alone to other ages whose history consisted in 'little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind'.

This confidence in the superior wisdom of their own time influenced all schools of thought. Even the most ardent Wesleyans and the most committed Evangelicals of the Church of England were as convinced that they lived in an age of advance and progress as were persons indifferent to the depravities of the unredeemed soul. Most Evangelicals believed that Britain had been granted by Grace, not by desert, the wealth and power needed to take the gospel to all lands, but they did not doubt either the reality of that greater wealth and

power,or the righteousness of Britain's civilizing mission.

British Augustanism

The contrast between the internal peace and overseas expansion, which generally characterized eighteenth century Britain, and its seventeenth century time of troubles increased British interest in Augustan Rome and made Virgil the focus of attention of particular study and emulation. British versions of the Georgics were by no means smugly self-congratulatory; indeed, the precariousness of civilization and the unworthiness of much in public and private life were major themes from Pope to Cowper. Overall, however, the Augustan poets not only concerned themselves with public affairs and the world of work, but treated them in a markedly optimistic tone.

In the Georgics Virgil celebrated the virtues and joys of country life. This bucolic note continued to be struck, but the range of celebration was extended to industry and commerce by James Thomson in The Seasons and The Castle of Indolence, by Robert Dodsley in Agriculture, by John Dyer in The Fleece (1757), and by William Cowper in The Task. Thomson typically rejoiced that energies once wasted in civil wars were being applied to mastering nature (1972, pp.25-6, l.838-848).

> And now the sprightly race
> Invites them forth; when swift, and signal given
> They start away, and sweep the massy mound
> That runs around the hill - the rampart once
> Of iron war, in ancient barbarous times,
> When disunited Britain ever bled,
> Lost in eternall broil, ere yet she grew
> To this deep-laid indissoluble state
> Where wealth and commerce lift the golden head,
> And o'er our labours liberty and law
> Impartial watch, the wonder of a world!

Thomson was gratified too that the power of Britain had extended to shores never known to ancient Rome (1972, p.48,l.423-431).

> Britannia sees
> Her solid grandeur rise: hence she commands
> The exalted shores of every brighter clime,
> The treasures of the sun without his rage:
> Hence, fervent all with culture, toil, and arts,
> Wide glows her land: her dreadful thunder hence
> Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, even now,
> Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coast;
> Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world

A New Augustanism, in which Britain surpasses Rome, combined with a stage theory, in which Britain embodies the skills of the fourth stage, to strengthen the idea that the leadership of mankind moves ever westwards. Lord Monboddo, after discussing the defeat of Persia by the Greeks and the conquest of Greece by the Romans, declared (1774, p.254), 'the progress of the human race has always been so far as we can trace it, from the east'. Bishop Berkeley wrote lines which were often to be quoted from his 1752 'Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America',

> Westward the course of empire takes its way;
> The first four acts already past,
> A fifth shall close the drama with the day:
> Time's noblest offspring is the last.

Fourteen years later Adam Smith anticipated (1950,II,p.124) that the capital of the British Empire might cross the Atlantic 'in the course of little more than a century'. Sentiments of this character were applied to Australia, very soon after its first settlement by the British, by Michael Massey Robinson and by William Charles Wentworth.

Summary

The doctrines of the Established Church, including the Biblical account

of the Creation, the Fall, the Flood and the Incarnation, still dominated thought about the human past in late eighteenth century England. Competing branches of Christianity, apart from Unitarianism and deist sects, differed very little from the Church of England (or the other Establishments in the British Isles) in their general historical conceptions. Widespread diversity of opinion flourished, however, with allegorical and euhemerist attempts frequently being made to reconcile scripture with contemporary findings about history and pre-history. Debate about the origins and development of the human race was stimulated by increased knowledge of other societies, whether highly civilized or very primitive.

Christian explanations of the origin and history of man had always been in some competition with classical accounts, especially in the education of the ruling classes, which was based to a considerable extent on Greek and Roman authors. The eighteenth century saw an ever-increasing interest in the differences between human societies, with environmental explanations being supplemented by sophisticated stage theories related to modes of production. In consequence, the battle between the 'Ancients, and the'Moderns' swung increasingly in favour of the latter; whereas the Renaissance thinkers saw themselves as recapturing the classical past, the leaders of the Enlightenment thought they had transcended it. This confidence was exhibited in English Augustanism.

Far from being highly ethnocentric, many educated Britons of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a keen interest in earlier times and in other lands than their own, together with a willingness to approve these. Although they were proud of the achievements, of their own age, they looked for virtues which, they feared, they themselves lacked, first in classical and

renaissance and then in medieval models. Gibbon's and Wedgwood's classicism, Scott's medieval and Jacobite novels, the Gothic Revival in architecture, successive passions for contrasting exotic societies, whether of noble savages, the Anglo-Saxons, the Chinese or the Egyptians, led John Stuart Mill to comment (1965, p.29) that his countrymen 'carry their eyes in the back of their heads', or W.S. Gilbert to satirize 'the idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone./ All centuries but this, and every country but his own'.

The British interest in the past was not mere faddism. Pocock (1972, p.208) notes of Burke, that he 'was not calling upon his contemporaries to return to a seventeenth-century habit of mind, but assuming that it was still alive and meaningful among them'. Lowenthal argues (1985, p.54) that '"new" countries like the United States and Australia compensate for relatively recent human histories by celebrating their prehistoric natural heritage' and that Australians in particular are 'solaced by natural antiquity, the unrecorded aeons of animals, plants, and rocks adding length to the meagre European past'. This claim may have some substance with respect to some twentieth century intellectuals, such as Patrick White, Rosemary Dobson, Kenneth Slessor and Sidney Nolan, all of whom Lowenthal cites in support of his thesis, but many earlier Australians, although they might accept the traditional limited time-span of past human existence, saw themselves as equal heirs to the British of a rich human heritage which directly influenced their everyday lives.

Chapter Two

The Significant Past in Late Eighteenth Century British Thought: the British Past

The Great Rebellion and the Glorious Revolution

Many of the fundamental questions about the past which were widely pondered in late eighteenth century Britain were not directly concerned with British history. Inevitably however there was also considerable reflection on that history, particularly about questions touching upon the legitimacy of peoples and governments. Before 1760 the historical questions most disputed in Britain were those connected with the political struggles of the seventeenth century, together with the Hanoverian Succession. The accession of George III effectively brought English Jacobitism to an end and very much weakened the Jacobite tradition in Scotland and in Ireland too; there were virtually no "Tories" in parliamentary politics during the early years of George III, until first the Rockingham Whigs, and then Grey, Holland and their followers, revived the label as a term of abuse for their ministerial opponents. Yet the interpretation of 1689 and related events remained a matter of central concern.

The most authoritative account of post-1760 orthodoxy was provided by William Blackstone in the four volumes of his Commentaries on the Laws of England, published between 1765 and 1769. Blackstone eulogized the constitution which had emerged from the 1689 Settlement as follows (I, pp. 122-23),

> The idea and practice of this political or civil liberty flourish in their highest vigour in these kingdoms, where it falls little short of perfection.

Blackstone avoided the difficulty of determining whether or not the conduct of James II had been of such a character as to justify his overthrow and expulsion by adopting the traditional Whig claim that James had voluntarily abdicated in taking flight from his kingdom. Blackstone also employed familiar Whig denunciations of Sir Robert Filmer's doctrines of indefeasible divine right, of passive obedience and of non-resistance, but these were combined with a strong repudiation of any general right of subjects to disobey a lawful and constitutional regime, such as that created by the 1689 Settlement. Blackstone refused to justify the Revolution (1765, I, pp.184-211),

> from its justice, moderation, and expedience: because that might imply a right of dissenting or revolting from it, in case we should think it unjust, oppressive, or inexpedient. Whereas, our ancestors having most indisputably a competent jurisdiction to decide this great and important question, and having in fact decided it, it is now become our duty at this distance of time to acquiesce in their determination; being born under that establishment which was built upon this foundation, and obliged by every tie, religious as well as civil, to maintain it.

The English State, as much as the English church, was a carefully constructed <u>via media</u>,

> The extremes, between which it steers, are each of them equally destructive of those ends for which societies were formed and are kept on foot. Where the magistrate, upon every succession, is elected by the people, and may by the express provision of the laws be deposed (if not punished) by his subjects, this may sound like the perfection of liberty, and look well enough when delineated on paper; but in practice will ever be productive of tumult, contention, and anarchy. And, on the other hand, divine indefeasible hereditary right, when coupled with the doctrine of unlimited passive obedience, is surely of all constitutions the most thoroughly slavish and dreadful. But when such an hereditary right, as our laws have created and vested in the royal stock, is closely interwoven with those liberties, which, we have seen in a former chapter, are equally the inheritance of the subject; this union will form a constitution, in theory the most beautiful of any, in practice the most approved, and, I trust, in duration the most permanent. It was the duty of an expounder of our laws to lay this constitution before the student in its true and genuine light: it is the duty of every good

Englishman to understand, to revere, to defend it.

Archdeacon Paley also sought to defend the 1689 Revolution within a political framework which accepted the divine underpinning of not only royal but of all legitimate civil authority, and declared in 1785 in his Moral and Political Philosophy (1845,II,p.347).

> The divine right of kings is, like the divine right of other magistrates, the law of the land, or even actual and quiet possession of their office; - a right ratified, we humbly presume, by the Divine approbation, so long as obedience to their authority appears, to be necessary or conducive to the common welfare. Princes are ordained of God by virtue only of that general decree by which he assents, and adds the sanction of his will, to every law of society which promotes his own purpose - the communication of human happiness.

That difficulties might arise in seeking to justify the 1689 Revolution, while severely restricting the application of its underlying principles, was well demonstrated in the thinking of Edmund Burke. In his great speech of 1774 opposing the tea duties on the American colonies, Burke compared the colonists' stand with that of John Hampden (1893,i, p.392),

> No man ever doubted that the commodity of tea could bear an imposition of three-pence. But no commodity will bear three-pence, or will bear a penny, when the general feelings of men are irritated, and two millions of people are resolved not to pay. The feelings of the colonies were formerly the feelings of Great Britain. Theirs were formerly the feelings of Mr. Hampden when called upon for the payment of twenty shillings. Would twenty shillings have ruined Mr. Hampden's fortune? No! but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle it was demanded, would have made him a slave.

Later in the speech he recalled Sir William Temple's observation (1893, i, pp.435-6),

> that Holland has loaded itself with ten times the impositions which it revolted from Spain, rather than submit to. He says

> true. Tyranny is a poor provider. It knows neither how to accumulate, or how to extract.

In 1775 Burke praised the Americans for maintaining the high tradition of liberty he perceived to be their most important cultural baggage from when they emigrated from Britain. He declared (1893, i, pp.474;508),

> The temper and character, which prevail in our colonies, are, I am afraid, unalterable by any human art. We cannot, I fear, falsify the pedigree of this fierce people, and persuade them that they are not sprung from a nation, in whose being the blood of freedom circulates. The language in which they would hear you tell them this tale, would detect the imposition; your speech would betray you. An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth, to argue another Englishman into slavery ....
> As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, whereever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have any where. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you.

The shock of the French Revolution led Burke to place especial emphasis on continuity and tradition in English life and government, so that the greatest justification for any claim to liberty becomes its ancient roots. Like so many eighteenth century thinkers, Burke used naturalistic arguments. If what is most natural is what is most commonly found, then despotism and civil disorder might well be judged the most natural condition of human society, but Burke argued that the slow 'organic' growth of constitutional monarchy was what was natural to English conditions. He argued in 1790 in his Reflections on the Revolution in France (1894, ii, pp.306-7),

> that from magna carta to the declaration of right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our

> liberties, as an entailed inheritance derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity .... This policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of selfish temper and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors.

Yet Burke's main argument is not based at all on what might be natural in general, but on the particulars of a tradition which he held to be intrinsically worthy of defending. He wrote in the same Reflections of 1790 (1894, ii, pp.290; 305; 306),

> If the principles of the Revolution of 1688 are anywhere to be found, it is in the statute called the Declaration of Right. In that most wise, sober, and considerate declaration, drawn up by great lawyers and great statesmen, and not by warm and inexperienced enthusiasts, not one word is said, nor one suggestion made, of a general right 'to choose our own governors; to cashier them for misconduct; and to form a government for ourselves' ... The Revolution was made to preserve our ancient, indisputable laws and liberties, and that ancient constitution of government which is our only security for law and liberty ... The very idea of the fabrication of a new government is enough to fill us with disgust and horror. We wished at the period of the Revolution, and do now wish, to derive all we possess as an inheritance from our forefathers. Upon that body and stock of inheritance we have taken care not to inoculate any scion alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformations we have hitherto made have proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity; ... The same policy pervades all the laws which have since been made for the preservation of our liberties. In the 1st of William and Mary, in the famous statute, called the Declaration of Right, the two Houses utter not a syllable of 'a right to frame a government by themselves.' You will see that their whole care was to secure the religion, laws, and liberties, that had been long possessed, and had been lately endangered ...

Burke went on to criticize the obsession of the Revolution Society with abstract and general rights. He alleged his opponents were deaf to any talk of(1894, ii, p.331),

> the practice of their ancestors, the fundamental laws of their country, the fixed form of a constitution, whose merits are confirmed by the solid test of long experience, and an increasing

> public strength and national prosperity. They despise experience as the wisdom of unlettered men; and as for the rest, they have wrought under ground a mine that will blow up, at one grand explosion, all examples of antiquity, all precedents, charters, and acts of parliament. They have 'the rights of men.' Against these there can be no prescription; against these no argument is binding; these admit to temperament, and no compromise: anything withheld from their full demand is so much of fraud and injustice.

Few political thinkers were more called upon to buttress argument in the Australian colonies during the nineteenth century than Edmund Burke.

The softening of old feuds

The healing effect of the accession of George III on former Tories with Jacobite sympathies is illustrated by the career of Samuel Johnson. Dr. Johnson had described the 1745 as 'a noble attempt' and had referred to William III as 'one of the most worthless scoundrels that ever existed' and to George II as 'unrelenting and barbarous'. As late as 1777 Johnson told a Whig during heated argument, (Boswell, 1961, p.840),

> ...if England were fairly polled, the present king would be sent away to-night, and his adherents hanged tomorrow...Sir, the state of the country is this: the people knowing it to be agreed on all hands that this king has not the hereditary right to the crown, and there being no hope that he who has it can be restored, have grown cold and indifferent upon the subject of loyalty, and have no warm attachment to any king. They would not, therefore, risk any thing to restore the exiled family. They would not give twenty shillings a piece to bring it about. But, if a mere vote could do it, there would be twenty to one; at least, there would be a very great majority of voices for it.

Yet it was a strain on a natural conservative who revered the crown to have to revile its wearer. Johnson praised George III after being received by him in 1767 and reflected in 1773, (Boswell, 1961, p.515),

> It should seem that the family at present on the throne has now established as good a right as the former family, by the long consent of the people; and that to disturb this right might be considered as culpable. At the same time I own, that it is a very difficult question, when considered with respect to the house of Stuart. To oblige people to take oaths as to the disputed right, is wrong. I know not whether I could take them: but I do not blame those who do.

Johnson's historical prejudices were never concealed. His only praise for Oliver Cromwell was for his Irish policy: he told Dr. Thomas Campbell in 1781 that if he were responsible for Irish affairs, 'I would have done as Oliver Cromwell did, I would have burned your cities, and roasted you in the fires of them'. In the same conversation he recommended the razing of the towns of America as the only solution to the revolt of the colonies. Yet Johnson's bark was worse than his bite and he conceded to Campbell that the Irish volunteers were perhaps not 'so very wrong' in their opposition to government policies. Johnson also denounced the Slave Trade and once at least, in Oxford, drank 'to the next insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies'. One reason for his particular detestation of the American rebels is suggested by his question, 'How is it that we always hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?' (Boswell, 1961, p.876).

The Radical revival

Paradoxically the removal of one set of political threats to the eighteenth century British Establishment directly helped to stimulate another danger. Just as the defeat of the French in the Seven Years War made the American colonies bolder in their disputes with Crown and Parliament, so the end of the old Jacobite and Catholic threat gave Dissenters at home greater confidence in urging radical reform in church

and state. The editor of the Annual Register of 1792 put it that 'the two famous performances' of Paine in The Rights of Man and of Burke in Reflections on the Revolution in France had,

> revived, as it were, the royal and republican parties that had divided this nation in the last century, and that had lain dormant since the Revolution in 1688. They now returned to the charge with a rage and an animosity equal to that which characterized out ancestors during the civil wars in the reign of Charles I.

The renewal of ancient disputes in new guises had already taken place much earlier in George III's reign however.

When in 1769 John Wilkes sought to rally his supporters, he described them as (Dickinson, 1977, p. 213)'the first and firmest defenders of public liberty'. Wilkes saw himself as fighting in an ancient cause; he wrote in the North Briton in 1763,

> The Stuart line has ever been intoxicated with the slavish doctrines of the absolute, independent, unlimited power of the crown. Some of that line were so weakly advised, as to endeavour to reduce them into practice: but the English nation was too spirited to suffer the least encroachment of the ancient liberties of the kingdom. Freedom is the English subject's prerogative.

Wilkes's ally Charles Churchill called upon the opponents of the Stuarts for inspiration. Churchill's The Duellist (1764) has a roll of honour of 'Old Patriots' and 'Friends of Liberty', including 'the prop of Freedom, HAMPDEN', while,

> 'SIDNEY by grief from heav'n was kept
> And for his brother Patriot wept;

Churchill also went back to Magna Carta for the antecedents to Wilkes and Liberty, as in An Epistle to William Hogarth (1763),

'When the GREAT CHARTER, which our Fathers bought
With their best blood, was into question brought.

Very few radical thinkers in Britain in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, apart from the idiosyncratic Cobbett, showed much interest in medieval history, however, even in Magna Carta and the original development of Parliament. For the most part they judged the Reformation, the Great Rebellion and the Glorious Revolution to be the three main steps in the establishment of national independence and constitutional liberty. Most radical thinkers who sought to become the heirs of the Revolution Settlement portrayed 1689 not as a final constitutional structure but as a basis for further adaptation. The centenary of 1689 was an ideal opportunity for such historical claims to be staked, especially as another Revolution already loomed in France. Richard Price declared in November 1789 to the Society for Commemorating the Revolution in Great Britain, usually termed the Revolution Society (1790, p.26),

> ..... We are met to thank God for that event in this country to which the name of THE REVOLUTION has been given; and which for more than a century, it has been usual for the friends of freedom, and more especially Protestant Dissenters, under the title of the REVOLUTION SOCIETY, to celebrate with expression of joy and exaltation ...

Price hailed the French Revolutionaries of 1789 as the true heirs of 1689 and urged (1789, pp. 34; 39) that the People had 'a right to chuse our govenors; to cashier them for misconduct; and to frame a government for ourselves'. Price was quite unwilling to be restricted by precedents in his quest for religious and political improvement. He sought (1789, p. 50),

> a general amendment beginning in human affairs; the dominion of kings changed for the dominion of laws, and the dominion of priests giving way to the dominion of reason and conscience.

James Mackintosh too specifically rejected all claims that rights to future freedoms depended on evidence that such freedoms had existed in the past, arguing (1791), p. 306),

> It is not because we have been free, but because we have a right to be free, that we ought to demand freedom. Justice and liberty have neither birth nor race, youth nor age ... Let us hear no more of this ignoble and ignominious pedigree of freedom.

Tom Paine went further than any other British radical in denying the claims of the past or the present, although paradoxically enough he urged that a written constitution be devised to constrain future generations to abide by the precepts he held dear. Paine urged in The Rights of Man (1967, II, p.277-8),

> There never did, there never will, and there never can exist a parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controlling posterity to the 'end of time', or of commanding for ever how the world shall be governed, or who shall govern it; and therefore, all such clauses, acts or declarations, by which the makers of them attempt to do what they have neither the right nor the power to do, nor the power to execute, are in themselves null and void. Every age and generation must be free to act for itself, in all cases, as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave, is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies ... The parliament or the people of 1688, or of any other period, has not more right to dispose of the people of the present day, or to bind or control them in any shape whatever, than the parliament or the people of the present day have to dispose of, bind or control those who are to live a hundred or a thousand years hence.

To Paine the past was a vast repository of injustice, rather than a source of inspiration. The medieval monarchy was 'a tyranny, founded upon an invasion and conquest of the country' by William of Normandy, 'the son

of a prostitute and the plunderer of the English nation'. Later changes, from Magna Carta to the Bill of Rights, had been merely cosmetic, he held, and had left monarchical despotism essentially intact: England's Tudor, Stuart and Hanoverian monarchs were at heart as vile and absurd as their medieval predecessors; the Protestant Succession was the work of a 'cabal of courtiers', using as its tools 'a Dutch stadtholder or a German elector', the much vaunted constitutional progress of Britain was an illusion; in the 1780s there was little to choose between Bourbon France and the Ministers of George III in terms of corruption or oppression.

Paine's millenarianism was first revealed in Common Sense, when he urged the citizens of the newly formed United States of America that (1967, i, pp.118-9),

> they had it in their power to begin the world over again. A situation similar to the present had not happened since the days of Noah. The birthday of a new world was at hand and a race of men, perhaps as numerous as all Europe contained, were to receive their portion of freedom from the events of a few months.

Fifteen years later in the Rights of Men Paine sought to refute Burke by declaring (1967, II, p.360),

> those who talked of a counter-revolution in France showed how little they understood of Man. There did not exist in the compass of language an arrangement of words to express so much as the means of effecting a counter-revolution. The means must be an obliteration of knowledge; and it had never yet been discovered how to make a man unknow his knowledge or unthink his thoughts.

Although Paine wished to exorcise most, if not all, the follies and errors which had preceded his own day, he nonetheless spent much time on attacking what his enemies believed to be significant in the past. The Age of Reason is replete with Paine's denunciation of the superstition and

moral evil with which, he believed, the Bible was filled. Jesus alone, conceived as a Deist precursor of Paine himself, but sadly misrepresented for eighteen centuries, escaped his censure.

Paine's enthusiastic disciple John Thelwell followed him in rejecting historical precedent as a basis for political claims. He wrote (1796, II, p.32),

> I adopt the term Jacobinism without hesitation - 1. Because it is fixed upon us, as a stigma, by our enemies .... 2. Because, though I abhor the sanguinary ferocity of the late Jacobins in France, yet their principles ... are the most consonant with my ideas of reason, and the nature of man, of any that I have met with ... I use the term Jacobinism simply to indicate a large and comprehensive system of reform, not professing to be built upon the authorities and principles of the Gothic customary.

During the 1790s British Radicals were often inconsistent on the value of past political traditions and constitutional enactments, as well as on the degree to which the existing state was opppressive and tyrannical. Charles James Fox claimed on the Hustings in the 1796 Westminster Election, in which his group of Whigs was informally allied with John Horne Tooke's Radicals, that (Thompson, 1965, p.165),

> A more detestable [Government] never existed in British History ... This Government has destroyed more human beings in its foreign wars, than Louis the Fourteenth; and attempted the lives of more innocent men at home, than Henry the Eighth.

Thomas Evans, a Spencean member of the London Corresponding Society, wrote bitterly of his allegedly harsh treatment in Newgate Prison, describing (Thompson, 1965, p.174) how he,

> was conveyed to the Bastille, and there confined many months in a cell, with the accommodation of a bog of straw, a blanket, and rug; denied books, pen, ink, paper, candle, and much of the time access to fire.

Yet Evans was released from prison in under three years and many of the leading English Jacobins, such as Thomas Hardy, Horne Tooke and Thelwell were found Not Guilty of high treason. John Thelwell wrote poems in prison in which he invoked the spirits of John Hampden and Algernon Sidney. One verse ran,

> Within the Dungeon's noxious gloom
> The Patriot still, with dauntless breast,
> The cheerful aspect can assume -
> And smile - in conscious Virtue blest!

Their enemies, naturally enough, refused to concede the name of Patriot to radicals who poured contempt on the history and constitution of the country and who were prepared to aid and abet a French invasion. Some radicals conceded that their treatment was far less cruel than that imposed by the Reign of Terror recently conducted by the Jacobin leaders they admired. Even at the height of what the Radicals termed Pitt's Reign of Terror, there was no droit administratif and no right of arbitrary arrest or search in England, although the laws of Scotland and of Ireland offered less protection to the individual. The Mansfield branch of the framework-knitters wrote in 1812 that (Thompson, 1965, p.81),

> if iver that bulkwark is broke down of every english mans hous being his Castil then that strong barrer is for iver broke that so many of our ancestory have bled for an in vain.

The Strength of Tradition

Late eighteenth-century Britain faced many social, economic and political strains. In international diplomacy and warfare Britain was frequently isolated and faced by powerful coalitions. With rebellion in

Ireland to aid the French, a successful invasion of Britain was more possible than at any time since the Spanish Armada. Internally both Britain and Ireland witnessed an unprecedented population increase in the late eighteenth century, while in Britain, although not in Ireland, urbanization and industrialization were rapidly transforming traditional occupations and ways of life in town and country.

Popular turbulence was frequent in various forms: food riots when prices for grains and other basic food stuffs rose sharply; riots against the reorganization of the militia; Wilkesite demonstrations and the Gordon Riots. Viscount Bennington, when Secretary-at-war, feared that the dispatch of troops to fight in America would leave London at the mercy of 'the many actively desperate and ill-affected people' among its citizens, (Christie, 1984, p.35). London still possessed no effective police force, so strong was the memory of the rule of Cromwell.

In the 1790s there seemed the possibility that internal opponents of the regime in Britain, as well as in Ireland, might join with the French. Elliott concludes (1982, pp.211-12) that 'a widespread belief in the tacit support of the parliamentary opposition fortified the United [Irish] campaign in Ireland, in England and above all in France'. Christie (1984, p.44) argues that 'in 1791 Fox took steps to traverse the governments' foreign policy in a manner which skirted very near if not over the line of treason'. Butterfield (1949), followed by Palmer (1959), thought that late eighteenth century British society had been close to political dissolution.

The overwhelming balance of evidence, however, suggests cohesion and

confidence in the basic institutions of the country. Educated opinion was proud of recent British contributions to natural sciences and to philosophy, such as those of Harvey, Newton, Locke, the Hunter brothers, Hutton, Playfair, Cavendish, Herschel, Halley, Priestly and Hume. The British prided themselves too on the inventiveness their countrymen had shown in recent decades: Arkwright, Wedgwood, Wilkinson, Smeaton, Murdock, Maudsley, Newcomen, Watt, Boulton and Cort formed part of this galaxy. Most of all the British prided themselves on the superiority of their political institutions to those of other nations, ancient, medieval or modern.

Even rioting Britons were highly conscious that, unlike in France, Prussia or elsewhere in Europe, there were considerable moral and legal impediments against the use of force by the government against them; the poorest felt that they were superior to 'Popery and wooden shoes'. When the Duke de la Rochefoucauld visited England in 1784 he noted (Christie, 1984, p.156) a general satisfaction with the system of government, whereas he asked 'How many thousands of Frenchmen will deem their own imperfect?'. On the eve of war Talleyrand (Bewley, 1981, p.27) warned the ministry in Paris that, contrary to the claims of Paine and the Radicals, the majority of the British nation was,

> ... attached to its constitution by ancient prejudices, habit, comparison of its lot with other states, and prosperity, does not imagine anything would be gained from a revolution of which the history of England makes it fear the dangers. The country is solely occupied with questions of material prosperity.

This basic self-confidence is supremely manifested in the words of Jack the Blacksmith in Hannah More's 1793 Village Politics (1854), II, p. 222). In reply to Tom the Mason, who had exclaimed 'I want freedom and

happiness, the same as they have in France', Jack replies,

> What Tom, we imitate them! We follow the French! Why, they only began all this mischief at first, in order to be just what we are already; and what a blessed land must this be, to be in actual possession of all they ever hoped to gain by all their hurly-burly. Imitate them, indeed! Why, I'd sooner go to the Negroes to get learning, or to the Turks to get religion, than to the French for freedom and happiness.

The theme of British liberty was central in Government propaganda in the 1790s, as in a poem published in the Anti-Jacobin in 1798,

> Thus Britons guard their ancient fame,
> Assert their empire o'er the sea,
> And to the envying world proclaim,
> One nation still is brave and free -
>
> Resolv'd to conquer or to die,
> True to their KING, their LAWS, their LIBERTY.

As Robert Burns, no died-in-the-wool reactionary, put it in 1795 in Does Haughty Gaul Invasion Threat,

> Does haughty Gaul invasion threat
> Than let the louns beware, Sir;
> There's wooden wals upon our seas,
> And volunteers on shore, Sir:
> The Nith shall run to Corsincorn,
> And Criffell sink in Solway,
> Ere we permit a Foreign Foe
> On British ground to rally!
> We'll ne'er permit a Foreign Foe
> On British ground to rally!

The Anglican Establishment

In 1788 full enjoyment of the rights and liberties of Englishmen was still confined to Anglicans, while the history of church and state was still viewed as a unified saga by most commentators. The Toleration Acts did not afford political and civic equality to Dissenters, while recent legislation concerning Canada indicated what Pitt might have done in

Australia had it been possible. In 1774 the Quebec Act, attacked by Tom Paine and the American 'Patriot' Party as excessively tolerant, sanctioned Roman Catholic jurisdiction in Quebec, but in 1788 a determined effort was made in Upper Canada to establish an Anglican episcopate backed by ample clergy reserves. Pitt and Grenville hoped that a strong Anglican establishment would resist pressures from radicalism in the United States and from Roman Catholicism in Canada. Had it been the United Empire Loyalists who sailed to Botany Bay and not the convict cargo of the First Fleet, the similar initiative might have been successful in New South Wales.

In the pre-Tractarian decades, the High Church party in the Church of England advanced specifically Anglican anti-Romanist arguments as strongly as did Evangelicals or Latitudinarians. The alleged pre-Reformation corruption of the Roman Church and the claims of the Church of England to Apostolic Succession were argued as strongly as ever before. The view which prevailed in the Upper Canada ecclesiastical legislation of 1788, but which was substantially weakened before relations between church and state were first seriously considered in Australia in the 1820s, was well expressed by Lord Eldon in 1825 (cited in Clark, 1985, pp. 351-2),

> My opinion is that the Establishment is formed, not for the purpose of making the Church political, but for the purpose of making the State religious: that an Establishment, with an enlightened toleration, is as necessary to the peace of the State, as to the Maintenance of religion, without which the State can have no solid peace: that our Establishment is founded upon the purest system of Christianity, and that which in its nature is most tolerant: that a Protestant Church and a Roman Catholic Church cannot co-exist upon equal terms: that one of them must be predominant: that if the Protestant is predominant, the Roman Catholic may have the full benefit of toleration - but that it cannot have political power, with any hope that it will allow a fair degree of toleration to the Prostestant Church. Its principles are founded in ecclesiastical tyranny, and ecclesiastical tyranny must produce civil despotism.

> I know not, moreover, how I can alter my conduct, without declaring the Revolution of 1688 to have been rebellion, and the throne to have been filled for a century by usurpers.

The fears of Catholicism entertained by the Anglican Establishment, clerical or lay, were mild besides those of the dissenting sects and of substantial sections of the normally inarticulate urban poor. In 1778 English Catholic leaders such as Bishop Challoner, the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Shrewsbury were sounded by Lord North's agents on their attitude to measures to remove some forms of legal discrimination against their religion; their response was to warn against such legislation, since the penal laws were largely moribund, whereas proposals to remove them might revive ancient Protestant fears. The 1778 Catholic Relief Act had the very effects which the Catholic leaders anticipated: Protestant Associations were formed which linked Britain's enemies with the Papacy and issued inflammatory propaganda. Lurid accounts of the St. Bartholemew's Day Massacre in Paris, of the burnings of Protestant martyrs at Oxford, Cambridge and Smithfield, of the crimes of Mary Stuart and of Bloody Mary Tudor, and of the atrocities committed by Irish Catholics in 1641, 1689 and on many other occasions, were feverishly distributed in Glasgow, Edinburgh and, with the worst effects, in London. Dissenting and Methodist pulpits were filled with exhortations to recall 'the raging fires of Smithfield' and to beware 'the purple power of Rome advancing by hasty strides to overspread this once happy land', to cite phrases used by John Wesley, who was far from being among the most fiery rousers of Protestant fears (Hibbert, 1959, pp.28-9). The Gordon Riots revealed clearly that anti-Catholic images still loomed large in the historical imagination of many late eighteenth century Britons.

The French Revolution largely ended the old association in England between national enemies and Catholicism, and the post-1815 confidence of Protestant England helped to ensure that in the Australian colonies contempt for Irish Catholics was not combined with serious real fears of domination by them. Nonetheless Lord George Gordon's sentiment (Hibbert, 1959, p.32) that 'Popery when encouraged by Government has always been dangerous to the liberties of the people' remained powerful among the religiously indifferent as well as among the self-consciously Protestant. Colonial Catholics had also to suffer from the suspicion, strongest among the ruling elite, that they felt no obligation to keep faith with those they considered heretics, although it was conceded that they, unlike atheists and heathens, held sacred principles by which they could swear.

The failure to transplant an established church successfully to New South Wales was not the result of any scepticism among Pitt and his ministers or among the civil and military leaders of the colony about the historical claims or legitimacy of such an establishment, but arose from the peculiar composition of the early colonial population. By the time that problems concerning education, public worship and the entire gamut of church-state relations became acute in New South Wales, the strength of the eighteenth century religious establishment in Britain had been weakened by the repeal of the Test and Corporations Acts and the introduction of full Catholic Relief.

The older Protestant denominations, such as Baptists, Congregationalists and English Presbyterians, were weakly represented in the early convict population of Australia, as were the Wesleyan and other types of Methodist. Dissent, old and new, had its main appeal to the lower

middle classes and the respectable poor, who rarely faced trial or transportation. Before the outbreak of the French Revolution most of the Dissenting groups had been increasingly radical in their assessment of the history and current policies of the English church and state. This radical tendency prospered despite the conservatism of John Wesley himself, an orthodox Tory on matters of non-resistance, and of Richard Watson, the leading Methodist theologian, who held that resistance to the sovereign was justified only if he should seek to subvert the constitution, and then if the resistance were led by 'the natural guides and leaders of the people - the nobility and gentry of the land'. During the French wars a pietistic reaction against Jacobinism and an increased patriotic pride led to a steady decline in revolutionary sentiments. The Kilhamite New Connexion and the Primitive Methodists retained radical tendencies, but from 1803 onwards the Annual Conference of Methodists, under the leadership of Jabez Bunting, increasingly emphasised the importance of self-discipline and of obedience to the civil magistrates. The value of toleration under the law of England was enhanced in the thinking of Dissenters by the example of the French Republic.

If the danger of Jacobin Revolution was as great in Britain in the 1790s as E.P. Thompson and George Rude claim it to be, it is remarkable that the Pitt Government accepted so many of the traditional shackles on its powers. Thompson claims (1965, p.168) that the naval mutinies at Spithead and the Nore in 1797 and the Irish Rebellion of 1798 'show how precarious was the hold of the English ancien regime', that (pp.170-71) the secret revolutionary organisation in Britain 'undoubtedly extended beyond the ranks of the Irish' and that 'sympathy with the Irish rebels was certainly not confined to Irishmen', and that (p.481) 'there is no real evidence to suggest that the case against Despond was a "frame-up"'.

Thompson believes that with a little more fortune, or determination, the 'English ancien regime' could have been overturned by revolutionary groups. Thompson regrets their failure, but if his estimate of their strength is anything like accurate, the shortness of the period (1798-1800) during which Habeas Corpus was suspended and the leniency of the courts is a tribute to the strength of the British law and constitution. Conversely, if, as Dickinson (1977) and Christie (1984) argue, Thompson's estimates are hopelessly inflated, the imperviousness of mutinous sailors and of the poor to radical propaganda suggests that a patriotic British ideology commanded wide adherence.

Traditional Elements in Popular Culture

Mrs. Q.D. Leavis (1965, p.97) is one of many scholars who note that the Authorised Version of the Bible and Pilgrim's Progress were widely disseminated among eighteenth and nineteenth century English Protestants and possessed by 'even the grimmest and poorest Puritan household'. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, with its combination of sturdy individualism, incentives to adventure, and piety, came a good third in many such households. The radical William Hone was brought up on the Bible, Milton, Bunyan and Foxe's Book of Martyrs, to which was added, less typically, Rollin's Ancient History, Plutarch's Lives, Pope's Homer and most of Swift. The Chartist Thomas Cooper, as a child in Lincolnshire, became acquainted with Shakespeare, Dryden, Cook's Voyages and Scott's Waverley Novels, but the Bible, Pilgrim's Progess and Paradise Lost were his earlier reading. Other popular religious works were Hervey's Meditations among the Tombs and Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, (Quinlan, 1955, pp.106-1). The challenge offered to religious beliefs by Paine's Age of Reasons produced a flood of 'anti-infidel' popular literature, of which Hannah More's Cheap

Repository Tracts were the most successful. Two million of Hannah More's tracts were sold in the two years after their first issue in 1795 (James, 1976, p.29). In the battle of ideas radicals such as Cobbett and Hone were a match for More, perhaps because they, like her, were well versed in Biblical texts and in English political history.

Not all historical or ideological speculation by those who claimed to be Christians was sober or conservative along the lines of a Hannah More. The fanatic J.N. Tom, who assumed the name of Sir William Courtenay, was as late as 1838 to lead a violent millenarian movement, which was only supressed by the military in carnage exceeding that of Peterloo (Thompson, 1965,). Joanna Southcott and Edward Irving were only the most prominent of a numerous millenarians who in England during the early years of the British colonization of Australia appealed to Daniel, to Revelations and to the Apocrapha, as well as to direct and immediate illumination, to justifiy their claims to spiritual leadership.

Not surprisingly the popular theatre in England in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries provided far greater variety and considerably less sobriety than did a typical Protestant family library. Historical dramas were very popular and by no means confined to the English past. Shakespeare was supplemented by plays about Richard the Lion Heart, the Wars of the Roses, Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I, or about episodes in recent British history such as The Death of Wolfe at Quebec, The Siege of Gibraltar or The Battle of Waterloo. Excitement was also generated by foreign conflicts such as the wars of Charles the Bold, Don Sebastian of Portugal and the Moors, Cortez and the Aztecs, William Tell, Masaniello, the Barbary Coast Pirates, or, on more contemporary themes, such as the

Fall of the Bastille or The Life and Death of Buonaparte. Stories of bandits and outlaws were very popular with the groups which contributed to the early settlement of Van Diemen's Land and of New South Wales. Robin Hood and medieval outlaws, Gay's Beggar's Opera and melodramas based on the crimes of recent celebrities such as George Barnwell, were supplemented by tales of bandits of many other nations, including German, Italian and Spanish.

At an even humbler level than that of the popular theatre were the chap-book stories. James (1976, pp.194ff) picks out as most popular in this genre tales of the Seven Champions of Christendom, with a highly legendary St. George of England leading the other six against human, bestial and diabolical foes, of Richard Lion Heart, and of Herman, the Red Cross Warrior defending Anglo-Saxon England against the Danes. Jack Sheppard and other Newgate heroes vied with these historical or legendary figures in popular favour. One common element across the many diverse modes of popular conceptions of signifcance in the human past during this period in England seems to have been an emphasis on the relative freedom and prosperity of the English and on the cruelty and tyranny of foreign rulers.

The Criminal Laws and the British Ideology

Critics of the British ideology of liberty often cite the criminal law of late eighteenth-century England as evidence of oppression rather than of liberty. The legal reformer Sir Samuel Romilly told the House of Commons in 1810 (Parl. Deb. Vol. 15, col.366) that 'there is probably no other country in the world in which so many and so great a variety of human actions are punishable with loss of life as in England'. Blackstone in the

late 1760s claimed there were then one hundred statutes imposing capital punishment, a number rising during the next half century to over two hundred. As Radzinowicz noted (1948, i, pp.8ff), defects in English criminal law included the use of the same heavy punishment for very different offences, inadequate discrimination on grounds of age, and inadequate alternatives to the death penalty.

Yet Radzinowicz also pointed out (1948, i, p.25) that as well as 'excessively severe criminal laws', England also had 'an extremely liberal form of criminal procedure'. He added that 'the Common Law was more than ever looked upon as a bulwark of individual freedom and a guarantee against encroachments by the executive' and he endorsed Holdsworth's view (1928, p.75) that 'the legal and political impact of the jury system has been greater even than that of the writ of Habeas Corpus'. Torture was not used, as in every other European state, to extract confessions, secret inquisitional practices were not permitted, and unrivalled material safeguards for the defence were available.

The forces available for the defence of law and order were few and the elements of misrule and crime numerous, particularly in London. Samuel Couling claimed in 1750 (Webbs, 1903, p.39) there was one public house to every eight in Westminster, one to every five in Holborn and one to every four in St. Giles. Smollett wrote (1848, 3, p.81) that in 1752,

> the suburbs of the metropolis abounded with an incredible number of public-houses, which continually resounded with the noise of riot and intemperance: they were the haunts of idleness, fraud, and rapine, and the seminaries of drunkennes, debauchery, extravagance, and every vice incident to human nature.'

In 1751 Henry Fielding's Inquiry into the Causes of the late Increase

of Robbers explained the difficulties faced by the Bow Street Runners, confronted as they were by large and growing gangs of professional robbers and footpads. He wrote (1851, p.780),

> Whoever indeed considers the Cities of London and Westminster, with the late vast Addition of their Suburbs; the great irregularity of their Buildings, the immense Number of Lanes, Alleys, Courts and Bye-places; must think, that, had they been intended for the very purpose of Concealment, they could scare have been better contributed. Upon such a view, the whole appears as a vast wood or Forest, in which a Thief may harbour with a great Security, as wild Beasts do in the Desarts [sic] of Africa or Arabia.

Fielding identified six key problems in bringing offenders to justice.

i The virtual impunity enjoyed by receivers of stolen goods and others who help to circulate the spoils of crime, such as brokers and pawnbrokers.

ii Inadequate control of the movements of the dangerous state of society, and notably of vagabonds, which encourages many of them to continue their criminal careers, and makes the detection of their offences very difficult.

iii The laxity shown in apprehending suspects.

iv The reluctance to initiate proceedings arising from a number of factors, such as the practice of advertising for the recovery of stolen goods, fear of reprisals, and unwillingness to undergo further trouble or to incur expense.

v The difficulty of proving offenders' guilt owing to the insufficient weight accorded to the evidence of an accomplice on the one hand, and undue credulity in the defence of alibi on the other, although the latter was often proved to perjury generally considered as 'a common act of Newgate friendship'; and to the rule that an interested person shall not be sworn as a witness.

vi The frequency of pardons.

The problem of highwaymen preying on travellers to and from London also mushroomed in the eighteenth century, as did smuggling on the Channel coasts. In default of an effective police force, itself opposed by many

honest folk who feared standing armies as possible props to arbitrary rule which might prove even more dangerous than common crime, deterrence was sought in ever increasing punishment for those caught. As poaching became a widespread rural activity in the eighteenth century, even before the new wave of enclosures but accelerating after it, it became a capital punishment too.

Although the criminal law became more onerous, it did not follow that more capital sentences were carried out., Radzinowics's figures (1948, p.151) for decades in the mid-century and the end of the century for London and Middlesex are,

	Sentenced to death	Executed
1749-1758	527	365
1790-1799	745	220

Tobias suggests (1979, p.67) that many of the convicts who finished up in Australia 'had been selected for transportation by intelligence, industry and drive', qualties required for the 'superior branches of crime' in which they engaged, but we know little of their thinking about the human condition.

Summary

The large majority of the population of late eighteenth century England, together with less convincing majorities in Scotland and Wales, seem to have held that in liberty, equality before the law, material prosperity and degree of civilization, they were more fortunate than peoples of other lands or their own ancestors. This sentiment was held by many radicals as well as by Whigs and Tories. It was also shared by

criminal groups which formed so important a part of the early British settlement of Australia. Convict, emancipist or free emigrant, most early Australians of whose sentiments we have evidence, regarded British historical and legal traditions as a source of pride rather than of shame. Biblical and/or classical history had significance and relevance for many groups in the British Isles which contributed to the post-1788 colonization of Australia, but, apart from the United States of America, a country which retained its English language and predominantly British culture after independence, there were no contemporary lands beyond Great Britain and Ireland to which many early Australian colonists looked for inspiration, instruction or meaning.

Chapter Three

The Non-European World in Eighteenth Century British Thought.

On the eve of Cook's voyages, Britain had enormous energies which succeeded in transforming whole fields of human activity within the next half century. This creative energy arose from and in its turn strengthened a buoyant view of the human past and of future human potentiality. Defeat by the Americans only served to confirm confidence in Britain in the basic soundness of English political and social traditions, since the United States had successfully adapted them rather than repudiated them. Jacobitism had evaporated and Jacobinism had not yet been born; the mob, despite the Gordon Riots, was not the danger of earlier centuries and had not been transformed into the revolutionary people; political rivals had attended the same schools and enjoyed the same pursuits; the flourishing trade and industry seemed to be cementing the political order rather than leading to a political challenge by the bourgeoisie, let alone by the proletariat. The wealthier classes in Britain shared Gibbon's belief that they had raised civilization to the level it had earlier reached in the golden age of the Antonines and that they might achieve further yet. How did such a society respond to new knowledge of other continents and their ways of life?

European Supremacy: Decadent Asia

Europeans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not as a general rule view Asian civilization with ethnocentric condescension. A

highly favourable impression of Chinese culture was conveyed to the west by Jesuit missionaries in Peking, such as Matteo Ricci, Nicholas Trigault, Alvaro Semmedo, Gabriel Magaillans, Louis Le Comte and Jean-Baptiste Du Halde. Protestants such as the Dutch colonial administrator Jan Nieuhoff, accepted much of the Jesuits' account. The Dutch diplomat Nieuhoff wrote in 1669, (Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.22),

> Of all the heathen sects which are come into the knowledge of those in Europe, we have not read of any who are fallen into fewer errours than the Chinese, ever since the first ages; for in their books we read that these people have worshipp'd the highest and one God-head.

Among English writers who endorsed this favourable opinion was John Webb, who wrote in 1678 (Ibid) that,

> if ever any monarchy in the world was constituted according to political principle, and dictates of right reason, it may be boldly said that of the Chinois is.

Jonathan Swift's patron, Sir William Temple, believed that most of the wisdom of Europe derived from China and India, and that Democritus, Lycurgus and Pythagoras had voiced Eastern wisdom, rather than made independent discoveries. Temple commented, 'For whoever observed the account already given of the ancient Indian and Chinese learning and opinions will easily find among them the seeds of all those Grecian productions and institutions' (1814, III, pp.456-7). Swift himself may have based the favourable traits discerned by Gulliver among the Houyhnhnms on Temple's opinions of Chinese wisdom and stability.

China's cultural advocates did not claim that it was a dynamic society; indeed its conservatism was an attraction to Temple and to Swift. By the late eighteenth century however British opinions about Chinese traditional civilization had become much more hostile. The East Indian Company informed

the House of Commons in 1791 that the Chinese Government was 'the most corrupt in the universe'. John Pinkerton in his 1802 Modern Geography claimed (2, p.91) that in China bribery was a 'universal vice'; John Barrow, who accompanied Lord Macartney's 1793 embassy to Peking, was sharply critical of Chinese society in general; holding that the rulers held the people in a 'rapacious grasp' (1806, pp.379-80), and that 'the general character of the people' was 'strongly marked with pride, meannesss and ignorance (p.419). Macartney's scientific adviser, Dr. Hugh Gillan, was dismissive (1962, p.279) of Chinese accomplishments in fields in which the Jesuits had once praised them. Accurate knowledge of medicine, he wrote, 'can hardly be said to exist among them', and 'natural history, natural philosophy and chemistry, or sciences, are equally unknown to them'.

The popularity of Chinese art, at its peak in the 1750s, was also in decline by the end of the century. It was only in porcelain and earthenware, especially in the 'willow pattern', that Chinoiserie remained, by 1800, a significant influence in Britain. Barrow denied (1806, p.305) that the Chinese could,

> boast of giving the materials much elegance of form. With those inimitable models from the Greek and Roman vases, brought into modern use by the ingenious Mr. Wedgwood, they will not bear a comparison. And nothing can be more rude and ill designed than the grotesque figures and other objects painted, or rather daubed, on their porcelain.

Macartney's mission helped to dissolve the European image of China as a stable, if stagnant, society in which a benign, paternalistic Emperor controlled a reasonably prosperous and contented peasantry through scholarly and efficient officials. Macartney in contrast dismissed (1962, pp.212-13) the Chinese Empire as,

> an old, crazy, first rate man-of-war, which a fortunate succession of able and vigilant officers has contrived to keep afloat ... but whenever an insufficient man happens to have the command upon deck, adieu to the discipline and safety of the ship. She may perhaps not sink outright: she may drift some time as a wreck, and will then be dashed to pieces on the shore; but she can never be rebuilt on the old bottom.

Like the Chinese, the Hindus had been supposed by earlier British and other European writers to be incapable of progressive political change. This supposed lack of dynamism did not necessarily lead to a general slighting of Indian culture: after the British conquest of Bengal, Warren Hastings strongly encouraged scholarly inquiry into the Indian past, and scholars such as Nathaniel Halhed, Charles Wilkins and Sir William Jones provided British readers with far more direct and detailed knowledge of Indian civilization than they possessed of Chinese. The picture of Indian culture painted by British observers was by no means always unfavourable in the eighteenth century. William Jones praised several Muslim traditions in Bengal, arguing (1806, III, pp.511ff) that Muslim law gave as much protection as that of England to the subject's property rights. Edmund Burke used Jones against his patron when he accused the impeached Hastings of seeking to establish in Bengal an arbitrary form of government previously unknown there. Indians possessed the right under their traditional legal system, Burke maintained (Marshall, 1965, p.183), to 'property moveable and immoveable, descendable property as well as occasional property, and property held for life'.

Yet by the end of the eighteenth century standard British judgements on India were as low as those on China. The Mughal officials in southern India and in Bengal were commonly castigated as foreign oppressors who used every cruelty to extort tribute from a conquered population, while Hindu officials were thought merely to substitute guile and deceit for brutality. The English

adventurer James Grant, a pot unfearful of calling kettles black, claimed in 1786 (Marshall, 1965, p.105) that,

> The depravity, ignorance and misconduct of native Hindoostanny agents in every branch of government has often been the theme of general declamation as being notorious, lamentable, irremediable.

Other parts of Asia were, if anything, in lower esteem in the late eighteenth century than China and India. Robert Wood's surveys of Baalbek and Palmyra between 1749 and 1751 left him outraged (1757, p.4, cited, like the following references in Marshall and Williams, 1982, pp.69, 90, 165, 167) by the 'shameful venality' of the Ottoman administration. John Bell described (1763, II, p.146) the peoples he had encountered in Central Asia as 'poor savage tribes', thus helping to overthrow residual romantic conceptions of semi-heroic Mongols and Tartars. The reputation of the Ottoman Empire sank even lower towards 1800. Eli Mabesci claimed (1784, p.258) that 'the Turkish government properly speaking is a system of slavery', while in 1798 William Eton described it (1798, p.17) as 'a power calculated to crush the growing energies of mind, and annihilating the faculties of men'. In the same year on his way back from Bengal, George Forster (not the son of Cook's companion) wrote of Persia that it had 'suffered severe devastations and has been grieviously depopulated' and 'that at this day Persia may be said to exhibit a vast tomb, piled up with the victims of ambition, avarice and revenge' (1798, II, pp.178; 234).

In general the reputation of Asian civilizations among Western Europeans, declined steeply in the two centuries preceding the British settlement of Australia, thus reducing interest in their past. Donald Lach claimed (1965, II, p.565) that representative European intellectuals in the sixteenth century lost much of their 'robust confidence in European secular ideals, ideas,

institutions and arts', when faced by Asian cultures. Two centuries later Asian societies were typically dismissed as despotic in government, stagnant in development, poor in the midst of potentiabilites of great wealth, and besotted with vain superstitions. Where violent changes had taken place, as in the Manchu conquest of China, the change was judged by European observers to have been for the worse. The dismissal by Marx and Engels of the 'Asiatic mode of production' as a recipe for despotism and stagnation was based solidly on accepted European opinions.

Even conservative thinkers like Samuel Johnson no longer held the lingering reverence for the customs of civilized societies beyond Europe that Temple and Swift had entertained earlier in the eighteenth century. Imlac explains in Rasselas (1759, ch.11),

> the northern and western nations of Europe ... are now in possession of all power and all knowledge ... When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdoms and those that surround us, they appeared another order of beings. In their country it is difficult to wish for anything that may not be obtained: a thousand arts of which we have never heard are continually labouring for their convenience and pleasure; and whatever their own climate has denied them is supplied by their commerce.

European Superiority: Images of America

The classical defence of primitivism was made by Montaigne, whose Essays were translated into English in 1603. Montaigne wrote (1935, p.204-05),

> We all call barbarism that which does not fit in with our usages ... Those people are wild in the sense which we call wild the fruits that Nature has produced by herself and her ordinary progress; whereas in truth it is those we have altered artificially and diverted from the common order, that we should rather call wild. In the first we still see, in full life and vigour, the genuine and most natural and useful virtues and properties, which we have bastardized in the latter, and only adapted to please our corrupt taste ... Those nations, then, appear to us so far barbarous in this sense, that their minds have been formed to a very slight degree, and that they are still very close to their original

> simplicity. They are still ruled by the laws of nature, and very little corrupted by ours.

The idea expressed by Hesiod that cities and commerce are a debasement of an originally blissful condition of life had never died out in Mediterranean and other European civilizations; hopes that part of mankind might have avoided the penalties of 'Man's first disobedience' lingered, despite being heretical. Dryden seems to have been the first author to use the expression 'the noble savage'. in The Conquest of Grenada (1664) Almonzer declares,

> I am as free as Nature first made man,
> Ere the base laws of servitude began,
> Even wild in woods the noble savage ran.

After Europeans gained close acquaintance with Amerindians, these were usually taken as the archetype of primitivism. John Locke wrote (1965, p.343) 'Thus in the beginning all the world was America', and that America was 'a pattern of the first ages in Asia and Europe'. Adam Ferguson wrote in 1767 of the Amerindians 'It is in their present condition that we are to beheld, as in a mirror, the features of our own progenitors.' This idea was extensively canvassed by the leaders of the Scottish Enlightenment.

William Douglass (1747, I (1), pp. 153-4), for example, wrote,

> America may with much Propriety be called the youngest Brother and meanest of Mankind; no Civil Government, no Religion, no Letters; the French call them Les Hommes des Bois, or MenBrutes of the Forrest: They do not cultivate the Earth by planting or grazing: Excepting a very inconsiderable Quantity of Mays or Indian Corn, and of Kidney-Beans (in new England they are called Indian Beans) which some of their Squaas or Women plant; they do not provide for To-Morrow, their Hunting is the necessary subsistence not Diversion; when they have good Luck in Hunting, they eat and sleep until all is consumed and then go a Hunting again.

In 1777 William Robertson used supposed similarities between contemporary

Amerindians and Germans of the time of Tacitus to suggest that modes of subsistence, rather than genetic links, best explain social structures. Robertson wrote (1840,I,p.372),

> I have pushed the comparison between the Germans and Americans no further than was necessary for the illustration of my subject. I do not pretend that the state of society in the two countries was perfectly similar in every respect. Many of the German tribes were more civilized than the Americans. Some of them were not unacquainted with agriculture; almost all of them had flocks of tame cattle, and depended upon them for a chief part of their subsistence. Most of the American tribes subsist by hunting, and are in a ruder and more simple state than the ancient Germans. The resemblance, however, between their condition is greater, perhaps, than any that history affords an opportunity of observing between any two races of uncivilized people, and this has produced a surprising similarity of manners.

In specific refutation of monogenesists such as Lafitau, Robertson argued (1840, II, pp.85-6),

> Nothing can be more frivolous or uncertain than the attempts to discover the original of the Americans, merely by tracing the resemblance between their manners and those of any particular people in the ancient continent. If we suppose two tribes, though placed in the most remote regions of the globe, to live in a climate nearly of the same temperature, to be in same state of society, and to resemble each other in the degree of their improvement, they must feel the same wants and exert the same endeavours to supply them. The same objects will allure, the same passions will animate them, and the same ideas and sentiments will arise in their minds. The character and occupations of the hunter in America must be little different from those of an Asiatic, who depends for subsistence on the chase. A tribe of savages on the banks of the Danube must nearly resemble one upon the plains washed by the Missisippi. Instead then of presuming from this similarity, that there is any affinity between them, we should only conclude, that the disposition and manners of men are formed by their situation, and arise from the state of society in which they live. The moment that begins to vary, the character of a people must change. In proportion as it advances in improvement, their manners refine, their powers and talents are called forth. In every part of the earth, the progress of man hath been nearly the same and we can trace him in his career from the rude simplicity of savage life, until he attains the industry, the arts, and the elegance of polished society. There is nothing wonderful, then, in the similitude between the Americans and the barbarous nations of our continent.

The Amerindian played the role in eighteenth century cultural history that the Australian Aborigine played in nineteenth century anthropology. Within such studies, as well as in popular thought, rival stereotypes continued to strive. The concept of the noble Amerindian never disappeared. French Jesuits and Pennsylvanian Quakers were among its advocates. William Penn himself wrote in a frequently quoted passage (Brome, 1687, pp.99-100, cited in Marshall and Williams, 1892, p.223),

> In Liberality they excel, nothing is too good for their friend; give them a fine gun, coat, or other thing, it may pass twenty hands, before it sticks; light of heart, strong affections, but soon spent; the most merry creatures that live, feast and dance perpetually; they never have much, nor want much: wealth circulateth like the brook, all part partake ... they care for little, and the reason is, a little contents them: in this they are sufficiently revenged on us; if they are ignorant of our pleasures, they are also free from our pains. They are not disquieted with bills of lading and exchange nor perplexed with chancery-suits and exchequer-reckonings: we sweat and toil to live, their pleasure feeds them, I mean, their hunting, fishing and fowling ....

European disputes often influenced French and British attitudes towards Indian culture and traditions in doctrinal as well as political ways. The scholarly Jesuit Joseph-Francois Lafitau, for example, was concerned to show that, pace the claims of sceptics and free thinkers, all peoples possessed an innate sense of religion and of the divine. He was as a result particularly keen to show that the texture of belief and obligation in Indian society was neither godless or lawless. Father Lafitau's concern to show that religious belief was natural to man led him not only, like other Jesuits, to a close study of Indian culture, but to comparisons between it and the world outlook of the Homeric Age. Bernard le Bouvier de Fontanelle's Discours sur l'origine des fables, although written from a very different standpoint, together with Lafitau's comparative studies, laid the foundations of modern anthropology.

Several Deists were just as ready as Quakers and Jesuits to defend Amerindian culture. The Baron de Lahonton wrote in 1703 (1905, pp.420-21),

> The savages are utter strangers to distinctions of property, for what belongs to one is equally anothers ... Money is in use with none of them but those that are Christians, who live in the suburbs of our towns. The others will not touch or so much as look upon silver, but give it the odious name of the French Serpent ... They think it unaccountable that one man should have more than another, and that the rich should have more respect than the poor. In short, they say, the name of savages which we bestow among them would fit our selves better, since there is nothing in our actions that bears the appearance of wisdom .... among them the true qualifications of a man are, to run well, to hunt, to bend the bow and manage the fuzee, to work a cannoo, to understand war, to know forests, to subsist upon a little, to build cottages, to fell trees, and to be able to travel an hundred leagues in a wood without any guide, or other provision than his bow and arrows.

Lahonton's sophisticated Amerinidan Adorio was described by Henri Baudet (1905, p. 39) as 'the first famous savage de bon sens'. Loosely based on the Huron Kondiaronk who, Lahontan claimed, had visited Quebec, New York and Paris but had quitted them with disgust, Adorio had advanced beyond the unreflective beliefs of a closed society to a principled rejection of decadence and injustice. Adorio was to influence popular fiction as well as scholarly debate.

The English Deist John Toland was not to be outdone by the French in his praise of the primitive. Toland (1726, II, p.425) cited as evidence of the superior rationality and tranquility of the Amerindians a letter he had received from a colonist in North Carolina, who wrote,

> Yes, Sir, it is these very Indians that have made me blush for shame to be a Man, and yet so little reasonable; and to carry the name of a Christian, and yet so remote from a practice of an Evangelical life. We know our Saviour's precepts without observing them, and they observe them without knowing him: were to have all the Gospel word by heart, they could not practice it with more exactness and

strictness then they do it already.

An Indian faced with an attempt to convert him to Christianity replied, accordingly to Toland's correspondent (1726, II, p.427),

> You would ... have us become Christians? well, to what end and purpose? Is it to make us better than really we are, or is it not rather to make us as wicked and vicious as yourselves, to render us Adulterers, Whore-masters, Lyars, Murtherers, Robbers, without faith, honor, or honesty, minding nothing but how to deceive one another, and to destroy you upon pretence of Justice? Is this a party to choose, and to oblige us to renownce the simplicity of our manner of life, and the sweet tranquility of midn we now enjoy?

Much popular literature in eighteenth century Britain was influenced by the archetype of the noble Amerindian. In The Adventure of Emmera; or, the Fair American, published anonymously in 1767, the Amerindian heroine Emmera compares Europe and her own people as follows, (II, p.185, cited in Whitney, 1965).

> .. my blood runs cold to think of the intolerable wickedness in the world, and amongst people that think themselves refined in their understandings and polished in their ideas! These are the people that call the Americans savages! Virtuous and amiable people! I have quitted the neighbourhood of men to become the companion of brutes!

Exceptional benevolence was also attributed to the Amerindian Chief Logan in another anonymous novel of 1788, called The School for Fathers; or the Victim of a Curse: A Novel, Containing Authentic Memoirs and Anecdotes, with Historical Facts. When the heroine, the wife of an imprisoned royalist in the American War of Independence, is found by Logan, the following is recorded (I, p.226, cited in Whitney, 1965).

> "I ask not", said he, "what country you are of. Whether you belong to our brother on the other side of the lake; or whether you are an enemy to us and to him. I see you are in distress; that is country enough for an Indian to pour the balm of consolation into the wounds of adversity. The great Spirit suffers his creatures to be

> afflicted, to teach them wisdom, and to inspire man with compassion one toward another".

'Logan' was a semi-historical person, quoted by Thomas Jefferson in his Notes on Virginia as follows (1904, II, p.88),

> I appeal to any white man to say, if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not.

Jefferson challenged 'the whole orations of Demosthenos and Cicero, and of any more eminent orator, if Europe has furnished more eminent, to produce a single passage superior to the speech of Logan.

The speech echoes the words of the Indian chiefs at the Albany Conference of 1754, reported in The Gentleman's Magazine as follows (1755, XXV, p.250),

> At this time which we have now spoken of, the white people were small, but we were numerous and strong; we defended them in that low state: But now the case is altered; you are numerous and strong, but we are few and weak; therefore we expect that you will act by us in those circumstances as we did by you in those we have just now related. We view you now as a very large tree, which has taken deep root in the ground, whose branches are spread very wide.

Against this tradition of sympathy for and admiration of the Amerindian as the noble savage there ran a contrary view. The New England Puritans from early settlement had far worse relationships with the North-Eastern forest tribes than had the Quakers in Pennsylvania. John Josselyn expressed a typical settler viewpoint when he wrote in his Account of Two Voyages to New-England that the Indians were (1674, p.124),

> Very inconstant, crafty, timorous, quick of apprehension, and very ingenious, soon angry, and so malicious that they seldom forget an injury, and barbarously cruel ....

Cotton Mather half a century later offered no hope for the conversion of

Indians to Christianity or to civilized ways. He wrote, (Vaughan, 1965, p.320),

> Though we know not when or how these Indians first became inhabitants of this mighty continent, yet we may guess that probably the devil decoyed those miserable savages hither in hopes that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ would never come here to destroy or disturb his absolute empire over them.

Hatred of Amerindians and contempt for their traditions was very powerful among British frontiersmen who were contending with them for land, whereas the typical French colonist was seeking trade rather than a homestead. British Governors in the coastal capitals hoped to restrain further westwards expansions through, for example, the ineffective Proclamation Line of 1763. Urban and urbane Americans such as Benjamin Franklin also deplored further inroads into Indian lands; his 1764 Narrative of the Late Massacres was a powerful indictment of the atrocities committed against Amerindians by the Paxton Boys in Pennsylvania. On the frontier however it was John Maylem's view which reigned supreme (Slotkin, 1973, p.249),

> With visage foul, and horrid awful grin;
> Red, black and green besmear'd their mighty fronts,
> With snaky braids, and dreadful ornament,
> And pitchy feathers platted on their hair;
> Obscene and naked, daub'd with various paints.

In the House of Commons in 1788 (6th February) Edmund Burke attacked Amerindian methods of waging war as (Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.225),

> so horrible ... as to exceed the ferocity of all barbarians mentioned in history. The only emoluments they receive: who signalize themselves in battle, are human scalps, human flesh, and the gratification arising from torturing, and sometimes eating, their captives in war.

Governor Thomas Pownal claimed in the same debate,

> The mutual feelings of humanity, which have set bounds to ravage, desolation, and bloodshed, among civilized peoples, are totally absorbed by an unrestrained effusion of the passions of revenge, bloodthirstyness, and carnage, even to extermination among the American savages.

By the late eighteenth century the Jesuit missionaries had lost their earlier sympathy for Indian life and customs. The Order had never been fully behind De Creux, Lafitau, Charlevoix and their colleagues: in particular the refined cruelties of the Natchez of Louisiana, more culturally akin to the Incas than the Iroquois, had led the Jesuit missionaries there to fear that there was nothing in Indian societies other than savagery and despotism. Miguel Venegas's Noticia de la Califoria signalled the end of the optimistic vein opened by the Spanish priest, Bartolome de Las Casas. Venegas wrote, (1759, I, pp.64-5, cited in Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.225).

> The characteristics of the Californians, as well as of all the other Indians, are stupidity and insensibility; want of knowledge and reflection; inconstancy, impetuosity, and blindness of appetite; and excessive sloth and abhorrence of all labour and fatigue; and incessant love of pleasure and amusement of every kind, however trifling and brutal; pusillanimity and relaxity: and in fine, a most wretched want of every thing which constitutes the real man and renders him rational, inventive, tractable, and useful to himself and society. It is not easy for Europeans, who were never out of their own country, to conceive an adequate idea of these people ... Their understanding comprehends little more than what they see: abstract ideas, and much less a chain of reason, being far beyond their power; so that they scarce ever improve their first ideas; and these are in general false, or at least inadequate.

Science as well as religion seemed to turn its back on the noble savage. Buffon concluded from his study of the ethnographic evidence that in America (Gerbi, 1973, pp.5-6),

> man, scarce in number, was thinly spread, a wanderer, where far from making himself master of this territory, as his own domain, he ruled over nothing; where never having subjugated either animals or the elements, nor farmed the waters, nor governed the rivers, nor worked the earth, he was himself no more than an animal of the first order,

> existing within nature as a creature without significance, a sort of helpless automation, powerless to change nature or assist her ... the savage is feeble and small ... the activity of his body is less an exercise or voluntary movement than an automatic reaction to his needs; take from him hunger and thirst, and you will destroy at the same time the active cause of all his movements; he will remain either standing there stupidly or recumbent for days on end.

The great Swedish Botanist Linnaeus also gave scientific respectability to a lowly classification of the Amerindians, whose attributes he summarized as (Burke, 1972, p.266),

> red, choleric, erect; thick, straight, black hair; distended nostrils; freckled face; beardless chin; obstinate, gay, free. He paints himself with variegated, red lines. He is ruled by custom.

The British sailors who explored the South Pacific with Cook, and, subsequently, the soldiers and convicts who first made a European settlement in Australia were much more influenced, by unfavourable than by the favourable portrayals of the Amerindians.

European Superiority: Images of Africa

Some medieval Christians hoped to find, beyond the threatening hordes of Islam, les bons negres who, led by Prester John from Ethiopia, would prove co-religionists and allies. Prince Henry the Navigator hoped in 1460, the last year of his life, to journey in search of this elusive ruler and to ally Ethiopia to Portugal. D.B. Davis's claim (1966, p.281) that 'it is possible that there was something in the culture of Western Europe that incited white men to look with contempt on the physical and cultural traits of the African', should thus be treated with caution.

Defenders of African culture included Francis Moore, a factor with the Royal African company who wrote an account of the Gambia in 1738, which

attributed the pillaging and extortions of African rulers to their imitation of foreign models. Moore (1738, III, p. 179, cited in Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.235), claimed that before either the Arabs had arrived with Islam or the Europeans with Christianity,

> The Negroes were entirely ignorant of arts and letters, and of the use of iron: they lived in common, having no property in lands nor goods, no tyrants, nor superior lords; but supported themselves in an equal state upon the natural produce of the country ... ambition or avarice never drove them into foreign countries, to subdue or cheat their neighbours. Thus they lived without toil or superfluities. And this the Greeks and Romans believed to be the first state of mankind, which they describe in the golden age ...

William Smith wrote glowingly of life in Whydoh before its destruction by Dahomean invaders he claimed had been corrupted by European influence. Smith wrote (1744, pp.248-9, cited in Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.236),

> All who have ever been here, allow this to be one of the most delightful countries in the world. The great number and variety of tall, beautiful and shady trees which seem as if planted in fine groves for ornament, being without any underwood, or weeds, as in other parts of Guinea; also the verdant fields are every-where cultivated, and not otherwise divided, than by those groves, and in some places a small foot-path; together with a great number of pretty little villages, enmcompassed by a low mud-wall, and regularly plac'd over the face of the whole country. All these contribute to afford the most delightful prospect that imagination can form.

A more famous Smith, Adam, resisted the use against Blacks of ethnocentric concepts of beauty. He wrote in 1759 (1976, p.199),

> What different ideas are formed in different nations concerning the beauty of the human shape and countenance? A fair complexion is a shocking deformity upon the coast of Guinea. Thick lips and a flat nose are a beauty.

Adam Smith's compatriot, James Beattie, was one of many writers who cited Francis Williams, Philip Quaques, Ignatius Sancho, Job Ben Solomon, Olaudah Equiano and other Black Africans who become respected figures in eighteenth

century London, as evidence that 'Blacks, if properly educated, are capable of the same improvements as Whites' (Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.249).

There were many sympathetic portrayals of injured and unfairly abused Negroes in popular novels and plays. Mrs Aphia Behn's novel Oroonko, dramatized in a version presented at Drury Lane in 1695, had as its hero a Europeanized Black of the highest character (Jordan, 1977, p.28),

> His nose was rising and Roman, instead of African and flat: His mouth the finest shaped that could be seen: far from those great turn'd lips, which are so natural to the rest of the Negroes. The whole proportion and air of his face was so nobly and exactly form'd, that barring his colour there could be nothing in nature more beautiful, agreeable and handsome.

The anti-slavery and other late eighteenth century humanitarian movements also promoted a wide range of popular literature which presented an idealized picture of the African past and of the character of the Negro (Tompkins, 1932). The most widely read novel of this genre was Mrs. Anna Marcia Mackenzie's 1793 Slavery; or the Times, described by Whitney (1965, p.89) as 'an Uncle Tom's Cabin of the eighteenth century'. Mrs. Mackenzie's hero is a young African prince, Adolphus, who visits England and wins the hearts of all who meet him. Adolphus's father, Zimza, a benevolent ruler who has also visited England and noted its vices with disapproval, cautions his son when Zimza plans marriage with a highly eligible young English heiress. That Adolphus is easily swindled by an unscrupulous gambler and that Zimza is sold into slavery by his rebellious subjects undermines some of the confidence which Mrs. Mackenzie sought to create in the soundness of Black judgement, although Adolphus rescues his father from slavery, marries his heiress and all live happily ever afterwards.

Another example in popular literature of the period of the noble negro is found in Sir Herbert Croft's A Brother's Advice to his Sisters (1776), in which the narrator relates (pp. 121-22),

> I saw an honest negro, not long since, as he was walking toward Deptford, at the rate of about five miles an hour, stop short, in passing an old sailor, of a different complexion, with but one arm and two wooden legs - It was my fortune, I say, to have the luxury to watch this worthy savage take three halfpence and a farthing, his little all, out of the side pocket of his tattered trowsers; and wrap them up in a bit of an old hand-bill, which held his tobacco, when he was so rich as to have any; force them into the weeping sailor's retiring hand; wipe his eyes with the corner of his blue-patched jacket; and walk away so happy, and so fast - that I was obliged to put your friend Sport into a Canterbury gallop, to get up to the dog, in order to shake him by the hand.

Again, as with the Amerindians, a powerful contrary stereotype of the African Negro was also propagated. Richard Blome's Geographical Description says of Guinea (1670, II, p.49, cited in Williams and Marshall, 1982, p.228),

> the Inhabitants, especially before the crossing of the Portugals, were rude and barbarous, living without the knowledge of a God, Law, Religion or Government, very dis-ingenious, not caring for Arts or Letters'. Even after the coming of the Europeans, the Africans remained 'much addicted to Theft ... perfidious, Lyers ... great Idolaters ... of late they have tried many forms of religion, as Judaism, Mahometism, and Christianity; but care not much for any.

James Houston, who served as a surgeon with the Royal African Company, wrote of Sierra Leone (1725, p.33, cited in Williams and Marshall, 1982, p.231),

> I shall only say in one word, that their natural temper is barbarously cruel, selfish and deceitful, and their government equally barbarous and uncivil ... As for their Customs, they exactly resemble their fellow creatures and natives, the Monkeys.

The cruelty of the Dahomey slave-state was to be widely used as a justification for sending Africans to slavery in the West Indies, since they would be better off there than at the hands of native predators. William

Snelgrave's 1734 account of sadism and cannibalism after the Dahomean capture of Whydah was quoted frequently throughout the century as evidence of Black blood-lust. Equally widespread were accounts of Black idleness, such as that of John Atkins, another surgeon. Atkins wrote (1735, cited in Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.233-5)) that the peoples of West Africa were 'cautious of planting too much and wasting their labour' (p.64). He described the King of Whydoh, before the Dahomean sack, as follows (p.90),

> His palace is a dirty, large bamboo building, a mile or two round, wherein he keeps near a thousand women, and divides his time in an indolent manner, between eating and lust; he is fatned to a monstrous bulk; never has been out since he became King (nigh twelve years).

As against Adam Smith and James Beattie may be cited Lord Chesterfield and David Hume. Chesterfield assured his son that (Anstey, 1975, p.37),

> the Africans are the most ignorant and unpolished peoples in the world, little better than the lions, tigers and leopards and other wild beasts, which that country produces in great numbers.

David Hume in a later footnote to his essay Of National Characters wrote (Green and Grose, 1875, I, p.252),

> I am apt to suspect that Negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences.

There was no shortage of violently abusive attacks on the African character as a whole, of which one of the best-known was that of Edward Long, a former judge in Jamaica, who wrote under the pseudonym of 'The Planter' before publishing his three volume History of Jamaica under his own name in 1774. Long wrote in terms such as (1774, II, pp.351-52),

> First, in respect to their bodies, viz. the dark membrane which communicates that black colour to their skins, which does not alter by transportation into other climates, which they never lose ... Secondly, a covering of wool, like the bestial fleece, instead of hair. Thirdly, the roundness of their eyes, the figure of their ears, tumid nostrils, flat noses, invariable thick lips, and general large size of the female nipples, as if adapted by nature to the peculiar conformation of their childrens mouths. Fourthly, the black colour of the lice which infest their bodies ... Fifthly, their bestial and fetid smell, which they all have in a great or less degree ....

Long went so far as to claim (Barker, 1978, p.47) that Negroes differed 'from other men, not in kind, but in species' and that the orang-outang 'has a much nearer resemblance to the Negroe race, than the latter bear to white men'. A.J. Barker rightly warned (1978, p. 200) that this was an extreme and unrepresentative position, since for most British commentators 'the Negro image was little different from that of the rest of the uncivilized world', 'a wild, intutored cousin', but certainly part of the human family. D.B. Davis was however, justified in his judgement that (1966, p.468),

> the most memorable images that emerged from the travel literature were not of industrious farmers or weavers, but of a people who mutilated their bodies and drank human blood, and of kings who lived in palaces decorated by thousands of human skulls.

It seems more likely that it was experience, however wrongly evaluated, that led to a low opinion of blackness, rather than that innate colour prejudice totally warped perceptions and experiences. The wide range of conflicting British attitudes must also be taken into account: the opponents of slavery were more numerous than those engaged in the slave trade. Furthermore, most subsequent British travellers in Africa were still eager to find African societies and culture which met with their approval; although they may have been ethnocentric in what they prized and hoped to find, or even unduly critical of what they did find, explorers such as Bruce and Livingstone did

not dismiss possibilities of African achievement. Similarly the European intruders into the Pacific were not without hope of finding peoples who had much to teach them.

European Superiority: Images of the Pacific

The opening of the Pacific greatly stimulated new comparisons, scholarly and popular, between human societies separated both in time and space. Canon John Douglas went out of his way to make this point at the beginning of his 1784 preface to the official account of Cook's Third Voyage. Douglas noted,

> It is a favourite study with the scholar to trace the remains of Grecian or Roman workmanship;.... the amusement is rational and instructive. But will not his curiosity be more awakened, will he not find even more real matter for important reflection, by passing an hour in surveying the numerous specimens of the ingenuity of our newly-discovered friends, brought from the utmost recesses of the globe, to enrich the British Museum, and the valuable repository of Sir Ashton Lever? If the curiosities of Sir Ashton's Sandwich-room alone, were the only acquisition gained by our visits to the Pacific Ocean, who that has the taste to admire, or even eyes to behold, could hesitate to pronounce, that Captain Cook had not sailed in vain? the expense of his three voyages did not, perhaps, far exceed that of digging out the buried contents of Herculaneum. And we may add, that the novelties of the Society or Sandwich Islands, seem better calculated to engaged the attention of the studious in our times, than the antiquities, which exhibit proofs of Roman magnificence.

Far from displaying any narrow ethnocentrism, Douglas added,

> A feeling of imagination will probably be more struck with the narration of the ceremonies of a Natche at Tongataboo, than of a Gothic tournament at London; with the contemplation of the colossuses of Easter Island, than of the mysterious remains of Stonehenge.

To Douglas the South Sea islands were invaluable to the historian, philosopher and scientist since (1784, I, lxvii),

> The inhabitants, as far as could be observed, were unmixed with any different tribe, by occasional intercourse, subsequent to their

> original settlement there; left entirely to their own powers for every art of life; and to their own remote traditions for every political and religious custom or institution; uninformed by science; unimpaired by education; in short, a fit soil from whence a careful observer could collect facts for forming a judgment, how far unassisted human nature will be apt to degenerate; and in what respects it can ever be able to excel.

As with America and Africa however the historical interests and insights promised by acquaintance with the Pacific were soon found illusory by most Europeans. Indeed, disenchantment had already set in before Douglas edited the journals of Cook's third voyage.

Early accounts were usually written in the spirit of the noble savage. Charles Le Gobin, a French priest, extolled in 1700 the happy life the Pacific Islanders must have lived before Magellan sailed among them. They lived then, he wrote, (Callendar, III, pp.41-46),

> in the most perfect freedom and independence, subjected to no laws, but every man lived as it best pleased himself ... exempt from cares and solicitude for the future.

The first voyage of Bougainville in 1768 raised, in France at least, the idealization of the noble savage to new heights. Bougainville believed he had found 'hospitality, ease, innocent joy, and every appearance of happiness' his enthusiasm for what Lovejoy and Baas termed the 'soft primitivism' of Tahiti was popularized in Europe by the Abbe Raynal in his Histoire des Deux Indes, translated into English in 1777, to which Diderot was a major contributor. In his own Supplement au Voyage des Bougainville, published in 1796, Diderot extolled the virtues of primitive life in such terms that the history of civilizations could only be conceived as a series of unnecessary errors.

Captain Cook's voyages into the Pacific also led at first to enthusiasm for societies in which, in Sydney Parkinson's words (1784, p.23), 'ambition, and the love of luxurious banquets, and other superfluities, are but little known'. George Forster, sailing on Cook's second voyage, noted that Tahiti did not lack ambitious menor lovers of luxury, such as Tu, when he described (1777, p.182) as,

> a luxurious individual spending his life in the most sluggish inactivity, and without one benefit to society, like the privileged parasites of more civilized climates, fattening on the superfluous produce of the soil, of which he robbed the labouring multitude.

Nevertheless the younger Forster praised Tahiti for greater ease of life and equality of condition than was to be found in Europe. He feared the impact of Europe, reflecting (1968, p.217) that,

> if the knowledge of a few individuals can only be acquired at such a price as the happiness of nations, it were better for the discovers, and the discovered, that the South Sea had remained unknown to Europe and its restless inhabitants.

George's father, Johann Reinhold Forster, had few reservations about the idyllic quality of Tahitian society, which had, he held, (1778, p.361),

> arrived at that happy mean which assigns the just bounds of prerogative to each rank of people, and thus places the true principles of happiness on a firm and solid basis.

In contrast, Johann Reinhold (1778, p.618), thought that 'our civilized communities are stained with vices and enormities'.

Parkinson commented on the conduct of those of the crew of the Endeavour who, when given orders to fire upon Tahitians during an affray, 'obeyed with the greatest glee imaginable, as if they had been shooting wild ducks', 'What a pity, that such brutality should be exercised by civilized people upon

unarmed ignorant Indians' (Parkinson, 1984, p.15). 'Unarmed Indians' themselves took life without compunction often enough, but Parkinson demanded a different standard from those he judged civilized.

James Dunbar similarly lamented that European visits (1780, p.356 cited in Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.290),

> have never yet been happy for any of the tribes of mankind visited by us. The vices of Europe have already contaminated the Otaheitan blood .. the natives of that happy island, so cruelly abused, will have cause to lament for ages that any European vessel ever touched their shores.

Horace Walpole in the same year also regretted the incursion of Europe into the Pacific and declared (1937, II, p.225),

> How I abominate Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander who routed the poor Otaheitians out of the centre of the ocean, and carried our abominable passions amongst them! Not even that poor little speck could escape European restlessness.

As late as 1792 George Hamilton, a surgeon on the Pandora as it looked for traces of the Bounty mutineers, could still describe Tahiti in pastoral vein as a land (Marshall and Williams, 1982, p.292),

> ...where the earth without tillage produces both food and cloathing, the trees loaded with the most odoriferous flowers, and the fair ones ever willing to fill your arms with love.

By the 1790s however British admiration for Pacific societies and interest in how such virtue and happiness had been secured over the centuries had faded. Even on his first voyage Cook, as well as Banks, has been more ambivalent than had Bougainville and Commerson about the merits of Tahitian society. Sir Joseph named Tahitian chiefs after Greek heroes, but when he saw jawbones in their huts he surmised that (1962, p.305),

> they had been carried away as trophies and are used by the Indians here in exactly the same manner as the North Americans do scalps.

Both Cook and Banks saw the unidyllic consequences of 'free love' when they found (1955, p.128; 1962, p.351) that 'the children who are so unfortunate as to be thus begot are smothered at the moment of their birth'.

Cook's initial hopes were not unrealistically high, nor was fuller knowledge to make him despair. He was certainly disappointed at the fragility of Tahitian culture and of their failure to learn from Europeans anything of value to them. On the third voyage, after discussing the failure of Omai to live up to his early promise of interpreting the two ways of life successfully, Cook wrote (1967, p.241),

> This kind of indifferency is the true character of his nation. Europeans have visited them at times for these ten years past, yet we find neither new arts nor improvements in the old, nor have they copied after us in any one thing.

Dr. Johnson had no time for primitivism, soft or hard. He shared the sentiment he attributed to Imlac, the philosopher guide of Prince Rasselas: 'human life is everywhere a state, in which much is to be endured and little to be enjoyed'. When Boswell (1961, p. 405) 'attempted to argue for the superior happiness of the savage life', Dr. Johnson replied,

> Sir, there can be nothing more false. The savages have no bodily advantages beyond those of civilised men: They have not better health; and as to care or mental uneasiness, they are not above it, but below it, like bears.

Another exchange on this subject between Johnson and Boswell went as follows (1961, p.539),

> Boswell. 'I am well assured that the people of Otaheite who have the

> bread tree, the fruit of which serves them for bread, laughed heartily when they were informed of the tedious process necessary with us to have bread; - plowing, sowing, harrowing, reaping, threshing, grinding, baking.'
>
> Johnson. 'Why, sir, all ignorant savages will laugh when they are told of the advantages of civilized life. Were you to tell men who live without houses, how we pile brick upon brick, and rafter upon rafter, and that after a house is raised to a certain height, a man tumbles off a scaffold, and breaks his neck, they would laugh heartily at our folly in building; but it does not follow that men are better without houses. No, Sir, (holding a slice of a good loaf), this is better than the bread tree.'

Johnson had a low opinion of Hawksworth's Voyages to the South Sea. An exchange with Boswell in 1784 went as follows (1961,p.1304),

> These Voyages, (pointing to the three large volumes of Voyages to the South Sea, which were just come out) who will read them through? A man had better work his way before the mast, than read them through; they will be eaten by rats and mice, before they are read through. There can be little entertainment in such books; one set of Savages is like another.' BOSWELL. 'I do not think the people of Otaheite can be reckoned Savages.' JOHNSON. 'Don't cant in defence of Savages.' BOSWELL. 'They have the art of navigation.' JOHNSON. 'A dog or a cat can swim.' BOSWELL. 'They carve very ingeniously.' JOHNSON. 'A cat can scratch, and a child with a nail can scratch.

Equally Johnson was hostile to notions of perfectibility and saw the disadvantages as well as the benefits of technical progress. In Rasselas Imlac ponders after an inventor tells him that he has found how men might fly,

> If men were all virtuous, returned the artist, I should with great clarity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas, could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the Southern Sea.

Cook and Banks were taken aback by their encounters with Maoris and with

Australian Aborigines, representatives of what Lovejoy and Boas term 'hard primitivism'. Although Cook and Banks admired the strength, bravery, honesty and sobriety of the Maoris, they were disturbed by the overwhelming evidence of their cannibalism. Revulsion against Maori cruelty increased when on Cook's second voyage the entire boat crew of the Adventure was massacred. The officer who found their remains, James Burney, wrote (1975, p.51) that the New Zealanders 'are at present in a state very little, if any thing, superior to the brute part of the creation'.

Cook himself was phlegmatic about these killings and observed (1961, p.175),

> I must however observe in favour of the New Zealanders that I allways found them of a brave, noble, open and benevolent disposition, but they are a people who will never put up with an insult.

Cook was also disposed to blame Europeans rather than the Maoris for their willingness, later to be repeated by the male Australian Aborigines, to prostitute their women for foreign goods, since (ibid),

> such are the consequence of a commerce with Europeans and what is still more to our shame civilized Christians, we debauch their morals already too prone to vice and we introduce among them wants and perhaps diseases which they never before knew and which serves only to disturb that happy tranquility they and their fore fathers had enjoy'd.

Cook came regretfully to the conclusion (1967, p.71), that 'the New Zealanders must live under perpetual apprehensions of being destroyed by each other'. He also noted that on his third voyage his men would no longer accept the sexual favours of Maori women because (1967, p.60), 'they had taken a kind of dislike to these people and were either unwilling or afraid to associate with them'. Cook's own death in 1779 at the hands of the Hawaiians seemed to

confirm dramatically the abhorrence for 'harsh primitivism' aroused by the massacre of the crew of the Adventure in 1773 and of Marion du Fresne and over a score of his men by the Maoris in 1772. The conclusion drawn from that gruesome episode by Julien Crozet, du Fresne's second-in-command, was (1891, pp.49,63),

> there is amongst all the animals of creation none more ferocious and dangerous for human beings than the primitive and savage man ... I have traversed the greater part of the globe, and I have seen everywhere that when reasons is not assisted and perfectioned by good laws, or by a good education, it becomes the prey of force or of treachery, equally as much so among primitive men as amongst animals, and I conclude that reasons without culture is but a brutal instinct.

Interest in the history of Pacific societies, as with those of Black Africa and of the Amerindians, was by the late eighteenth century largely confined to the problem of which lowly rank to place them in the Great Chain of Being or in the Four Stages of human progress. Nothing of intrinsic value in relation to rationality, control over nature or security of life had ever been attributed to them by the British or other Europeans; earlier beliefs in their possession of greater freedom or of equality in anything other than ignorance and violence had largely evaporated.

Summary

In their encounters with ancient Asian civilizations and with the primitive cultures of America, Africa and the Pacific, European traders, explorers or colonisers often started off with respect or admiration for significant aspects of these societies. In each case the dominant European opinion had become much more adverse by the late eighteenth century. The British explorers and settlers who came to Australia in the late eighteenth century had little, if any, expectation of finding evidence of human thought or activity, past or present, which they could make part of their own cultural

heritage. The attitudes of the first British Australians to non-European cultures had largely been formed by the adverse judgements made in the Eighteenth Century by their countrymen on the societies of Asia, America, Africa and the Pacific.

Chapter Four

The Significant Past in Aboriginal Thought

History and Dreamtime in Aboriginal Thought

At one level the Aborigine past held the present in a more powerful grip than is by definition, the case in more 'Open' societies. Traditional lore laid down precisely which group and generation each individual belonged to, and provided each man and woman with clear directions, which were not necessarily, of course, always followed, any more than are unambiguous laws and moral imperatives in other societies, as to who were potential spouses and who stood in various forbidden degrees of kinship. There was considerable variety in Aboriginal groupings including 'Brotherhood' group endogamy, 'Patri-group' family exogamy, and different types of Direct Exchange (renewable in consecutive generations, in alternative generations, or every third generation), but geneological exactitude was required for the effective operation of each type. Specific individuals in earlier generations were identified when reincarnation was deemed to have occurred, whether their new existences were as members of the same kinship group, or, as was frequently believed after 1788, they had returned as whites.

Just as kin and potential spouses were designated by powerful traditional codes, so were enemies from whom harm by sorcery was to be expected. There was little possibility of blood-feuds between Aboriginal groups ever ending, since their continuation did not require what is required in most other societies as evidence for malicious hurt. Traditional Aboriginal thought ruled out the possibility of death by accident; instead, death was routinely attributed to the exercise of

sorcery.

The Berndts argued (1977, p.306) that,

> Even wounding or death in fighting may be seen in this light. The immediate cause may be a spear thrust, but the real cause may be the hostile action of a third person, who had arranged in advance to ensure that the victim was in the right position at the right time.

Elkin typically offered a sanguine explanation of the part played by sorcery in Aboriginal thought (1977, p.38),

> Not to know the causes of illness and death of tribesmen, by which the solidarity and efficiency of the community are weakened, is a disturbing factor in psychological and social life, but to have an accepted explanation and to have acted on that explanation, enables the community to readjust itself to events and to go ahead about its business.

Solidarity within the group was perhaps secured,as was the prestige of the fully initiated, whose own powers as sorcerers were valued by the group, not so much as protection - since there might be none, but as the means of wreaking revenge on the offenders. On the other hand, once established, group hatreds could be infinitely perpetuated without any need of further infusion of theft, murder or other actual offence.

Thus it cannot be maintained that the past had no, or even only a little, influence on traditional Aboriginal thought. Hiatt even suggested, in the course of considering how gerontocratic polygyny was sustained by the older men, that (1985, p.39), although'Aborigine secret cults are ostensibly preoccupied with the cultivation and transmission of the Aboriginal intellect, their masked purpose is to protect the interests of senior males by dissipating the energies of juniors in the sphere of the transcendental'. It has been frequently been argued that the great emphasis placed on

knowledge of dreamtime myths possessed only by fully initiated males served to maintain patriarchal control over Aboriginal women.

Yet it is true that traditional Aboriginal thought, although deeply concerned with geneologies and group relationships grounded in time as well as place and with sacred acts attributed to the Dreamtime, had very little interest before the time of European contact in the ordinary historical lives of previous generations and did not conceive that significant changes might have taken place between the Dreamtime and the moving present. Initiation was into just the same lore and secrets into which generations had been inducted, not into a cumulative tradition towards which each generation made a contribution. Stanner claimed (1979, p.4), 'I have never been able to discover any Aboriginal word for time as an abstract concept. And the sense of "history" is wholly alien here.'

In Central Australia several Aboriginal groups reckoned current time in sleeps, but there were very few occasions when any particular number of sleeps, even those needed for a journey, was calculated exactly or considered important. The number of sleeps needed for a journey depended largely on the availability of food to be gathered and on which people were to be met en route. One form of forward planning of time among traditional Aborigines (Lawrence 1970, p. 268), was to arrange future meetings by the method of one party giving the other a length of fibre string with a knot tied in it for each sleep before the appointed day and by keeping an identical one for themselves, one knot to be cut off each day until all were gone. Standard measurements of time shorter than 'sleeps' were unknown in traditional Aboriginal society, while, in general, little value was placed on carrying out an activity speedily. Lack of fixed abodes and the limited quantity of goods which could be carried by a people without

pack-animals may have restricted any incentive to accumulate by exertion.

The sun was often used to measure time, and most Aboriginal languages are rich in terms for daybreak, sunrise, mid-day, afternoon, sunset, evening and night, as well as for particular times such as yesterday, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, in a short time and in a long time. The position of certain stars at sunrise and sunset was also used by Aborigines to help determine the seasons, which they were able to conceive as an annual cycle. Although no Aboriginal groups developed the concept of a month, they could identify seasons with their characteristic trees. Howitt noted (1904, p. 432), that the Bigumbul in South East Australia named their mid-summer season after the apple tree, the period around late January/early February after the iron-bark eucalypt, and so on.

The waxing and waning of the moon were important in the timing of many important Aboriginal festivals, which usually started at new moon or early in a waxing phase, (Nilsson 1920, pp. 325-6), but no concept of a year, lunar or solar, was developed. The timing of festivals was also related to the breeding cycles of animals and the flowering of plants with which particular totems were associated; many ceremonies were acts of sympathetic magic aimed at increasing the number of the totemic animal or plant. The Berndts note (1970, p. 31) that,

> The point at which one phase passes into another does not depend on a fixed time progression, such as a series of named months, but on the appropriate combination of weather, surface water, and vegetation.

The irregularity of rainfall in many parts of Australia led to marked variations in the most suitable time for such ceremonies, in contrast, say, to prehistoric Egypt, in which the predictability of the Nile's floods

proved a potent stimulant to conceiving calendars and developing a sophisticated sense of historical time. This lack of seasonal regularity may also have strengthened Aboriginal indifference to exact time keeping.

Traditional Aboriginal thought placed emphasis on the immediate present and on the supposed Dreamtime, but virtually none on a historical past. The first people of the Dreamtime were not conceived as having been created at a particular point in time, or even as having ever been created, since they may have always existed in some form before they emerged from waterholes or trees. The landscape which, in Aborigine myths, took shape or emerged to sight during the Dreamtime was not conceived as having undergone subsequent change, even though major changes assuredly took place in climate, flora and fauna during the long Aborigine occupation of Australia. Anthropologists remain uncertain just how the Primordial beings were conceptualized in traditional Aborigine thought. Eliade, for example (1973, p. 2), ponders, 'were the Sky Gods, "All-Fathers"; theriomorphic mythical ancestors; ghosts of famous chieftains?'. In some myths creation is conceived of as ex nihilo, but others suggest a moulding of pre-existent amorphous cosmic matter. Some myths imply belief in a single supreme being, perhaps human, or superhuman, in character, but others suggest that a plurality of non-human creative figures either came down from and re-ascended to the skies, or emerged from sacred sites on earth into which they subsequently descended.

Some traditional Aborigines believed that the spirits of members of the local group would return to the spirit homes of the ancestors and might be reincarnated. Furthermore, spirits of the unborn, as well as of the dead and of the living, were often held to have existed since the Dreamtime, perhaps experiencing incarnation for the first time or perhaps one of

several reincarnations. Whether the living Aborigine was a reincarnation of one of the ancestors and, if so, of which one, might, it was held, be discovered through clues provided by the sacred sites and through initiation ceremonies. In Strehlow's account (1947, p. 93),

> At the time of birth the totemic ancestor who has undergone reincarnation is totally unaware of his former glorious existence. For him the preceding months have been a 'sleep and a forgetting'.
>
> If he is born as a boy, the old men will later on initiate him and re-introduce him into the ancient ceremonies which he himself had instituted in his previous existence.
>
> ....Through his initiation, the novice discovers that he has already been here in the beginning; he was here under the appearance of the mythical ancestor. In learning the deeds of his mythical ancestor, he learns about his own glorious pre-existence. Ultimately, he is taught to repeat himself such as he was 'at the beginning'; that is to say, he is to imitate his own exemplary model.

Strehlow added;

> The whole countryside is his living, age-old family tree. The story of his own totemic ancestor is to the native the account of his own doings at 'the beginning of time', at the dim dawn of life, when the world as he knows it now was being shaped and moulded by all-powerful hands. He himself has played a part smaller or greater according to the original rank of the ancestor of whom he is the present reincarnated form.

There has been much dispute about understanding of physiological paternity, even among patrilineal Aboriginal groups. Radcliffe-Brown doubted (1961, p.166-9), whether Aborigines considered themselves genealogical descendants of the beings they regarded as their Dreamtime ancestors. Ashley-Montague (1940, p.111) argued that Aborigines saw sexual intercourse as a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for conception: intercourse made possible the entry into a woman of a spirit child, whose decision to be born at that time was quite independent, however, of coitus itself. The Berndts (1964, p.121) argued that physiological paternity was fully understood by Aborigines, but that they regarded it as 'of secondary

importance: something everybody knows about, something they more or less take for granted', since 'the really important thing is the child's spirit.

Spencer and Gillen (1899, p.125) inferred that the spirit children who were thought by the Aranda to enter women who sat open-legged by sacred water-holes were held to be manifestations of Aranda ancestors, but Kaberry (1939, p.41-5) wrote that the different viewpoint was held in the Kimberleys, that a 'father' determined who would be the ancestors of his wife's child, not physiologically but through his own 'ordinary' dreaming of an animal which would then become the djering or conception totem of the child, although not that of the 'father'. Strehlow stressed (1947, p.87-9) the importance to the Western Aranda of the conception site, the place where the mother experienced the first symptoms of morning sickness or the first pains of incipient pregnancy. It was by ascertaining which totemic ancestor visited this conception site during his Dreamtime wanderings that the Western Aranda established the genealogy of a child. The Berndts report (1964, p.122) that in north-eastern Arnhem Land a creature might appear to the sister of a 'father', as well as to a 'father' himself, before entering his wife. The Berndts conclude, 'most of the mythical characters are not, strictly speaking, ancestral as far as people are concerned, and no attempts are made to link them genealogically with living persons'. The ambiguity of the link between past and present is indicated too by the Berndts' comment that the "First People" 'do not live on only through human beings and in one sense they are believed to be independent of man. (They) died or changed shape or became rocks, but in essence they were indestructible'.

The Aboriginal conception of the Dreamtime, (or 'creative period' or 'ancestral times' or 'World-Dawn' or 'The Dreaming', as the differing Aboriginal words have been variously translated) was defined by the Berndts

(1964, p.187) as that,

> the beings said to have been present at the beginning of things still continue to exist. In a spiritual, or non-material fashion, they and all that is associated with them are as much alive today, and will be in the indefinite future, as they were.

The Berndts added (1964, p.188) that,

> the mythological era, then, is regarded as setting a precedent for all human behaviour from that time on. It was the period when patterns of living were established, and laws laid down for human beings to follow. This was the past, the sacred past; but it was not the past in the sense of something that is over and done with. The creative beings who lived on the earth at that time did perform certain actions then, and will not repeat them: but their influence is still present, and can be drawn on by people who repeat those actions in the appropriate way, or perform others about which they left instructions.

Munn (1970, p.144) noted that for traditional Walbiri and Pitjantjatjara, as for many other Aboriginal societies, time is split into two broad temporal ages, that of ancestral times (Djugurba), and that of ongoing present and recent past (Walbiri jidjaru; Pitjantjatjara, mulaba). There were also two corresponding categories of human or humanized subjects: ancestral persons (djugurba) and contemporary human beings (Walbir, jaba, Pitjantjatjara, arangu). The Berndts (1970, p.15) also noted that the Gunninggu had totally different words for present or 'recent people' (i.e. those in historical time) from those appropriate for the 'first people' or the ancestors.

Strehlow (1947, p.36-7) held that the Aranda peoples had a distinctive concept of a 'golden age', in which 'a highly idealized picture is given of the Burt Plain and the bordering northern Macdonnell ridges. Every creek and rill contains water. The plain is green with herbs and grasses....the world in which his ancestors move is the unattainable Golden World of the native himself'. Strehlow (1947, p.38) noted with dismay that 'the lives of the totemic ancestors are deeply stained with deeds of treachery and

violence and lust and cruelty: their "morals" are definitely inferior to those of the natives of today'. Strehlow found some comfort in the reflection (1947, p.38) that 'this absence of moral and ethical values is a characteristic of Classical, Germanic and Celtic mythology', but in each of these, although much less so than in Judaism or Christianity, there is some sense of a 'fall' which has no echo in Aboriginal myth.

Not only did traditional Aborigines appear to have no interest in their own secular history, but their myths and totemic practices, it seemed, had been handed on from generation to generation without change or development. It was therefore assumed that there were no significant differences in myths which might be related to whether Aboriginal settlement of an area had been relatively early or late. It was assumed that there was no reflection in Aboriginal myth of any of the immense changes in climate, habitat, flora and fauna, let alone of human experiences, during the period of their occupancy of Australia. The total or near-total absence in traditional Aboriginal thought of any apparent interest in human history has been widely praised by anthropologists. Eliade wrote (1968: p. 261),

> In fact, the distinctive characteristics of Australians and other primitive peoples is not their lack of history but their specific interpretation of human historicity. They too live in history and are shaped by historical events; but they do not have a historical awareness comparable, say, to that of Westerners; and, because they do not need it, they also lack a historiographical consciousness. The aborigines do not record historical events in an irreversible chronological order. The changes and innovations, which imperceptily but continuously transformed their existence, were telescoped into the mythical era; that is, they became part of the tribal sacred history. Like most archaic peoples, the Australians do not have any use for real chronology. Their sacred history is meaningful, not because it narrates the events in a chronological order, but because it reveals the beginnings of the world, the appearance of the Ancestors, and their dramatic and examplary deeds.

Strehlow (1970, p.132) also advanced that view,

> In my own view, the great and specifically Australian contribution

> to religious thought has been the unquestioning Aboriginal conviction that there was no division between Time and Eternity. Since every person carried within himself, through reincarnation, an immortal spark of life derived from the original supernatural personages, men and the totemic ancestors were believed to be interlinked inseparable. The perpetual well-being of the universe, and the whole welfare of the material world, hence depended on the continued singing of the original creative acts of the original supernatural beings by their human reincarnations from generation to generation.

Yengoyan was even less grudging in his admiration, urging (1979, p.399),

> It could therefore be argued with much justification that the natural/supernatural distinction, which is so basic in Western thought, has no relevance in Aboriginal culture and only divides the continuity of cultural form into arbitrary and meaningless categories and contrasts

Yengoyan added (p.400) that 'among the Pitjantjatjara it was noted that geographic knowledge in terms of one's particular totemic sites was based on a detailed acquaintance with particular events in the mythic history of that site', that in Central Australia (p.401) 'the obligatory basis of hospitality is revealed by the trackings of mythic ancestral beings as they meandered over thousands of miles in central Australia. Mythic trails crosses over many local areas and provided linkages in which all groups articulated with one another', and that among the Walbiri (p.403), 'Causation emanates from the Dreamtime, gradually working itself through the kinship system, and is materially expressed in the differential utilization of land, resources, and native geographical categories.' Yengoyan asserted (p.406) that 'Throughout Aboriginal religion, statements of spiritual meaning and content arise out of the Dreaming, an experience which all Aborigines inherit (but cannot disinherit)', and (p.407) that, 'the totem is the expression of the social as it works back onto eternal time. In whatever form the totem occurs and whatever it accomplishes, the point is that totems are real. They do have a very basic existence to humans, since virtually everything is perceived as having totemic significance.'

The effect of the approach adopted most vigorously by Yengoyan has been to strengthen among Aborigines two very dubious beliefs: the first, that Dreamtime myths are a true and sufficient basis for understanding their own experiences, as well as those of the rest of the human race; the second, that these beliefs are for ever ordained as sacred and unalterable by virtue of their totemic ancestry. Not all anthropologists regard Aborigine concepts of time with Yengoyan's veneration: the Berndts, when considering why 'the Aborigines were no match for the invaders in any clash of interests between them', suggested that the answer lies in part in (1964, p.422),

> the structure and organization of Aboriginal social life and belief, with its heavy emphasis on non-change, on the emotional satisfaction to be derived through extreme dependence on the great mythical beings, through the concept of the Eternal Dreaming. The impact of the outside world came as a rude shock. Things were happening outside the framework of what the Aborigines conceived to be the established order of life, both physical and social: things which were not provided for within that framework, and could not be pigeon-holed into any known category.

The Berndts pointed out (1964, p.423) that,

> The first Europeans, almost all over the Continent, were regarded as returning spirits of the dead - perhaps frightening and even to some extent unpredictable, but at least beings who could be fitted into the local scheme of things, explained in terms of the local people's own experience, if not assumed to be related to them through kinship. This image of them did not last long. Other terms were used for them too: malignant spirits, strangers, inhuman creatures, and a variety of nicknames which underlined the suspicion and resentment with which they were viewed.

Strehlow was ambivalent about whether such concepts of time and history were a help or a hindrance to Aborigines. On occasion he spoke favourably of this aspect of their traditional thought, urging (1947, p.170) that it,

> was amply justified by its results. All existing power was placed into the possession of the most highly educated and most widely trusted class in every group; all control was exercised by men who had the wisdom and the experience of a whole lifetime to help them in their decisions. Their methods were conservative in the extreme; but it must not be forgotten that they were the

> preservers of a highly intricate system of native civilization which had reached the zenith of its development. Further improvement could have been stimulated and brought about only by fresh and foreign impulses coming from without; and the age-old isolation of Australia effectively prevented the influx of any new creative ideas which might have brought about a change in the old order.

Elsewhere, as (1947, p.35), he reflected, however, that,

> All occupations originated with the totemic ancestors; and here, too, the native follows tradition blindly: he clings to the primitive weapons used by his forefathers, and no thought of improving them ever enters his mind. In all his modes of living and in all his multifarious occupations, there is everywhere evident the same depressing inertia, the same mental stagnation that has stifled so completely all his literary endeavours. Nothing that the ancestors have done can ever be bettered by later craftsmen. In this respect, too, as in all others it is unfortunately true that Central Australia sleeps heavily under the all-oppressive night-shadow of tradition.

Theories concerning the origins of myth

Hiatt (1975) elaborated four separate, although not incompatible, interpretations of Aboriginal myths. His categories are taken here in reverse order. The first is myth as ontology, a view developed by Levi-Strauss (1964:1966), by Eliade (1955; 1958a; 1958b; 1960; 1964; 1969), and, among Australian anthropologists, particularly by Elkin (1933:1974) and by Stanner (1979a; 1979b). Although Aborigines, like peoples in other archaic and non-literate societies, Hiatt argued, (p.10), 'generally lack words for abstract metaphysical concepts, they nevertheless expressed their ideas on the nature of reality through myth, rite and symbol'. In Stanner's words (1979b, p.259), the mythic structure is 'the celebration of a dependent life which is conceived as having taken a wrong turn at the beginning, a turn such that the good life is now inseparably connected with suffering'. In such ontological views the myth is purely symbolic and does not gain its value from any correspondence with 'real' events, either at the 'beginning' or subsequently.

Secondly, Hiatt considered myth in psychoanalytical, particularly Freudian, terms. Aboriginal myths abound in incest and in the mutilation of parents by children and vice versa, so that it is not surprising that Freud applied his principles to these myths in his 1919 Totem and Taboo. The Freudian Roheim analyzed Aboriginal myths in a series of books and articles from 1925 to 1945. In his first major work in 1925 Roheim held that sexually-laden myths commemorate 'real' events in early human history, such as the revolt within the primal horde of the sons against the father. In Roheim's later work two further themes predominated: that some myths of sexual conflict reflect early childhood feelings of fascination by and revulsion from parental coitus, while others reflect the anxiety felt by young children at separation from their mothers or at being ousted as prime objects of maternal attention by younger siblings.

The third mode of interpretation is that of myth as charter, as a mode of investing existing social conventions with the sanctions and sanctity of the First People of the Dreaming. Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, the dominant figures in this structural-functionalist approach to myth, had a powerful influence on Warner, Kaberry and the Berndts, so that their approach may be judged as, until recently, the mainstream of modern Australian anthropology. A chicken and egg problem faces the view that the purpose of myths is to validate existing rituals, since the rituals might equally be held to 'function' to validate the myths.

The concept of myth as charter also faces the problem that myths, far from safeguarding and enforcing morality, are often ambivalent or even hostile to traditional Aboriginal values. The Berndts (1970, p.28) discussed the Yarawadbad Dreaming myth of a young wife killed by her elderly husband because she spurned him for a younger man. The purpose may be to

warn young women of the dangers of adultery, but it implies no censure on vengeful husbands. In the myth of Moon, (Kaberry 1939, p.199), a married man who seeks an incestuous union with Snake, his classificatory mother-in-law, suffers the loss of his genitals at the hands of a group of angry women, but they in their turn are doomed by him to destruction. Kaberry (1939, p.128) noted that people accused of sexual crimes sought to justify themselves by reference to Moon and similar myths. Strehlow (1947, p.38), as noted above, regretted 'the lives of the totemic ancestors are deeply stained with deeds of treachery and violence and lust and cruelty; their 'morals' are definitely inferior to those of the natives of today.'

Hiatt (1975, p.15), noted that in four myths chosen by Stanner to underpin the ontological concept of myth, 'the social order is conspicuous only by its almost complete absence ... when kinship ... is mentioned, it is either incidental to the story or there to be violated'. White (1975, p.123) was even more sceptical of the charter thesis,

> The more myths I studied the more evident it became that sexual relations in myths are not typical of those in traditional Aboriginal society. Myths record almost no cases of licit sexual intercourse with mutual agreement of both parties; where there is mutual agreement then the relationship is usually illicit, either incestuous or adulterous or during a period of sexual taboo for one or other party; or if it is licit, it consists of rape, or it takes place after a long chase and difficult subjugation of the female.

There are undoubtedly handy hints for survival in many Aborigine myths. Tindale (1959, p.40) noted ironically that the Dreamtime Beings had prudently ensured a workable distribution of the resources they created and had established taboos which discouraged their over-exploitation. The Berndts (1970, pp.18-19) made the similar point that, 'Details aside, the wanderings of the First People were not haphazard. The urge that prompted them to set out on their travels in the first place was directed towards a

long-range goal: to reach the site where they were to 'put themselves in spirit' - in other words, to become djang'. Such myths are, in the Berndts' words (1970, p.41),

> Like a loosely organized collection of guide books, where basic information is embedded in quasi-factual accounts of local history. Without giving a complete picture, they indicate what visitors can expect to find there: what kinds of terrain, vegetation and food, what difficulties or dangers, whether insects are troublesome, what surface waters will last through the dry season or whether water must be dug for, and so on. Geared to the demands of semi-nomadic living, the stories are a convenient medium for transmitting a series of "hints to travellers".

Other myths underscore the dangers of breaking taboos on dangerous foods or of highly risky activities. The Berndts suggested, for example (1970, p.50), that the reason why so many Gunwinggu stories about attacks by the Rainbow Snake are located on sands or on flat rocks near the water's edge is to warn against very real dangers of drowning. Perhaps cases of Aborigines being taken by sharks in the shallows helped to shape the Rainbow Snake and comparable myths. Biernoff (1978, p.96-7) distinguished 'dangerous places' which acquired their 'dangerous potential' in the Dreamtime from those which reflect historical events, such as 'a local catastrophe which produced a large number of deaths - perhaps the extinction of the local residence group'. It may well be, however, that elements in Dreamtime stories also reflect past actuality in ways we cannot recognize.

The fourth interpretation considered by Hiatt is myth as history, not in the sense that the Dreamtime was a historical event or that myths lend themselves to literal interpretation, but that allusions to 'real' events may be deduced from many myths. Traditional Aborigines denied, or appeared to deny, that their myths and associated beliefs had changed over historical time, but significant changes must have taken place. Although it is rarely

possible to compare different versions over time, there is significant evidence of ways in which myths have been created and transformed.

The best source of information about changes over time in Aboriginal beliefs comes from Arnhem Land, (Mulvaney, 1969, pp. 21-30; Berndt and Berndt, 1954; Mountford, 1956 and 1960; Warner 1958; Worsley, 1955) where several generations of contact with Bugis or 'Macassar' trepang fishers led, not only to the spread of techniques and artefacts, but to palpable modifications of supposedly changeless myths. Material influences include imitation of the Bugis lepa or small dug-out canoe and the use of iron in making knives, spear blades and axes; cultural imitations included the adoption by Arnhem Landers of the Van Dyke beard, the Malayan smoking pipe, various card games and arak drinking, and the incorporation of many Macassarese words into local vocabularies. Much more significantly still, however, one clan on the Glynde River is known to have adopted a square-faced green liquor bottle as a totemic symbol. Thompson (1949) found that a wooden model of such bottles had been carved and covered with painted designs depicting trepanging in a similar style to drawings which referred to Dreamtime activities.

Savage clashes between Portuguese and Timorese slavers and Melville Islanders, such as those described by elderly Timorese to George Windsor Earl (1853, p.210) on his 1840 visit, have left no similar evidence on the Aborigine side, but there may be recollections of such conflicts in mythic forms. Possible examples include the story, in Warner (1958, pp. 536-8), of Djuraindjura, the Dog who rejected the 'matches' and other Macassar gifts and as a result confined the Aborigines to traditional life in the bush. This tale was also recounted in later years in various versions to the Berndts (1964, p.423-5) at Milingigimbi, as were stories of spirit canoes

and of sacred sites with Malay names, at which the trepangers are said to have left offerings to spirits. The Berndts argued (1970, p.5) that the term 'Macassar' became:

> a vaguely located point of origin, not only for the early traders, but also for various mythical characters who are said to have come from unidentified islands somewhere to the north-west.

Even the Rainbow Snake, a central figure in Arnhem Land and neighbouring myths is given Macassar origins in several versions. The women around Madabir, near Cooper's Creek, claimed (Berndt and Berndt 1970, p.118), that the Rainbow in female form had travelled underground there from 'Macassar'; the sacred ubar rituals of Arnhem Land are attributed to the principal male avatar of Rainbow as a venomous snake, Yirawadbad, who is said by the Gunwinggu to have come into western Arnhem Land from 'Macassar'.

The Berndts (1970, p.197) cited as 'one of the few myths that could possiblly refer to the early picture of disease and depopulation' (after contacts with non-Aborigines), the Wurudja (Poison Island) sickness djang. In this myth the slaughter of a boy from Poison Island by men jealous of his attractiveness to the local women leads to the father avenging his death in the form of a sickness 'like hot ashes'. The Berndts (1970, p.197) considered the myth may have had its origin in an influenza or measles epidemic, rather than in a volcanic eruption in the islands to the north. Tindale (1946, p.76) held that a range of Aboriginal myths might be based on 'some half-remembered cataclyst of nature, or an eclipse, or a meteorite shower'. Tindale (1938, pp.18-9) suggested that the story told of Prupe, a cannibalistic old woman especially fond of eating young children, 'in its present form may be the dramatization of an actual meteorite fall at this spot', i.e. where in the myth Prupe is finally engulfed in great flames.

Of particular interest is the use of the dingo as a totem animal by many Aboriginal groups, since the animal entered the continent several millenia after the first Aboriginal settlements and well after any possible historical dating for the 'Creative Period of Dreamtime'. Eliade (1960, p.194), discussed a Karadjini myth of two brothers called Bugajimbiri who first emerge from the earth in the shape of dingos. Tindale (1978, pp.158-9) noted that in the Western Desert the beginning of the new annual cycle is marked by the coming of dingo pups and adds that there is in that area an 'association between the appearance of the dingo and women beings [which] is a very old one in the present day Aboriginal Mythology, but because of its widespread distribution may well be a marker of a relatively late accretion limited to the time of the appearance of the first dingos about six or seven thousand years ago? Strehlow (1947, p.12) held of Aboriginal myths in general that, 'animal symbolism has been introduced into these legends only by story-tellers who belonged to a later and higher order of society', but he failed to consider how this insight undermines his conception of an 'unchanging nature' of Aboriginal beliefs.

Strehlow's work was curiously ambivalent about the changelessness of their myths. Within the covers of one book (1947), he gave at least six hints that myths may change over the generations. He noted (p.2) that the young men have to be silent when explanations of myth are offered to them and that 'if these are insufficient for a complete group of these myths, the young men must wait respectfully until another of these rare opportunities presents itself'; he observed of traditional song that,

> it contains a great number of obsolete and obscure words, which, furthermore, have been dismembered and had their component parts re-grouped in the chant-verses for metrical purposes. This re-grouping of the dismembered parts effectively prevents the uninitiated from being able to understand any portion whatever of the chant when it is being sung. Yet it is upon this old

> traditional chant, the words of which are jealously guarded by the old men of the group, that the whole of the Ulamba myth is based.

Strehlow wrote (p.78) of the final incident in the Southern and Western Aranda myth about two Ntjikantja men who ascended into the sky, instead of sinking down into a sacred site, that it is 'almost certainly a relic from older legends, a last remnant of half-forgotten traditions which had originated in a society of the older, matrilineal order'; of the Tjikara myth, he suggested (p.81) that it 'has probably been preserved in tolerable completeness, but the chant is obviously very defective, and many verses remain altogether enigmatic and almost meaningless. Only a few scattered dramatic pieces have survived out of the huge total of ceremonies whose performance, according to tradition, once lasted for more than six months. Everything else has been swallowed up by time and oblivion and death';

Strehlow (p.155) showed also that among the Western Aranda, 'each njinana section is concerned only with that part of the tradition which is placed in its own immediate territory; the preceding and successive portions of the myth are known to it only more or less imperfectly'. He commented on the Western Aranda Ulamba myth, that (p.158),

> the Ulamba clan contents itself with opening and closing chapters of his life-story. The remainder of the myth has to be obtained from Central and South-Western clansmen. The latter prefer to relate the story in the presence of an Ulamba man, so that no charge of encroaching over the Ulamba borders, no accusation of, "stealing sacred tjurunja", can be preferred against them.

Strehlow held (1947, p.159), that all these cases supported his belief that Aranda myth remained unbroken and intact,

> We are now in a position to understand the painstaking accuracy with which the sacred traditions of every section, every group, and every 'tribe' in Central Australia have been handed down over a long series of past generations. The native myth is not indeed

> memorized word for word by its owners; but every detail mentioned in it is based on ceremonies and chants which are rehearsed assiduously year after year under the guidance of the oldest men in the owning clan, upon the possession of sacred stone and wooden objects which must not be removed from the local sacred caves, and upon the existence of various physical objects of religious significance in the landscape commemorated by the myth.

It is instructive to consider the relationship between myths and trivial boundaries, since, as the Berndts (1904, p.35), pointed out,

> various beings are said to have created most of the physiographic features, which in many cases have become totemic or sacred sites. Tradition dictates who must look after these, and around which of them rites are to be performed and songs are to be sung. When all this is a living reality, the local people can usually draw careful charts of their own and adjacent territories.

The truth is surely that myths are not a reliable source for activities of Dreamtime Ancestors forty thousand years ago, but rather that they supply important clues about folk wanderings in much more recent times. It is obviously not as a result of Dreamtime instructions, for example, that the Ngulugwongga people became known as Mulluk Mulluk after a 'mullock', rubbish from a copper mine, became a feature of their territory during the nineteenth century. This is not to argue that ancient traditions have not survived and, indeed, it is clear that Aboriginal peoples have often maintained close links with lands they may not have effectively occupied for considerable periods of time. Throughout the centuries Aborigines have frequently changed their home regions or tribal boundaries, yet have kept over very lengthy periods a link through myth and ritual with their former territories.

The Berndts (1970, p.5) noted that as recently as 1912 there seem to have been no Gunwinggu people at Oenpelli, where forty years later they were the predominant group. A mythic character, such as Barramundi in a story in Gumadir, is sometimes described (Berndt and Berndt 1970, p.17) as 'always

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there, that's where he began', but more often the character is said to have entered the site from elsewhere, and the direction indicated may well reflect, in however unreliable a way, actual folk movements.

The Berndts noted on variations in myths they encountered, (1970, p.10) that 'within a certain range, variation is accepted almost without question', which left them, although not apparently the Gunwingga, very uneasy about 'the question of accuracy'. The Berndts concluded (1970, p.16) that the Gunwingga did not invest equal belief in each conflicting version, but gave greater credence to story-tellers who were old and male, and/or had the strongest patrilineal links with the particular territory. The Gunwingga showed little desire to sort out glaring inconsistencies between versions of important myths. The late arrival of the Gunwinggu into the area around Oenpelli did not inhibit their establishing Dreamtime links with their new territory. The process of enculturing themselves there seems to have involved the systematic attribution of myths indigenous to the area to sacred beings from outside it, but no hints were incorporated into the myths of the Gunwinggu's own very recent arrival on the scene. The speed with which Aborigines can establish 'timeless' links with the land was shown by Merlon (1978, p.84ff) in an account of Elsey Station, where in a generation Gudir (Luganin in Algwa), brought to Elsey as an Aborigine Policeman, 'was thoroughly incorporated into local Aborigine society: despite the fact that Gudir is known to have come from a foreign tribe, he is said to have been brought to the Elsey area by a "wild wind" (locally the totemic property of the semi-moiety to which he belonged).'

Anomalies in myths were taken (1899, p.207) by Spencer and Gillen as evidence that they 'cannot be regarded as having been invented simply to account for certain customs now practised, for the simple reason that they

reveal to us a state or organisation and a series of customs quite different from, and in important respects at variance with, the organisation and customs of the present time'. Noting a discrepancy between contemporary prohibitions on killing and eating the totem animal, and traditions which describe the ancestors as doing both, Spencer and Gillin concluded (1899, p.209) that such myths 'can only be understood on the hypothesis that they refer to a former time in which the relationship of the human beings to their totemic animals or plants was of a different nature from that which now obtains'.

The main thesis of Mathew's Eaglehawk and Crow was that this group of myths reflected historical conflict, in which original inhabitants of Melanesian descent were overrun by Dravidian-type invaders from the north. Mathew (p.19) argued that the best explanation of the myth was 'that the eaglehawk and the crow represent two distinct races of men which once contested for the possession of Australia, the taller, more powerful and more fierce "Eaglehawk" race overcoming and in places exterminating the weaker, more scantily equipped sable "crows"'. This thesis gained support from Ehrlich (1922) and from Tindale, who believed (1946) that 'ethnic clash between successive waves of invaders' is dimly recalled in these myths. In the functionalist reaction against crude diffusionist theories, Radcliffe-Brown insisted (1958, p.108-29) that the conflict between Eaglehawk and Crow was merely a metaphor for tribal divisions into moities, a position adopted by Levi-Strauss too (1964, p.82-91). In Roheim's Freudian view (1925, p.39) the Eaglehawk-Crow conflict represented, of course, the primal struggle between fathers and sons, which found a compromise solution in the moiety system. The possibilities of historical analysis were far from exhausted, however, when new modes of analysis of an ahistorical character became dominant in professional anthropology.

Campbell (1967, p.476-81) revived the historical approach by suggesting that some Aboriginal myths record the rise in the level of the sea at the end of the last Ice Age, as well as climatic changes in the Pleistocene period, the wider terrain then of animals such as the crocodile, and the existence of now extinct creatures such as the Diprotodon. Blainey, (1975, p.90) in taking up the point, argued that the rise of the seas must have had profound effects on Aboriginal 'languages, marriage patterns, genetics, religion, mythology and warfare'. Blainey regretted, that 'the archaeological record so far has not even whispered about those effects. Anthropologists have not even begun to speculate about them', a pertinent criticism of orthodox anthropological theory for most of this century.

A historical approach could be criticized on the grounds that there are very considerable differences in some groups between the men's and the women's myths. White (1975, p.128) showed that in the Western and Central Desert areas, the men held that 'women were not necessary for original creation, ..though later they made some alterations in the landscape and reproduced the species first created by the ancestral heroes'. White (1975, p.132) found 'unmistakable lesbian suggestions' in the accounts given by Kaberry (1939, p.235-6) of women's ceremonies in the Kimberleys. These myths concern the Two Women, ancestral beings who could create life without men, if they so chose, although they sometimes decided for pleasure to involve men in sexual activity. Such discrepancies are not utterly daunting, since it is common enough in literate society for differing and incompatible accounts of events to co-exist, without historians being reduced to incoherence. Indeed, the co-existence of contrary accounts may often in the long run help rather than hinder historians or detectives.

Summary

Stanner wrote (1979a, p.29), 'The Aboriginal does not ask himself the philosophical-type questions: What is "real"?; How many "kinds of reality" are there?; What are the "properties of reality"? How are these properties "interconnected"?' This may be true, but, only a few generations before Socrates, no Greeks asked 'philosophical-type' questions. Those who now think abstractly and historically descend from ancestors who did not engage in such reflections. Stanner (1979a, p.30) also wrote,

> European minds are made uneasy by the facts that the stories are, quite plainly, preposterous; are often a mass of internal contradictions; are encrusted by superstitious fancies about magic, sorcery, hobgoblins, and superhuman heroes; and lack the kind of theme and structure - in other words, the 'story' element - for which we look. Many of us cannot help feeling that such things can only be the products of absurdly ignorant credulity and a lower order of mentality.

He added that 'our pervasive rationality' has 'a withering effect upon sensibility. As well as contemporary modes of rationality, Stanner held, Aborigines were alien to modes of religious thought than those of their ancestors: 'there could never have been an Aboriginal Ezekiel, any more than there could have been a Job'. (1979a, p.30). Stanner may have been correct historically in claiming (1979a, p.29) that 'the blacks cite The Dreaming as a charter of absolute validity in answer to all questions of why and how', but the future is not necessarily bound by the past.

Before contact with the British, Australian Aborigines had little interest in their own historical, as distinct from mythical, past. This feature of Aborigine thought helped to confirm in the British a view that nothing resembling an organised political community, with a coherent view of its own political structure and its origins, existed among them, thus strengthening the doctrine of nullius terra. Subsequent enquiry among anthropologists has by no means adequately elucidated the origins,

development or function of Aborigine myth, but some explanations seem more fertile than others. Little help, if any, seems to be provided by Freudian or other psychoanalytical explanations. That much myth was and is, symbolic, is likely to be part of the truth, as is the view of myth as charter. It is unwise, however, to dismiss out of hand the possibility that many myths contain important clues about actual historical events. This is not to return to the euhemerism discussed in chapter one or to the modes of anthrological thought which Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, pre-eminently, undermined. The study of possible historical elements in Aborigine myth may significantly deepen our understanding of the pre-contact Aborigine past.

Chapter Five

The Significant Past in Early Colonial Legal and Political Thought

Legal Continuities and Discontinuities

A fundamental distinction was made in eighteenth-century English law (Roberts-Wray, 1966, p.532 ff,) between colonies acquired by conquest or cession, and those regarded as unoccupied so far as settled habitation was concerned, at the time of annexation. In the first case, the prevailing laws would have continuing force, until such time as specific changes were made by the conquering power; in the second, in Blackstone's view (1765, I, p.107), 'all the English laws then in being, which are the birthright of every English subject, are immediately there in force'. This principle, which applied at least as much to New Holland as to any other part of the world colonized by Britain, was subject to two qualifications, according to Blackstone: that 'such colonists carry with them only so much of English law as is applicable to their own situation and the conditions of an infant colony'; and that the colonists were still subject to the 'general superintending power of the legislature in the mother country'. The composition of the population made anything like the full and automatic extension of British legal and constitutional practice impossible in the Australian colonies, but the early colonial courts tried to follow English precedents as closely as they could. Convicts could only be charged with crimes known to English Law and on indictment following strict judicial requirements. The traditional jury system could not be employed when the large majority of the population were criminals, however, so military and naval officers served as a court under the presidency of a Judge-Advocate.

The officers seem not to have been biassed against the accused: Francis Forbes, the first Chief Justice of New South Wales and no friend of military influence, held (Currey, 1968, p.367) that they had, in general, been more lenient than civil petty juries would have been; Hirst (1983, p.114) cites three examples of praise for the judicial record of the officers from the Australian, the leading liberal emancipist paper.

Military juries were never regarded as anything more than a temporary device, however, as Chief Justice Dowling made clear in 1838, when he argued (Molony, 1973, p.113) that 'sound policy dictates that a broad foundation should be laid in this Colony, as early as possible, for institutions corresponding with those of the Mother Country'. Jeffrey Hart Bent alleged in 1815 that in practice the basic legal principle in New South Wales was 'Quod Gubernatori placet, legis habet vigorem', but, although London was far away and the legal and constitutional rights of subjects circumscribed, the complaints of successive governors reveal that it was far from the case that they could do whatsoever was pleasing to them.

The Grand Jury system, too,could not be employed in the early colonial period, so that the Attorney-General acted as Grand Jury. John Hubert Plunkett commented on this situation (Molony, 1973, p.110),

> No man would more rejoice than he would at the Attorney-General being relieved from acting as Grand Jury; feeling as a British subject, and estimating and revering the institutions of Britain, he could not consider that he was acting constitutionally when occupying the place of a Grand Jury; but at present he was compelled to do it...

Plunkett did more than any other lawyer to make knowledge of those

laws of England which had application in New South Wales, together with all orders and proclamations with local force only, widely available, by compiling his An Australian Magistrate, which was frequently updated and re-issued, although, after a time, without having Plunkett's name attached to it. The courts of the Australian colonies came during the 1820s to be modelled on those of England: the Supreme Court of New South Wales, for example, was granted 'the like jurisdiction as the superior Courts of Westminster in all civil and criminal matters'. Roger Therry noted (1974, p.347) that 'the Bar of Sydney is modelled, as nearly as possible, on the practices and observances of the English Bar'.

A major clarification was made in 1828 in several major areas of confusion by the Australian Courts Act, 9 George IV, c.83, which provided that 'all Laws and Statutes in force within the Realm of England at the Time of the passing of this Act...shall be applied in the Administration of Justice in the Courts of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land respectively, as far as the same can be applied within the said Colonies'. For the future, however, it stated that, with the exception of General Acts explicitly applicable throughout all British dominions, only those statutes of the Westminster Parliament expressly adopted by the Legislative Councils of the colonies would be recognised and operative. It was not supposed that the 1828 Act was innovatory. Indeed, in 1831 Chief Justice Forbes observed (Legge, 1896, I, p.5) that it was 'merely declatory of what the law was before, and in 1836 (Legge, 1896, I, p.74), that it 'is neither new, nor peculiar; it is affirmative of the text law as it is laid down by Sir William Blackstone and other elementary writers, and as it has been received and acted upon in the Courts of England'. Blakeney (1979, p.129) notes that in 1823 in Cooper v. Stuart, the Privy Council had affirmed that

New South Wales was to be treated as a 'settled' colony in Blackstone's sense.

The directive to apply the statutes of England to the colonies 'as far as could be applied' and to ensure that local legislatures did not 'pass or adminster any law repugnant to the laws of England' opened the door to numerous legal wrangles. Roger Therry cited the advice of Sir James Stephen, the long serving Under-Secretary for the Colonies (1974, p.318),

> Why bother yourself with that everlasting phrase, 'not repugnant to the laws of England'...Take a new code, wherever the old one won't suit you. Keep up the family resemblance between your law and ours as well as you can, and never think it worth while to go mad over a difficulty...

Despite offering this advice, however, Sir James intervened decisively to prevent Commissioner Bigge from relaxing the technical requirements for successful prosecution in New South Wales. Bigge was alarmed at the low rate of the capture of criminals and sought to ease the rules of evidence and the formalities of indictment, but Stephen insisted (HRA, I,IV, pp.478;614) on the continued provision of the full facilities for the defence traditionally available in England, and refused to countenance in the Australian courts any 'inaccurate, loose and unintelligent' indictments. An example of the application of the principle of 'repugnance to the law of England' in respect of colonial legislation was Plunkett's unwillingness (Sydney Herald, 11 June 1838) to prosecute under the 1838 Bushranging Act, on the ground that it required the execution of a convicted bushranger within forty-eight hours of sentence, an insufficient time, in Plunkett's view, for the Crown to consider whether or not to exercise its prerogative of mercy.

The Military and Civil Powers

There was strong antagonism in Georgian England to standing armies and to centrally controlled police forces. The 'forced billeting' imposed first by Charles I and the Duke of Buckingham, and later by James II, as well as the rule of Cromwell's Major-Generals, remained alive in the English folk-memory. The rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte on the bayonets of his soldiers strengthened British suspicions of the military in politics; the purchase of commissions was routinely defended as a way of ensuring that the country's 'natural rulers' commanded the army and that military adventurers had neither opportunity nor incentive to subvert the constitution.

In the colonies there were greater opportunities than on home service for soldiers of modest social rank or financial means to rise to high command. Sporadic acts of military defiance took place in Madras and Bombay during the eighteenth century, which anticipated the overthrow of the authority of Governor Bligh in New South Wales. Clear distinctions between different types of authority were not easy to make during the early years of the Australian colonies. In Governor Phillip's First Commission (HRA, I,I, p.1) he was admonished that he and those under his command should 'observe and follow such orders and directions, from time to time as you shall receive from us, or any other superior officer according to the rules and discipline of war'. The tradition that civil and military authority should be separated remained strong, however, and most of the marine officers actively resisted rather than sought civil authority, either judicial or administrative, even though there were insufficient civilians to carry out such tasks.

Within six months of the First Fleet's arrival, Phillip advised Lord Sydney (HRA, 1, p.35) that 'sitting as members of the Criminal Court is thought a hardship by the officer, and of which they say they were not informed before they left England'. Five officers, of whom Captain-Lieutenant Watkin Tench was the senior, claimed that the 1775 Military Regulations justified their refusal to sit as members of an ordinary criminal court. The lengthy and complex dispute which followed proved, if nothing else, that the Governor did not possess absolute or arbitrary power, and that English precedents were immensely powerful, even in the strange and utterly different conditions of New South Wales. By the time that Phillip gained backing from London for his original order, which had mean while been disobeyed, the recalcitrant officers were able to plead that, under the 'three year rule', the time to take legal proceedings against them had already lapsed. In this case at least distance proved a protection rather than a tyranny.

In the peculiar conditions of early colonial life, the enforcers of the law, notably the Night Watch, were convicts, whereas many of the offenders were soldiers. Major Ross, the Commandant of the Marines, declared (HRA, I,I, p.135) that 'he considered a soldier being stopped, when not committing any unlawful act, as an insult to the Corps, and that they would not suffer themselves to be treated in that manner, or to be controlled by the convicts, while they had bayonets in their hands'. Constitutional principles prevailed, however, and the Marines had to submit to examination by convicts of the Night Watch, if found wandering abroad in the middle of the night on no obvious military business.

In 1796 John Baughan, a carpenter, alleged that he had been assaulted

by members of the New South Wales Corps, the replacement for the Marines; the soldiers had also nearly demolished his house. When the court found in Baughan's favour, Governor Hunter told the Corps (HRA, I,I, p.577) that 'they must not - they shall not - dictate laws and rules for the government of this settlement; they were sent here by His Majesty to support the civil power in the execution of its functions, but they seem disposed to take all power into their own hands'. Hunter declared, after another free settler, John Boston, successfully sought redress against members of the Corps (HRA, I,I, p.642), 'however distant from the Mother Country, they (British subjects) are nevertheless under the protection of the British laws, and that they are, whatever may be their rank or profession, amenable to them'.

Hunter considered that, during the inter-regnum of Grose, the military had gained too much influence, so that on his own arrival (HRA, I,I, p.671) he 'therefore reinstated the civil magistrate in his proper office'. Just what was the proper office of the civil magistrate, when, as well as Governor he was also Commander-in-Chief, was highly uncertain, however, as the Rum Rebellion revealed. Atkinson (1978) argues that John Macarthur, perhaps with David Collins as intermediary, had become aware of Jeremy Bentham's opinion that much of the power exerted by the Governors of New South Wales had no legal foundation. Bentham argued in 1803 in a pamphlet entitled A Plea for the Constitution that the white population of New South Wales could properly be divided into three groups. Two of these groups: the military personnel, who were bound by the Articles of War and the Mutiny Act, and the convicts, were, in Bentham's opinion, fully under the control of the Governor. Over the third group, the free settlers, including ex-convicts, and their wives and children, Bentham held (cited in

Atkinson, 1978, p.2), 'the governor neither had, nor could have had, nor without fresh authority from parliament can ever have, any more power (I speak always of legal power) than I have'. Bentham went on to denounce the Governors for presuming to control this third group of people by general orders which were inconsistent with the Common Law.

Soon after Macarthur's return to Sydney, he told Governor King in 1806 (HRA, I, IV, pp.43-44) that it was 'some counsel's opinion' that 'unless sanctioned by an Act of Parliament', no local Regulations which he issued had the force of law. Atkinson's view is (1978, p.5) that, given the fate of the mutineers on the Bounty, 'it is quite impossible to believe that the officers of the Corps would have entered the mutiny with such easy gusto unless they had some assurance that Bligh, their Commander-in-Chief, had broken the law first in the exercise of his civil power'. Major George Johnston, the commander of the Corps, certainly claimed (HRNSW, 6, p.832), that Bligh 'had determined to do away (with) the courts of justice, both civil and criminal, and declared that his word should be that statute law of the land', although this avowal did not save Johnston from being cashiered.

John Macarthur made good use against Bligh of that Governor's reply to charges that he was breaking the laws of England, 'Damn your laws of England, don't talk to me of your laws of England', and his assertion with respect to the Secretary of State, 'he commands at home, I command here' (Evatt, 1938, cap.26; Mackaness, 1951, pp.400-9; Ellis, 1953, pp.299-301). John Macarthur's devotion to those laws of England which interfered with his own interests was uncertain, but his actions and those of his colleagues were to a large extent vindicated by the Report of the Select

Committee on Transportation (pp.181, II, 341, p.8), which recommended that a Council be appointed to advise the Governor, even if it had 'no other power than that of protesting against any measures of the Governor of which they might disapprove; and of transmitting their protests to the Secretary of State'.

Convicts and Emancipists as British Subjects

The military men brought out with them to New South Wales a complex of ideas about what was significant and relevant to them in the human past, mainly taken from the last two centuries of English history. Despite the Rum Rebellion, and despite the fact that the early Governors of New South Wales were naval and army officers, the military per se had very limited long-term effects on the colonies, the most important being that ex-soldiers with land grants formed an important part of the early free male population, and that the officers among them were among the leading figures of exclusivism. The early convict population, too, were conscious of aspects of a national, as well as a personal, past, which they wished to retain, as well as aspects they wished to discard. Apart from the Irish Catholics among them, the convicts and emancipists had little hostility to British political traditions and showed strong loyalty to the Crown which had sentenced them. The 'Scottish Martyrs' of 1794 and the 'Tolpuddle Martyrs' of 1834 had little influence on the non-political convicts, whereas the rebels of 1798 and 1848 were considerable figures among other Irishmen. When in 1800 there seemed a danger of French invasion, Irish disaffection was greatly feared, but many non-Irish emancipists volunteered to join a loyal association of militia to defend the colony (Macullum, 1961, p.352 ff.). The Australian, the main organ of the emancipists, frequently claimed during the 1820s that, not only could they buy up the

free emigrants, but were unsurpassed in their political loyalty to the law under which they had once been, fairly or unfairly, convicted.

Patriotic occasions, especially the King's Birthday, seem to have aroused strong feelings of loyalty among many convicts. George Worgan recorded (1978, p.54) on George III's birthday in 1788,

> In Consequence of this being the first Celebration of His Majesty's Birth Day in New South Wales, Governor Phillip, had been studious to distinguish it with every Sentiment of Joy, Zeal and Affection in his Power, accordingly, he had issued his free Pardon, to all the Convicts that were in Confinement for Trial, or under Sentence of Punishment for Crimes committed since they came to the Country. Each Convict was allowed a Pint of Grog, and all Work, was suspended for the Day, Every private Soldier drank his Majesty's Health &c in a Pint of Porter, and every Seaman, in an additional allowance of Grog, and all this, at the Governor's own Expence. In a Ward every Heart beat with Loyalty & Joy.

The Sydney Gazette (5 June 1803) expressed similar sentiments some fifteen years later,

> ...in any circumstances under Heaven can exalt to adoration a Monarch's Name, (it) is assuredly that of recalling to society those who from an exemplary conduct are by His Excellency deemed worthy to participate in a Clemency which commands at once the gratitude of the Penitent, and the veneration of an admiring world.

Governor King reported (HRNSW, Vol. 6, p.150),

> As (pardons) were extended on the anniversaries of their Majesties' birth, the general joy expressed on the return of those auspicious days awakened expectation and excited gratitude...

Many convicts displayed an acute consciousness of their legal and political rights as British subjects. They could petition the governor, could not be punished except by legal process and could be admitted as witnesses in court without challenge until the 1830s. Convicts could give

evidence in court against the masters to whom they had been assigned and could not be physically punished by them - very different conditions from those of slavery. Nearly all the convicts sent from Britain to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, including many with life sentences, became free and some became wealthy and prominent in colonial life. Under the law of England as traditionally interpreted, convicts could not own property, but this was generally permitted in New South Wales until the Bigge Commission challenged the practice. In 1832 this right was removed as part of attempts to make transportation a more effective deterrent, but Governor Bourke, ever sympathetic to emancipists and convicts who conducted themselves lawfully, did not fully enforce the ban on convict property ownership.

John Stephen, the second judge of the court of New South Wales, fought hard to classify convicts as ordinary members of a normal civic society, Stephen granted a writ of habeas corpus to convicts arrested at Bathurst on charges of cattle stealing, even though the Crown argued that no such right was open to convicts. Stephen went so far as to maintain (Currey, 1968, pp. 241-4; HRA, I,XIII, pp.188-9, 206-9, 259-63, 516-7) that,

> the rights of prisoners were as sacred in the eye of the law as those of free men, and while he had the honour of sitting where he did, he would never allow them to be impugned and treated carelessly.

Complaints from Westminster that the relative leniency of the criminal law in New South Wales and, to a lesser extent, in Van Diemen's Land, had undermined the deterrent value of transportation, led to pressures on colonial Governors, especially on Darling in New South Wales, to impose stricter control. Yet when in 1829 Darling tried to use his executive

power to remove to the penal settlement at Moreton Bay a convict accused of theft, but granted habeas corpus by the Supreme Court of New South Wales, the Governor was defeated by the protection offered by the law of England to the accused. (HRA, I,XIII, pp.97-9; 14, pp.5-6; 15, pp.837-50, 862).

Generally convicts accepted the legitimacy of their sentences. Numerous commentators (Collins, 1798, pp.196-7; Lang, 2, 1834, pp.65-6; Cunningham, 1827, p.279) noted that convicts thought themselves victims, not of injustice, but of bad luck in being caught. Cunningham (1827, pp.300-1) was struck by the detailed legal knowledge displayed by convicts on board ship, who often staged mock trials. Hirst (1983, p.139) notes the frequency with which convicts were willing to bring domestic or local disputes for decision to the magistrates.

There was very little difference in legal and political rights between free emigrants and emancipists: neither, for example, could serve on a jury until the 1830s. Only free emigrants were nominated to serve on the legislative council established by the New South Wales Act in 1823, but that council's powers were constricted and when fuller self-government was conceded no distinction was made in the franchise between emancipists and free immigrants.

English legal traditions of master and servant relationships were implanted in Australia. Labourers in England were usually bonded to serve a master for a season or even a year, with severe penalties for breach of contract. Until 1823, when the Bigge recommendations were implemented and attempts made to make transportation a more effective deterrent, stipulated wages were paid to assigned convicts; by 1800 it was already common for

unassigned convicts to have negotiated stints, or task work, with the government as employer. Assigned convicts seem typically to have seen their actual conditions of work, as distinct from their legal status, in terms of continuity with wage-labour in eighteenth-century England.

Not only were convicts not slaves, but in some respects their position was more favourable than of free immigrants. The Bushranging Act of 1830 rendered persons lacking identification open to arrest as runway convicts, the burden of proof falling on the accused, but convicts on legitimate journeys, which covered the large majority of assignees, normally had a pass from a master to establish identity, just as emancipists had certificates of freedom. Alexander Harris claimed (1847, ch.8) that he and other free immigrants had been unfairly arrested because they lacked internal passports or identity papers. The requirement to produce such papers was alien to English traditions and was thought demeaning to the status of a gentleman, but, as Hirst points out (1983, p.126), the only alternative to requiring such identification was, in the peculiar conditions of the penal colonies, the power of arrest. Production of identity papers on demand from a constable was a comparatively small price to pay for the considerable freedom of movement granted in the pre-Bigge years to men convicted of violent crimes. Modern penitentiaries, including 'open-prisons', are far more restrictive.

The view, so powerfully argued recently by J.B. Hirst (1983), that transportation and assignment had on the whole worked well in the early decades of New South Wales, that the convict colonies were fundamentally different in character from slave societies, and that basic continuity with English political and legal traditions was maintained, was advanced by many

of the colonists, both before and after the Molesworth Committee reported. Roger Therry, for example, whose profession brought him frequently into the company of the more desperate members of society, claimed (1974, p.25-6),

> Even in the class of the more depraved convicts transported for serious crime, the instances of a reformed character were numerous and gratifying...pickpockets and convicts...who, from their childhood upwards, had been brought up in ignorance and had let lives of habitual crime, if not from principle, from obvious motives of interest in the prospect to becoming independent in a land of abundance, altered the course of conduct and became industrious members of society...A very large portion of transported persons who had led, and would have continued to lead, lives of crime in England, thus obtained a knowledge of some profitable ways, and stimulated them to industry...In this way transportation operated as a great benefit.

Therry thought this applied less to women than to men, since (1974, p.219) 'many of the latter were transported for slight offences, but females were seldom sent out whilst any reasonable hope remained of reforming them at home...Some of them, however, on getting married to steady husbands, became reformed'. Therry was able to cite in favour of his general argument a letter written to Sir William Denison by Dr Willson, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Tasmania, which rejoiced (Therry, 1974, pp.495-6) that, 'by judicious and sound system of penal discipline, human life had been spared, thousands of criminals coerced effectively, and very many of them rendered useful to society...'

Women convicts have sometimes been described as especially disadvantaged in respect of legal rights and the possibility of regaining or retaining self-respect. Dixson (1976, p.122) writes of them as 'the victims of victims', while Summers (1975, p.267) claims that 'the social and economic conditions of the first fifty years of white colonization of Australia fostered whores rather than wives. Summers holds that wives had

little enough protection under the law of England, and had very little opportunity to influence the shaping of early Australian consciousness, but that whores were even worse placed. Robinson's careful analysis of the first generation of white Australian women suggests, however (1985, pp.63-96; 145-176), a different picture. Robinson distinguishes between four categories among these women: convicts, ex-convicts, free immigrants, and native-born 'currency lasses'. In each group she finds a wide range in wealth, happiness, morals and conceptions of the human condition, but she does not imply that in any group the women were significantly less attached to the traditions they had inherited than were the men. Traditional conceptions of what was proper within families were stronger among early colonial women, according to Robinson, that their contemporary critics, such as Samuel Marsden, or their later champions, such as Dixson and Summers, supposed. The survival of Catholicism in a settlement which had such little religious instruction outside the family suggests a strong loyalty among many Irish women to their religious and cultural traditions. Without evidence to the contrary, it seems unreasonable to deny to other early white colonial women some capacity to instil in their children some coherent sense of traditions they inherited and valued.

There soon developed in New South Wales, and to a lesser extent in Tasmania, the belief among convicts, emancipists and their children that, since they were the people on whose behalf the colonies had been settled, they possessed stronger political claims than any other groups in the colonies. This attitude gained some support from statements of some of the Governors. King told Major Johnston of the New South Wales Corps in 1803 (HRA, I,IV, p.216) that the colony had been formed for the express purpose of receiving prisoners, and that the humanity of King and Parliament, in

empowering the Governor to grant emancipation, showed that they never intended that, after pardon or expiation by servitude, past offences should reduce the enjoyment of every right traditionally enjoyed by British subjects. Governor Macquarie frequently spoke of the priority of the colony's penal and redemptory raison d'etre over any other of its purposes. Macquarie became regarded as a special protector by many emancipists, because of his personal treatment of them, and because of his advocacy of their interests with the Secretary of State. Macquarie's position was summed up in a report to Lord Bathurst in June 1813 (HRA, I,VII, pp.775-6).

> It has been My Invariable Opinion, and Upon that Opinion I have Acted ever since I came to this Colony, that once a Convict has become a Free Man, either by Servitude, Free Pardon, or Emancipation, he should in All Respects be Considered on a footing with every other Man in the Colony, according to his Rank in Life and Character.

By 1837 James Macarthur, a leading opponent of the liberal-emancipist political groupings, bemoaned (1837, p.24) that the ex-convicts had come to believe 'that the colony was theirs by right, and that the emigrant settlers were interlopers upon the soil'. Reports were widespread that emancipists and their families scorned 'bloody immigrants' (Ward, 1958, p.53). This attitude was strengthened by the frank admission of many freed immigrants that they were sojourners, not permanent settlers: as the earnest Calvinist Niel Black put it (Roe, 1965, p.76), 'Although called Settlers we are never permanently settled anywhere; we have always an eye to returning home some day or other'. The free-born children of emancipists formed for some three generations the majority of native-born white Australians, so that emancipist and nativist claims became closely intermingled. This relationship became a very delicate one during the late

thirties and the forties, when the future of transportation became the central political issue in the penal colonies. Not all who defended the reputation of the emancipist body wanted more convicts to enter the colonies to swell their future number.

Few non-Irish convicts came from groups which were political active in Britain; in default of a strong sense of specific grievances, which few felt, an energetic engagement in emancipist politics was unlikely to be made. Under the political rule of the Governors, most of the emancipists and native-born found ample scope for their energies in making money and in sporting activities. In consequence, those who sought to be their spokesmen often berated them for political apathy. Edward Smith Hall's Monitor complained in July 1826 (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.14) that 'The people of New South Wales are a poor grovelling race...their spirit is gone - the scourge and the fetters and the dungeon and the Australian Inquisition have reduced them to a level with the negro they are not longer Britons, but Australians'.

On the other hand the native-born children of convicts and emancipists often received high compliments. Some of it was perhaps self-praise, as when the Australian wrote of them (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.24),

> The Native Youths by the experience which has grown up with them from the cradle, are much better fitted than immigrants for turning to good account the soil they cultivate. They consider this, too, as their clime, their native home and settle in general, with more fixed and steady industry to their pursuits than the wandering immigrant.

Disinterested praise was also given, however. T. McCombie wrote of them (1847, p.107), 'The men manly and generous, the women beautiful and good'.

More significantly than comment from an individual traveller was Commissioner Bigge's judgement in his 1823 Report on Agriculture and Trade,

> The class of inhabitants that have been born in the colony affords a remarkable exception to the moral and physical character of their parents: they are generally tall in person, and slender in their limbs, of fair complexion and small features. They are capable of undergoing more fatigue, and are less exhausted by labour than native Europeans...I only repeat the testimony of persons who have had many opportunities of observing them, that they neither inherit the vices nor feelings of their parents.

On more specifically political attitudes, an anonymous 'Settler', guaranteed by the Sydney Herald to be a free settler and not an emancipist, wrote during a series of articles in 1839 in rebuttal of the Molesworth Committee's sweeping condemnation of the convict system and its effects (Hirst, 1983, p.207),

> The convicts are Britons, knowing their rights and jealous of them; - they are prunings from the tree of liberty, wild and diseased shoots certainly, but they retain the character of the original stock...The men from first to last never lose sight of the rights that they do retain;

The emancipists happily accepted being described as prunings from the tree of liberty, but utterly rejected that as a group they were wild or diseased. Many of their number became leading figures in New South Wales, such as the merchant Samuel Lyons, the convicted surgeons William Bland and William Redfern, the Superintendent of Public Agriculture Richard Fitzgerald, the surveyor James Meehan, the shipbuilder Andrew Thompson, the printer George Howe, the artists John Eyre and Thomas Watling, and the bricklayer James Bloodsworth, men of many businesses and professions, who made money and who gained entry to the Governor's circle. The wealth and confidence of the leading emancipists was a source of anger and jealousy

for many exclusives.

The potentiality of the emancipists and the native-born for political activity was first disclosed and developed by William Charles Wentworth. Wentworth's mother was a convict, while his father, who emigrated free, but hurriedly, suffered social ostracism from the exclusives, despite his abilities and considerable success in the colony. William Wentworth gave the first articulate expression of 'Australianism', which combined a sense of group pride and solidarity, resistance to exclusivist pretensions and disdain, and demands for significantly greater independence from British control. Wentworth's programme was based essentially, however, on securing for all white Australians the full constitutional and legal rights of English society, not on seeking any alternative political and social system. The moderation of his basic programme, if not of his political rhetoric, enabled Wentworth to enjoy the support of leading free migrants, such as the first titled settler of New South Wales, Sir John Jamison. Jamison, who had personal links with the emancipists through convict mistresses, as well as in more reputable ways, supported Wentworth's demands on the jury system, claiming (Macquarie to Bathurst, 22 March 1819, HRA, I,X, p.53) that its benefits had already been extended to 'the Hindoo in India, the Hottentot in Africa and the Negro slave in the West Indies'. Jamison was also fearful that prolonged gubernatorial rule would make the colonists strangers to English constitutional rights, holding (Australian, 31 Jan. 1827, cited in Fletcher, 1979, p.18),

> Governments are founded in opinion, and preserved by habit...a people educated under one form of government, can never by fitted for another form, except by a species of revolution which must always do a violence to society, in proportion to the alterations which it effects.

The main historical and political ideas of the youthful radical Wentworth were expounded in 1819 in his Description of the Colony of New South Wales. This work served several purposes. At one level it was a topographical account aimed at attracting free emigrants to New South Wales; at another it was a political tract seeking to blacken the name of Bligh and to exalt that of Macquarie; and at a third it tried to put the young Australian colonies in a broad historical context, a task continued in 1823 in Wentworth's poem Australasia (see next chapter).

In his second purpose Wentworth was rarely fair or balanced. He compared Bligh's governorship (p.171) with 'the enormities of the Dionysii, of Caligula, and of Nero' and described him (p.237) as 'this monster'. In pursuit of the third objective Wentworth used a more recent historical analogy, one that was to become almost a cliche during the next three decades, by threatening that New South Wales would follow the example of the Americans in throwing off British rule entirely, unless certain flagrant injustices were remedied at once. Some of the alleged injustices seem to be of a minor order, such as restrictions on the opening of distilleries, and on vine and tobacco cultivation. Westminster was concerned, not only about drunkenness and allied vices in the colony, but about encouraging crops which, in other countries, had encouraged slave, indentured or coolie labour. Some of Wentworth's other demands were of more substance, such as full admission of emancipists to the franchise, a House of Assembly with wide legislative powers, and to jury service. Wentworth admitted that 'the strange ingredients of which this country was formed did not, at the epoch of its foundation, warrant a participation of these important privileges', but he argued (p.164) that, thirty years on, these privileges or rights should immediately be granted, even though the

white population of New South Wales was still predominantly convict and emancipist.

Wentworth's sharp criticisms of many aspects of British policy and his hostility to exclusivism were made, like those of most contemporary English radicals, within the framework of admiration for English traditions of liberty. In the Description, Wentworth argued (p.161-2) that,

> (Britain's) present position is not so much the effect of her soil and climate, since in these respects she is confessedly behind many of the nations of Europe, as of the superior freedom of her laws, which have engendered in her a freer, more virtuous, and more warlike race of people...one of the leading maxims of her political conduct, and undoubtedly one of the chief causes of her present greatness, is to attach the people who have been embodied into her empire, or who have emigrated from her shores only to colonise new countries, and thus to extend her limits and increase her resources, by an equality of rights and privileges with her subjects at home.

Wentworth rejoiced in the extension of British rule (p.89),

> What a proud sight for the Briton to view his country pouring forth her teeming millions to people new hives, to see her forming in the most remote parts of the earth new establishments which may hereafter rival her old; and to behold thousands who would perish from want within her immediate limits, procuring an easy and comfortable subsistence in those which are more remote; and instead of weakening her power and diminishing her resources, effectually contributing to the augmentation of both, and forming monuments which may descend to the latest posterity, indestructible records of her greatness and glory.

Wentworth admired Macquarie as the first great official champion of the emancipist. He also sought to use Macquarie's opinion that New South Wales had originally been founded by a benevolent British Government in the interests of redeemable convicts, as a basis for the claim that they were its staatsvolk. After the Bigge Commission poured cold water on that highly dubious proposition, Wentworth began to adapt for emancipist needs the rhetoric of the Liberal Awakening, with which he had become familiar in

England. Wentworth's specific demands during the 1820s for representative institutions in New South Wales, unencumbered by restrictions on persons who had legally expiated former offences, and equal rights to serve on as well as to be tried by a jury, were politically moderate by contemporary British standards, but his rhetoric was more fiery and anticipated the language of Chartism. Many of his speeches and writings of those years were to be quoted against him in his later more conservative period.

Wentworth did not claim that liberty was in itself sufficient for social progress or political strength - the Aborigines, after all, had never experienced before 1788 any governmental restrictions - but he argued that political liberty was a great advantage rather than a hindrance in achieving such objectives. He particularly sought to rebut claims that political liberty, by dividing states into competing interests, weakened military power and the capacity for territorial expansion. He wrote in the Description (p.160),

> Rome, once the glory of the world; now a bye-word among the nations: once the seat of civilization, of affluence, and of power; now the abode of superstition, poverty and weakness, is a lasting monument of the truth of this assertion. Her greatness was founded on freedom, and rose with her consulate; her decadence may be said to have commenced with her first emperor, and was completed under his vicious and despotic dynasty: her climate and soil still remain; but the freedom which raised her to the empire of the world has passed away with her institutions.
>
> If we search still further back into antiquity, we shall find that all the great nations which have at various times preponderated over their neighbours, attained their utmost force and vigour during the period of their greatest freedom and virtue; and that their decadence and ultimate annihilation were the work of a succession of vicious and tyrannical rulers. The empires of Persia and Greece were successively established by the superior freedom and virtue of their citizens; and it was only when the institutions which were the source of this freedom and virtue, were no longer reverenced and enforced, that each unit became in its turn the prey of a freer and more virtuous people.

It was typical of Wentworth that his examples of virtue and freedom in the past are taken, when not from British, from Greek and Roman history, that the Roman Republic was extolled above the Empire, that his references to the specifically Christian past are few, but those to the Roman Catholic Church disparaging and disdainful. Wentworth had found many models for this position in the thought of the Enlightenment, just as his verse forms were taken from the classical modes of the eighteenth century, not from the romantics who had swept them aside in early nineteenth century England.

In the Description Wentworth felt it necessary (pp.248-9) to disclaim,

> being classed with a band of ruffian levellers, who under the specious pretext of salutary reform seek, like the jacobin revolutionaries of France, the subversion of all order, and the substitution in its stead, of a reign of terror, anarchy, and rapine, amidst the horrors of which they may satiate their avarice, and glut their revenge.

It is true that Wentworth was far from a leveller in respect of wealth and property, but this had been equally true of George Washington and the authors of the Federalist, who had also possessed Wentworth's admiration for the basic structures of English law and British government. It had not stopped them from leading a revolutionary struggle against the Crown. If Westminster had been obdurate in resistance to demands for self-government of one form or another in the Australian colonies, there is little doubt that Wentworth would have used the language of traditional English rights, from Hampden, through Locke, to the Burke of 1775, in the leadership of a movement similar to that of the thirteen American Colonies. As it happened, however, perhaps because of greater flexibility among British

ministers, who were seldom themselves forgetful of 1776 and of the unwillingness of British colonists, of whatever hue or complexion, to seek a wide measure of self-government, a situation never arose in which Wentworth was called upon to be the Washington of New South Wales.

The Exclusives

If the belief developed among many convicts and emancipists that they were heirs presumptive to New South Wales and the embodiment of the libertarian strand in British traditions, the leading free families were even more convinced that it was their historical mission to plant British institutions successfully in a strange land. The main threat to the re-creation of British civilization in the Australian colonies was, from their viewpont, the convict taint. That the free settlers who intended to stay in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land were so small a percentage of the total white population made them especially sensitive to any inroads by convict contagion into the traditions of civil society as developed in Great Britain. The constant danger they feared, that all they most valued might be overwhelmed by convict and ex-convict crudity and lawlessness, led to their exclusivism.

The exclusives sought to show their particular loyalty to the Crown, especially on occasions such as the King's Birthday, but they found under Governors Macquarie and Bourke, that they were expected to attend such ceremonies under similar conditions as prominent emancipists. Under Macquarie the Birthdays of the King and Queen became (see next chapter) occasions on which Michael Massey Robinson recited Odes, which, for the exclusives, contained too many sycophantic references to Macquarie himself. In 1837 the Sydney Herald criticized Bourke for not holding a ball to

celebrate the King's Birthday, arguing that 'the respectable Colonists, with their wives and daughters, have a prescriptive right to assemble at Government House on an occasion like this'. The main reason there was no ball was, however, Bourke's realization that no agreement existed as to which persons precisely constituted the respectable Colonists who possessed such prescriptive rights. Most exclusives hoped that the penal colonies would as soon as possible become normal English societies, but they denied that the full rights distinctive of such a society should be available on equal terms to emancipated convicts as to citizens free of the taint of crime.

The case against equal rights for emancipists was put most extremely by James Mudie in 1837 in his The Felonry of New South Wales. Mudie was something of an outsider in the eyes of the earliest established landowning families of New South Wales. His reputedly harsh treatment of convicts assigned to him gave him an unsavoury reputation, and his arguments were often strident and unbalanced, but his central case against admitting ex-convicts to equality with respectable ladies and gentlemen was acceptable to more moderate and restrained exclusives.

Mudie accused Governor Bourke of excessive leniency to convicts and emancipists, alleging (1964, p.2) that he had made transportation 'a reward for the perpetration of the crimes of which they have been convicted'. Mudie argued that 'the community of England, though composed of persons of different degrees of rank, constitutes, nevertheless, one society', but that such organic unity did not and could not exist in the Australian penal colonies. Mudie maintained (1964, p.6),

> It is quite evident that there is nothing in the condition of this society which is analagous to that of society in England, or in any other civilized community, or even to that condition of society which existed or now exists in the West India colonies. The inequalities in the society of New South Wales are so far from being founded in injustice, or from being maintained in violation of law, that the inequalities have been constituted by the administration of justice, and can only be altered by defeating the very object and spirit of that British law...no absurdity, then can be greater...than to suppose that the emancipated convicts of New South Wales are entitled to claim rights and immunities, as those claimed by or granted to the free and respectable settlers.

Legal and constitutional precedents were eagerly sought by exclusives and emancipists alike to support their conflicting opinions on many questions, such as that of jury service. The Sydney Herald urged (23 Feb. 1837) 'let emigrants be tried by emigrants, and let transported persons be tried by paid commissioners'. The bitter hostility of Mudie to the emancipists proved to be as damaging to the reputation of New South Wales, as that of William Ullathorne and of John Dunmore Lang, who both, for very different reasons from Mudie's, gave the fullest possible weight in their evidence to the Molesworth Committee on Transportation in 1837 to the permanently brutalizing effects of transportation and of both pre-Bigge systems of Assignment and post-Bigge methods. Irrespective of their evidence, however, the Molesworth Committee was able to cite enough attacks on the character of the emancipists to give the colony as a whole a bad name. Ironically, the Report of the Molesworth Committee may have helped to reduce conflicts between exclusives and emancipists about past differences and future possibilities, since each group was harshly criticized: the emancipists as corrupted and dehumanized by past treatment, and the exclusives as being among the parties guilty of administering that treatment.

What was it that exclusive families, such as the Macarthurs of Camden, sought to establish in New South Wales and in Van Diemen's Land, to which convictism might prove fatal? One of their first concerns was to establish a patterned, or hierarchical, civil society of the English type. Even though, like John Macarthur, many of the exclusives had been army or naval officers, and did not find it repugnant that all the early governors were military men, it was not a military hierarchy, still less one based on convict and jailer relationships, that they wished to characterize their society. Instead, they sought to replicate what they conceived of as the traditional English structure, in which social eminence and political authority were based on the freehold ownership of substantial landed estates.

John Macarthur's deep desire to maintain continuity with the British past was shown sometimes in rather eccentric ways, which were used by his enemies to deride him, such as naming his sword Excalibur, after the weapon of the shadowy figure from whom his clan claimed descent. Yet his interest in the past was far from merely cranky. His son James, on whom his mantle fell, claimed (Atkinson, 1979, p.31) that, when John Macarthur was living on a farm in the West of England during his early twenties, he 'spent much time in the perusal of such books as he could obtain - especially works on English and Roman history, and the general principles of law'. It is hard not to be impressed by the wide reading of so many of the 'men of action', who played a prominent part in the British colonization of Australia, such as James Cook, David Collins and Watkin Tench, including John Macarthur. His children recalled too (Ellis, 1955, pp.530-1), how well versed he was in English literature and how fond of quoting Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Samuel Butler, Addison, Byron, Crabbe and Walter Scott. In old age John

Macarthur thought of himself as a Coriolanus, in a land of ingrates and time-serving demagogues.

James Macarthur was born in Parramatta in 1798, but spent an important part of his youth in England, while his father was in virtual exile. James Macarthur's advice to the free colonists was always (Sydney Herald, 28 Feb, 1841), to 'extol their rights and principles as Englishmen'; his friend Charles Campbell was applauded by his neighbours at Queanbeyan when he told them (Sydney Herald, 31 May, 1844) that they should always act 'as English gentlemen anxious to make this a second England'. Despite the scoffing of their enemies and the relative shortness of their occupation of their properties, many of the leading land-owning families felt by the middle of the century great pride in the depth of their roots. The sympathetic historian Samuel Bennett wrote (1857, p.629).

> The pride of race - the consciousness of high social standing - the sentiment of family antiquity - however absurd when carried to excess, are capable of exercising, of kept under proper control, a very restraining and refining influence upon individual characer.

Yet James Macarthur realised that New South Wales could never become a replica of England, or Camden Park indistinguishable, apart from its larger scale and its gum trees, from a stately English country house in the Home Counties. He and his friends could not re-create in the Antipodes their idea of what Merrie England had once been like, with a yeomanry or contented farm labourers, deferential to them as their natural protectors, who provided them with employment, an Anglican church and a school, and who settled disputes among them. They could, however, they believed, be the prime instrument by which British institutions of law and government would ultimately flourish, and some elevation of cultural and moral standards be

achieved, in the colonies. In addition, they sought to reproduce as much as they could of some aspects of traditional English life which they particularly valued: their girls would become skilful in traditional female accomplishments, their boys would hunt, shoot and fish, and play cricket; there would be ploughing contests on the banks of the Hunter. At Scone, Cobbity, Berrima, Queanbeyan and Stroud in New South Wales, and at Kempton, Bothwell, Oaklands and Longford in Tasmania, there were dreams of preserving something of rural England in the bush.

Many major difficulties confronted the hopes of the exclusives. For a start, many of the leading families in the early years of the penal colonies had skeletons in their cupboards. As Captain John Turnbull put it in 1805 (Vol. 3, pp.182;185),

> The circumstances under which the colony was settled, and the very purpose of the settlement, has had a very visible effect upon the general manners, or what may be called the national character, of Botany Bay. The free settlers are not without something of the contagion...From upwards of hundred families who have been sent out from England, there are not above eight or ten between whom and the convicts the smallest degree of discrimination could be drawn.

The comparative lowliness of the origins of many of the exclusives, exposed their pretensions to derision. John Macarthur was teased by his enemies for being a draper's son, especially when he suggested that he and his clan were descended from King Arthur. Captain Rossi, appointed as Police Magistrate in Sydney in 1824, was attacked for airs unsuitable to what his critics claimed were dubious origins in Corsica. James Mudie was alleged to have left Britain in doubtful circumstances, while his use of the title of Major was also queried. Edward Eager, an emancipist lawyer from an established English family, scoffed at Samuel Marsden as, (1824,

p.23),

> ...a man descended from the lowest ranks of life, brought up to the Trade of Blacksmith, of a narrow and inferior education, of course vulgar habits and manners, accustomed to no better Society than the original confined unimproved Society of New South Wales,...and who, were it not for the accidental circumstance of obtaining the appointment of Assistant Chaplain of New South Wales at a time when it was more a discredit than honour to hold such a situation, would to this day have remained in that obscurity, out of which neither his birth, education, talents or manners gave him any right to emerge.

John Hood (1843, p.72) was among the visitors to the colony with suspicions as to how its wealthier citizens had gained their prosperity.

> If the truth must be told, the fortunes of many of the exclusionists themselves were not acquired by the purest means; close contracts, the gin or rum shop, embarrassments wilfully created by insidious loans and ejectments, and other crooked paths, were used equally by both parties, bond and free.

John Hood noted too 'that Caste in Hindostan is not more rigidly regarded than it is in Australia; the bond and free, emancipist and exclusionist, seldom associate together familiarly'. He might have added that within each group the date of arrival in the colony was important. The early arrivals considered that precedence was due to them, but later comers often commented adversely on the origins and background of their predecessors. G. Ranken, looking back on the first half of the century, claimed (1895, p.52),

> The free colonists who came out in Sir Thomas Brisbane's time (were) men of station and education, but an early Gazette showed the tracts opened through their enterprise granted to the sons and daughters of officials, to pliant secretaries, to grog-selling captains, and to conveniently perjuring officers of police.

William Grant Broughton defended the leading members of his flock from such aspersions, recalling that many aristocratic families in Britain had

humble and even unsavoury origins, yet had ultimately given character and leadership to society. It was, however, a somewhat motley crew who sought to make themselves the gentry, squirarchy, and perhaps the aristocracy of New South Wales.

A second problem for the exclusives was their relationship to the land, the ownership of which was central to their social aspirations and to their political theories. They had no doubt that they had a better right to the land than the Aborigines, since, as the Sydney Herald, the main exclusivist paper put it (Roe, 1965, p.27),

> It is the right of civilized men to occupy countries in state of nature, the inhabitants of which merely roam over the soil, without any defined form of government; because, if this were not so, the great end of civilization could never be effected.

This belief was, of course, shared by emancipists and free migrants, but the exclusives were determined that the civilized should be defined as the law-abiding and respectable and as excluding convicted criminals.

The exclusives' concept of themselves as a landed gentry, or even an aristocracy, could gain little support from the way in which they had acquired their land. Daniel Deniehy's most effective points in his witty attack on proposals for a 'bunyip aristocracy' were, perhaps, those which ridiculed their claims to any right of conquest. The Australian colonies were, in law, settled and not conquered, and in sober fact there was very little correlation between successful military skirmishes with the Aborigines and grants of freehold land, or the opportunity to buy it cheaply. The claims of exclusives to provide the element of independence from official patronage necessary for a free and balanced society were

weakened by the knowledge that many of them had received their lands as a result of patronage.

The Squatters

Another weakness of the exclusives was that their potential allies, the squatters, had received no such grants of land and were ready to dispute with might and main the principle that the Crown had the sole right to grant freehold title and to confirm possession. On the contrary, the squatters argued, through Gideon Scott Lang (1845, p.14), that,

> The first principle of squatting is, that the squatter shall have full power to settle without restriction wherever he can find unoccupied pasture, and to take possession of as much land as his stock can occupy.

Or, as John Cotton put it (1953, II, p.56), 'Those persons who first reclaimed the land from a state of barrenness, the persons who first turned the forest land to their own use, have surely a far better title to the soil than the Queen of England'. Like the American colonists, particularly those on the western frontiers, who had opposed the attempt of the British Government in 1763 to limit further expansion westwards by establishing the Proclamation Line, the squatters of New South Wales refused in 1844 to accept any limitations on pastoral expansion or any attempt by the Secretary-of-State in London or the Governor in Sydney to exercise any general control over unoccupied lands in the colony. Governor Gipps' reply (SMH, 24 August 1842) was that he was bound to protect the Crown lands against claims such as those of the squatters 'for the benefit, not of any particular class of people here, but for the benefit of the whole British Empire'.

The exclusives were faced with a dilemma: they wished to show their loyalty to the British constitution and to support obedience to the lawful instructions of the Secretary of State in London, a position the Sydney Herald advanced in 1842 as follows (Roe, 1965, p.31),

> The colonial estate has all along been in the hands of its rightful signiors, the British Empire; it has all along been managed by competent agencies, the agencies constituted and appointed by that empire; and the present agency can have no right to question the powers of its predecessors, since those powers flowed from the same authority as is own.

On the other hand many exclusives faced severe financial difficulties during the mid-1840s, which might be most conveniently relieved if the disposal of Crown Lands were in colonial hands, provided that these were their own, rather than in those of the Secretary of State of the governor. James Macarthur had been sufficiently angered as early as 1840 with Governor Gipps' fiscal policies to assert 'the great principle of Whiggism', concerning taxation without representation, and to add (Sydney Herald, 17 July) that 'there were many with the spirit of Hampden in this colony.' It is not unusual for conservatives and loyalists to find themselves in opposition to the powers-that-be, to which, in principle, they wish to defer, as was illustrated in Hanoverian England in the situation of Swift, Pope, Dr Johnson and many others. Such reflections did not make the exclusives' predicament any less galling under Governors who, it seemed to them, failed to defend the interests of Crown and Constitution.

Robert Lowe's Atlas argued (15 Feb 1845) that squatters had no choice other than 'ruin or rebellion' and there was wild talk of 'doing a Bligh', an embarrassing parallel for James and Hannibal Macarthur. Lord Stanley,

the Secretary of State, found it difficult to accept (HRA, I,XXIV, pp.219-20) that it was 'Gentlemen...of talent and station' who appeared to be denying 'that the right of property in the Land occupied by them is vested in the Crown', but this, indeed, was the position taken up by the squatters' leaders, such as Benjamin Boyd and William Charles Wentworth.

The squatters' willingness to import cheap coloured labour, to support the resumption of transportation, and to ignore the law in their dealings with Aborigines, were shared by few of the exclusive agriculturalists, although there were, of course, often ties of kinship between the two groups, as well as some common interests in seeking to curb any levelling tendencies in radical democracy. Equally the dream of many of the exclusives of creating a second Merrie England in Australia, in which a sturdy yeomanry or dependent farm labourers would look to the landowners as their natural leaders, was of interest to few squatters. The effects of dispersion were as destructive to the development of village and community as Wakefield alleged.

Nativism

The emancipist-exclusive conflict might gradually have lost its sharpness with changes of generation and the emergence of a strong spirit of nativism, even if the proposals of the Molesworth Committee to abolish transportation and those, a decade later, to revive it, had not split both emancipist and exclusive opinion. The compliments made about colonially-born youth by Bigge, Scott, McCombie and others were equally directed to the children of emancipists and of free immigrants. Grievances, such as that new immigrants were favoured above the native-born in land-grants, appealed to the younger children of earlier free immigrants

as well as to those of emancipists. In 1827 a letter was published in the Australian from 'twenty young men of property - natives of the colony', which claimed (Atkinson, 1988, p.11) that as 'the natural ameliorators of the face of the country', they had special rights in their native soil which was 'their birth-right and inheritance'. Alexander Harris noted (1953, pp.224-5) 'a very bitter feeling' among the native-born of having been 'debarred of their rights', and that 'the whole rising and mature voice of Australia of the middle and lower class look on our dominion as an usurpation, and as one of the most selfish character'. Harris usually over-stated his points, but the sentiment he described was one likely to extend upwards from the lower and middle class.

Chief Justice Forbes claimed in 1829 of the native-born whites that (Atkinson, 1988, p.11) 'they adore their native soil, and they regard the institutions of Great Britain with an enthusiastic, nay an idolatrous devotion', but they were far from extending this enthusiasm to the persons of new immigrants. In 1837 a group calling themselves the 'United Australians', which included the poets Charles Harpur and the younger Charles Tompson, and the editor of the Australian, G.R. Nichols, organised their own Anniversary Day dinner on 26 January, which only the native born were eligible to attend.

James Macarthur and other native-born children of leading exclusives also valued being Australian as much as being British. Macarthur expressed pride (Sydney Herald, 13 July, 1842) in belonging to 'a sharp-witted, quick-seeing, sensitive race', and idealised (SMH, 19 Jan 1854) the honest Australian settler who laboured 'amidst his native forests, inspired by the murmurings of the limpid stream that flowed beside his homestead'. Such

sentiments were a commonplace in English thinking too, of course, especially in post-Wordsworth romanticism, and are very strong in Harpur's verse, but the relationship between the British past and the Australian present, between culture and nature, was necessarily even more problematic than the corresponding concern in British thought on the connections between a rural past and an increasingly industrial present.

The basic problem was that Australia itself appeared to have no significant human history which could form the core of an inspirational tradition or of a constitutional structure. This problem was even more acute in the later colonies. The earliest historians to ply their trade in Victoria, such as David Blair and Alexander Sutherland, felt (Roe, 1969, p.131) that the colony had no real history of its own. It was therefore vital for their self-respect, vis-a-vis immigrants from Britain, that Australian nativist thinkers should find arguments from nature and habitat to support their claims, since the British traditions which they valued were at least equally embodied in later arrivals. In terms of significance attached to the human past as a whole, however, the group differences between old emancipists, old exclusives, nativists and new immigrants were very small. It was also logically the case that the children of those squatting families which, even if their original intention had been to make a quick fortune and then to return to Britain, stayed on, faced the same problems as the exclusive families in the reconciliation of their attachment to a British past and an Australian present and future.

In the situation after transportation had ended in New South Wales, a major measure of responsible government had been secured, and gold had given a new economic structure, together with some new problems, the older

families went in varying political directions. In doing so they utilized different aspects of what they conceived to be most significant in the British political tradition. The labels of 'liberal' and 'conservative' were then, as at most other times, a source of confusion as well as of helpful discrimination, but no others are immune to this objection.

The new liberals of the 1850s, who included members of prominent old exclusive families, such as Charles Cowper, put their emphasis on freedom from government interference, on the laissez-faire and free trade tradition which had it effective origins with Adam Smith and the 'classical'economists of the late eighteenth century. The new conservatives, who included some eminent emancipist leaders, most notably William Charles Wentworth, looked back to a more paternalist tradition, one which had been powerfully implanted in the Australian colonies through the extensive executive powers enjoyed by governors. At the risk of some over-simplification, it can be claimed that on most social and economic problems, such as care for destitute children, the use of dangerous drugs, the production and sale of liquor, housing conditions, and controls over manufacture and trade in general, including the new gold mining industry, the 'conservatives' called for more state intervention and regulation, and the 'liberals' less, both sides using events in British history and arguments from British political discourse to support their positions. This was to lead to difficulties for later socialist politicians and marxian historians, who liked to associate 'conservative' or 'reactionary' groups with opposition to state intervention. What is less contestable is that the new political differences in the Australian colonies were closely related to those in Great Britain: the political ideas expressed by James Macarthur and James Martin, for example, were a modified (and more

moderate) version of those of Disraeli's 'Young England' group, and, like theirs, sometimes had undertones of the 'reactionary radicalism' of William Cobbett, which contrasted a more caring traditional, but long lost, society, with selfish and heartless ways which had succeeded them.

Summary

The convicts and emancipists who, in the words of the Barrington Prologue were 'true patriots all; for be it understood, /We left our country for our country's good', and the more substantial free settlers who had left Britain for their own good and who, together with former military officers and civil officials who remained in the Australian colonies, formed the exclusives, were alike in seeking continuity in basic institutions and patterns of belief. There were important technical problems about just which of the laws of England could properly have application in penal colonies, but there was no antagonism to the general principle that as much of English legal and constitutional traditions as possible should be rooted afresh. The emancipists' political grievances concerned their lack, once their sentences had been completed, of the rights and privileges to which they thought themselves traditionally entitled.

Even though wide powers were invested in a Governor who exercised military as well as civil authority, there was little danger that the dominant traditions of English civil society would be lost, since the military themselves fully accepted those traditions. Instead two rival views soon clashed on how widely the rights and privileges of British subjects should be extended, and on whether past crimes could be so completely expiated as to entitle legal, social and political equality with

the respectable. These disputes, in which William Charles Wentworth became the recognized leader of liberal and emancipist opinion, were accompanied by many historical claims and references.

By the time that the emancipist-exclusive dispute faded away, first in the disputes about the revival of transportation, an issue which split each of the old groupings, and then in the granting of a substantial measure of responsible government during the gold era, the old arguments had themselves become part of Australia's significant past. The British ideology of ordered liberty had been used selectively by the two sides, with the emancipists emphasising the liberty and the exclusives the order, but, despite abuse and invective, which were themselves part of the British political tradition, there was never a complete rupture between the two factions, or between colonists as a whole and governors. The relative speed and ease of the transition of the Australian penal colonies to responsible self-government, in which a major part was taken by former convicts, is testimony to the strength and resilience of a political tradition, in whose history relevance and significance was constantly found. In one sense, the exclusives lost their argument, since by the 1850s no legal or constitutional differentiation remained between ex-convicts and those who had always been free, but the ideals of service and leadership, self-serving as these no doubt were in part, which the Macarthurs and their friends conceived as the distinctive part of English traditions which they embodied, also became significant, although far from dominant, elements in Australian life and thought.

Chapter Six

The Significant Past in Early Colonial Literature

Introduction

It is not surprising that the literature of early colonial Australia showed overwhelming continuity in its sense of historical significance with that dominant in the parent culture. Nothing the colonists could glean of Aboriginal history could form an alternative source of significance for them and it was bound to take time before colonial experience itself was sufficiently substantial to act as an independent repository.

The Report for the Year 1838 of the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts expressed the difficulty as follows,

> As a section of the British empire, our history is bounded by the recollections of the present generation. Everything around us is new, and nothing is to be met with calculated to awaken our sympathies with the past, or which takes a part in our historical reminiscences.

J.O. Balfour, who stayed in the Bathurst district for some six years, wrote in 1845 (p.49) that Australia,

> calls up no train of ideas that are associated with the past, it has no fossil remains of any consequence, not even the vestige, so far as I know, of any one thing from which the curious might deduce that Australia had ever been different from what it was when Cook landed on its shores.

Frederick Sinnett could hardly be contradicted when he claimed in 1856 (p.9-10) that,

> Unless we go into the Aboriginal market for 'associations', there is not a single local one, of a century old, to be obtained in Australia...there is not an association in Victoria mellowed by so much as a poor score of years...we are quite debarred from the interest to be extracted from any kind of archaeological

> accessories. No storied windows, richly dight, cast a dim, religious light over any Australian premises. There are no ruins for that rare old plant, the ivy green to creep over...the foundations of a second Castle of Otranto can hardly be laid in Australia during our time...No one old enough for a hero can say, 'I remember, I remember the house where I was born', apropos of a Victorian building.

The voyage out to Australia from Britain was often perilous and seldom other than miserable, but early memoirs and personal records, as well as early fiction, usually played down the difficulties, and rarely sought to invest any particular voyage with symbolic significance. Perhaps an experience undergone by all is less regarded as possessing deep intrinsic interest than those faced by only a few. Voyage literature became a popular evocation of early Australian suffering and endurance after voyages came to be safer and more comfortable. Similarly the lack of any armed struggles in the landing at Botany Bay, in the transfer to Port Jackson, or in subsequent coastal settlements, meant that heroic or epic elements were generally absent from the early colonial past. William Charles Wentworth, who could not anticipate the copious literature of late twentieth century Australian historians concerning armed Aborigine resistance to the white invaders, bemoaned in 1853 (Melbourne, 1934, pp.91-2),

> Sir, it has been not only my misfortune, but it has been the misfortune of my countrymen, that we have not lived in troublous times, when it becomes necessary, by force, to repress domestic faction or treason, to repel invasion from without or, perhaps to pour out our chivalry to seek glory and distinction in foreign climes...

The French historian de Blosseveille regretted (1859, I, p.vii) that Australia possessed 'no startling facts to arrest attention, no heroes, no wars, hardly any little skirmishes, hardly any names'. An anonymous poet, W.H.B., lamented in the'Headlong Rhymes by a Policeman' published in Launceston in 1843 (Nadel, 1957, p.59),

> The woods have never rang with War's loud crash
> No chivalry has swept the silent plains;
> Mailed bands of combatants, with courage rash
> Were never led to fight by gallanty Thanes.
>
> Here are no storied tombs, nor sculptored shrines,
> On which we read a Saint's or Hero's praise,
> The ancient Harper never poured his rhymes,
> Nor Troubadour e'er sang melodious lays.

Even the arrival of the French ships commanded by La Perouse soon after the arrival of the First Fleet robbed the occasion of a stronger sense of historical uniqueness.

There was not universal regret that Australia had no known martial history. A. Marjoribanks, for example, argued (1847, p.237) that the wars and battles of the past, whether in England or anywhere else, were irrelevant to people of a commercial society,

> The single historian who mentions that in the reign of Edward the Third a fat sheep was sold for 1s 3d, a fat goose for 3d, and that a labourer got 3d per day, recorded circumstances more useful to mankind than those other historians who have filled whole volumes with the details of the glorious victories of that monarch.

The bourgeois vision was expressed with more fire by W.A. Duncan in his anthem'Australia the wide and free',

> I sing not of wars, for our fields are unstained
> With the blood of our patriot men;
> 'Tis peace, and by commerce our honours were gained
> Which in peace, or by war, we'll maintain.
>
> We boast not indeed of antiquity's badge,
> Nor our ancestral deeds loud proclaim,
> But of cities and empires, in history's page,
> Can the founders be buried to fame?

Duncan, a Scottish Presbyterian convert to Catholicism, was far from indifferent to the religious and cultural past of Europe, however, and he and many others saw the children of Australia as the legitimate heirs of the

British and European past. The intellectual all-rounder James Harrison, inventor of refrigeration at sea and editor during its short life of the Australia Felix Monthly Magazine, reflected in 1849, after quoting Edmund Burke's dictum that people will not look forward to their posterity who never looked backward to their ancestors (Nadel, 1957, p.41),

> We live then in a new country, but we are an old people, every member of which is himself composed of thoughts and feelings, which are the result of national history, national institutions and national religion. Most of us have arrived within the last ten years in this new abode and have either brought with us or inherited recollections of the past, which extend beyond our own lives and crown into a present picture the storied memories of a nation....This new country of ours must then be moulded to our minds; not our minds to the country, and therefore the mould in which our minds are to be cast is the question. We urge this point because there is a manifest tendency to sink the old in the new, to conform ourselves to outward circumstances...We are as yet English in our feelings in spite of the effects of a wild and unsocial life in the bush and of a restless mode of existence in towns which substitutes rapidity for strength of thought.

By 1849 many significant attempts had already been made to mould the new country to the minds of the British and Irish Australians, but these were by no means all of a piece. Conceptions of what was most significant in the past and of what part Botany Bay/New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land/Tasmania, or Australia as a whole, might play in human history were very sharply polarised in early colonial literature and perhaps in early colonial thought as a whole. For most of the early newcomers the significant past was, not only in terms of personal experience but of a wider frame of reference, that of English low life and crime. The earliest colonial novelists, such as James Hardy Vaux, Henry Savery and Charles Rowcroft, combine special pleading with depictions of criminal society in both Australia and England which provide insights into its values and heroes. The first edition of James Hardy Vaux's Memoirs contained a preface by Barron Field placing Vaux in the tradition of Aleman's Guzman de

Alfarche, while Vaux himself consciously sought to emulate Smollett's picaresque novels. The Newgate novel was the basic model for most early fiction in the Australian colonies. On the other hand an opposed strand in early colonial literature embodied the Augustanism of Georgian England and depicted Australia as the successor to Britain in the progress of civilization, just as Britain had so frequently been portrayed during the eighteenth century as the lineal successor of Athens and Rome.

James Tucker's Ralph Rashleigh

One of the few works in which an account of low life was presented within a much broader context was James Tucker's Ralph Rashleigh, although, as Dixon (1985, p.164 ff.) points out, Tucker offered an allegory of regression into the murky past of mankind, rather than of advance into a brave new world. Tucker arrived in New South Wales in 1827 after conviction for blackmail and served some eighteen years as convict or ticket-of-leave man before writing his novel. It seems probable, Roderick suggested (Tucker, 1952, p.ix), that Tucker worked on farms in Emu Plains and Campbelltown and on road gangs in Cumberland County before gaining his first ticket-of-leave in 1835, and was subsequently reconvicted for further offences. Tucker had spent some eight years at Stonyhurst College and was clearly far better educated than the average convict or, indeed, free settler. It is fair to assume, however, that he expected such allusions as he made in Ralph Rashleigh to be understood by a wide readership once it was published, although this did not occur during his lifetime, of course.

Despite Tucker's Roman Catholic upbringing there are few Christian, let alone specifically Catholic, allusions in the text. There are some Biblical references of a very general character: London is conventionally described as 'the modern Babylon' (p.1); a gambling den emits 'the uproar of Babylon and the din of Pandemonium' (p.28); an emaciated bullock is compared with

'the lean kine seen in the dream of Egypt's Pharoah' (p.230). There are also references to two celebrated works of religious devotion: as a captive of bushrangers, Rashleigh is in a 'new Slough of Despond' (p.192); a shelf of books discovered in a settler's cottage has a well-thumbed copy of the Arabian Nights, together with an untouched The Whole Duty of Man (p.182). Oddly, both Pilgrim's Progress and The Whole Duty of Man were works particularly within a Protestant tradition of piety.

Tucker was fairly typical of educated Englishman of his time in making more references to classical lore than to English history. When Rashleigh is being hunted, 'such a tumult of arresting, searching, questioning and cross-questioning had never been known in Hampshire since the death of William Rufus' (p.5) and the female impersonators in Rashleigh's dramatic production in New South Wales are compared with the disguised Falstaff in Merry Wives of Windsor (p.96), but such references are well outnumbered by classical ones. Rashleigh and his fellow-critics of Governor Darling are described as 'embryo Demosthenes' (p.71), a farmer from Emu Plains giving evidence in court is an 'agricultural Lycurgus' (p.83), a harsh commandant is a 'modern Caligula" (p.226), delayed payments will not be made until the Greek Kalends (p.112), and soldiers are twice referred to as 'sons of Mars (pp.55,84). An old Irish woman is sound asleep 'in the arms of Morpheus' (p.116).

It is not surprising that events in recent Irish history should surface in a convict novel such as Ralph Rashleigh. During a drunken evening with an Irish family, Rashleigh is informed by a veteran of the '98 of 'his wonderful feats at Vinegar Hill and Enniscorthy' (p.123), while Biddy, an Irish woman who has helped Rashleigh, is always quick to drink to 'auld Ireland' (p.121). Yet the English Catholic paints an unsympathetic picture of the Irish past and present. Biddy's family are 'indifferent to dirt'

(p.122), and the worst bushrangers are not only Irish but are proud of the atrocities they committed in Ireland before transportation. The brutal Foxley fancies when drunk that one of his captives is an old Irish foe, 'long Heppenstall' (p.202), and the escaped convict Phil Hennesy from Tipperary has been convicted of the 'popular though anything but humane amusement common in Ireland at that time of "carding a tithe proctor"' and 'spoke of the most sanguinary deeds with a cool gusto' (p.239).

Tucker's portrait of English convicts is scarcely flattering either. Although Rashleigh is critical of the harshness of Governor Darling (p.71), he does not pretend that he and his fellow-convicts are innocent victims of poverty or political oppression. In sadistic cruelty, rape, murder and cannibalism, the convicts seem unsurpassable, except when Rashleigh compares them with the Aborigines, who run them close. The women convicts are depicted as equally vicious: 'so fair and yet so callous, so totally lost to all womanly pity or shame' (p.194).

There are very few references to early colonial events, although the mutiny on the 'Bounty' is mentioned when Rashleigh and his fellow bolters wonder whether they can reach a Dutch settlement in an open boat (p.237). It would be hard to find a sharper contrast between the use made of early colonial experiences by Robinson or Wentworth in their optimistic vision of New South Wales as a fulfilment, or at least an extension, of a triumphal human progress towards greater freedom and civilization, and the harsh account of colonial society in Ralph Rashleigh. Whether the scene is set in Sydney, in the farming settlements at Campbelltown, in the Blue Mountains, or the northern coast, and whether depicting whites or blacks, there is very little in Ralph Rashleigh to suggest that New South Wales has a glorious future before it. Indeed the epigraph to the chapter describing Rashleigh's stay in Sydney (p.68) may be entirely ironical in intent (Dixon, 1985,

p.164) The epigraph is,

> The band of Romulus, it is most certain,
> Were ruffian stabbers and vile cutpurse knaves;
> Yet did this outcast scum of all the earth
> Lay the Foundation of the Eternal City.

Tucker seems deliberately to have portrayed earlier Sydney in unduly dark tones. As Rashleigh first looks upon the colony which will be his new home, we read (p.68),

> The shores of Port Jackson then possessed few charms, either natural or acquired...There were then none of those elegant mansions or beautiful villas, with their verdant and ever blooming gardens, which now so plentifully meet the eye of the new colonist, affording abundant proofs of the wonted energy of the Anglo-Saxon race, who speedily rescue the most untamed soils from the barbarism of nature.

Tucker hoped for a better future from these energetic Anglo-Saxons, but his novel is a record of the destructive effects of the recent expenditure of their energies in New South Wales.

The Early Colonial Theatre

In Enlightenment thought drama, when organized aright, was a powerful influence for civilization. Since such an influence might be of especial value in the degraded conditions portrayed in Ralph Rashleigh, the early colonial governors encouraged theatrical productions. The first was Farquahar's The Recruiting Officer, played in Port Jackson in 1789 before an audience of some sixty notables, including Governor Phillip. Watkin Tench (1793, p. 25) emphasised the potential social value of the theatre, especially its utility in fostering cultural continuity.

The early Australian theatre mirrored early travel narratives and poetry in its evocation of those virtues of form and tradition so lacking in

the everyday life of the infant colonies; emulation of the London theatre, rather than experiment with novel themes, was the norm. This feature was displayed in the work of David Burn, who migrated from Scotland to Van Diemen's Land in 1826 and subsequently wrote eight plays, as well as a wide range of historical and descriptive works and a considerable body of essays and journalistic pieces.

Burn's two plays set in New South Wales, The Bushrangers and Sydney Delivered were never performed in Australia. Sydney Delivered was published in 1845, prefaced by an apology for its 'lavish seasoning of French pepper', but The Bushrangers, obnoxious not for sexual licence but for a favourable presentation of the bushranger Matthew Brady, was not published in Australia until much later, although it was staged in Edinburgh in 1829. On the other hand, Burn's plays set in Europe, such as Loreda, in Sicily, or The Queen's Land, in seventeenth century Scotland, were well received in Hobart and Sydney, although his manner was condemmed in The Athenaeum in London in 1843 as 'wonderfully in the Crummles vein' (Kramer, 1981, p.178).

The Bushrangers was notable for a very unflattering portrait of the Governor, whose injustices Brady is depicted as resisting. Burn's scarcely veiled caricature of Governor Arthur was part of an implied criticism of the absence in Tasmania of the legal rights and constitutional liberties to which free British Settlers are entitled on any soil under the British flag. A stereotyped Aboriginal is featured in The Bushrangers, which offers no hope that they are capable of sharing British rights and liberties and which accepts as inevitable the disappearance of the Tasmanian Aborigines.

Another Burn play, Our First Lieutenant, is a patriotic nautical drama of the type popular in Britain and Australia throughout the century. The patriotism was in the first instance British, with loyalty to the flag and 'Rule Britannia' highly prominent, but Australian audiences, conscious of

the importance of the British naval power for their prosperity and perhaps their very existence, were apparently as supportive of this genre as were those in London.

Newgate plays were still very popular on the London stage in the early nineteenth century, the 1825 production of Jack Sheppard gaining notorious popularity, but sympathetic presentation of a MacHeath, or Sheppard or Brady were unwelcome to early Colonial Governors, especially to Arthur and Darling. In 1834, however, Hobart saw the first performance of The Bushrangers (or Norwood Vale) by an English free migrant, Henry Melville. Melville's Bushrangers are dyed-in-the wool villains who seduce and kill in the best traditions of melodrama. Again, unlike Burn's play, Melville's presents its main Aboriginal character sympathetically, as a tragic figure fully justified in seeking revenge for the Bushrangers' murder of his wife and child. Charles Harpur's ill-fated Tragedy of Donohoe was also written and published, although not performed, in the 1830s.

The transition from a predominantly convict colony to a free society seeking to attract a better type of immigrant stimulated the Australian theatre, but the leading Sydney playwright of the 1840s was the convict Edward Geoghegan, a Dublin medical student transported for obtaining goods under false pretences, who arrived in New South Wales in 1840. Controversial themes were best avoided, as Joseph Simmons recognized when he assured the Colonial Secretary in 1843 that (Williams, 1983, p.20) his own play The Duellist was 'perfectly free in dialogue and plot from anything local, political, sectarian or immoral'.

Geoghegan's contemporaries set most of their plays in traditional times and places of romance and historical conflict: Paris, Barbados and Grenada, with central figures such as Blanche of Navarre, Mary Stuart and Charles II. Geoghegan's own works included pirate plays such as Captain Kyd and Lafitte

the Pirate, and a version of The Last Days of Pompeii. He adapted Dickens's Christmas Carol and Scott's The Bride of Lammermoor (dramatised as Ravenswood), but his most controversial play was The Hibernian Father, based on the determination of the Irish judge, Walker Lynch, to conduct his son's trial for murder and to execute him personally when convinced of his guilt. Lynch's rejection of a father's love for the role of judge and executioner leads to revolt among the citizens of Galway, convinced rightly of the son's innocence - a politically sensitive story in a convict colony with a large Irish population. Indeed, Geoghegan's stage presentation was probably less subversive than its first version, since its licence included the words 'as now altered' (New South Wales Archives 4413673. cited in Kramer, 1981, p.192).

Geoghegan's most popular play was The Currency Lass. Its central joke is the misapprehension of the hero's rich uncle in England that the 'native Australian' his nephew proposes to marry is an Aboriginal woman, who would perpetuate 'the family features in bronze'. The Currency Lass seeks to embody the virtues of English, Scottish and Irish women: she is 'one who unites the charms of all concentrated in herself'. The play also contains a careful balance of English, Scottish and Irish melodies, all shown as naturalized in Australian by their new lyrics. The Currency Lass symbolized the continuing links with the United Kingdom, the distinctive identity of Australia and its distance from Aboriginality. No serious plays set in the Australian colonies were offered in Sydney in Geoghegan's time at the Royal Victorian Theatre in Sydney.

The combination of traditional and colonial elements which made The Currency Lass popular was found, too, in the pantomimes of the 1840s and 1850s. Traditional tales such as St. George and the Dragon, Jack and the Beanstalk, or The Seven Champions of Christendom provided the framework for

local jokes and allusions to Sydney's leading landmarks.

The Place of Australia in History

The darkness of Australia's origins and convict experience as a whole was a major theme in colonial literature, at least to the time of Marcus Clarke and William Astley ('Price Warung'). The contrasting theme of Australia as a land of historical promise and fulfilment, rather than of punishment, was also sounded soon after British colonization.

In the Introduction to the 1810 English translation of de Labillardiere's An Account of a Voyage in Search of La Perouse the question was asked (p.vii) 'Who can tell whether the rudiments of some great future empire may not already exist at Botany Bay?' Erasmus Darwin seems to have been the first English writer to make New South Wales a poetic subject when he contributed 'The Visit of Hope to Sydney Cove' as a frontispiece to Stockdale's account (1789) of Phillips' voyage to Botany Bay. Darwin personified Sydney Cove with 'his young navies' and represented an allegorized Hope promising a future in which 'Time's opening scenes' will create 'broad streets, 'stately walls', 'bright cards, and solid roads', embellish'd villas', 'tall spires and dome-capt towers' and 'piers and quays', as well as farms and orchards.

William Lisle Bowles included the infant colony in his 1803 The Spirit of Discovery, or, The Conquest of Ocean. From London Bowles made an early portrayal of Australia as the heir to England's glories,

> My heart has sigh'd in secret, when I thought
> That the dark tide of time might one day close,
> England, o'er thee, as long since it has clos'd
> On Aegypt and on Tyre: that ages hence,
> From the Pacifick's billowy loneliness,
> Whose tract thy daring search reveal'd, some isle
> Might rise in green-haired beauty eminent,
> And like a goddess, glittering from the deep,
> Hereafter sway the sceptre of domain
> From pole to pole; and such as now thou art,

Perhaps NEW-HOLLAND be.

The Times predicted as early as 1807 (2 Oct., cited in Clark, I, 1963, p.203) that New South Wales might emulate Rome, which had also started life as a despised dumping-ground for criminals and fugitives from justice. Governor Macquarie's encouragement of the term 'Australia' in place of New Holland, with its associations with convictism, both mirrored and stimulated further a more favourable view of the past and present of the colony.

There are few early traces of any emancipist or native-born, let alone any free immigrant, seeking broad historical significance in the foundation of New South Wales, but in 1817, the Sydney Gazette (1 Feb.) contained Isaac Nichols's new verses to Rule Britannia. These recalled with pride Australia's foundation and the explorers who had made it possible. Nichols, a successful emancipist originally transported in 1791, compared New South Wales favourably with England because of its freedom from foreign enemies and the threat of war.

The Historical Vision of Michael Massey Robinson

The first poetry of significance published in Australia was that of Michael Massey Robinson. Robinson had been educated at Oxford and had practised as an attorney in London, but was charged and found guilty of extortion. After transportation to New South Wales in 1798 he gained employment, first as a convict and then as an emancipist, as an assistant to the Judge Advocate, but he fell back into old habits and was sentenced in 1802 to seven years hard labour in Norfolk Island for perjury. Robinson's friends in Sydney soon secured his return from Norfolk Island, but after a further conviction for forgery he was barred from future official employment under the Judge Advocate. In 1811, however, Robinson

secured appointment as Principal Clerk to the Governor's Secretary. In this capacity Robinson worked closely with Governor Macquarie, who came to esteem his abilities and who secured his admission into the society of Government House. It was through Odes written to be recited on the King's and Queen's birthdays at Government House that Robinson gained his main poetic fame.

Robinson's Odes are in the heroic couplets favoured in much Georgian Augustan verse. Robinson's central theme was the relationship between the past glories of the Ancient World, of Greece and Rome, to the present glories of Britain, always styled as Albion, and to those to come of Australia. He made virtually no allusions to medieval English history, other than to Alfred the Great and to the Hundred Years War. Alfred was important to him as the supposed founder of the English navy and of Oxford University, to which Robinson frequently made pious filial references. Thus in the Ode for the Queen's Birthday in 1815 (1946, p.50),

> Such are the favor'd Realms that prove
> A MONARCH'S WORTH, A PEOPLE'S LOVE!
> And such, ah, ALBION ! from thy ALFRED'S DAY,
> When Freedom smil'd thro' Science bright'ning Ray :
> When early ISIS saw thy Sons aspire
> To fan the latent Spark of Classic Fire;
> What Time the native Youths went forth to brave
> The untry'd Perils of the briny Wave :
> From the fierce Danes their gaudy Streamers tore,
> And drove their mimic Navies from thy Shore :-

The campaigns of the Black Prince and of Henry V received attention, mainly perhaps because the struggle against France was an immediate concern of the English nation. Both the Queen's Birthday Ode of 1813 and the King's Birthday Ode of 1815 (1946, pp.35;54) contain references to Agincourt and Crecy.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada merited a reference in the 1813 Ode

for the Queen's Birthday (1946, p.35),

> Or, swelling high in Naval Glory, tell
> Where Spain's "invincible Armada" fell !
> What Time pale Terror seiz'd their scatter'd Train,
> And BRITAIN'S BULWARKS triumphed on the Main.

Spain, however, also received tributes for its maritime deeds, although these fell short of those of Albion: Columbus was honoured as a pioneer of heroic voyages which gained their apotheosis in the discovery of Australia. Robinson had no doubts that Columbus brought blessings to the New World in helping to free a 'rude Race' from 'Pagan Darkness'. Nor did he suggest that any errors in Roman Catholicism might have corrupted the 'Christian Faith, with heav'n taught Truths refin'd' which Columbus's ships bore with them to the Americas. Columbus had met, Robinson lamented, with undeserved misfortune, but his British successors, who continued his civilizing mission throughout the world, received in contrast honour rather than slander.

In general the period between the fall of Rome and the Age of Enlightenment held little interest for Robinson and was dismissed in the 1819 Ode for the King's Birthday as follows (1946, p.82),

> Till After Ages rudely dar'd
> Profane the Reliques Time had spar'd,
> And, sunk in Gothic Darkness, long
> Was hush'd the Minstrel's sacred Song.

Robinson inherited from English eighteenth century Augustanism the conception that the path of civilization arose in Greece, crossed over to Rome and finally, after a subterranean disappearance, resurfaced during the Enlightenment. The influence of James Thomson is particularly strong in Robinson's Odes. In the Queen's Birthday Ode of 1814 (1946, p.44), Robinson anticipated the end of the French wars by a comparison with the

advent of peace to Greece,

> Then ATHENS saw her rising Day
> Illum'd by Wisdom's spreading Ray,
> And Arts, and Science, hand in hand,
> Advance progressive o'er the Land.

In Athenian achievement Robinson foresaw the future glory of England,

> And ancient GREECE one Meed of Glory claim,
> To raise her annals high on story'd Fame;
> Whilst faithful Mem'ry pauses to review
> The brightest Aera polish'd ATHENS Knew !
> When her enlighten'd Seers of old,
> Skill'd in prophetic Lore, foretold
> That o'er the Western Main an Isle
> Should flourish under FREEDOM'S Smile;
> Whose mighty KINGS thro' Times unborn,
> The regal Sceptre should adorn;
> Whose CONSORTS, form'd with Virtues rare,
> Should prosper-HEAVEN'S peculiar Care;
> Whose august Race, by kindred worth allay'd,
> Should rise the Hope, and prove the Nation's Pride.
> THAT ISLE has flourish'd, eminent in Fame.
> Supreme in Arms, and ALBION IS HER NAME

In the King's Ode of 1814 Robinson compared England's poets with those of Greece (1946, p.48),

> Hence, on departed Merit's hallow'd Shrine
> Shall laurel'd Wreaths with fadeless Lustre shine,
> Albeit the treasur'd Lore of early Days,
> Preserv'd in GRECIAN Verse or THEBAN Lays;
> Bid HOMER'S Page the Wreck of Time survive,
> And PINDAR'S Name thro' unborn Ages live;
> Yet ALBION'S Bards, like her own Warriors, long
> Fame shall immortalize in lasting Song !

In the Queen's Ode for 1817 Robinson took up the theme of the emergence of learning from 'Gothic Spells' in Greece and its revival by the favourite Roman poet of the Enlightenment, Virgil (1946, p.64). Like Athens, Rome lost its greatness, but their memory had been perpetuated by the veneration and imitation of the British, whose example will also be followed in

Australia,

> And long shall gen'rous Britons guard
> The Turf that marks the hallow'd Ground,
> And from each Relique Age has spar'd,
> Bid fadeless Laurels flourish round.
>
> Yet ALBION ! on thy trophy'd Shores,
> Enriched with Nature's choicest Stores,
> The Muses still rever'd roam.
> And find thy green Retreats their Home.
> There Arts on Freedom's Basis stand,
> There Science owns her genial Land,
>
> And when AUSTRALIA'S Annals prove
> Her peopl'd Towns and fruitful Vales,
> Her herds and flocks that countless rove,
> Her Pastures rich, and clustr'd Dales :
>
> Her spacious Harbours girt with Sylvan Pride,
> Where Commerce sees her treasur'd Navies ride.
> (Whose distant Margin skirts the WESTERN Main).
> Where Nature languish'd for the Tiller's Care,
> And proudly hail'd a new Dominion there.

In the 1821 'Song for His Majesty's Birthday', the first written by Robinson after the end of George III's long reign, he repeated the theme of the succession of leadership of civilization from 'Athens, high, triumphant and renown'd' and from Rome, through 'The Havock barbarous Hordes had made,/That swept with desolating Rage./The Boast of the Augustan Page' to the time when 'Genius shall cease to slumber in the waste' but shall (1946, p.96),

> ...rise with freshen'd Grace at last :-
> To see pround Science her fair Morn restore,
> And shed her brightest Ray on ALBION'S Shore.

Robinson's account of Britain's glories opens with 'Shakespeare's Muse..(and) Milton's bold aspiring lyre', and is followed by examples of eminence in war and peace which compel gratitude for her bountiful gifts, assured to Australia through the wise care of Macquarie,

AND, whilst AUSTRALIA'S favor'd Isle
Partakes the universal Smile,
And honors the benignant Hand,
That nurtur'd first her Infant Land;

SHALL not her PATRIOT-CHIEF receive
All that fond Gratitude can give
Whilst every Heart responds to every Lay
That owns His fostering-His Paternal Sway!

And lo ! within this Austral zone,
In regions, unexplored, unknown,
Till time has into dotage grown,
An infant State appear;
Like Rome's, whose motley exiles stand,
A lawless, daring, desperate band,
Expelled from Britain's parent land,
Their crimes to expiate here.

What force, what wisdom can restrain
Such fierce, unruly souls, or gain
To Law, and order'd social reign,
And savage natures tame ?
Brave Chief ! 'tis thy illustrious doom,
To rear for these, a dearer home;
And in a second rising Rome,
To rival Numa's fame !

In his 1811 Ode for the King's Birthday Robinson identified the causes of Rome's downfall as luxury and faction, but he was confident that Albion will not allow such weaknesses to develop (1946, p.29),

When ROME her sov'reign Flag unfurl'd,
Rose the proud Mistress of the world;
And, rich in Arts, in Arms renown'd,
Aw'd the devoted Nations round;
'Till LUXURY'S intemp'rate Trains
Spread Desolation o'er her Plains :
And INDUSTRY, with nerveless Hand
Retir'd, dejected, from the Land;
Whilst rent by Faction's wily Spell,
Her Senate's droop'd-her Fame and Freedom fell.

Not so, yon ISLE, against whose sacred shore
BELLONA bids reluctant Thunders roar,
Not so, our ALBION whose imperial Shield
Still was triumphant on the tented Field :

In an 1820 poem addressed to Governor Macquarie, who was lauded in

almost every royal birthday Ode as well, Robinson repeated the Times' comparison cited earlier between the origins of Rome as a refuge for criminals or outcasts and that of New South Wales as a convict settlement. Just as Rome transcended sordid beginnings, so shall the new Australia (1946, pp.86-7),

> When infant Rome,-earth's future queen
> To grow above her hills was seen,
> A Numa rose,-brave, sage, serene,
> To rule her iron race;
> A motley, heterogeneous brood,
> For crimes, from different lands pursued,
> Of courage fierce, of manners rude
> First laid her Empire's base !
>
> And lo ! within this Austral zone,
> In regions, unexplored, unknown,
> Till time has into dotage grown,
> An infant State appear;
> Like Rome's, whose motley exiles stand,
> A lawless, daring, desperate band,
> Expelled from Britain's parent land,
> Their crimes to expiate here.
>
> What force, what wisdom can restrain
> Such fierce, unruly souls, or gain
> To Law, and order'd social reign,
> And savage natures tame ?
> Brave Chief ! 'tis thy illustrious doom,
> To rear for these, a dearer home;
> And in a second rising Rome,
> To rival Numa's fame !

To Robinson the settlers in the Australian colonies were, whether free or unfree, equally sons of Albion and had no loyalty separate from that due to her. He wrote in the 1810 Ode on the King's Birthday (1946, p.21),

> THO' far from ALBION'S hallow'd Coast,
> OCEAN'S first PRIDE, and NATURE'S Boast :
> ?Whose Fame the sacred Bards of old
> In Strains prophetical foretold :
> Though, wafted by the refluent Tides,
> Your watery Waste her Sons divide,
> Still shall the Muse prefer her tribute Lay,
> And Australasia hail her GEORGE'S Natal Day.
> Auspicious Morn ! to BRITONS dear :

The Pride of each revolving Year !

Australia was now one of several sisters benignly cherished by the Mother Country, as in the 1819 Queen's Birthday Ode (1946, p.81),

> Hence shall Australia, like her Sister Isles,
> By Britain rear'd, and fostered by her Smiles,
> From her own Source her ample Produce pour,
> Thro' Eastern Climes, and every peopled Shore :

Robinson was typical in his judgement that the Aboriginal occupation had little of value to offer. The Aborigines were not portrayed by him as noble or as having made any progress towards a higher state of civil society. In the 1811 King's Birthday Ode Robinson wrote (1946, pp.30-1),

> Time was, when o'er THIS dread expanse of land
> No TRAIT appear'd of Culture's fost'ring hand :
> And, as the wild Woods yielded to the Blast,
> Nature scarce own'd the unproductive Waste.
> O'er rugged Cliffs fantastic Branches hung,
> 'Round whose hoar Trunks the slender Scions clung,
> Impervious Mountains met the ling'ring Eye,
> Whose cloud-cap't Summits bav'd the Sky.
> Rocks, whose repulsive Frown access defied,
> And Bays, where idly ebb'd the slumb'ring Tide-
> Unless some Straggler of the NATIVE RACE,
> In crude Canoe expos'd his sooty Face;
> With lazy Motion paddled o'er the Flood,
> Snatch'd at the spear-struck Fish-and hugged his Food.
>
> But when BRITANNIA'S Sons came forth, to brave
> The dreary Perils of the length'ning Wave;
> When her bold Barks, with swelling Sails unfurled,
> Trac'd these rude Coasts, and hail'd a new-found World.
> Soon as their Footsteps press'd the yielding sand,
> A sun more genial brighten'd on the Land :
> Commerce and Arts enrich'd the social Soil,
> Burst through the gloom and bade all Nature smile.

Robinson was anxious that the arrival of the British should prove a time of emancipation from ignorance and darkness for the Aborigines. He wrote in his 1811 Queen's Ode (1946, pp.27-8),

May Reason muse...and, in the Solemn Pause
Indulge a Sigh in suff'ring Nature's Cause.
Not with presumptuous Thought thy Pow'rs scan,
But urg'd by Kindred Ties from Man to Man,
With sympathetic Energy retrace,
The lorn Condition of yon sable Race,
For ages doom'd in Indolence to roam,
The Rocks their Refuge, and the Wilds their Home!

Lost to each social Interchange of Thought,
Their Youth neglected, and their Age untaught,
Unless the Finny Victims to beguile,
And snatch Subsistence from the Scanty Spoil!

Hap'ly, whilst, calm Religion's genuine Voice
In other Climes bids other Tribes rejoice,
Pours into darken'd Minds her lucid Rays,
And bids the wondering Savage live to Praise.
'Ere many circling Years have onward roll'd,
May call these Wand'rers to the 'promised Fold',
And from the Dawn o' Reason's genial Day,

Bid their Night yield-to intellectual Day,
Be such a Briton's Care, a Briton's pride,
Nature the precept, and fair Truth the Guide.

As became an Emancipist, Robinson placed great importance on the virtues of forgiveness and of manumission. After the overthrow of Napoleon, Robinson rejoiced that there would be no vindictiveness, but rather (1946, p.51)

Now, rescu'd from the dark usurper's Sway,
Gallia's gay shores shall hail the bright'ning Day;
Again her rambling Vines shall cluster round,
Commerce revive, and waving Vales abound :

Similarly in an 1825 song delivered at a public dinner to Sir Thomas Brisbane (1946, p.104), Robinson praised the abolition of the slave trade,

...'till the Atlantic wave
Was crimson'd no more with the blood of the slave;
Nor the task-master's lash, the red signal for toil,
But the Afric's dark brow rose illum'd with a smile.

It was striking that Robinson made virtuallly no reference to Biblical

or religious traditions, especially since Macquarie, the man whom Robinson sought most to please and impress, had a strong vein of Christian piety. Robinson expressed the strong secularist values of the Enlightenment and it was 'Reason's Light' which, he prophesied, wwould guide Australia to a bright future (1946, p.85). This classicist or rationalist motif was to be strong in nineteenth century Australian historical thought and cultural association, through Harpur and on to Furphy, but in few of his successors was this motif so detached from Hebraic and Christian elements as in Robinson.

Michael Massey Robinson was proclaimed by the Sydney Gazette (20 January, 1810) as 'The Laureat Bard' of New South Wales, but no such office was in Macquarie's power to bestow. In any case Robinson's works were soon put into the shade by William Charles Wentworth's 1823 philosophical poem, Australasia, which owed much to Robinson, as well as to Robinson's models, especially James Thomson, and to Philip Freneau's The Rising Glory of America, which placed the United States as the legitimate heir of the historical tradition of Greece, Rome and Great Britain.

W.C. Wentworth and the place of Australia in history

Wentworth was a minor poet, as well as a landowner, entrepreneur, journalist, explorer and politician. In the poem Australasia, which he submitted in an 1823 poetry competition in Cambridge University, Wentworth expounded his ideas about Australia's place in world history. It was not uncommon for sons of leading colonial families to attend the ancient English universities, while the prescription of 'Australasia' as the subject for a poetry prize was a tribute to British interest in the Antipodes.

In Australasia Wentworth traces the progress of Pacific exploration from De Quiros to Cook, 'The Columbus of our Shore' and 'Searcher of every

sea, and every coast', who brought light 'where all before was dark'. Banks, La Perouse and Phillip also receive full praise for the light which they shed. Cook and La Perouse gave their lives to this endeavour, but their sacrifice has already been proved not to be in vain, and the future of Australia will increase gratitude towards their memories.

A panegyric on Sydney, along the lines of Thomson's description of London in the The Seasons, is followed in Australasia by the story of recent and continuing explorations of inner Australia's 'Tracks of untraversed earth'. As one of the first three settlers to cross the Blue Mountains, in 1815, Wentworth was that rare combination, hero and bard. Wentworth links Australian exploration with classical and biblical themes. Aeneas is listed as a forerunner, while the final passage of the Blue Mountains recalls the first sight of the Primeval light vouchsaved to the Children of Israel (1923, pp.12-3),

> Till gain'd with toilsome step thy topmost heath,
> We spied the cheering smokes ascent beneath,
> And, as a meteor shoots athwart the night,
> The boundless champion burst upon our sight,
> Till nearer seen the beauteous landscape grew,
> Opening like Canaan on rapt Israel's view.

Like the English poets who were his models, Wentworth moves easily between the Bible and classical literature so that he can foresee (p.14),

> Soon, Australasia, may they inmost plains,
> A new Arcadia, teem with simple swains;
> Soon a Lycoris' scorn again inspire
> A Gallus' song to moan his hopeless fire,
> And, while he murmurs forth his plaintive tale,
> The listening breezes waft it down the vale.

The final note struck in Australasia is that, should Britain, like earlier empires, decline and fall, all will not be lost (p.22),

And, oh Britannia! shouldst thou cease to ride
Despotic Empress of old Ocean's tide;-
.....
May this, they last-born infant, - then arise,
To glad thy heart, and greet thy parent eyes;
And Australasia float, with flag unfurled,
A new Britannia in Another world.

Wentworth was soon enough the subject as well as the author of verse of a serious historical, as well as of a satirical, character. For example in his 'Lines Written to Commemorate the Passing of a Bill to Incorporate and Endow a University in Sydney', the Rev. Dr. William Wools paid tribute as heroes of Australia to Wentworth, Leichhardt and Mitchell, and to three governors, Bourke, Gipps and, perhaps for reasons of decorum, Fitzroy. Four of Woolls' lines show particularly clearly his conceptions of historical significance and of progress,

Oh! blest the land where despot breast ne'er glows
The gates of science on mankind to close.
Where priestly rancour with misguided zeal
Ne'er plies the rack now persecuting steel.

High-flown poetical sentiments were no doubt highly untypical of standard colonial modes of expression - yet when such sentiments were expressed at least they aroused no antagonism and may be supposed to have received a generally sympathetic reception. The Sydney Gazette contained on 17 December 1829 a prize poem written in Latin by S. Smith, a 'Student at Hyde Abbey School, Winchester', and entitled Australia, and followed it up on 13 February 1830 with a translation by Charles Tompson.

Smith discerned no noble savages in New South Wales, but depicted Aborigines as sadly degenerated from God's original creation. Their humanity is not in doubt, since Smith adheres to monogenesis, but the Aborigine has fallen low (cited in Dixon, 1985, p.144),

Poor, wretched man, whose dim degenerate mind,
Scarce certifies the form of human kind!
He, sad and needy as his parents were,
When sin from Eden drove the erring pair,
Thro' the wide wilderness which gave him birth,
Wanders, a naked vagrant of the earth.
Deep in his sullen brow is set the seal,
Of heart relentless and unwont to feel

The arrival of the British has, however, brought new hope. Smith typically combines classical with biblical themes in order to hail the high destiny of Australia, whose new order will redeem the fallen Aborigine as well as the corrupted convict. Smith's Australia ends,

Tyre knew not once, proud mistress of the seas,
Havens so tranquil - so secure - as these;-
Nor Carthage, rival of the Roman fame,-
Nor Britain's self, of ocean's pride, the name.
O, come blest era! Happy age awake,
When the dark native from gross night shall break,
To docile temper mollify his mind,
And taste acquire for habits more refined,-
When heathen error shall no more possess
His sould reclaimed to CHRIST AND RIGHTEOUSNESS;
But, quitting his wild woods, no more to roam,
Blest, he shall taste the settled joys of home.

Another example in the Robinson and Wentworth vein appeared in 1838 in The Australian Magazine (February 1838, cited in Dixon, 1986, p.3) as part of "An Address, supposed to be spoken by a young Australian on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Colonization of New South Wales',

Rome, Carthage, Greece and Troy, all had their day
Of infant strength - of glory - and decay;
Their power, like Australia's, first was small;
They rose in time - but rose, alas, to fall.
Such is the curse of change that ever clings
To mighty empires, and all earthly things.
Our land shall rise, like every other clime,
To martial glory, and to power sublime.
May it progress in honours, arts and fame,
And win, like Rome, an everlasting name!

Peter Cunningham was thoroughly prosaic, but he anticipated (1827, p.22)

that 'Australia may hereafter pour her myriads of hardy sons to control the destinies of the effeminate nations of the East'. Cunningham went on,

> England has already erected one immense empire in America, and founded, it is to be hoped, another considerable one in Australia, where her wise institutions, her language, and the very names now borne by her children, her counties, her parishes, and her towns will all be handed down to future ages as an imperishable record of her public spirit, her wisdom, and her greatness. Can all the gains every to be realized by selfish commerce be compared to the glory of this?

The Significant past in Charles Harpur's Thought

Australia's first poet of significant ability, Charles Harpur, born in 1813, had as one of his deepest and most abiding interests the relationship between the new lands of Australia and the collective history and literature of mankind. Although convicts, his parents were educated and his father not only became a schoolmaster in New South Wales but had definite literary pretensions and liked to be called the Sage of Windsor. Harpur's status as a Currency Lad born of convict parents was in itself no great obstacle in life, but through life he suspected slights and rebuffs, which he was inclined to attribute to patrician snobbery rather than to any fault of his own. From his earliest years, Harpur saw himself as a tribune and oracle of the People; his tragedy was that few people accepted him in his own terms. He lacked the talents, perhaps the vices too, to become a successful political leader like his friend Henry Parkes, but he was an indifferent follower too, who readily broke off friendships when his advice was not accepted. As a result of these traits, but perhaps more fundamentally because of contraries within his own aims and values, Harpur became an increasingly isolated, alienated and bitter figure.

Like all contemporary radicals in New South Wales, Harpur and his

older brother Joseph were youthful admirers of William Charles Wentworth, then at the height of his powers and of his radicalism. Joseph Harpur saluted Wentworth as follows (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.25),

> Wentworth, whose spirit soars above the dross-
> The sordid yoke that binds the grovelling crew,
> Above the mean accompt of gain or loss,
> Attendance on the justice you pursue.
> O, pay to Fame whate'er to Fame is due,
> And much is due from such a soul divine;-
> Glory, the Patriot's glory, bright and true
> Shall crown thee, and the poet's bays be thine-
> Attune thy lyre again - thy country's lyre;
> And act with glory still, and sing with fire.

Harpur's own early poem "To the Lyre of Australia' was strongly influenced by Wentworth's "Australia", as the following stanza reveals (1984, p.723),

> With her green forest round me, above her blue sky,
> I lap in thy measures some national dream;
> And I find that our songs, though unstudied, are high,
> When the glory of Future Australia's the theme:
> And ever thy Lay, to her sons and her daughters,
> Should breathe of the Land where the evergreen grows -
> To men's souls like the strong wind that swelleth the waters,
> To the heart like a spring breeze that opens the rose.

Once Wentworth adopted more conservative opinions, he became the bete-noire of his former admirers. Harpur wrote in 1843 (1984, p.606),

> Once he would have the Franchise low - For why?
> His "brandy-faced" supporters then were poor.
> But these grown rich (by any means be sure)
> He turned his Jacket - and would have it high!
> Being priced too cheaply by the grasping Crew
> Of Arling's reign - he was the Many's Man!
> Now that we've something of sage Bentham's plan
> To rest in - hark, he's roaring for the Few!

By 1853 Harpur could parody the climax of 'Australasia' as follows (1984, p. 105),

> And O, Britannia, shouldst thou cease to have
> One born Obstructionist, one titled Knave;
> Should ere the Treasury only Truth employ,
> Nor longer live brute Hessians to destroy;
> Should ere arrive that bright auspecious hour
> When thou shalt abdicate all wrongful power,
> And not in seeming, but in substance free,
> To God, as monarch, only bend the knee;
> May this thy last born daughter then arise
> A barbarous Britain under other skies,
> And Australasia spread, with flag unfurled,
> All thy worst features through a wider world.

Harpur was deeply affected by what he considered to be apostasy and treachery on Wentworth's part. His confidence in the People and its leaders was always to be ambivalent, with wild swings between empassioned faith and cynical doubts. He himself became the first significant literary opponent in Australia of received English political values, the first systematic exponent of a radical counter-ideology. In a note added to one of his political essays of the 1850s Harpur denied any hatred of England, claiming that it was impossible that he could hate the country in which his mother had been born (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.5). Yet, although he wrote in praise of 'English beauty', as distinct from that of Italian or Spanish women (1984, pp.20-1), and although his literary tastes were little different from that of his contemporaries in England, Harpur's central hope for Australia was that it should repudiate the English past and present. In none of the political struggles of his own time was Harpur able to see virtue in British policies and he extended this judgement backwards in time. In 1859 Harpur praised John Robertson, then N.S.W. Minister of Lands, on the grounds that (Mitchell, 1973, p.XVI),

> Robertson is not only clear headed and progressive, in a sufficiently anti-European sense, but he is sound at the core and a son of the soil It is not in the nature of things that men brimful of Englandism can ever do us any real national good.

In the Maori Wars Harpur was very much in a minority in Sydney in calling for the defeat of the 'proud invaders', colonists very similar to the new Australians from whom he hoped so much. In the Crimean War, Harpur, denied by the tyranny of distance from being able to read Karl Marx's frenzied call for a total war against the Czardom, attacked Britain's role as unnecessary. He wrote (1984, p.728),

> What's the Crimean War to thee,
> Its craft and folly, blame and blunder?
> Its aims are dodges plain to see,
> Its victories shams with all their thunder.

His account of 'The Battle of Inkerman (the truest version)', contributed to The People's Advocate in 1855, concludes (1984, p.103),

> Thus fourteen thousand, hungry
> And with no provisions nigh,
> Fought the lord knows how many,
> And smote them hip and thigh!
> Old Thermopylae did not
> See such numbers go to pot;
> But was made to look quite small
> By the Briton and the Gaul,
> (May they eat fat frogs together with a zest)
> By the men who died when they
> Should have dining been that day,
> Or live with stupid Raglan, whose blunder slew the rest.

Harpur had no difficulties in deciding on rights and wrongs in Anglo-Irish relations. He wrote in his 'Robert Emmett' (1984, p.771),

> What though tyranny trampled him soon to the earth-
> Though the hope of the Patriot pass'd like a breath,
> So that nought he might leave to the land of his birth,
> But the scorn that he poured on the minions of death!

Harpur named his first-born son Washington, not perhaps so much for any of the President's deeds in office as for his leadership of a successful revolution against English rule. Harpur's hopes that Sydney

would be the capital of a republic were often associated in his mind with the 'wrongs of Ireland'. He wrote in 1854 in The People's Advocate (1984, p.782),

> Such was my Muse's war cry,
> Intent on bloodless weal,
> When Daniel's great, but cloudy soul
> Was storming for Repeal;
> But unarmed right aye withers
> In wrong's all blasting breath -
> Then on, ye Red Republicans,
> To Freedom or to Death

There was hardly an item on the mid-nineteenth century radical political agenda which Harpur did not endorse with enthusiasm. His sonnet 'On the wrongs of Ireland' was re-published with only slight alterations as 'On the Wrongs of Poland'. He granted heroic status without reserve to the nationalist leaders, Kossuth, Mazzini and Garibaldi, and attacked their enemies, Pope Pius IX and Field-Marshal Haynau, without stint.

Harpur execrated both Wellington and Napoleon, although had the latter remained a general of the French Republic, he might well have earned Harpur's praise. By having himself crowned, however, Napoleon had gone beyond the pale. Harpur cried in 'A Republican's Creed' (1984, p.570),

> How long shall there be Kings and Emperors,
> And Dukes and Lords - Folly's most fulsome births?

In his 'Chorus of the Hours' Harpur asked (1984, p.896),

> Crowned heads and mitred dignities -
> The courtly slave and ministerial lord,
> And Governments composed of these
> And them who serve them with the sword,
> Backed by the unproducing moneyed great
> What rational hope - what pledge can such afford
> Of better human destinies?

Harpur oscillated violently between belief in human perfectability and despair of human stupidity. In millenarian moods he could write (1984, p.702),

> The day must come - for Freedom must keep pace
> With knowledge - when the accident of birth,
> Or emptier imposition of mere pelf,
> Shall neither arrogate to any man
> Distinction as of right, nor qualify
> Any for power, by a sole influence,
> Over his fellows. But all men shall stand
> Up proudly, under the wide roof of heaven,
> As God-created equals: each the sire
> Of hiw own worth, and the joint sanctioner
> Of all political pertainment - all
> Moral and social honor!

Or in 'A Youth of the Utopian Era' (1984, p. 157),

> He stands before his Bride in passion's purple light,
> Great Nature's perfect child, a Vision boldly bright!
> And gentle too his mind; - inevitably brave,
> He hath no scorn for men, save such as bend the knee
> To Tyranny or Vice in willing slavery.
> Complete in mind and form, even such a manly birth
> Is he, as mothers bore ere Nimrod scourged the earth,

In pessimistic vein however Harpur accused most men of bending their knees to tyranny and vice in willing slavery, or of subservience to superstition and error. In 'Eden Lost' he bemoaned that (1984, p.406),

> 'Tis man alone-dishonest Man,
> Who schemes a plan
> Excluding brotherhood!
> He only, with disnatured mind,
> Becomes the Tyrant of his kind:
> He! in his lordly mood.

In 'The Chorus of the Hours' (1984, p.861) even deeper pessimism is revealed,

> There is not one green mound, existent long,
> In any region, nor old wayside stone,

On which some weary child of social wrong
Hath sat not, - there alone
To bite his pallid lips and heave the unheeded groan!

And such hath been the state of Man
Since first the race's recreancy began;
And thus his piety is seared away
From Earth, its proper home,
To seek vague Heavens above the source of day;

Responsible government in New South Wales seemed little better to Harpur than the monarchical tyrannies of the past. Indeed they had at least the virtue of being more obviously wicked, whereas, he laments in 'Hybrid Freedom' (1984, p.669), "Freedom that's half a fact and half a fiction/What is it but a sorry contradiction?.....pure Despotism's honest at the least,/Nor cloaks the hoof that intimates the Beast.' Somehow still 'the spoiler class' (1984, p.783) and 'wolves and foxes' such as Wentworth, Martin, Murray and Marsh (1984, p.784) still polluted political life in 1854. Even his friend and benefactor Henry Parkes showed a cloven hoof (1984, p.550),

I like you friend Parkes, but don't like the morality
Of your notion of greatness, so bloated and crude;
Setting down what we can to the score of garrulity,
Leaves enough in't to set you with thinkers at feud.

Such a crochet, I fear, has made many a Nero;
Of all that's despotic, I know, 'tis the seed:
And would make the <u>great</u> Czar, not a Spoiler, but Hero, -
And the devil <u>a very great fellow indeed</u>.

In Harpur's view, Australia offered its new white settlers the opportunity to re-create as closely as possible the Eden lost through the Fall. He accepts that 'Alas! this world can never be /A poet's Eden utterly', but he thought that something like it could be achieved, provided that the corruption of the Old World were kept at bay. The composition of the initial white population might have seemed a guarantee that corruption

would be as gross in New Australia as in Old Britain, but provided that the right intellectual vision prevailed, Harpur held, at least in his optimistic moments, that a glorious future was possible.

In 'A Coast View' Harpur presents one of several versions of that vision,

> High 'mid the shelves of a grey Cliff,
> that yet Hangeth in bluffs enormously above,
> In a benched cleft, as in the mouldred chair
> Of grey-bear Time himself, I sit alone,
> And gaze with a keen wondering happiness
> Out o'er the Sea...

The vistas which the poet beholds are symbolic of the wrecks of past civilizations: 'pyramid structures vague and rent', 'dark time-wasted columns...such as old Assyrian trowels might have reared', 'rugged domes, /And minarets', and 'buttresses of more /Than Babylonian vastness'.

If Australia could avoid 'Old World Kings and ruling sets' and heed the warnings of its poet, Harpur anticipated the time when (1984, p.15), 'The spirit of Liberty destined to rule us, /And cheer on the world from the great Austral land' will dawn, even though, for the moment, 'pygmies high placed in our councils yet fool us'. In 'This Southern Land of Ours' he declared (1984, p.13),

> With clowns to make our laws, and knaves
> To rule us as of old,
> In vain our soil is rich, in vain
> 'Tis seamed with virgin gold!

As the radical hopes of Harpur's youth for a Chartist England and a Republican Australia (or at least New South Wales) faded, his tone became increasingly frenetic. He was on the side of the People, but people would not listen to him. One of the direst faults of contemporary New South Wales in Harpur's eyes was the inability of most of its inhabitants to appreciate

him at his true worth. This was especially the case with immigrant English and Scottish critics, such as Frank Fowler, who was the object of the following heavy irony from Harpur (Normington-Rawling, p.226),

> It would appear, from the 8th number of the Month, that its editor, Mr.Fowler, has come hither, all the way from Fatherland, for the express purpose of founding for us natives a national literature, on a critical basis;.....
>
> Be this, however, as it may, W.C. Wentworth, Dr. Lang, Martin, Norton, Parkes, Halloran, Deniehy, Dalley, my humble self, and all who have hitherto vainly endeavoured to lay down a few of the foundation stones of an Australian literature, are bound to be profoundly grateful for the generous "intentions" of this sovereign Londoner. Yea, let us sing paeans to the Samson-like might of the man who has thus come to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. May his shadow never be less! and to Gehenna with the Philistines who would prod out his eyes!

Harpur has been praised in recent years by critics such as Judith Wright, J. Normington Rawling, A.D. Hope and Vivian Smith, but none of them comes close however to placing Harpur anywhere near his own evaluation of himself. He may be forgiven, just, for comparing himself to Burns, as when he writes, '.....could I vie/With a Burns in the strength of his patriot fire,/O then would I raise thee in glory on high -..'. It is less easy to pardon the following lines from 'Chorus of the Hours' (1984, p.865),

> I grew at last assured
> Of that peculiar state of by-gone being
> My soul had reassumed, well pleased to be
> The solitude-loving Schoolboy much remarked
> For thought-pale cheeks and burning eyes, alone
> Wandering at eve: and saying in his heart
> What shall prevent me, if I will that Homer,
> Chaucer and Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, - all
> The soul's great potentates and world-renowned
> Poetic Caesars do in death become
> My spiritual kindred?

It is one thing for Harpur to grant himself prophetical status and write (1984,p.695), 'While I who write this, still a Prophet shall stand/One born

and baptised in the light of the Land.' It is another for him to reply "To Certain Criticlings' as follows (1984,p.433),

> Why howl ye at my star? It dooms you all!
> Why was the Galilean's light maligned
> Of old by all blind leaders of the blind?
> His rising was predictive of their fall!

It was small wonder that G.B. Barton, wrote in his Literature of New South Wales (1866, p.73),

> The idea of a man declaring himself, as Mr.Harpur does, 'A Monarch of Song in the Land', is something new to literature. If Mr. Harpur is entitled to that royal designation, he is in the unenviable position of a monarch without subjects.

Harpur's narcissism vitiated his genuine respect and affection for the central traditions of English literature. Harpur wrote (Normington-Rawling, 1962,p.27),

> For more than a year of my youth, Shakespeare was nearly my whole reading - was in fact (and luckily) almost the only book my means could at that time command. At first I perused him rapidly right through, in order to take, in one mighty draught, his entire spirit. Then I reperused him with minute attention - that is critically underlined every beauty I could perceive even to a happiness of phrase. I next reconsidered the whole, committing to memory as I proceeded almost all that I had previously underlined.

To Harpur, Shakespeare was 'the heart-seer profound' and many of his poems are prefaced by Shakespearian epigraphs. In writing a 'Death of Shylock' scene to give The Merchant of Venice a more satisfactory ending than Shakespeare had contrived, Harpur left himself open to sharp criticism, but who could withstand such a comparison? More irritating was Harpur's attempt to grade the English poets, as much for their ideologies as their verse. The greatness of Shakespeare is commended in such lines as,

What husband viewing dark Othello's deed,
But shall with caution, at the worst proceed;
Lest, haply a like madness he inherit,
And wreck a Desdemona! - that rare spirit!

In Harpur's 'Poetical Studies', good marks are given to clearly anti-Establishment figures: to Milton, 'whose genius but heaven could bound', to Marvell, whose, 'deeds, though plain, were towering all and bold', to 'my own wild Burns', and to 'Beautiful Shelley! he who smote the lyre/With wild hand, moved by an o'ermastering fire!', all rate very highly. Pope too gains Harpur's favour, because, although a Tory, his satirical powers are to be envied (1984, p.804),

Oh, could I wield so well in current song
Scorn's searching lance or Wit's satiric thong,
How the bold-vizaged Vices of the day
Should crouch, or slink, like beaten curs, away!
But chiefly Greed, that hell-enkindled rage
Which burns into the spirit of the age!

There was very little of the Augustan spirit in Harpur, despite his mastery of eighteenth century verse forms. It was Harpur's misfortune that in political persuasiveness he resembled the ineffectual Shelley, but without his social position, rather than Marvell, whom he especially admired, or Milton.

Other poets receive fainter praise: Waller is 'A prim, complacently poetic wight;/Smooth in his style, and in his matter light', Dryden, 'though scarce a genius', has 'quickness of perception - mother wit', Moore 'wants in clear affection, faith immense', while Byron, though possessing 'swift imagination, wildly free', displeases by his approval of hedonistic excesses in 'sensual Italy or shameless France'. Harpur scorned Scotland's treatment of Burns: 'The thankless Country that denied him bread/Now gives this stone - for he is safely dead". Harpur's attitute to Wordsworth was

not unlike this, however: he was only able to express full admiration once Wordsworth was no longer alive to utter conservative sentiments. Harpur wrote , 'How much, O Wordsworth in this world how much/Has thy surpassing love made rich for me/Of what was once unprized', but Wordsworth's reactionary opinions caused him much distress (1984, p.817),

> Lofty and strenuous of sentiment,
> But narrow and partial in its scope and bent,
> And thence the bigot of a local set
> Of habitudes, meshed round him like a net.

Harpur, like most people of his time with any interest in poetry, read the Greek poets and dramatists closely, although it is uncertain whether he read them in the original or not. In lines on Chaucer, Harpur wrote (1984, p.793), 'A well of English undefiled, is he,/Said Spenser - but he's almost Greek to me'. This passage suggests that in 1845, when he wrote it, he had difficulty with Medieval English and had no knowledge of Classical Greek. During the 1850s however Harpur published what he claimed were his own direct translations from Homer. Normington-Rawling defended Harpur from any suspicion of dishonesty, writing (1962, p.230-1),

> It would appear that he had somehow got himself some Greek. He was untiring in his literary labours, his indefatigability being matched by his eagerness to know and to learn. His appetite was insatiable. If he were determined to learn Greek - and he had incentive enough - Greek he would learn, making the best possible use of the facilities available.
>
> What he acquired of Greek appears from his definite statement that he did translate the passages that appear under his name ... In this, he stated his views on translating Homer. "I challenge any honest researcher, who can spell through Homer in the original" - to prove him wrong. This seems to mean that that is how Harpur knew Homer - he was able to spell him out in the original. Not a Greek scholar, but with sufficient knowledge of the language to be able to work out the meaning of passages.

Whatever the level of Harpur's knowledge of Classical Greek, it is

certain that, like his brother Joseph, he was influenced powerfully in his early reading by the Iliad and had a high respect for Greek poetry and drama. His versions of famous passages from Homer, such as the Night Scene from the VIIIth Iliad, are among his best work. Harpur valued very highly a tribute paid to him in a sonnet but Henry Halloran who described him as 'a new Achilles' and 'another Orpheus' (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.184). Stoic virtues were not derived by Harpur however from his studies in classical literature. His delight in tribute was at least equalled by the anger or despair at criticism or mockery, an unfortunate defect in one who seeks to hurt with sharp satire.

Harpur allowed himself to be incensed by a squib entitled 'The Pseudo-Poets', penned in 1838 by the eighteen year old Henry Martin, later to be Premier and Chief Justice of New South Wales. Martin offered an allegory in which Apollo passes judgement on the poetry of young Athenians (or the bards of Sydney). The figure representing Charles Tompson is told that he is not intended by nature to be a poet and a licence to write any further verse is refused; Henry Halloran is praised for 'sparks of hidden fire' but instructed to 'labour strenuously' if he is to reach a worthwhile standard; Henry Bull, editor of the Colonist, is told that, although his achievement was mediocre, he might gain the poet's wreath some day. Harpur was treated more harshly than Thompson: Apollo accuses him of 'far greater pretensions than any of his contemporaries', but as 'lamentably led away by presumption'. Harpur is accused of placing himself above Homer and Hesiod. The lampooning was highly effective, because Harpur was not averse from pressing his own claims, was much influenced by the Greeks, and was highly sensitive to criticism. Harpur tried hard enough to wreak literary revenge on Martin, as in 'The Temple of Infamy' (1984, pp.581ff.), but he seems to

have received more hurt than he gave.

It is not surprising that one whose father had been christened John Jehoshaphat should have a considerable knowledge of the Bible. Harpur's father had, indeed, been closely associated with the Auxiliary Bible Society of New South Wales (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.11). The second play started, although not finished, by Harpur was on the life of King Saul, which had particular interest for him because of the conflict between monarchy and republic inherent in the story. Fragments from the uncompleted play became separate poems, such as 'A Song of David Inciting to Dance', but they show little critical insight into the text of Samuel: the phallic significance of David's dance, for example, is lost on Harpur or ignored on acount of his strong prudishness. Joshua, Deborah, Jael, and the Jews in Babylonian Captivity all appear in Harpur's verse, either as sufferers from foreign oppression or as inspired instruments of vengeance against an oppressor. Jesus on the other hand is presented in Harpur's verse as a pacifist and social reformer.

Harpur's interest in the Scriptures did not prevent him from expressing anti-Semitic sentiments. Many radicals associated Jews with capitalism and exploitation, but Harpur's references are particularly stereotyped: 'an income like that of old Rothschild the Jew' (1984, p.602) or,

> I'll cut it, - yes; as all my advisors bid me,
> And get as rich as any Jew in Sydney.
> That is, I mean to turn an auctioneer,
> And take to buying cheap and selling dear. (1984. p.704).

Harpur had religious beliefs of a vaguely pantheistic character, with

Unitarianism being the Christian sect he most favoured. He had no insuperable difficulties in accepting the miracles of Jesus, but could not accept the idea of a Christ or a unique Son of God. Heretics were in general attractive to Harpur and he wrote benignly of Wycliffe, through whom '..much that erst was barren as a stone/Bloomed into beauty and was fruitful kept 'and of Luther and Knox, both commendably 'Prompt to affront the error it would kill-/The bondage it would break - with battering shocks,/As ocean's mighty waves assault the shore'. Once a religion was successful, however, degeneration soon set in, he believed. The Papacy was a frequent object of his distaste for vested authority in religion: 'Your papist, in the Pope's infallibility,/Can see the only barrier of utility/'Gainst anarchy, and heresy, and schism' (1984, p.568); the Italian poor gain nothing from 'the specious prayer and trumpery fee/Of Pope and priest and princely devotee' (1984, p.425).

Study of The Witch of Hebron, especially when it is compared with the secular and rationalistic spirit in most of Harpur's works of an historical character, suggests inconsistency and looseness in his thinking. The Witch of Hebron relates the transmigrations or transmogrifications of a soul or spirit which finally finishes up inside the daughter of one Bin Baghal, a friend of the narrator, the Rabbi Joseph. Originally a courtier of the Pharoah Ptolemy Philadelphus corrupted by wealth and power, the spirit had entered a lion, then an eagle, and then a series of women. There are some powerful passages in this poem, but it fits incongruously into the work of one who saw himself as a clear-minded Tribune of the People.

Harpur, not uniquely, loved the human race as a whole, but disliked most individuals and groups he met. In one poem he put together a whole

collection of the less progressive groups of humanity (1984, p.839), '...-this most ill-mixed mob-/This gatherum of effeminate Asiatics,/And Barbarous Africans, and treacherous Greeks!'. He wrote of a 'rude Afric King' who was 'Black as a log of ebony, and who/As still at stated times, in motley state/On low-bent shanks and big pot-bellied hulk,/He strode amongst us, bore I must confess,/Much brother likeness to a huge baboon' (1984, p.961).

Harpur had, however, a strong and very untypical sympathy for the plight of Aborigines in the face of European dominance and placed the blame for the Black War entirely on the shoulders of the colonists. In 1838 he supported the execution of the Myall Creek Seven. Nine years later he placed in the mouth of one of the victims of the Myall Creek massacre 'An Aboriginal Mother's Lament', which opens (1984, p.368),

> Still farther would I fly, my Child,
> To make thee safer yet,
> From the Whiteman's so unsparing
> Dread hand, all murder-wet!-

Although sexual commerce on the frontier between Aborigine and European was not uncommon, the subject was rarely touched upon in print, but in 'My Sable Fair' Harpur wrote sympathetically of an attachment between a Currency Lad and an Aboriginal girl. In 1857 he asked in the Maitland Mercury (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.156), concerning the Aborigines who had twenty years before been seen by the hundred on Jerry's Plains,

> Where are they now? They have latterly become so few in number, that they no longer form camps in the wild woods, but crouch in twos and threes by the wood heaps and pig-sties of such benevolent Europeans as may vouchsafe to allow them such lodging.

Ackland (1984, p.370) argues that in 'The Creek of the Four Graves' Harpur displayed 'a profound sense of tradition' and 'sought to understand colonial experience in terms of a great inherited concept'. The inherited concept is the Fall as conceived in Paradise Lost. In Ackland's words (1984, p.356), 'the camp-site of Egremont's party evokes the nuptial bower of Adam and Eve; Harpur's splendid description of the rising moon recalls Raphael's account of the first day of Creation'.

Since Harpur had strong sympathies with the Aborigines, he might have made their social life the symbol of human community and universal order, and portrayed the Whites as violent intruders who overturn that order. In'The Creek of the Four Graves', however, the Blacks represent the Satanic hosts and are (1984, pp. 166-7) 'wild men whose wild speech hath no word for Mercy'.

> But there again - crack upon crack! And hark!
> O Heaven! have Hell's worst fiends burst howling up
> Into the death-doom'd world? Or whence, if not
> From diabolic rage, could surge a yell
> So horrible as that which now affrights
> The shuddering dark! Ah! Beings as fell are near!

Egremont only escapes the fate of his companions because of Aboriginal superstitution,

> His vanishment, so passing strange it seemed,
> They coupled with the mystery of some crude
> Old fable of their race; and fear-struck all,
> And silent, then withdrew...

Overall "The Creek of the Four Graves' has many fine qualities, but the translation of primeval, archetypal murder into the Australian context is problematic, and accords very uneasily with Harpur's general view of

Black-White relationships. Harpur was the first, but not the last, to find difficulty in combining a commitment to progress and the advance of civilization with admiration for Aborigine ways of life.

Harpur and his friends also sympathised with the Maoris, who had, it seemed, a much better chance of standing the test of the survival of the fittest than had the Aborigines. When the Maori War of 1845 started most of the citizens of Sydney in the vicinity cheered the troops of the 99th Regiment as they marched to be embarked for New Zealand, but Harpur compared the Maori leader Hone Heki to William Tell, William Wallace, Robert Emmet, and the Spartan Three Hundred at Thermopylae. Harpur's friend Henry Halloran compared Heiki to Arminius, Cassivelaunus and Caractacus.

Unlike many later Australian radicals, usually city-dwellers whose personal acquaintance with violent crime was somewhat limited, Harpur had little sympathy with bushrangers. Far from writing in praise of 'bold Jack Donohoe', the original of 'The Wild Colonial Boy', Harpur had a genuine concern for his victims, one of whom, a Hunter River settler named Clementson, provided the basis for one of his best poems, 'The Glen of the White Man's Grave'. Harpur with less success had written in 1834 'The Tragedy of Donohoe', parts of which appeared in the following year in The Monitor, but which was not published as a whole in book form until 1853. The influence of Shakespeare on Harpur showed itself in a Lady Macbeth-like sleep-walking scene for Mary O'Brian, Donohoe's beloved, whose madness and death, were modelled on the fate of Ophelia, but overall the play was a disaster for Harpur and was the occasion for Martin's lampoon described above.

Harpur was a very querulous man. In a footnote to 'The Lyre of Australia' Harpur wrote (1984, p.723),

> This address to the Lyre of Australia was written in my teens - say, twelve years ago. But, alas! neither then nor since did my Country deign to award one smile of encouragement to the endeavours of her Poet. Her best and only gifts to him have been hunger and rags...

There is no doubt that he suffered from disadvantages compared with, say, Henry Martin, but others struggled against greater adversity with much more phlegm. In particular those who seek to criticize should be able to withstand criticism, but he could not. None of his invocations of heroism and sacrifice were of avail to him when in 1867 his younger son Charles was accidently shot at the age of thirteen; Harpur could only rail at the injustice of fate. In this mood, shortly before his own death, he wrote as his own epitaph (Normington-Rawling, 1962, p.297),

> Here lies Charles Harpur, who at fifty years of age came to the conclusion, that he was living in a sham age, under a sham Government, and amongst sham friends, and that any World whatever must therefore be a better world than theirs.

In the inner conflict between millenarian optimism and nihilistic despair, the latter, for all the historical and literary resources at Harpur's disposal, finally prevailed. It was the principal irony of Harpur's life that the simplistic doctrines of political perfectibility he embraced isolated him from many of the causes and movements he was well equipped to serve and led him ultimately to a position close to misanthropy.

The second central irony of Harpur's life was that his self-consciously militant rejection of the values which prevailed in one

form or another around him was in deep conflict with his sense of belonging to the continuing literary tradition closely associated with versions of those values. Much of his own verse was placed, as he clearly understood, 'betwixt the heroic rhyme of Dryden and that of Cowper, with also a running dash of our elder masters of English verse' (cited in Hope, 1984 p.112). He was influenced more by eighteenth century and earlier English poets than by his contemporaries, since the tyranny of distance delayed the impact of Romanticism on Australian writers. He admired Keats, Coleridge, Emerson and Wordsworth, however, and pursued similar themes to those of early Victorian poets in England itself. Harpur never imagined for one moment that poems based on classical or biblical themes were irrelevant to Australian interests, any more than Tennyson or Matthew Arnold thought them extraneous to English dilemmas. In this Harpur stands at first sight in contrast to Joseph Furphy who, as Hope notes (1984 p.117), claimed that 'there was something inferior in an imagination exercising itself on literary themes of the old world, instead of taking fresh inspiration from the local scene'. Furphy had in practice, however, as deep and wide an interest in the traditional lore of the western world as Harpur.

Harpur's aspirations were far from ignoble. It was not foolish to try to establish in Australia the English literary and cultural tradition, while eliminating the political structure within which this tradition had developed, although it was certainly a difficult task. Harpur lacked, however, the intellectual power to tackle such a project successfully. The constructive contribution he might have made was reduced by his increasing isolation and crankiness. In particular his excessive sensitivity to criticism and his willingness to attribute unworthy motives to others helped to ensure his failure to establish himself at the centre of the literary or political world of colonial Australia. This failure in its

turn sharpened his resentments and frustrations. At heart though it was not so much his personal failings, as his shallow millenarianism and his inability to see value in the imperfect, but far from despicable, social and political structure that New South Wales had derived from Britain, which isolated him from his former friends.

Harpur's stock rose after his death for two different reasons. During the nineties many radicals warmed to Harpur's anticipations of their republicanism and admired his antagonism to any forms of social or political hierarchy. At the same time many conservatives were finding qualities in his poetry which were quite unrelated to Harpur's ideological positions, a separation difficult to make in Harpur's own time because of his political stridency. It was a tragedy that Harpur's resentment at his lack of recognition strengthened in him the very characteristics which brought about his comparative obscurity, and that Harpur was unable to make more creative use of the tension between what he loved and what he hated in the culture and traditions which Australia inherited from the British Isles.

Summary

It was natural enough that the Newgate novel, adapted to the context of transportation should have been prominent in early Australian colonial literature, but even that genre, as James Tucker's Ralph Rashleigh shows, could be the vehicle for evaluating crude and apparently limiting experience in a broader conceptual framework. The early colonial theatre hardly became a major influence for sweetness and light, despite the hopes of its early official patrons, but its productions were in no way confined merely to the here-and-now of a penal colony, and constituted a valuable

link with British and wider European cultural traditions.

The reception given to Michael Massey Robinson, and to Wentworth as a poet, shows that a significant group in the colony valued links between a sordid present with great events and movements in the human past, and relished the hope that their apparently petty and obscure activities might be the prelude to future achievement and recognition. Most of the accounts of voyages and settlement by explorers, military men and civilian officials in early New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land show a considerable knowledge of the human past and the ability to put their knowledge to constructive use. A lively press and a relish for political disputes, in which historical lore was put to good use were part of the culture which was transplanted in and after 1788.

Four main strands of historical interest can be perceived very soon after the British colonization: the Judaeo-Christian, the Classical, the British, mainly in its English form, and the Irish. For the most influential groups in the early colonial period it was the relationship of the first three of these to each other and to colonial life which was the central problem about the significance of the past, with Irish history appearing only as a problem which, unfortunately, was difficult entirely to ignore. For the Catholic Irish, as will be shown below, the pattern of thought was very different. The first important writer in the colonies was of Irish, although Protestant, extraction, and in Harpur arose the first main challenge to the more comfortable assumptions of the mainline British traditions. It was from other sources within British traditions, however, that Harpur found his main inspiration to challenge orthodoxy, although an adaptation of the nationalist ideology of Mazzini or Kossuth for Australian use against Britain was also important in Harpur's thinking and became a significant ongoing element in Australian colonial thought.

Chapter Seven

The Place of Aborigines in History in Colonial Thought

Early Contacts

It is unlikely that Aborigine culture and traditions would have been seriously considered from the standpoint of their place in a universalistic historical record had Australia been settled by, say, the Javanese or Chinese, who evinced little, if any, interest, in primitive societies, but interest in 'otherness', derived from sources as various as Herodotus, Plato and St. Paul and strengthened by exotic contacts since the new Age of Discoveries had started, was strong in many of the first Britons in Australia, as in Cook and Banks. Following their example, officials, sojourners and settlers free and unfree, tried to investigate and describe Aboriginal ways of life and their placement in a universal scheme.

Although no Aborigine before 1788, apart from a few northern groups who had encountered Bugis traders, knew anything about non-Aborigines, many of the late eighteenth century British were well acquainted with a very wide variety of human societies. Cook and Banks had also some evidence on which to base their anticipations of the inhabitants of Terra Australis. They knew, for example, that Tasman in 1642 had suggested that the people he encountered in Van Diemen's Land might have a significant place in the Chain of Being by his claim that, 'there can be no doubt that there must be men here of extraordinary stature'. Like Byron's account a century later of the giants of Patagonia, who 'seemed to realize the tale of monsters in a human shape', Tasman's description received no later confirmation.

Cook and Banks were particularly well acquainted with William Dampier's description of the inhabitants of New Holland he had encountered in his voyage of 1688 and 1689, and whom he tried to compare with other peoples he had met (1927, Vol. 1, p.453),

> The inhabitants of this country are the miserablest people in the world. The Hodmadods of Monomatapa, though a nasty People, Yet for Wealth are Gentlemen to these; who have no Houses and Skin, Garments, Sheep, Poultry, and Fruits of the Earth, Ostrich Eggs, &c. as the Hodmadods have: And setting aside their Human Shape, they differ but little from Brutes...Their Hair is black, short and curl'd, like that of the Negroes; and not long and lank like the common Indians. The colour of their Skins, both of their faces and the rest of their Body, is coal black, like that of the Negroes of Guinea.

The influential French scientist and philosopher, Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, followed Dampier when in his 1749 Varietes dans l'espece humaine he described Australian Aborigines as (Duchet, 1971, pp. 252;254), 'peut-etre les gens du monde les plus miserables, et ceux de tous les humaines qui approchent le plus des brutes'.

After his first sight of human life on the Australian coast in April 1770, Banks noted in his diary that his impressions might have been prejudiced by his reading of Dampier, a concern foreign to the deeply prejudiced. Banks wrote (Beaglehole, 1962, II, p. 50),

> we stood in with the land near enough to discern 5 people who appeared through our glasses to be enormously black: so far did the prejudices which we had built on Dampier's account influence us that we fancied we could see their Colour when we could scarce distinguish whether or not they were men

Banks, very much a man of the Enlightenment, made more references to classical lore than to the scriptures, but like most other commentators, he

was interested in the relationship of the Aborigines to the Genesis account. Banks wrote (1962, Vol. 2 p. 130), that 'Of Cloths they had not the least part but naked as ever our first father was before his fall, they seemed no more conscious of their nakedness than if they had not been the children of Parents who eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge'. He noted too that (1962, Vol. 2, p. 123) 'they seem to have no fixed habitation but move about from place to place like wild beasts in search of food'. He nonetheless concluded,

> Thus live these I had almost said happy people, content with little nay, almost nothing. Far enough removed from the anxieties attending riches. From them appear how small are the real wants of human nature.

Yet Banks could not say of the inhabitants of Terra Australis as he had of the Tahitians, (1896, p. 99) 'these gentlemen, like Homer of old, must be poets as well as musicians' or give them classical pseudonyms such as Hercules, Ajax, Epicurus or Lycursus. Whereas Omai, when taken to London in 1774, was feted as an ornament of civilization in fashionable drawing rooms, Benelong was to arouse amused interest rather than respect.

Neither Cook nor Banks observed with other men's eyes. Cook, indeed, seemed to be seeking deliberately to rebut Dampier when he wrote (1955, Vol. 1. p. 399),

> From what I have said of the Natives of New-Holland they may appear to some to be the most wretched people upon Earth, but in reality they are far more happier than we Europeans; being wholly unacquainted not only with the superfluous but the necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe, they are happy in not knowing the use of them. They live in a Tranquility which is not disturb'd by the Inequality of Condition. The Earth and sea of their own accord furnishes them with all things necessary for life, they covet not Magnificent Houses, Household-stuff etc, they live in a warm and fine Climate and enjoy a very wholesome air, so that they have very little need of clothing and this they

> seem to be full sensible of, for many whom we gave cloth etc. to, left it carelessly upon the Sea beach and in the woods as a thing they had no manner of use for. In short they seem'd to set no Value upon any thing we gave them...this in my opinion argues that they think themselves provided with all the necessarys of Life and that they have no superfluities.

Banks also noted the lack of interest among Aborigines in the skills and techniques of the newcomers or in their history or culture. Banks wrote (Beaglehole, 1962, Vol. 2, p. 125),

> These people seemed to have no Idea of traffick nor could we teach them, indeed it seemed that we had no one thing on which they set a value equal to induce them to part with the smallest trifle...They readily received the things we gave them but never would understand our signs when we asked for returns

Cook's relatively warm appreciation of Aboriginal life may have owed something to his adverse reaction to the indolent luxury of Tahiti, and even more to the courage shown by the first Aborigines he encountered at Botany Bay. Lord Kames (1813, Vol. 1. p. 23) was among those impressed by the 'true heroic courage' of two men who disputed the landing. The two were also the subject of Parkinson's celebrated painting Two Natives of New Holland Advancing to Combat. Other comments (1955, Vol. 1. p. 340) by Cook betray opinions of Aborigines closer to those of Dampier however: 'their houses are mean small hovels not much bigger than an oven'; 'their canoes are as mean as can be conceived'; 'we are to consider that we see this country in the pure state of nature, the Industry of Man has had nothing to do with it'.

Dampier, Cook and Banks all wrote as though Australian Aborigines were more or less homogeneous in racial type and in social structure. Even when early observers such as Tench and Collins noted significant differences between Aboriginal groups, particularly between those on the coast and

those a little further inland, their common characteristics, so different from those of other peoples they had encountered, impressed more did than any variations among them. It is perhaps unreasonable to expect them to have included reservations and caveats with every observation they made, but the overall effect of the journals of Banks and of Cook was to confirm among British and other European thinkers the view that Australia's Aborigines should be regarded as the lowest link in the Great Chain of Being entitled to human status. Lord Monboddo, the pioneer evolutionist, claimed (1774, Vol. 1, p. 206) that the fishing methods used by New Hollanders were identical to those said two thousand years earlier by Diodorus Siculus to be in use among the most primitive fish-eating peoples of south-west Arabia. Monboddo went further and advanced the theory that the New Hollanders belonged to the same species as the anthropoid apes, adding somewhat irrelevantly (1774, Vol. 1, p. 420) that 'the huts of the New Hollanders are not near so well built as those of beavers, and serve only as a cover to the head and shoulder'.

Other reactions in Britain to information about the Aborigines of Australia derived from Cook's first voyage were in general equally negative. For example, William Robertson's 1772 revised edition of Thomas Salmon's New Geographical and Historical Grammar claimed (Salmon, 1772, p. 515),

> New Holland is an island at least as large as all Europe; and may, in the interior parts, have civilized nations, although the people on some of the coasts, which have been visited, appear to have little more of the human kind than the figure.

Similarly Carver's 1779 The New Universal Traveller followed Hawkesworth's inadequate version of the Endeavour's voyage in commenting

(p. 665),

> It is difficult to account for the small number of the human species dispersed in this extensive country. If the increase of the inhabitants is not prevented by some natural cause, perhaps it arises from the horrid appetite for devouring each other, which prevails in New Zealand. From the extreme ignorance of natives respect to those arts that are generally found to be more or less cultivated by the most uncivilized people, there is reason to place them among the lowest of human kind.

The experiences of British colonization, together with perceptions of the past and present states of the inhabitants of New Holland, were influential in the newspaper controversies in London when plans for a penal settlement at Botany Bay were announced in 1786. The extracts cited below come from Atkinson (1982, pp.87-91). Atkinson's sources are the Burney Collection in the British Library, London, and the microfilm of the Daily Universal Register.

In the English Chronicle (7-10 Oct. 1786), 'A Plain Englishman' considered that the plan compromised the national honour and character, since,

> that the manners and morals of even the natives of New Holland, could escape being rendered worse than they now are, by the contagion of such a neighbourhood, is next to impossible...The inevitable consequence of which will be, that the contagion of English vice, and English villainy, will be disseminated in the space of a few years, throughout every country, situated in the South Seas.

A more sanguine view was taken by 'A.Z.' in the Morning Chronicle (16 Oct. 1786). This correspondent wrote that,

> The Great Penn, when he obtained a grant from the King of Land in America, carried with him cloth and utensils, and suitable for the climate, and made the Indians sensible that if they would grant him so many furlongs of their land, he would give them so many yards of his cloth, and to this day his name is famous

> amongst the natives, and perhaps will be so to the latest posterity.
>
> I hope the English annals will never be stained with shedding innocent blood. What are we to think of men who have already notoriously forfeited the friendship of their own countrymen, and been denied the benefit of our laws and society now going to colonize with guns, and will they all benefit a race of men who are content with the spot nature has allotted them, whose wants are few and whose virtue, perhaps exceeds our capacity of thinking; they go quite naked, so did Adam and Eve in Paradise...I am alarmed for those whom we may ignorantly style Barbarians. Colonization was the ruin of the Roman State, the Empire was too widely extended....

By 1787 the gory deaths in the South Seas of several leading explorers, particularly that of Cook, had dampened European optimism about the attractions of soft, let along of hard, primitivism. Moreover one of the first bits of news from outside the settlement that Phillip received after his arrival in Botany Bay was La Perouse's account of the killing of De Langle and twelve of his crew at Maouna. The deliberate abandonment by the Bounty mutineers of the European way of life showed that experience of the Pacific had not completely extinguished European hopes of affable relationships with newly encountered peoples, but the First Fleet which set sail for Botany Bay in 1787 with its cargo of convicts and their guards, contained very few, free or captive, who, we may assume, were predisposed to esteem highly the contribution made by Aboriginal Australians to the general stock of human wisdom.

Early colonial thought about the Aboriginal past

The new Australians who began to arrive in 1788 not only knew nothing about the history of Aborigine groups, but, unlike the situation in other continents, they could not learn anything of their historical past from the existing inhabitants. The apparent absence of any interest among Aborigines in their own actual history, as distinct from Dreamtime myths, coupled with

the lack of any readily identifiable state or political hierarchy, helped to make attractive the doctrine of terra nullius in New Holland and Van Diemen's Land. Cook's claim that along the eastern coast of New Holland, (1955, p 396) 'we never saw one inch of Cultivated Land' was a common justification for the British occupation. An editorial in the Sydney Herald (7 Nov. 1838), used comparative and historical arguments,

> The American Indians were divided into nations, having fixed localities - they cultivated the ground, and understood the rights of property. Not so, however, with the natives of New Holland. This vast country was to them a common - they bestowed no labour upon the land - their ownership, their right, was nothing more than that of the Emu or the Kangaroo. They bestowed no labour on the the land and that - and that only - it is which gives a right of property in it. Where, we ask, is the man endowed with even a modicum of reasoning powers, who will assert that this great continent was ever intended by the Creator to remain an unproductive wilderness? Yet what else was it - what would it have remained, but for the labour of civilized man? Here, then, we take our stand. The British people found a portion of the globe in a state of waste - they took possession of it; and they had a perfect right to do so, under the Divine authority, by which man was commanded to go forth and people, and till the land. Herein we find the right to the dominion which the British Crown, or, more properly speaking, the British people exercise over the continent of New Holland.

A treaty between the British Crown and an Aboriginal group would have been difficult to enforce on the colonists, convict or free, especially after a passage had been made through the Blue Mountains in 1813, but an equal impediment was the lack of any person or persons on the Aboriginal side who possessed in the eyes of the British even the rudiments of a historically grounded political authority. The missionary James Dawson held not only that many Aborigine customs were superior to those of Christian Europe, but also (1881, p.1) that Aborigines had evolved effective formal political structures, but the failure of Phillip's attempt to make a treaty with the Hawkesbury Aborigines and the farce of Batman's treaty with the Aborigines of Port Phillip indicate the difficulty of the problem. There

was no lack of legitimizing myths in Aboriginal belief systems, but these were not easily communicable to the British and were in any case entirely incompatible with any aspect or dimension of British law. Any synthesis between two such entirely different conceptions of history and of law was difficult, if not impossible, to establish. Governor Phillip was instructed by the Crown (HRA, I,I, pp.13-14),

> to endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them. And if any of our subjects shall wantonly destroy them, argue them any unnecessary interruption in the exercise of the several occupations, it is our will and pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment according to the degree of their offence.

Yet even had the newcomers all been saints, let alone a majority being professional criminals, there was no possibility that the several occupations of the Aborigines might remain free from major interruption. The very presence of the British, any actions they undertook, had a potent effect even on Aboriginal groups who had not as yet seen or heard them. The Aborigines, so long separated from other human groups, contracted European diseases more readily than the British caught Aboriginal diseases. The effectiveness of the new technology powerfully undermined Aboriginal confidence in the value of their own traditional skills, even if and when they were still able to engage in these as of old.

Many of the early officials and military officers serving in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land already had considerable experience of British rule in other continents; the same was to prove true in Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland. In Bengal, for example, the British ruled after 1757 over a complex historical society with established

laws and customs they could readily understand, whether or not they liked them. To the annoyance of Evangelicals and other would-be missionaries, the East India Company for many years excluded Christian missions from Bengal; in secular matters too British ascendancy was exercised in ways which left much Bengali life unaltered. There was no possibility that this could take place in New South Wales, whether it were to be an open prison for convicts or available for settlement by free colonists seeking land.

Yet, despite the very real difficulties in establishing any common understanding between Aborigines and British, it was by no means the case that inveterate prejudice jaundiced the eye of every colonist who came freely or in chains to New South Wales or to Van Diemen's Land. There is a distinct parallel between the changing estimates made by eighteenth century Europeans of Asians, Amerindians, Africans and Pacific Islands, from tentative or even wholehearted approval to impatient dismissal, in early British attitudes to Aborigines. Initial respect was often accorded to Aborigines when they were encountered in their ancestral ways, but this rarely survived closer acquaintance. Since Aborigine traditions failed to prepare them for successful survival once within the cultural ambit of the newcomers, it was all too soon a debased version of what had been initially admired which came to excite amusement, contempt or disgust. This led to low estimates of past Aborigine achievement or of their capacity to acquire anything significantly worthwhile from the complex of values and skills represented in the ways of life developed in Britain, or in Europe as a whole.

Some of the early encounters with Aborigines such as Arabanoo, Gooreedeena and Benelong stimulated European hopes for a meeting of minds.

Arabanoo, the captured youth described by Watkin Tench (1793, p.24) as 'distinguished by a portion of gravity and steadiness' died prematurely, however Gooreedeena of the Camaraisal, who in Tench's words (p.25) 'excelled in beauty all their females I ever saw', was wounded by an Aborigine 'who had lately dragged her by force from her home, to gratify his lust' and her skull 'covered by contusions and mangled by scars' by her lover. Benelong, the Aborigine most feted by the early governors, rapidly degenerated from the archetype of the noble to that of the comic savage, drunken and rejected by all. In 1793 Tench, by then entirely pessimistic about the possibility of any meeting of minds or coalescing of traditions, wrote (p.200),

> If they are considered as a nation, whose general advancement and acquisitions are to be weighed, they certainly rank very low, even in the scale of savages. They may perhaps dispute the right of precedency with the Hottentots, or the shivering tribes who inhabit the shores of Magellan. But how inferior do they show themselves when compared with the subtle African; the patient watchful American; or the elegant timid islander of the South Seas.

Tench dismissed the whole noble savage thesis in withering terms, (p.27)

> A thousand times....have I wished, that those European philosophers, whose closet speculations exalt a state of nature above a state of civilization, could survey the phantom, which their heated imaginations have raised; possibly they might then learn, that a state of nature is, of all others, less adapted to promote the happiness of a being, capable of sublime research, and unending ratiocination: that a savage roaming for prey amidst his native deserts, is a creature deformed by all those passions, which afflict and degrade our nature, unsoftened by the influence of religion, philosophy and legal restriction: and that the more men unite their talents, the more clearly the bands of society are drawn; and civilisation advanced, inasmuch is human felicity augmented, and man fitted for his unalienable place in the universe.

The most careful analysis of Aboriginal belief and traditions made by

any early newcomer was that of David Collins, first Advocate-General in New South Wales and then Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land, in his 1798 An Account of the English Colony of New South Wales. Fletcher argues persuasively (1975, p. 610) that 'as Collins' account...is nearly always consistent with other evidence, where such exists, we can accept with confidence many of the finer details which he alone records...Collins is usually careful to distinguish observation from either interpretation or hearsay'.

Collins wrote (1975, p. 452),

> We found the natives about Botany Bay, Port Jackson, and Broken Bay, living in that state of nature which must have been common to all men previous to their uniting in society, and acknowledging but one authority. These people are distributed into families, the head or senior of which exacts compliance from the rest. We were always accosted by the person who appeared to be the eldest of the party, while the women, youths, and children, were kept at a distance.

Collins thus linked Aboriginal society and its stone-age technology to the stage-theories advanced by the authors of the Scottish Enlightenment. Furthermore, Collins anticipated the distinction between biological and classificatory parents developed more fully in nineteenth century anthropology. Collins noted too the different strength and prestige of Aboriginal groups, although only ritual precedence was to be confirmed by further experience, not an elaborated political suzerainty.

Collins was very ready to find virtues in Aboriginal society. He compared (p. 452) 'the humane practice of those uncivilised people' with 'the general conduct of our baptismal sponsors' in respect of children not biologically one's own'; he refused (p. 454) to find Aboriginal ideas of

reincarnation 'more extraordinary than the belief which obtains among some of us, that at the last day, the various disjointed bones of men shall find out each its proper owner and be united'; he held (p. 456) that 'the features of many of these people were far from unpleasing' and, admirable to an Englishman, they were (p. 461) fond of dogs.

The debit side is heavier, however, in Collins' judgements. One man (p. 459) 'might well have passed for an orang outang', while Aboriginal lack of concern for comfort or improvement distressed him and their sexual mores disgusted him. Collins was well aware that rape was not uncommon in Britain or among the convicts in the settlement, but he concluded that it was the norm among Aborigines that (p. 463) 'the prelude to love should be violence...and of the most brutal nature'. Whatever the accuracy of Collins' observation on Aboriginal courtship, he was in error in holding (p. 454) that they were unique among the nations in having no 'trace of religion', but the nature of Aboriginal religious beliefs were not readily open to European understanding. Collins' judgements had great influence, to the extent that William Charles Wentworth considered he had said all that could be ascertained on Aboriginal life and beliefs.

Sympathetic approaches to Aboriginal antecedents and culture included the attempt in 1795 of Blumenbach, the pioneer craniologist, to relate Australian Aborigines to other people on a basis of physical, anatomical, or cultural features. Observers who found merit in the Aborigines included the painter George Fife Angas,, who wrote (1846, Plate XXXV),

> ....Their heads are not wanting in the perceptive faculties, though in the reflective they are deficient: sight and hearing for instance are enjoyed in much greater perfection by the New Hollander, than even by the New Zealander; the former can trace

> the footsteps of their enemies over any distance, and in places which would not afford the slightest indication to the eye of a European or even a New Zealander, thus showing that the more perceptive faculties are always more perfect in savages and some animals than in civilized man, and the greater the advance towards intelligence and the refinements of civilization, the less perfect are the indications of the unaided senses.

The official account of the First Fleet, The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay (1789), which was 'compiled from Authentic Papers' by John Stockdale, a London publisher, contained in its illustrations as well as in its prose much of the eighteenth century hope of finding noble savages in newly discovered lands. Dixon (1985, pp. 10-11) argues that the engravings by Thomas Medland, from drawings by Robert Clevely, which illustrated Stockdale's edition, especially 'Natives of Botany Bay' and 'Views of a Hut in New South Wales', consciously evoked images of the noble savage already familiar in Enlightenment thought.

Stockdale noted that in some significant respects the culture of Australian Aborigines differed from that anticipated by disciples of Lord Kames and other Scottish proponents of stages of development. In particular they diverged from Kames' expectation that (1813, I, p. 128) 'useful arts paved the way to fine arts', since they seemed highly skilled in sculpture although lacking in clothes or shelter. Stockdale observed (1789, pp. 106-7),

> That the arts of imitation and entertainment should thus in any degree precede those of necessity seems an exception to the rules laid down by theory for the progress of invention

Serious, as well as malicious or derisory, attempts to understand the Aboriginal past continued to be made decade after decade. Ship's surgeon Peter Cunningham reasoned as follows (1827, pp. 183-4),

> Our Aborigines appear to be a cross between the Malay and Oriental negro of New Guinea, their mouth, and the general contour of their face, partaking more of the former than the latter character.
>
> It is singular that in Van Diemen's Land they should again approach nearer to the negro; for considering that New Holland is interposed between New Guinea and Van Diemen's Land, you would naturally presume that its natives would partake most of the New Guinea negro appearance. If, however, we believe that the Oriental negroes of New Guinea formed originally the population of the greater portion of our Eastern islands, we may account for this anomaly by supposing the Malay tribes to have established themselves upon the coast of New Holland in early times, and that their descendants gradually rooted out or became blended with the aborigines.
>
> It is more feasible to ascribe the above as the cause of the difference between the long frizzly-haired native of New Holland and the woolly-headed native of Van Diemen's Land, than to suppose that Van Diemen's Land had been peopled direct from New Guinea without the intervention of Australia. The New Zealanders, New Caledonians, and Friendly Islanders, are darker than the tribes inhabiting the islands more distant from New Guinea: those of the Marquesas being about as clear-complexioned as the generality of European brunettes, which evidently shows that it is not climate, but a cross of the breed, that has occasioned this, inasmuch as the cold latitudes have here the darkest and most woolly-headed inhabitants, as we see in Van Diemen's Land and Island to the eastward of New Zealand.

Cunningham connected cannibalism with tribal egalitarianism (p. 184-5),

> It is curious that cannibalism, as far as I have heard in this quarter, exists only among the tribes where there are not hereditary chiefs, nor indeed, I may say, any individuals possessing authority, except what their own strength and bravery, and the attachment of their connexions, afford. The Marquesans, Paumatoo Islanders, New Zealanders, and New Hollanders are all of this class; their form of government, such as it is, being purely republican, without distinction of rank.

Cunningham expressed very graphically his revulsion from the drunkenness, prostitution, infanticide and venereal infection rampant among Sydney Aborigines by the 1820s (pp. 186; 202). He wondered why this should be (p. 202), since

> they are lively, good-humoured, inquisitive, and intelligent, and are found to acquire the knowledge of reading, writing, etc., almost as expertly as Europeans. If their intellectual functions, then, are thus so far above debasement, how is it that the abject animal state in which they live, and their great and glaring deficiency in all the useful mechanical arts (in comparison with other savages), should place them at the very zero of civilisation, constituting in a measure the connecting link between man and the monkey tribe?

Cunningham's tentative answer was (pp. 202-3),

> We may, I think, in a great measure impute their present low state of civilisation, and deficiency in the mechanical arts, to the nature of the country they inhabit, the kind of life they lead, and the mode of government they live under.
>
> Civilisation depends more upon the circumstances under which man is placed than upon any innate impulse of his own, the natural inclinations of man tending toward the savage state, or that in which food is procured with the least possible effort; there being something so irresistibly captivating in a wild, roaming life of this description, that few who have made the trial ever relish civilised society thoroughly again. It is only necessity that urges mankind to congregate in fixed habitations, and raise their food by the sweat of their brow; for if it could still be procured in an easy a way by civilised Europeans as by our uncultivated tribes, the European woods would soon abound with creatures nearly as rude and idle as our natives.
>
> Here, though game and other articles of sustenance in the interior woods be tolerably abundant, yet they are so scattered that the natives must be constantly on the move from place to place to obtain them, so that fixed residences would be impracticable; while, from this constant shifting, the lighter their baggage is the more expeditiously can they move along, and consequently only the most common and most useful utensils are carried with them.
>
> The New Zealander is obliged to form a fixed residence, cultivate yams and sweet potatoes, and breed hogs for his support, because the woods do not afford him sufficient game wherewith to maintain life; he ornaments his huts with carved cups and other useful appendages, to amuse his leisure hours and serve, as objects of pride, to look at. Our Australian tribes, however, find sufficient amusement in the constant shifting of scene in pursuit of their necessary food, while by means of their perpetual wars and the practices of spear-throwing, child-murder, and concubinage, they keep down population, obtaining their livelihood thus easily through their diminutive numbers by roaming through the woods. They are never driven to the necessity of congregating, and supplying their wants by artificial means, like the natives of most of our southern

islands.

> It is, I repeat, the necessity springing from over-grown population, and difficulty in obtaining food, except by artificial means, that first drives man into taking up a fixed abode; but here neither of these causes operates:

Cunningham (1827, pp. 196-7) was one of many colonists who claimed that Aborigines were indiscriminate in revenge: 'like the Chinese, they are not particular about the person; but if a white injure them they generally satisfy their rage upon the first of that colour they can conveniently meet with'. Cunningham did not consider there was any way of changing Aborigine thinking about such matters, but instead advocated that the only way in which whites could establish even rough justice was to adopt the Aborigine custom and use 'timely and effective means', even if the persons receiving punishment could not be guaranteed to be the one who had committed the alleged offence. Cunningham held (1827, p. 197),

> It has been observed that the various tribes of savages have always one time or other escaped a trial of strength with the whites, and, when once fairly satisfied of their inferior power, live ever afterwards in perfect harmony with them.

Cunningham concluded (p. 205),

> A degree of force we find to be absolutely necessary to urge man toward civilisation, in his primitive debased state, and cause him to break up those habits he had acquired. It is only when the mind is more enlightened, and reason supersedes animal instinct, that civilisation will steadily advance among the community by the exertions of individual members. In countries, therefore, where absolute hereditary chiefs exist, you have only to gain them over to forward your views; but in countries differently circumstanced you must absolutely secure the young, wean them from parental influence, and infuse into them new ideas and opinions before you can make much progress.

The influence of stages theories of historical development advanced during the Scottish Enlightenment is highly conspicuous in Cunningham's

thought.

Within thirty years of the establishment of New South Wales there was little, if any, difference in the opinions of the value of Aboriginal culture, past or present, between 'currency' and 'sterling', the Australian-born and the British-born. William Charles Wentworth, the first 'currency lad' to achieve fame, wrote (1819, p.28),

> The aborigines of this country occupy the lowest place in the gradatory scale of the human species. They have neither houses nor clothing; they are entirely unacquainted with the arts of agriculture; and even [their arms and implements] are of the rudest contrivance and workmanship.
>
> Thirty years intercourse with Europeans has not effected the slightest change in their habits; and even those who have most intermixed with the colonists, have never been prevailed upon to practise one of the arts of civilised life...

In his 1823 poem Australiasia Wentworth adopts the noble savage mode in his treatment of Aborigines, presenting them as 'sons of freedom' and 'Unshackled wanders. enthusiasts free,/Pure sons of savage liberty'. In a Classical allusion he suggests that the Greek philosophers might envy the 'savage joys' of Aborigines and place these above 'all the comforts all the arts bestow'. Yet Wentworth could find nothing in the Aboriginal and British pasts or presents which might coalesce. He declaimed (1823, p.10),

> Say--whence your ancient lineage, what your name
> And from what shores your rough forefathers came?
> Untutor'd children, fresh from Nature's mould,
> No songs have ye to trace the time of old:-
> No hidden themes, like these, employ your care,
> For you enough the knowledge that ye are:-
> Let Learning's sons, who would this secret scan,
> Unlock its mystic casket if they can.

Sharing English Law with the Aborigines

Hopes that the Aborigines could become partners of some sort within the political and legal traditions brought by the British were often expressed, and not merely hypocritically. Newly arrived Governors and other officials, administrators in London, and missionaries were prominent in expressing such hopes, although there were many exceptions, such as Watkin Tench and Samuel Marsden. The occasional colonial radical, such as Charles Harpur, was both sympathetic to Aborigines and hopeful of their long-term assimilation within new Australian society, but on the whole officials and short-term residents were more sanguine than were permanent colonists, whether convicts, emancipists or free immigrants, about the possibility of Aborigines absorbing, with whatever adaptations, any significant British beliefs and values.

In many Governors and other officials a dismal cycle may be perceived, in which early hopes of Aboriginal accommodation to European beliefs and values were succeeded by doubts and finally despair. Phillip set the pattern. In May 1788 when two rush cutters were found dead, one with four spears in his body, Phillip (HRA, I,I, p.48) was 'persuaded the natives were not the aggressors'. If Aborigines had killed the convicts, he held 'it is more than probable they did it in their own defence, or in defending their canoes'. His early encounters with Aborigines left Phillip convinced (HRA, I,I, p.49) 'of the necessity of placing a confidence in these people as the only means of avoiding a dispute'. In July 1788 Phillip assured Lord Sydney (HRA, I,I, p.65) that 'the natives have ever been treated with the greatest humanity and attention, and every precaution has been taken to prevent their receiving any insults'. He expressed his belief that Aborigines would soon learn 'the advantages they will reap from cultivating

the land' and would soon appreciate other benefits too of British civilization.

When twenty Aborigines seized fish at spear point in July 1788, Phillip explained to Lord Sydney that (HRA, I,I, pp. 66-7), 'they, at present, find it difficult to support themselves' and made it clear that he proposed no armed retaliation. In September 1788 Phillip reported to Sydney that (HRA, I,I, p.76) 'the natives, though very friendly when they are met by two or three people who are armed, still continue to attack any of the convicts when they meet them in the woods, and two or three have lately been wounded by them'. By the end of October Phillip was yet more pessimistic in tone in a report to Sydney that (HRA, I,I, p.96),

> The natives still refuse to come amongst us, and those who are supposed to have murdered several of the convicts have removed from Botany Bay, where they have always been more troublesome than in any other part. I now doubt whether it will be possible to get any of those people to remain with us, in order to get their language, without using force; they see no advantage that can arise from us that may make amends for the loss of that part of the harbour in which we occasionally employ the boats of the harbour in fishing.

Phillip's hopes met with a nasty setback in September 1790 when he was speared by an Aborigine, Wileemaris, at Manly Cove, a place named by Phillip himself in honour of the manly bearing of the first Aborigines he had met there. The final blow to Phillip's earlier optimism was the killing by Aborigines of his huntsmen John M'Entire when unarmed. Phillip's immediate angry response was to demand ten Aboriginal heads in return, as revenge or in terrorem, although his wrath soon cooled and no Aborigines were decapitated for M'Entire's death. Many of Phillip's successors re-enacted this pattern of disillusionment.

Murders were plentiful in early New South Wales: convicts, particularly those turned bushranger, killed free settlers, other convicts and Aborigines. Convict murderers understood the criminal law well enough, however, and could calculate the odds of capture and sentence. The legal position of the Aborigines was a very different matter. Governor King informed Lord Camden in 1805 (HRA, I,V, pp.502-4) of Judge-Advocate Richard Atkins opinion on the legal status of Aboriginal evidence. Atkins held,

> I think it cannot; for the evidence of Persons not bound by any moral or religious Tie can never be considered or constructed as legal evidence ... The Natives are within the Pale of H.M. protection; but how can a Native, when brought to Trial, plead Guilty or not Guilty to an Indictment, the meaning and tendency of which they must be totally ignorant of?

The key problem was that of belief in God and a life-to-come, the presuppositions of the oath in English law. Mr. Justic Burton, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, argued (HRA, I,XX, pp. 364-5) that 'to be ignorant of a Supreme Being and a future state' was a 'defect which could only be remedied by religious instruction'. Unfortunately, however, such instruction rarely, if ever, proved a sufficient remedy for the defect.

Evangelical and liberal opinion in London became increasingly hostile to the exclusion of Aborigine evidence in the courts of the Australian colonies. In July 1839 the Committee of the Aborigines Protection Society wrote to Lord Normanby (HRA, I,XX, pp.303-4),

> It is evident that the rejection of the Evidence of these Natives renders them virtually outlaws in their Native Land which they never alienated or forfeited. It seems to be a moral impossibility that their existence can be maintained when in the state of weakness and degradation, which their want of

> civilization necessarily implies; they have to cope with some of the most cruel and atrocious of our species, who carry on their system of oppression with almost perfect impunity, so long as the Evidence of Native Witnesses is excluded from Our Courts.

In 1839 John Hubert Plunkett introduced a bill before the New South Wales Legislative Council to allow Aborigines to give evidence in the Courts, but admitted (Sydney Herald, 23 September) that it was 'the greatest departure from the rules of English evidence ever attempted'. Plunkett gained the approval of the Council, but only after accepting an amendment that the Bill would not take effect without royal approval. The Bill was overthrown in London, on the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown who advised (HRA, I,XX, p.756) that 'To admit in a Criminal case the evidence of a witness acknowledged to be ignorant of the existence of a God or of a future state would be contrary to be principles of British jurisprudence'. The Law Officers thought it would be relatively simple to give adequate instruction to the Aborigines, since 'the established rules of Law do not define the distinctness of Religious ideas or to what degree the belief in a future state is to be fixed to qualify a witness to take an Oath', but their action helped Robert Lowe, W.C. Wentworth and others to defeat further attempts by Plunkett to introduce an Aboriginal Evidence Bill. In 1844 (SMH, 21 June) Lowe denounced the proposal as 'placing white men at the mercy, not of man - of savage and blood-thirsty cannibals', while Wentworth, who in the course of his speech described the Myall Creek hangings as legal murder, declared that 'the whole life and habits of these blacks were the practice of falsehood'. Plunkett's arguments that the Native Police, and even Jack Jacky, who was the only witness to the murder of Edward Beasley Kennedy by Aborigines, could not give evidence in court, were ignored. In South Australia and Western Australia, however, where reaction against the Myall Creek judgement was

less fierce, Aboriginal Evidence Bills were successfully enacted.

Dislike of the humanitarian tradition which most colonial Governors in Australia tried to extend was often expressed by settlers who preferred the North American tradition of frontier justice (or injustice). On the death of Benelong the Sydney Gazette (9 January 1813) rued that,

> the Principal officers of the Government had for many years endeavoured, by the kindest usage, to wean him from his original habits and draw him into a relish for a civilized life, but every effort was in vain.

A more bitter attack on 'our governors' was made by Thomas Watling. They had, he claimed (1794,p.12),

> carried philosophy, I do not say religion, to such a pitch of refinement as is surprising. Many of these savages are allowed, what is termed, a freeman's ration of provisions for their idleness. They are bedecked at times, with dress which they make away with the first opportunity, preferring the originality of naked nature .... This you will suppose not more than laudable; but is there one spark of charity exhibited to poor wretches, who are at least denominated christians? No, they are frequently denied the common necessaries of life! wrought to death under the oppressive heat of a burning sun; or barbarously afflicted with often little merited arbitrary punishment - this may be philosophy, according to the calculation of our rigid dictators; but I think it is the falsest species of it I have ever known or heard of.

An example of intervention which exasperated white opinion was Macquarie's consent to the execution of the escaped convict John Kirby in December 1820 for killing an Aboriginal tracker who was pursuing him. Macquarie held that every encouragement and protection should be offered to Aborigines who actively cooperated with the government, even though such cooperation incurred the bitter hostility of many convicts. On the other hand, Governor Darling deferred to settler opinion in 1826 when he commuted the death sentence imposed on two settlers for the killing of an Aborigine

boy.

The first generation of white settlers, mainly convicts and emancipists, had good grounds for fearing Aboriginal attack. The late 1790s saw clashes on the Hawkesbury between the intruders and large parties of Aborigines which led to the death of twenty-six whites and the wounding of thirteen, according to John Moloy (HRA I,II, p.422). Aborigines were unable to sustain campaigns at the level of military efficiency attained earlier by the Amerindians and later by the Maoris in the face of British colonization, but from the encounters on the Hawkesbury onwards there was always a sub-stratum of fear beneath the typical contempt displayed for Aborigines by white settlers. This fear or hatred was most intense among escaped convicts pursued by Aborigine trackers, collaborators with the colonial authorities who earned the praise of Governors Hunter and King (HRA I,I, pp 554-5, HRA I,II, p.24, HRA I,IV, p.73).

The tenuousness in the Outback of traditions of British law was exposed forcefully when the defendants in the Myall Creek massacre pleaded self-defence and sufficient provocation, because many of their friends and neighbours had been murdered with impunity in recent years in the Liverpool Plains and in New England. Robert Scott, a leading Hunter River grazier and a prominent figure in the 'Black Association' formed to protect the accused in the Myall Creek trial, had told the Committee on the Aborigine Question earlier in 1838 (Harrison, 1978, p.22),

> I have observed, that whenever any collision took place between them and the whites, the natives were led on by some one among themselves, best acquainted with the Europeans, and most civilized. Violence, however, ceases as they become better acquainted with our power to punish, and it is only in our first intercourse with the natives, that outrage is to be

> apprehended...Among themselves they have no governing principle but force; superior strength alone commands obedience; each person is free to do anything within his own daring; personal fear is his only control...Men so constituted, cannot be kept in check, except by force, and the certainty of instant retaliation. It is useless to deceive ourselves - it is wicked to do so.

The Colonist listed fifteen such incidents or collisions and alleged (Reece, 1974, p.33) that 'not one of the perpetrators of any one of these fifteen murders has been brought to justice'. The defendants submitted that 'they thought it extremely hard that white men should be put to death for killing Blacks'. An elaboration of their opinion had recently been made in the Sydney Herald (19 Sept. 1838) by a correspondent describing himself as a settler near the Murrumbidgee and signing himself as 'Anti-Hypocrite',

> ...every man of common experience in the Colony, and of common sense, has long known...(that) the aboriginals of my native country, are the most degenerate, despicable, and brutal race of beings in existence, and stand as it were in scorn 'to shame creation' - a scoff and a jest upon humanity - they are insensible to every tie which binds man to his friend - husband to wife - parent to its child - or creation to its God. They stand unprecedented in the annals of the most ancient and barbarous histories, as a nation notorious for the anti-civilizing propensities they put forth in opposition to every attempt made to reclaim them from their present wandering, abject, and brutal mode of life.
>
> Any attempt to civilize the Aboriginals of New Holland is futile and vain...and what it has pleased the Almighty in his wise decrees to ordain they should be, they will remain, in spite of every effort of civilized man, aided, however, powerfully (sic) by Christian principles and example. Before they are made christians you must make them men - they can only be classed in the order of creation, as the first great link, with connects in its chain, man with the brute.

Reactions to the Myall Creek verdict revealed two very divergent attitudes to the Aboriginal question and the British legal traditions. When at the end of the first trial the jury acquitted the defendants the Sydney Monitor reported (19 Nov. 1838),

> The verdict of acquittal was highly popular! It was with exertion that the Chief Justice could prevent the audience from cheering - such was their delight! The aristocracy of the colony, for once, joined heart and hand with the prison population, in expression of joy.

After the defendants were found guilty in the second trial and hanged, the Gazette reported (20 Dec. 1838) on 'the ill-suppressed murmurings of the rabble' who resented 'the hanging of so many white men for the murder of a few black cannibals'.

In 1861 the Wills massacre, this time of nineteen whites by Aborigines, took place at Cullinlaringo Station in Central Queensland. The issue of cause was strongly contested. The Police Magistrate at Rockhampton held that 'from all accounts it would appear that this murderous attack was induced by Mr.Wills neglecting to take proper precautions and by allowing great familiarity between his People and the Blacks' (Carment, 1980, p. 53). On the other hand the Brisbane Courier held that white occupation of land in Central Queensland, was the effective cause, so that it was otiose to blame the Aborigines who killed Wills's party. The Courier claimed (Carment, 1980 p. 54),

> the system which sanctions our appropriation of native territory, and assumes the right of dispossessing the aborigines of their hunting and fishing grounds, without making the slightest provision for their physical well-being, is one of very doubtful morality.

Neither side in this debate, in Queensland or in the other colonies, expressed any belief that the two types of human being in conflict could share the same law and government, or the same religious and political traditions.

There was by no means full consistency in the thinking of the Colonial Office or of successive Governors on the basic question of whether offending Aborigines were to be regarded as disaffected subjects of the Crown or as aliens. In July 1825 Earl Bathurst instructed Governor Darling, then faced with considerable Aboriginal opposition, that (HRA, I,XXII, p.21) he was to 'oppose force by force, and to repel such Aggressions in the same manner, as if they proceeded from subjects of any accredited state'. On the other hand, Lord Glenelg instructed Governor Bourke in July 1837 (HRA, I,XVIII, p.48) that Aborigines in New South Wales 'must be considered as subjects for the Queen' and that it was unthinkable to 'regard them as Aliens with whom a War can exist, and against whom H.M.'s troops may exercise belligerent rights'. Overall it was the latter interpretation that was upheld. An authoritative pronouncement was made in Westminister in 1837 by a Parliamentary Select Committee on Aborigines which declared (p.76),

> He who has made Great Britain what she is, will inquire at our hands how we have employed the influence He has lent to us in our dealings with the untutored and defenceless savage; whether it has been engaged in seizing their lands, warring upon their people, and transplanting unknown disease, and deeper degradation, through the remote regions of the earth; or whether we have, as far as we have been able, informed their ignorance, and invited and afforded them the opportunity of becoming partakers of that civilization, that innocent commerce, that knowledge and that faith with which it has pleased a gracious Providence to bless our own country.

Governor Hindmarsh delivered the same doctrine on Proclamation Day, 28 December 1838, in South Australia,

> It is also at this time, especially my duty to apprise the Colonists of my Resolution to take every lawful means for extending the same protection to the Native Population as to the rest of His Majesty's subjects, and of my firm determination to punish with exemplary severity all acts of violence and injustice which may in any manner be practised or attempted against the

> natives, who are to be considered as much under the safeguard of the law as the colonists themselves, and equally entitled to the privileges of British subjects. I trust therefore with confidence to the exercise of moderation and forbearance by all classes in their intercourse with the Native Inhabitants, and that they will omit no opportunity of assisting me to fulfil His Majesty's most gracious and benevolent intentions towards them by promoting their advancement in civilisation, and ultimately, under the blessing of Divine Providence, their conversion to the Christian Faith.

Lord John Russell declared in 1839 that it was (Bonwick, 1863, p.74),

> impossible that the Government should forget that the original aggression was our own, and that we have never yet performed the sacred duty of making any systematic or considerable attempt to impart to the former occupants of New South Wales the blessings of Christianity, or the knowledge of the arts and advantages of civilized life.

There seems little doubt that the large majority of the colonists favoured the position Bathurst had expressed in 1825. A settler wrote of Aborigines to John Dunmore Lang's Colonist (1 June 1839),

> When have they become British subjects? When have they taken the oath of allegiance? When have they in any way recognized the supremacy of British laws? In any disputed question between the respective tribes, have they ever claimed your interference or submitted to your decision? From what act of theirs do you infer that they acknowledge their subjection to the British Crown? In short, have you any proof that they ever regarded us except in the light of intruders whom it is both their duty and interest to exterminate?
>
> Every act of theirs shows that nothing is farther from their minds than to believe or wish themselves to be British subjects. Early have they assumed the attitude of open hostility, setting the laws at defiance, and scorning your inter-position. They are rebels in open arms, and we ought to treat them in no other light.

Yet for any admission to the privileges of British subjects, or to their duties, to be meaningful, it was necessary that Aborigines should understand them. An early attempt to initiate Aborigines into such knowledge was William Shelley's educational institution for Aborigines,

established at Parramatta in 1814, despite the scepticism of Samuel Marsden. By the end of 1820 thirty-seven Aboriginal children had spent some time in it and in 1819 the Sydney Gazette reported (17 Feb.), 'a black girl from the Institution had carried off the chief prize in a public examination'. However, the evidence given by Shelley's widow, Elizabeth, who supervised the Institution after his death, to a Legislative Council Committee in 1838 was pessimistic. Instead of Aboriginal girls trained at the Institution having a civilizing effect on their menfolk, Mrs. Shelley reported (Yarwood, 1982, p.66),

> Several of the girls had married black men, but instead of having the effect intended, of reclaiming them, they eventually followed their husbands into the bush, after having given away and destroyed all the supplies with which they had been furnished by the government.

In 1814 Governor Macquarie expressed the hope to Earl Bathurst (HRA, I,VII, p.313) that, although Aborigines were only just emerging from the rudest and most primitive state, they had qualities capable of cultivation and might well be able to give up the nomadic life and instead become skilled in agriculture or even in the less demanding industrial occupations. A little later in 1814 (HRA, I, VIII, p.367) Macquarie suggested to Bathurst that, given time and good will on the British side, Aborigines would come to appreciate the benefits of civilization and to understand the duties and rights involved in this more desirable condition. Macquarie fully shared the hopes of the Shelleys and gave every support to the Aboriginal Institution at Parramatta; like them, and like earlier Governors, Macquarie met with failure.

The settlement at Blacktown, established in 1814 'for the purpose of civilizing the aboriginal natives of Australia,' was an even more abject

failure than that of the Parramatta Institution. Charles Tompson's 'Black Town', a poem derivative of Goldsmith's 'The Deserted Village', shows sympathy with the plight of Aborigines, but frustration at their apparent inability to derive any good from the newcomers.

South Australia followed in this path. Attempts in 1842 to provide a combined school for children from the Adelaide and Murray tribes and in 1844 to set one up for Murray children only both failed. Similar schools opened and closed in Encounter Bay in 1846, in Adelaide in 1850 and in Port Lincoln in 1853. Matthew Moorhouse, Protector of Aborigines in South Australia wrote after seventeen years in the post (Clarke, 1973, III, p.432) that he had,

> long since given up hope of domesticating the aborigines, partly because their elders threatened them with death by sorcery if they adopted the white man's ways and partly because the aborigines preferred their own erratic liberty to what the white man offered.

Through Children's Eyes

Children's stories give many clues to colonial attitudes to the Aboriginal past and present. Many were deeply pessimistic, but others were sympathetic and even hopeful in their approaches.

A Mother's Offering to her Children: by a Lady Long Resident in New South Wales is an early example of the gloomy perspective. Written in 1841 by Charlotte Barton and probably the first children's story published in the Australian colonies, A Mother's Offering includes stark accounts of Aborigine atrocities. For example, the narrator, Mrs. Saville, tells her children about the fate of some shipwrecked mariners,

Mrs. S. - About an hour after they had laid down to repose, the natives came with clubs, spears and knives, and commenced an indiscriminate

slaughter. Thirteen of the unhappy people lay lifeless corpses; when they cut off their heads and danced and shouted round them.

The two poor boys only remained: and one of the savages shortly afterwards, seized hold of Ireland to cut his throat with a large English knife. Poor Ireland struggled violently. It was for his life; and succeeded in getting from the savage and fled to the sea, which he reached; not however, till he had been speared in his left side, and he was again obliged to return to the beach. The same man was there awaiting his coming, and caught hold of the poor exhausted boy, who must have expected instant death; but the savage did not now ill-treat him; he gave him food and water, and made him understand that he was safe.
The heads of the murdered people were arranged in a row.

Clara - What a truly distressing situation for the poor boys!...

Mrs. S. - They remained with the cruel natives about three months, when these bad people added to their crimes by murdering the defenceless boys. Master D'Oyley was a very handsome child, and they cut off his head to adorn the front of a canoe.

Emma - This is monstrous! How could such thoughts enter their heads?

Clara - Were they cannibals, Mamma?

Mrs. S. - Yes, my dear. They ate the eyes and cheeks of the ship-wrecked people. This they do with the idea that it increases their desire for the blood of the white people.

Clara - What dreadful sanguinary creatures. It makes one shudder even to hear of it!

One of the children describes a walk with her nurse during which they find 'burnt bones, ashes and hair' of an Aborigine child, killed by its mother because it was 'too much trouble to rear'.

In William Howitt's 1854 A Boy's Adventures in the Wilds of Australia the young hero Herbert, after stating that Aborigine mothers 'show no want of natural affection for their children in general', undercuts this sentiment by adding 'though they do kill and eat them occasionally', allegedly because of difficulties of carrying them when on the move. In Maud Franc's Golden Gifts: An Australian Tale, published in 1869 in Adelaide, the heroine Edith ponders,

.. to think that these beings are really of one blood with us...

> Does it not seem strange? They have souls; and yet how near they seem to approach the lowest order of animals'.

In Louisa Meredith's 1880 Tasmanian Friends and Foes: Feathered, Furred and Finned, an early conservationist note is struck, when Aborigines are condemned, although not more than the British upper-classes, for slaughtering kangaroos and other fauna which they do not need for food. E. Davenport Cleland's The White Kangaroo, set in South Australia in 1890, has boy heroes who find some good qualities in a friendly group of Aborigines, but concludes, 'the short time during which the boys had been with them was sufficient to show how very degraded a nation they were'.

Many children's stories, however, offered a more sympathetic picture of the Aborigine past and treated white intrusion critically. One of the first stories set in Australia, the 1830 Alfred Dudley or the Australian Settler, attributed to Mrs. Sarah Porter, a sister of the economist David Ricardo, portrays an Aborigine, Mickie, who saves the hero's life in the bush. As Niall notes (1984, p.9), the Dudley family regard Aborigines as the equivalent of the deserving poor in England, in contrast to the undeserving poor, the convicts. When Mickie is described by a knavish immigrant as 'vermin', Alfred declares the Aborigine to be 'much superior in the scale of being' to such a 'brutal wretch'. A key theme in Alfred Dudley is that Australia can only be colonised successfully, if kindness is shown to Aborigines and if they are enabled to share in English traditions.

Mrs. Sarah Lee, also writing in England without having visited Australia, attacked in her 1851 Adventures in Australia the shortcomings of settler treatment of Aborigines,

> That aboriginal question is a difficult one to settle, and only of two things can we be certain-that we have no right to treat

> them ill, and that we cannot blame them, when, after we have usurped their lands, and driven kangaroo away, as they say, which, in other words, is to deprive them of their sustenance, they strive to turn us out by the only means in their power, physical force, administered in the only style of warfare with which they are acquainted.

George Sargent's Frank Layton: an Australian Tale, published in 1865 by the Religious Tract Society, took up the Aborigine cause energetically. Sargent describes the effects of European settlement as follows,

> As the country became occupied with the flocks and herds of the settlers, the kangaroos, emus and other wild animals fled away or were destroyed; and thus deprived of one principal means of subsistence the natives have been largely thinned by famine, hardship and misery. But the diseases communicated by contact with Europeans, and the intemperance learned from them, have formed a far more influential cause of decay.

Frank Layton includes a well-balanced argument, in which several settlers urge that over-population in Europe and the failure of the Aborigines to develop Australia more fully justifies its colonisation, but the heroine Mercy remains unconvinced. The novel implies that there can be no white withdrawal, or indeed any refusal to bring the whole continent under British rule, but that the enterprise will only be defensible if well-paid rural employment is provided for Aborigines and if they are given the advantages of English law and the Christian religion.

Emilia Marryat Norris, daughter of the author of Mr. Midshipman Easy, expressed in her 1867 The Early Start in Life strong sympathy for the dispossessed. Her heroine Maggie Stirling, aged fourteen when her family emigrates, says about a passing Aborigine,

> After all, it is his own land we have taken possession of... We are not much better than thieves; and I am sure he must look upon us as such.

Yet Maggie cannot contemplate the ending of colonisation, and the

Stirling family seeks a compromise by taking in an Aborigine boy and instructing him in Christianity and in English ways. Since they call him 'Monkey' and describe him as a 'dreadful coward', their chances of success seem limited. Augusta Marryat, unlike her cousin Emilia, lived in Australia. Indeed, her husband was Governor of South Australia and Port Augusta is named after her. In her The Young Lamberts, published in 1878, an emigrant family succeeds in making a satisfactory domestic of an Aborigine girl, although little hope is offered that this might prove generally possible.

Richard Rowe's Tasmanian based novels, the 1869 The Boy in the Bush and the 1880 Roughing it in Van Diemen's Land, make several favourable comments on Aborigine life. In The Boy in the Bush the Australian-born Harry compares Aborigines with immigrants,

> They're a queer lot, the black fellows, ... but they're a long sight better than new chums - they were born in the colony just like us. A black fellow can ride like a native, but those Englishmen look so scared when a horse begins to buck.

Harry goes further after a fight with Aborigines,

> And yet, after all, if you think of it, you can't blame the beggars. I can't see what right we whites have to this country. If you were to get up at night and see a fellow helping himself to your swag, you'd do your best, I guess, to shoot him if he wouldn't bundle out. And that's what the blacks must feel like when they see us taking up their country.

Rowe says past conflicts in Roughing it in Van Diemen's Land,

> Whites and blacks in Van Diemen's land in those days hated one another like fiends for the most part. Both had committed great barbarities, but it was the whites who began the quarrel.

Rowe is very realistic however and suggests in The Boy in the Bush that the boys' attitudes will change,

> It is not pleasant to have to write about such things, but I must if I am to tell the whole truth about Australia. Sydney (the hero of the book) soon got quite envenomed against the blacks, whom he had robbed of their hunting grounds, because they were killing off his cattle; and not long afterwards Harry and Donald fully sympathised with him. Not one of the three felt the slightest scruple in shooting down a black, and then cutting off his head and hanging it in terrorem on a tree, as a gamekeeper nails a hawk against his gable.

T.P. Wilson's 1877 Frank Oldfield, set in South Australia, won the Band of Hope's prize for its effectiveness as a warning of the evil effects of strong drink, but it expresses pity for the condition to which whites, drinkers and sober alike, have brought Aborigines, such as a miserable group they meet on the road outside Adelaide,

> 'Poor creatures!', exclaimed Hubert; 'what miserable specimens of humanity; indeed, they hardly look human at all.'
> 'Ah,' said his uncle, 'there ar some who are only too glad to declare that these poor creatures are only brutes, that they have no souls. I've heard a man say he'd as soon shoot a native as a dingo...'
> 'But you don't think so, dear uncle?'
> 'Think so! no indeed. Their intellects are sharp enough in some things. Yes, it is very easy to take from them their lands, their kangaroo, and their emu, and then talk about their having no souls, just to excuse ourselves from doing anything for them in return. Why, those very men who will talk the most disparagingly of them, do not hesitate to make use of them; ay, and trust them too. They will employ them as shepherds, and even as mounted policemen.'

E.B. Kennedy's 1889 Blacks and Bushrangers, set in New South Wales, is unusual in presenting a positive Aborigine character, Drummoora, who is described as a 'chief'. Drummoora is a faithful ally of the hero in his struggle with dastardly bushrangers; when the outlaw leader Magan dies he curses the hero and the 'nigger' Drummoora with equal ferocity. In a scene reminiscent of Fenimore Cooper, but rarely surfacing in Australian fiction, Mat the hero and Drummoora part from each other with deep emotion,

> When Mat turned round for a last wave of the hand he saw his old chief...seated on a stone, the attitude of despair. The tears rose in (Mat's) eyes as he witnessed this spectacle, which (his companion), observing, said soothingly, -
> 'Never mind, old man, you might see them again, some day.' 'Yes, in heaven, I hope,' responded our forester in a choking voice, as he turned his face southwards.

W.H. Timperley, the author of the 1892 Bush Luck, had been superintendent of Rottnest Island before writing his book, which contains 'good' and 'bad' Aborigine groups, none characterised in much depth. Bush Luck was published by the Religious Tract Society, but Timperley had little confidence in the capacity of Aborigines to understand, let alone to embrace Christianity. He writes of an Aboriginal mother bereaved of her child,

> 'Mine boy dead!, mine boy dead!' she wailed forth, with such an outburst of grief that I found my own tears beginning to flow... the usual words of comfort would have been worse than useless; for how could I tell the poor old savage of a brighter future beyond the skies, and a joyful meeting in a world to come? 'Mine boy dead' was the sum total of her belief. Dead now, and for ever and ever.

Most nineteenth century authors for children were even less hopeful that Aborigines could be enabled to understand Christianity than that they could be brought to master the colonists' material civilisation. Mrs. Saville explains to her children in A Mother's Offering that an Aborigine child cannot be buried in the church-yard, because she had never been christened, but does not suggest that the significance of christening is communicable to Aborigines. Her aim was to impress on Christian children the importance of the sacraments. In Emilia Norris's The Early Start in Life there is a scene in which the Stirling family say a special Christmas prayer over the grave of a friend killed by Aborigines, but little hope is offered that Aborigines will utter such prayers.

The greatest optimism is displayed by Mrs. Porter, whose Alfred Dudley brings out from England his old vicar; together they establish a school for both 'the white and the black children without any distinction'. Mrs. Anne Bowman's 1859 The Kangaroo Hunters, is also optimistic and ends with an Aborigine girl already a Christian and about to attend school with the white children, so that she will become 'a little English girl in all but complexion'. The great difference a generation may make is explained in a description of the difference between the mother Baldabella and the daughter Nakinna,

> It was with deep concern that Mr. Mayburn saw the perfect indifference with which Baldabella regarded the religious worship of the family. She looked at first much astonished to see men and women kneel down, and to hear the solemn prayers pronounced by Mr. Mayburn; but she soon turned carelessly away to dig for worms, or to collect sticks for the fire.
>
> Not so the little Nakinna; for, after observing the devotions two or three times, she walked up to Margaret, knelt down by her, lifted up her little hands, and seemed to listen with interest, though she could not yet understand. This act of docility and obedience was very gratifying to her kind instructress, who anxiously wished for the time when natural understanding might make it possible to communicate to these heathens a knowledge of the truth.

Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Bowman both wrote from England without having visited Australia. None of the authors with direct experience of Aborigine life showed quite the same degree of optimism about the possible speed of their conversion to Christian beliefs.

Sharing Christianity with Aborigines.

Christians are exhorted to preach to all nations and to bring them the good news of the Gospel, but the conversion of the Aborigines was low in the priorities of the British Government in the early years of its

colonization of Australia. The first Fleet did not contain enough clergy to minister to the spiritual needs of the convicts, let alone to preach to the Aborigines. No Las Casas sailed with Phillip. The most influential of the early British ministers of religion in Australia, Samuel Marsden, had little hope that any Aborigine might understand or respond the Christian message. When instructed in 1819 by the Church Missionary Society that he should receive into his Parramatta seminary Aborigines as well as Maoris, Marsden, after consultation with other prominent Anglicans declared (Elder, 1932, pp.231-2) that the plan would 'not do', since his experience suggested that at 'a certain age' Aboriginal children invariably reverted to their ancestral ways and beliefs. In contact with Europeans, Marsden held, Aborigines would not adopt Christianity or the best features of civilization, but simply adopt 'drunkenness and idleness and vice'.

Evangelicanism in Britain was deeply critical of such pessimism. Even the Sydney Gazette carried frequent letters condemning the unwillingness of Christian missionaries to put more energy into the conversion of Aborigines. Significant missionary activity was first attempted by Wesleyans at Blacktown in 1821. By 1839 there were five mission stations stretching from Port Phillip to Moreton Bay, but all of these came to an ignominious end before 1850. None of the Christian groups, Catholic or Protestants, which worked in the field, achieved a single unambiguous convert.

A grant of 10,000 acres at Lake Macquarie, a few miles south of Newcastle, was made in 1825 to the London Missionary Society to support the mission of the Reverend Lancelot Threlkeld to the Awabakal people, but Lord Goderich warned Governor Darling in 1827 (HRA, I,XIII, pp.433-4) that he

ought not to incur on behalf of Aborigines 'extensive exertions, leading to expense'. Lancelot Threlkeld was a paragon of the Christian missionary, genuinely seeking to share the traditions and good news of Christianity with Aborigines. He was an outstanding linguist with considerable previous missionary success in the South Pacific. Yet by 1836 almost all the Awabakal, to whom he sought to minister, had succumbed to the vices and diseases of the newcomers, while none had become converts of the type Threlkeld sought. By December 1838 Threlkeld was forced to report that the surviving Awabakal were almost constantly drunk and incapable of learning anything from him, sacred or secular. Furthermore, his knowledge of the Awabekal language proved valueless for communication with other Aboriginal groups, even neighbouring ones.

Some missionaries, such as the Reverend William Watson of the Church Missionary Society, were accused by later toilers in the field, such as the Quakers Backhouse and Walker (Woolmington, 1979, p.289), of failing because they did not value any Aboriginal traditions and skills, so that there was no basis for reciprocity. Watson took to extremes the view that the only way in which to change Aborigine patterns of thought was to catch them young. The Police Magistrate of Port Macquarie, W.N. Gray, supported that argument in 1845 (NSWLCPP) 1845, p.26,

> In my opinion it is impossible to persuade the men to give up their wandering life, but by taking the children from them very young, and bringing them up in an establishment where they would have no opportunity of seeing any but Europeans, they would, I have no doubt, become useful members of society, and their condition would be much improved. The parents could be easily persuaded to give up their children, and the number of children in this district is so small, that the expense would be but trifling.

Watson did not find that parents could so easily be persuaded, but he was

undeterred. The Rev. James Gunther told his colleague Rev. William Cowper (Woolmington, 1973, p.93),

> I am sorry to be obliged to inform you, that as far as I have come, being upwards of 60 miles along the Macquarie and in some side way direction the Natives dread Mr. Watson on account of having taken children by force, and I being his Fellow Labourer was always in the first instance looked upon with suspicion except by such Natives who knew more about me. In various places even among the farthest Tribes they concealed their children from me. Could anything be more distressing and discouraging?

The victory won by Evangelicals when slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1833 encouraged renewed pressures from Exeter Hall to help Aborigines, especially those in the Port Phillip District as it became settled. The 1835 Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Aborigines had been faced inevitably with the problem of whether to give to Aborigines the same or different treatment from that accorded to non-Aborigines. It expressed the dilemma as follows (p.83),

> To require from the ignorant hordes of savages living in Eastern or Western Australia the observance of our laws would be absurd, and to punish their non-observance of them by severe penalties would be palpably unjust. On the other hand, if they are placed beyond the pale of the law as a rule of their conduct to others, they will infallibly lose the advantage of it, considered as a rule of conduct of others towards them.

Melbourne's administration accepted the Select Committee's recommendation to establish Aboriginal Protectors. Lord Glenelg's instructions to Governor Gipps (HRA, I,XIX, p.253-4) illustrate the assumptions on which the recommendations were made. Glenelg assumed, for example, that 'the Aboriginal tribes ... can be induced to assume more settled habits of life' and 'to engage in the cultivation of the grounds, in building suitable habitations for themselves, and in whatever else may conduce to their civilization and social improvement', although little

earlier success in this respect had ever been achieved. Glenelg, like his predecessors, put his hopes in 'the Education and Instruction of the Children, as early and as extensively as it may be practicable', and urged the promotion of 'the moral and religous improvement of the Natives, by instructing them in the Elements of the Christian Religion'.

Rowley (1970, p.96) attributed missionary failures to the demoralized state of the Aboriginal groups to whom their ministries were addressed, arguing 'it is quite basic that these effects were directed at a collection of beaten tribal remnants'. There was, however, only marginally higher success when missionaries, such as Backhouse and Walker, expressed admiration for some Aboriginal customs or when, as later in the Northern Territory, attempts were made to convert groups more socially intact and in better heart.

Explanations for missionary failure included the greater availability of such material attractions as the mission stations possessed being more fully available in settlements and farms. Threlkeld complained that one of the Aborigine students who had deserted him was (Gunson, 1974, 1, p.133) 'displaying his knowledge at Newcastel town, where drink has attractions far more strong than my study possesses at the Lake.'

Woolmington (1985) suggested that one reason for the failure of most missionary endeavours among the Aborigines was that the men employed had low standards of education. The London Missionary Society claimed in its 1796 Report that a 'godly mechanic' or other such uneducated people would be more successful than university graduates from the upper classes in dealing with savage races. With only a few exceptions, such as Rosano

Salvado in New Norcia and James Gunther at the Wellington Valley Mission, missionaries in Australia were not, in Woolmington's view (1985, p.55), the sort 'who would have become leaders of men if they had stayed at home and followed the trades for which they had been trained, yet in their missionary work they sought not only to lead the Aborigines but to set themselves up as moral guardians of their fellow countrymen in the colonies.' Woolmington's central claim was that the social insecurity and limited cultivation of most missionaries made them sensitive to their own status and reduced their willingness to share Aboriginal life in the wholehearted way needed to secure their confidence.

Rev. Christopher Eipper (1841, p.10; cited in Ferry, 1979, p.32) wrote that Aborigines at Moreton Bay 'seem to hold that after death they will be like whites, and that white men have been black fellows before'. An implication of this opinion seemed to be that there was no point in going to pains to act like a white Christian, since that is what one would become in any case. Threlkeld was told at an Aboriginal funeral by one of the kin of the deceased that she was now in England. Woolmington advanced the more radically pessimistic view (1979, p.289) that,

> a crucified Christ who reminded humans of their sinful condition and offered the m the opportunity of a better life to come, had no point of reference in the Aboriginal scheme of things with its 'one-possibility' life, where a never-changing pattern of existence had always been and always would be.

Fears that the traditions and history of Christiantiy could not become an integral part of an Aborigine's thought were not, of course, shared by missionaries as they set out on their tasks, even though some succumbed ultimately to pessimism. The hope that shared humanity itself would, however great the obstacles, enable Aborigines to embrace the Christian

world-outlook, was well expressed by William Grant Broughton in 1830, (in his Charge to the Clergy (Sydney Gazette, 4 Feb. 1830),

> God works in every dispensation for his own glory, and in his own fore-ordained times and seasons; and his purpose in permitting the existence of such difficulties may be to furnish an immediate exercise of our faith and patience, and, in their final subjugation, a clearer manifestation of his own Omnipotence.

A similar sentiment was expressed in Lang's Colonist, which editorialized (24 Nov. 1838) that the case of the New Hollander,

> has not been equally fortunate with that of his African brother, in awakening the sympathies of the Christian world. For him, no Wilverforce has stood forth in the senate - no petitions have besieged the throne and both houses of parliament - no public meetings have agitated the three kingdoms - no opulent societies have combined their wealth, their influence, and their eloquence. No, because the chains of slavery were not riveted upon his limbs - because he had not been kidnapped in our ships, and bought and sold in our market places - his case had no poetic adjuncts 'to point a moral and adorn a tale', and he was left to perish unpitied, and scarcely thought of.

One obvious obstacle to Aboriginal understanding of Christianity was that, apart from the missionaries, so few of the whites they met appeared to be touched by its teaching. As Richard Johnson warned in the first book written in Australia (Bonwick, 1870, p.6),

> If these ignorant natives," he cried, "as they become more and more acquainted with our language and manners, hear you, many of you, curse, swear, lie, abound in every kind of obscene and profance conversation, and if they observe that it is common with you to steal, to break the Sabbath, to be guilty of uncleanliness, drunkenness, and other abominations, how must their minds become prjudiced, and their hearts hardened against that pure and holy religion which we profess!

Broughton in similar vein in his 1830 Charge blamed the drunkenness of the Tasmanian Aborigines (Sydney Gazette, 4 Feb 1830) on their being misled 'by many whose superiority in knowledge ought to have been directed to some

less unchristian work'. Broughton anticipated countless later commentators when he bemoaned of the Aborigines that,

> while, as the contagion of European intercourse has extended itself among them, they gradually lose the better properties of their own character, they appear in exchange to acquire none but the most objectionable and degrading of ours.

John Bede Polding also pointed to the incompatibility between Christian teaching about sexual relationships and the practices of the nominally Christian colonists. Polding told the 1845 New South Wales Select Committee, in respect to the condition of Aborigines (NSWLCPP, 1845, p.10),

> If the Whites could also be impressed with the grievous impropriety of making use of the women of the aborigines, as they are used, the way would be opened for them doing much good; and I have not the least doubt that the aborigines of this Colony might be brought into a high state of civilization.

The official position of the Catholic hierarchy on the treatment of Aborigines was given its fullest articulation in the Joint Pastoral of the Second Provincial Council in April 1869. Dispossession was held to require compensation, although the legal status of earlier Aboriginal possession was left unclear, as follows,

> We have dispossessed the aboriginals of the soil, at least we have deprived them of that use of it from which they gained a subsistence, even if it be not such a use as can properly be considered to constitute a possession.

The Pastoral insisted that (Haines et al., 1962, p.404) 'these aboriginals, who seem, and who are indeed so low, are still our fellow-creatures, fallen from the same natural and supernatural gifts of origin, heirs of the same redemption and regeneration through Christ'. The failure of the 'incoming nation, since it professed to be a nation of

Christians..to protect, and teach, to make disciples of Christ those poor children of the soil' was deeply deplored. That 'with very little, with short-lived exception, injustice, neglect, cruelty, and a million times worse, the actual teaching of vice, have branded the annals of white men' was acknowledged. At the same time the hierarchy acknowledged 'the solicitude repeatedly expressed by her Majesty's Government that efforts should be made to ameliorate the conditions of the Aborigines', and that 'this solicitude has been accepted by the Colonial authorities'. They did not suggest that the average Catholic colonist had been any better than non-Catholics in the treatment of Aborigines, even though Catholics should know that one Aboriginal soul 'like one of our own, is of more worth than the whole material world'.

The Pastoral did not flinch from declaring that 'no-one must dare to say with Cain the murderer, "Am I my brother's keeper?"', yet no certain way ahead could be seen: 'By which means the Christian regeneration of the aboriginals may be best attempted we can scarcely yet determine in detail.' The hierarchy urged emulation of the missionary work of the Jesuits in Paraguay, and praised the example of the Spanish Benedictines in Western Australia, which 'proves abundantly that a little patience, and the perseverence of charity and faith, can prepare their souls to receive the grace of Christ.'

Leading Catholic laymen such as Roger Therry displayed a similar ambivalence to the Aborigine past to that of non-Catholics. Therry (1974, p.271) deplores 'the terrible mode of clearing the country by a massacre of the poor helpless natives, - the original owners of the soil'. Like John

Hubert Plunkett, Therry supported the Myall Creek executions and attacked the vigilante threats of the Sydney Herald that any softness towards Aborigines would be met by the settlers setting the government at defiance, taking the law into their own hands and executing summary justice. Therry urged (1974, p.286) that 'the protection of the lives of this poor inferior race of our fellow-men is a strict duty we owe them. To that protection they derive the highest possible claim from the sovereignty which has been assumed over the whole of their possessions'. Yet Therry saw no way to give lasting protection to 'that weak and prostrate race which wastes away as civilisation advances - or, to speak more plainly and truly, as our occupation of their lands thrusts them out and tramples them down'. He wrote (1974, p.292) that 'though many thousands of pounds have been expended amongst them..., the problem has yet to be solved of bringing even a single aboriginal of New Holland within the pale of civilization', and that, despite apparently positively responding to schooling when they are young, 'invariably, on coming to mature years, they have...resumed a savage and wandering life.' Kindness ought to be shown, Therry argued, but it will be in vain, since 'Europeans have almost always found them treacherous and cunning. The sentiment of gratitude has rarely been exhibited by them; and certainly some of the most cruel murders, in my experience, have been committed by them on persons who have harboured and maintained them for many months, and treated them with invariable kindness' (p.294).

Bonwick (1873, pp. 83-4) lamented that in exchange 'for endearing relations, joyous freedom, and an unanxious existence', Aborigines had been exposed to the sneers and contempt of the most degraded members of white society and taught only how to swear and drink. James Dawson feared that Aborigines would be spiritually atrophied in missionary reserves, yet he

doubted their capacity to compete with Europeans outside such reserves. Like Alexander Harris, he had no confidence that anything short of a white evacuation could save Aboriginal traditions or even ensure their physical survival. Dawson, a capable linguist and a proto-anthropologist, faced the dilemma of wishing that Aboriginal traditions should be known outside their own immediate group, but of fearing that they could not make the critical assessment of European beliefs that the enlightened heirs of Herodotus and St. Augustine could make of theirs. Dawson was himself an example of European willingness to incorporate different customs into their way of life, but, although he was willing, and perhaps able, to absorb aspects of Aboriginal tradition, he doubted that western beliefs were reciprocally available to them. Even Richard Sadleir (1883), who concluded from linguistic evidence that Aborigines had descended from a higher state of existence rather than risen from a lower one, did not believe that Aborigines could readily regain access to what they had lost.

Samuel Marsden had little hope that Aborigines could make Christianity and European civilization their own, and there was little, if anything, in the first century or so of British Australia to prove him wrong. In his pessimistic assessment of the power of Aborigines to adopt new historical and cultural perspectives Marsden, for once, expressed the opinions of the mass of non-official lay opinion in New South Wales, convict, emancipist or free.

Dean Cowper noted at the end of his long life (1902, p.19), that the attention of his father, Archdeacon Cowper,

> was early drawn to the sad and degraded condition of the Aboriginal population. Low as they were in their natural condition, he observed that they were dragged lower still by falling into some of the worst vices of the Europeans around them. He was therefore anxious that some steps should be taken for ameliorating their condition.

Dean Cowper recognised (1902, p.22-3) that the Protestant Churches of New South Wales were all prompted by 'concern for the degraded condition of the Aboriginal habitants, of whose land we had taken possession', but that 'it is matter of deep regret that no permanent results were obtained, such as were, afterwards, in the Moravian and Church of England Missions in Victoria'. The Dean's verdict was little different from that which might have been made half a century earlier or later.

> It is, however, a pleasing reflection that the Christian people of this colony were not unmindful of their obligations to endeavour to evangelize their heathen brethren, while on the other hand, it will ever remain a dark blot upon our Colonial history, that cruel and inhuman treatment was meted out to them in the interior for alleged outrages and wrongs, when the whites had probably been the first aggressors.

Dean Cowper was perhaps over-optimistic in his view of the successes in Aborigine evangelisation gained in Victoria. He was certainly aware of how difficult it was to introduce civilisation and Christianity to the Aborigines, even had there been no 'cruel and inhuman treatment'. One of the lasting memories of his youth was of (1902, p.88) 'a fine stalwart aboriginal, with a waddy (club) in his right hand, and with his left clutching the arm of a female whom he was dragging along the ground apparently senseless'. The Dean noted that David Collins had described a similar scene in the 1790s.

The Aborigine as Bushman and Friend to Explorers

The most positive image of Aborigines in the ongoing historical

imagination of White Australians was as accomplished bushmen playing a supporting role to White explorers. Forrest's Windich, Eyre's Wylie and Kennedy's Jacky-Jacky all embodied the twin virtues of deep knowledge of the bush and of devotion to their White leader. Daniel Bunce held (Argus, 31 Aug. 1850) that one black such as Wommai, who helped Leichhardt on his first expedition, was worth half a dozen white men because of his 'sagacity, and capacity in finding and tracking cattle and general knowledge of locality'. Mitchell (1834, II, p.162) praised his black guide Piper for his ability to

> read traces on the earth, climb trees, or dive into the water, better than the ablest of us. In tracing lost cattle, speaking to 'wild natives', hunting or diving, Piper was the most accomplished man in camp.

During a later expedition into Central Queensland another guide, Yuranigh, became so necessary to Mitchell that (1848, p.414) 'he was ever at my elbow, whether on foot or on horseback. Confidence in him was never misplaced'. Mitchell held (1834, I, p.210) that he was 'perfectly safe from the danger of sudden collision' with local clans, provided he was accompanied by some of their members. Sturt described (1833, II, p.49) how his guides 'sent ambassadors forward regularly from one tribe to another, in order to prepare for our approach, a custom that not only saved us an infinity of time, but also personal risk.'

Among the expedition saved from disaster by Aboriginal guides were those of Bannister in 1833, Strzlecki in 1830, and the squatter Scott in 1843. In contrast the destruction of Burke and Wills was at least partly the result of their stubborn unwillingness to employ Aboriginal guides or to make such contact as they could with Aborigines along their line of march. Their fate amply justified the advice given by J.L. Stokes in 1846 (I,

p.400) that 'from them we must always calculate on learning much that is useful and valuable, with regard to the productions of the country; a knowledge which would otherwise consume much time to acquire'. When co-operation was not offered willingly by Aborigines, some explorers compelled their assistance: Carnegie (1898, pp.232, 267) made no apology in relating examples of 'unceremoniously making captives from whatever wandering tribes he might fall in with'. Although the understanding did not undermine confidence in the nullius terra thesis, many explorers noted the regular routes which criss-crossed their journeys: George Grey (1841, I, p.110) found tracks which were 'as completely path-ways as those we find in England leading from a village to a farm house'; Reynolds (198) cited similar comments from A.C. Gregory, Robinson, Mulligan, Jukes, Eyre, and Stuart. Appreciation of the detailed hunting and tracking skills of Aborigines and of the systematic nature of their movements did not in itself enable the most admiring of whites to find ways in which the world in which those skills and movements were significant and vital could be associated with a world which had already traversed the stages identified by Adam Smith from a hunting to a commercial society, or by Marx and Engels from primitive communism or the middle stage of savagery to capitalism. The difficulties faced by hunters and food gatherers in the face of modernity were understood by philosophers, economists and statesmen from an abundance of European experience since the time of Columbus, but during the nineteenth century the Aborigines became a focal point of controversies about the ways and customs of early man in general and about transition from one type of society to another.

The Aborigines and Evolutionary Social Theory

In 1900 seventy-seven prominent British politicians and scholars

petitioned the Premiers of Victoria and South Australia to urge their support for a trans-continental expedition to be headed by Baldwin Spencer and Gillen. The petitioners claimed that 'it is to Australia, more than to any other quarter of the globe, that anthropologists are now looking for the solution of certain problems of great moment in the early history of society and religion'. The British savants were returning a compliment, since, well before the end of the nineteenth century, the work of Charles Lyall, Charles Darwin, Alfred Russell and their successors was acknowledged by most Australians who consciously devoted any thought to the matter, as having established that the world was infinitely older than Bishop Ussher and those who followed him had supposed. As A.W. Howitt put it in 1898 in his Presidential Address to the Ethnology and Anthropology Section of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science (1898, pp.745-6),

> In considering all the facts before me bearing upon the question of the origin of the Tasmanians and the Australians, I have been much impressed by the immense periods of time which seem to be essential as one of the elements of any solution of the problem.

Charles Darwin himself had, of course, visited Australia in the course of the voyage of The Beagle, and had taken a great interest in the place of the Aborigines in the development of the species. Darwin was curious that the Aborigines seemed so unaffected in many ways after several years of contact with Europeans. He observed (1986, 6, p.406),

> It is very curious...to see in the midst of a civilised people, a set of harmless savages wandering about without knowing where they shall sleep at night, and gaining their livelihood by hunting in the woods.

It was Darwin's disciple, T.H. Huxley, however, who looked at Aborigine societies in the light of evolutionary theory. In a contribution to Lyell's The Geological Evidences of the Antiquity of Man, Huxley noted resemblances,

not only between the material culture of Aboriginal and prehistoric Europeans, but in their crania. The interest in securing Aborigine skulls for European museums was not merely ghoulish, but represented a serious effort to secure advances in ethnological classification. The German anatomist, H. Klaatsch visited Australia during the 1880s to examine Aborigine skulls and (1907, p.577, cited in Mulvaney, p.69), 'had noted the close similarity existing between the skulls of Australian aboriginals and those of primitive man in Europe, that was first pointed out by Professor Huxley'. Klaatsch also considered that the ways Aborigines climbed trees had been 'the rule amongst the primitive man-like apes'. In a later work (1923, pp.103;108;136), Klaatsch suggested that Aboriginal languages were 'fragments of the primitive speech of man' and that those who spoke it were a 'stationary remnant of primitive humanity'. One of Klaatsch's fellow-speakers at the 1907 congress for the Advancement of Science, W. Ramsay Smith, advanced the view (1907, p.574), that the Aborigines had, more than any other race, 'furnished the largest number of ape-like characters. The more one investigates, the truer does this statement prove to be.'

Anthropologists held similar views to those of anatomists and physiologists. A L.Pitt-Rivers suggested in 1867 (Myres, 1906, p.50) that Aborigines were 'living representatives of our common ancestors' and that they bore the same relationship to prehistoric Europeans as 'the mollusca of recent species to the mollusca of the primary geological period'. Or, as Sir John Lubbock put it (1865, p.336), 'the Van Diemener and the South American are to the antiquary what the opossum and the sloth are to the geologist'. In like vein C.S. Wake wrote in the Journal of the Anthropological Institute (1872, p.83), that Aborigines were 'mere children', who lacked the power of abstract reasoning. 'They represent the

childhood of humanity itself, revealing to us the condition of mankind...not...long after man's first appearance on the earth'.

Pitt-Rivers, like most of his contemporaries, held the view that progress, geological, biological or social, took the form of ever increasing heterogeneity and differentiation. On this basis he classified Aboriginal weapons as (Myres, 1906, p.11), the 'lowest in the scale, because they assimilate most closely to the natural forms'. Spencer's organisation of the Australian Ethnological Collection in the National Museum of Victoria followed Pitt-Rivers' system; in his Guide to the Collection Spencer wrote (1901, p.12) that the Aborigines 'may be regarded as a relic of the early childhood of mankind left stranded...in a low condition of savagery'.

One question which interested nineteenth century anthropologists was very similar to the monogenesis problem debated in earlier generations, (see Chapter 1). On the one hand there seemed to be striking similarities in physical appearance and social customs among widely separated Aboriginal groups, yet some distinctive characteristics were also noted. The possibility that their ancestors might have had origins far from the areas of their sacred sites was a concept entirely alien to Aborigine thought, but for the scientific mind of the late nineteenth century the question of whether human life had developed independently in Australia, which few considered tenable, or whether the ancestors of the Aborigines had entered the continent from elsewhere, and if so where from, had great interest. Furthermore, it was wondered, had there been one original stock of human colonisers, who had later differentiated themselves in various cultural and physical ways, or had there been more than one immigrant grouping? The idea of a zoogeographic barrier between Australasia and Asia, first advanced by

Alfred Wallace, was frequently brought into such discussions. Before 1900 speculations had linked Aborigine languages, customs or physical traits to a range of populations, in India, South East Asia and Melanesia. Lorimer Fison, for example, suggested (1872, p.155) that the similarity between Aborigine and Tamil systems of classificatory kinship might indicate a common ancestry. Mathew's 'Eaglehawk and Crow' hypothesis has been discussed in chapter 4. The effects of isolation of the Australian Aborigines after links with South East Asis had become increasingly difficult to maintain, or between Tasmania and the Australian mainland after their separation, were among the many fascinating questions in which nineteenth century thinkers found deep historical significance.

It was especially for clues on how to solve problems concerning primitive religious beliefs and family structures that social scientists looked to their colleagues with information on Aborigine customs. The principal Australian enquirers, Spencer, Gillen, Lorimer Fison and Alfred Howitt, were greatly influenced by overseas scholars, particularly by the American Lewis Henry Morgan and by the Englishmen Sir James Frazer and E.B. Tylor. Morgan's work among the Iroquois proved an inspiration to the enquiries of the Australians and to the speculations of Frederick Engels. Morgan was particularly interested, because, as he wrote to Howitt and Fison (Mulvaney, 1971, p.295), he considered that they were 'several strata below barbarism into savagism, and are nearer to the primitive condition of man than any other investigator'. Frazer, for his part, encouraged Spencer and Gillen by describing their The Native Tribes of Australia as (1899, p.281) 'a document of priceless value for the understanding of the evolution of human thought and society'.

Engels wrote in 1884 in his Preface to the first edition of his Origin of the Family that (1970, III, p.191) Morgan 'rediscovered in America, in his own way, the materialist conception of history that had been discovered by Marx forty years ago, and in his comparison of barbarism and civilization was led by this conception to the same conclusions, in the main points, as Marx had arrived at'. In the Preface to the fourth German edition Engels spelled out just what he considered Morgan's contribution to be (1970, III, p.201),

> The rediscovery of the original mother-right gens as the stage preliminary to the father-right gens of the civilised peoples has the same significance for the history of primitive society as Darwin's theory of evolution has for biology, and Marx's theory of surplus value for political economy. It enabled Morgan to outline for the first time a history of the family...this opens up a new era in the treatment of the history of primitive society.

Engels followed Morgan in dividing the human past into 'three main epochs, savagery, barbarism and civilisation' and in dividing savagery into a 'lower', a 'middle' and an 'upper' stage. No direct evidence remained, they held, of the lower stage of savagery, which had to be postulated as the transitional stage from ape-like ancestors, but 'the Australasians and many Polynesians are to this day in this middle stage of savagery'. Engels acknowledged his debt to Lorimer Fison for (1970, III p.222) 'the most essential enrichment of our knowledge of group marriage, for he studied this form of the family for years in its classical home, Australia. He found the lowest stage of development among the Australian Negroes of Mount Gambier in South Australia'. Engels did not deplore the sexual relationships of the Aborigines of Mount Gambier, but urged on the contrary that 'Where the European can see only immorality and lawlessness, strict law actually reigns'. Engels' main worry, like that of the Australian anthropologists

from whom Morgan and he gained their information, was that this 'very low and primitive form of group marriage' was 'gradually dying out, the only question being which will first disappear from the scene as a result of European influence - group marriage or the Australian Negroes who indulge in it'. Through Engels, as well as through the orthodox anthropology of the day, the significance of Australian Aborigines as a valuable resource for the study of the primitive marriage customs of the human race as a whole became a matter of interest in many political and scientific circles, but not, so far as it is known, among Aborigines, whose conceptual structure was alien to such speculations, even had they been aware of them.

Scholars and the Australian public believed in the late nineteenth century that, just as the Tasmanian Aborigines had completely vanished, so the mainland Aborigines were also dying races. Tylor worried (Roth, 1890, p.vii) that time was running out for the student of Aboriginal ways and customs,

> Looking at the vestiges of a people so representative of the rudest type of man, anthropologists must join with philanthropists in regretting their unhappy fate...We are now beginning to see what scientific value there would have been in...a minute careful portraiture of their thoughts and customs.

Howitt and Fison wrote (Walker, 1971, p.285) that 'a few years hence an account of the Victorian aborigines may be written on the lines of the celebrated chapter on the Snakes of Ireland - "There are no aborigines in Victoria"'. Anthony Trollope was simply expressing conventional wisdom when, during his tour of Gippsland in 1872, he remarked of the Aborigines 'the race is doomed, and is very quickly encountering its doom.'

Darwin's concept of the 'survival of the fittest' was consciously in

Pitt-Rivers' mind in 1867 when (Myres, 1906, p.54) he referred to 'the law which consigns to destruction all savage races when brought in contact with a civilization', and declared that 'the savage is morally and mentally an unfit insment for the spread of civilization'. The rapidity with which traditional Aborigine societies fell into dissolution meant that it was very rare that a trained observer had much time to study their ways and customs. The study by Spencer and Gillen the Arunta people was perhaps the single most celebrated ethnographic investigation of the century: Durkheim, for example, believed that the Arunta represented the very bottom rung of the social evolutionary ladder, the most basic and primitive human society, preserved by desert isolation from the influence of other ideas and customs. Whether or not Spencer and Gillen had interpreted their data correctly, by the time that Spencer revisited the Arunta thirty years later their lives had been transformed. In Spencer's view they had passed rapidly from the primitive to the decadent without gaining any benefit from contact with a much more advanced culture.

The Significant Post-Contact Past in Aborigine Thought

What of Aborigine thought about their experiences of contact with whites and their ways? In particular how did they try to place the white intruders into their own conceptual structures, and to what in contact experiences became part of the significant past in Aborigine thought? Immediate responses by Aborigines to contact with the newcomers ranged from the welcoming, through the appeasing, to the watchful and wary, and the hostile.

This is true of the animals they introduced, as well as of the newcomers themselves, since contact was often first with them. Many of

these experiences became incorporated into Aborigine lore. G.A. Robinson was a witness of a Tasmanian Aboriginal dance in which the movements of horses were mimed (Plomley, 1966, pp.281-2). Similar mimetic dances in Central and Northern Queensland were described by Reynolds (1978, p.57). Bates (1966, pp.88-9) gave an account of how the landing of Matthew Flinders in King George Sound, Western Australia, in December 1801 entered folk memory. In 1908, or thereabouts, Bates recalled in a letter whe wrote in 1945 (White, 1980, p.35), a very old Aborigine named Nebinyan from near Albany had told her that Flinders and his men were the ghosts of their own dead ancestors, returned from home of the dead, Koorunnup, which is across the sea. His people thought the full dress parade of the Marines to be a Koorannup ceremony and they subsequently made a dance to represent it. Bates wrote,

> He saw the dance as a boy and taught it as a man. He covered his torso with red and put on white pipeclay across the red and did with his club what he had seen his fathers and grandfathers do as the bayonets were exercised.

Memories of conflict and resistance became an important part of oral tradition. In Robinson's words (Plomley, 1966, p.88),

> They have a tradition amongst them that white men have usurped their territory, have driven them into the forests, have killed their game and thus robbed them of their chief subsistence, have ravished their wives and daughters, have murdered and butchered their fellow countrymen; and are wont whilst brooding over these complicated ills in the dense part of the forest, to goad each other on to acts of bloodshed and revenge for the injuries done to their ancestors and the persecution offered to themselves through their white enemies.

Robinson considered their grievances real enough: they have been made 'the dupes of designing men...The natives were the parties who first guided the White Man through the intricacies of their forests, led them to their

Rivers, their springs, and rich pastures, assisted them in keeping their stock...The knowledge of their Country was thus acquired, was turned to account'.

Victories in conflict with Whites became incorporated into mimetic as well as oral traditions. Descriptions by White observers of such celebrations include (Reynolds, 1978, p.62),

> Some of their corroborees have a distinct and well defined plot. One commences with a group of blacks on all fours, representing a mob of cattle feeding...Next, several darkies with their faces pipe-clayed appear; these are the stockmen, who, with shouting and whip cracking round up the cattle. As they are driving them away, a band of dusky warriors approach, and after a terrific encounter kill all the whites.

A similar description from a Queensland station in 1874 related how Aborigines,

> dressed up two effigies of white men and all the warriors present - a great number - after exciting each other with war songs and dances, attacked the effigies with their tomahawks and cut them up in pieces.

Reynolds (1978, p.63) noted that terms used by Aborigines as synonyms for Whites include 'devil, intruder', woman hunter' and 'stinking corpse'. He cited too a frustrated employer who wrote,

> Whatever a white man may do to gain fidelity in his black employees, by kind and just reward, he is baulked and baffled in all his endeavours by the traditions of the past.

Violence between blacks and whites was certainly sufficient to become an important part of the significant past in Aborigine thought. Henry Meyrick, a settler in the Western Port area of Port Phillip District, suggested (Meyrick, 1939, p.137) that 450 Aborigines had already been killed

by whites in that area alone in the few years of white settlement. This and other estimates are unreliable: the possible range for the whole Port Phillip District between 1835 and 1850 extends from 2,000 suggested by Christie (1979) to 400. There is no doubt at all, however, that it is much greater than the number of white deaths at the hands of Aborigines. This figure is much more readily ascertainable, since such 'outrages' were well reported; Nance (1981) calculated precisely 59. On the other hand Nance estimated the number of Aborigines killed by other Aborigines during the same years to be around 200.

Nance's explanation for the far greater numbers of other Aborigines than whites killed by Aborigines links up with a problem in significance in the past in traditional Aborigine thought noted above (pp, 81-2). Powerful and unchallenged traditions made some Aborigine groups kin and others marriageable, but identified others as hostile. Malignancy and sorcery were commonly accepted in Aborigine thought as the ultimate and effective cause of death, so that the sorcerer, not the immediate agent of death, bore the responsibility and had to be pursued so that vengeance could be wrought and the spirit of the dead appeased.

Whites were often incorporated into traditional Aboriginal thought by being classified as dead Aborigines returned to life. William Buckley was regarded in this light (Morgan, 1967, p.21). Escaped convicts in the Moreton Bay area such as John Baker, Samuel Derrington, James Davis and Thomas Pamphlett were all identified (Cilento and Lack, 1959, pp.77-9) as reincarnated forebears and accorded the full respect appropriate to the initiated, with even the correct scarifications being carried out on them, since the original marks had been lost apparently after death. G.G. McCrae

was told by some Mornington Peninsula Aborigines that (1911, p.22) 'they had recognized long-lost relations in the persons of certain of the white settlers.' Nance (1981, p.538) cited the experience of the Protector E.S. Parker, during the 1840s in the Port Phillip District, of being 'literally worshipped' and being told on one occasion to return to the sky, from whence he had come. Similarly the escaped convict George Clark reported (Sydney Gazette, 8 Dec. 1841) that the Kamilaroi people among whom he had lived for five years had treated him as a 'superior being'. Generally, however, even whites taken to be reincarnated Aborigines do not seem to have been attributed by Aborigines with the powers of sorcery as their hereditary Aborigine enemies possessed.

Nance argued (1981, p.538),

> Aborigines continued to attribute deaths among them to Aborigines of hostile tribes, and whites remained outside the inter-tribal feuding. We can thus infer that deaths caused by whites would have been attributed to foreign, hostile Aboriginal tribes.

This inference, which it is hard to test, would help to explain the escalation of violence between Aboriginal groups which Rowley, for example, (1978, p.37) claimed had followed contact with whites, but had not been typical of precontact millenia. Rowley described increased violence among Aborigines as 'largely a symptom of social breakdown resulting from the economic and other effects of white settlement and the effects of the white man's power - and also his example.' Yet reactions to deaths from diseases introduced by whites may, Nance argued, have contributed more than direct actions by whites and even more than clashes arising from Aborigine folk-movements to an unprecedented scale to increased violence among Aborigines. The Protector of the Melbourne Aborigines, William Thomas,

wrote (Nance, 198 , p.537) that Mynide, a powerful snake who served Pund-jel, the creator-God,

> is known to all tribes, and all tribes are known to him; and when any tribe is very wicked, or when any tribe fails to overtake and kill wild blackfellows, then Pund-jel makes Myndie give them diseases, or kill them as he sees fit.

When the Aborigines from the Goulburn district were incensed by the seizure and imprisonment of nine of their men, they determined, so Parker reported to Robinson on the basis of what some Aborigines from Loddon had told him, to revenge themselves 'by bringing the "Mindye", and practising the "wooreet" upon all the black fellows who are in amity with the whites'. The higher incidence of deaths at the hands of Aborigines of dark skinned newcomers than white was offered by Nance as evidence that only blacks were considered to possess the powers of sorcery needed to cause major harm, so that non-white convicts and settlers were especially liable to be singled out as objects of vengeance by Aborigines.

As well as hostility and resistance towards Whites, and as well as mistaken attribution to other Aborigines of the actions of Whites, co-operation with Whites was also common among Aborigines. Native Police, Aborigines loyal to explorers, Aborigine women who co-habited with or married Whites and whose children became absorbed into the general population, also in their different ways became part of Aborigine thinking about the significant past. The title of Vivienne Rae Ellis's book Trucanini: queen or traitor indicates of diversity of judgement which have been passed on Aborigines who collaborated with Whites. Ellis, for example, is concerned to prosecute the Tasmanian Whites for exterminating the

Tasmanian Aborigines, whereas Lyndall Ryan, whose The Aboriginal Tasmanians was published in the same year, 1981, as Ellis's book on Trucanini, condemns the Tasmanian Whites for having falsely claimed that the Aborigines of Tasmania were exterminated. On the general question of Aborigine resistance to White occupation, two apparently incompatible positions have been taken up by contemporary historians who perceive themselves as defenders of past and present Aborigines. One is that there were very few attacks by Blacks on Whites, but that the latter magnified such as there were in order to justify their own gratuitous violence as reprisals; the second is that there were many such attacks, so that Aborigines should not be accused of having surrendered their ancient lands tamely.

Whatever the positions of twentieth century historians may be, it seems certain that few Aborigines in any part of Australia had at the end of the nineteenth century good reasons for looking back at the post-Contact past with any satisfaction. One of the first recorded expressions of loss and pathos was that of Maoroo soon after the arrival of the First Fleet. In the version offered by Bonwick (1873, p.86). Maoroo said,

> ...This all my country - nice country. My father chief long time ago, now I chief; water all pretty. When I little fellow, plenty blackfellow - plenty gin - plenty piccaninny - great corrobory - plenty fight. Ah! all gone now, all gone; only me left to walk about.

Bonwick quoted the Port Phillip Bay Aborigine Derrimutt as in similar vein pointing down the main street of Melbourne (Ibid),

> All this mine - all along here Derrimutt's once; no matter now, very soon tumble down (die)'. When Derrimutt was asked about his children, he replied: 'Why me have lubra, why me have pickininny? You have all this place; no good have lubra - no good have children me, me tumble down, die very soon.

William Thomas told George Robinson, his superior officer in the Port Phillip Protectorate, in 1839, that the Goulburn Aborigines thought (Nance, 1981, p.543), 'Plenty White Men set down, Black fellows no sulky. Plenty Black fellow set down and White man Sulky. No good that - Long time ago before White Man came Goldborn Black Fellow sit down here. Why Gago now?'. Thomas's colleague, Dredge, noted in his diary in 1840 (Nance, 1981, p.546) that an Aborigine, Billy Hamilton, had just described to him, 'as well as he could, the dismay he and other blacks experienced when they first saw white men', which must, Dredge thought, have been Mitchell's party crossing the Goulburn on their way back to the east. Thomas himself reported Billy Hamilton 'while holding me by the hand' as saying 'Poor Blackfellow me now, no like long time ago before white Man come here. No Tomahawk. No Spear me now. Plenty hungry poor Blackfellows now.'

Summary

In general the efforts of governors and their officials, and of churches and missionaries, to promote among Aborigines elements of British law and Christian belief met with very little success. In most cases their good faith cannot be seriously challenged, while their view that progress would be represented by Aborigines adopting the best of British ways, rather than of the British adopting even the best of Aborigine ways, was not racist or inegalitarian. It cannot be denied that a large number of whites, whether convicts or free settlers, had no interest in sharing laws and beliefs with the Aborigines, whom they regarded as an obstacle to the progress of civilization and of their own chances to prosper. The deeper difficulty then was and in terms of historical judgement still is, whether any colonizing policy could have been adopted which might have had less damaging effects on Aboriginal societies.

In 1849 the Committee on the Aborigines and Protectorates advised the Commons to abolish the Port Phillip Protectorates set up a decade earlier, but added pessimistically that they were,

> unable to recommend any other as a substitute. They cannot express any sanguine hopes as to the future of the adult population; and the education of the children is accompanied by difficulties admitted by all acquainted with the subject, but which none have been able to surmount.

Alexander Harris in 1847 expressed a widely held viewpoint clearly (1964, pp.214-5),

> If we want a league of peace on equal grounds, really there is no road to it but that we give up their land and forsake their country; for this and only this is the true source of the aggravation. It is the white man at large, not the individual, upon whom their enmity is pointed...The blacks cannot be conciliated unless by giving up their country.

By the end of the nineteenth century no constructive solution had been found to the 'difficulties' alluded to by the Commons Committee in 1849, nor had Aborigines been conciliated by any of the various methods employed, which had not, of course, included the withdrawal of the non-Aboriginal population. There was not perceived to be too much of an 'Aborigine problem' in the colonial capital cities, mainly because it was assumed that Aborigine numbers were declining rapidly.

Governor Phillip and his successors had tried to find qualities in Aborigine ways which they could admire, but it was only in hunting, food-gathering, tracking and other aspects of bushcraft that they found such admirable characteristics. Yet these virtues were to a large extent doomed by the white incursion, not only because land was appropriated, not only

because Aborigine resistance to white diseases was low, not only because traditional relationships between and within Aboriginal groups were severely dislocated, but because the contrast between Aborigine and the new technologies was so vast as to undermine Aborigine confidence in the value of the material basis of their ancestral society. Their belief system could survive much more readily, since the superiority of Christianity, or of the Common Law, was by no means as obvious as was that of guns, ships, and food and drink in apparently endless abundance.

The most positive aspects of traditional Aborigine thought and social organization proved very fragile, often, although by no means always, collapsing within a generation of contact. The low opinion of the average white of Aborigine custom was confirmed by the scholarly judgement of the anthropologists, which scientifically placed Aborigines as the lowest level of human achievement. The extension of the time span of the human race in general and of the Aboriginal occupation of Australia in particular, which took place during the nineteenth century, did not help to raise the Aborigine image, since it was wondered why they had remained arrested in time, whereas the ancestors of other peoples had advanced from tribalism and savagery generations ago.

The Aborigines could not be conceded any advances in control over their environment, or in more abstract thought. The absence of elaborate social hierarchy in Aboriginal societies had some attraction for Australian radicals, but this was diminished by knowledge of the severe control thought to be exercised by the older men over the younger, and by the men over the women. Freedom of a sort the Aborigines were sometimes allowed to have possessed, but it had been, it seemed, of a character few of the newcomers

sought, even those who had endured the severest penal servitude. The Hobbesian picture of primitive life as short, nasty and brutish appeared to be confirmed by knowledge of Aborigine life; little of their history and traditions, even had it been available to the new Australians, seemed to be a conceivable part of a valued and usable past.

Chapter Eight

The significant past in colonial Anglican thought

Background and Early Days

During the early years of British settlement in Australia the Church of England was considerably affected by the Methodist and Evangelical Revivals. Organisational results of the missionary zeal felt by many Evangelicals included the setting up in 1799 of the Church Missionary Society, to supplement the work of the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) and of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), and of the Religious Tract Society, forerunner of the British and Foreign Bible Society, founded in 1804. William Wilberforce and other leaders of the 'Clapham Sect' were instrumental in persuading William Pitt to send the Reverend Richard Johnson as chaplain to the first convict fleet and to the convict colony, and later to send out the Reverend Samuel Marsden as assistant chaplain. Concern with the souls of the convicts or of the native populations likely to be encountered was not high among the priorities of the British Government in its instructions to and support for Governor Phillip. No official prayers or thanksgivings were offered when the First Fleet reached shore, nor did Johnson play an important part in the ceremony a month later when Phillip took formal possession in the name of the Crown. Inevitably, however, the First Fleet took with it religious beliefs and legal precedents about church organization, indifferent to such matters as many of the early arrivals may have been.

Phillip's oath of office naturally included a pledge to maintain 'the succession of the Crown in the heirs of the late Princess Sophia being Protestants, and for extinguishing the hopes of the pretended Prince of

Wales and his open and secret abettors'. Prince Charles Edward Stuart had died and Jacobitism long ceased to be a significant political danger when Phillip began his duties, but the Governor's Instructions enjoined on him (HRA, 1, p.14) to 'enforce a due observance of religion and good order among the inhabitants of the new settlement, and that you do take such steps for the due celebration of publick worship as circumstances will permit'. Just what constituted what was due and how circumstances were to be interpreted were not elaborated and scarcely could be. Little immediate difficulty arose from lack of definition, since early Governors valued religion for its potential contribution to good order, but discouraged religious zeal, let alone controversy. In any case very little religious enthusiasm was manifest among convicts or military; it was not until 1796 that a temporary church was built, close to the Governor's residence at Parramatta (Collins, 1975, I, p. 492-3), and not until 1798 that the foundations of a permanent church were laid in Sydney.

Establishment and Royal Supremacy

Although no attempt at any definitive or authoritative statement seems to have been made in Westminster or Whitehall on the matter before the establishment in New South Wales of the Church and Schools Corporation in 1825, the various Secretaries of State and Governors seem simply to have taken for granted that the Church of England as by law established in England itself had been extended to or established in Australia too. They acted as though the ecclesiastical law of England operated as fully as circumstances permitted in New South Wales and in Van Diemen's Land. In a legal action by Samuel Marsden against James Bradley, an ex-convict schoolmaster, on a charge of having 'seduced the male and female children out of the Public School at Parramatta', Marsden asked whether it were

'proper according to the Established Laws of the Church or any person to teach in Government Public Schools without the sanction of the Resident Chaplain, either here or in England', the reply was that it was improper (Fogarty, 1959, I, p.11). The Preamble to the Instructions to Governor Darling which established the short-lived Church and School Corporation only made explicit what had always been assumed,

> Whereas, it is necessary that sufficient provision should be made for the establishment and support within our said Territory of the Protestant Reformed Religion as by law established in England and Ireland and for the education of youth in the discipline, and according to the principles of the United Church of England and Ireland....

The granting of government funds to the Roman Catholic Church in 1819 for the maintenance of two priests in New South Wales, and to the Presbyterian Church for building a chapel and for Dr Lang's stipend, in no way jeopardized the special status of the Church of England, any more than the widespread provision in Britain to non-established churches for educational expenditure threatened the continuation of establishment there.

It seems to have been assumed, rather than explicitly proclaimed, that New South Wales was ecclesiastically an outpost of England rather than of Great Britain. When Governor Phillip issued Instructions to Philip Gidley King (HRA, I,I, p.34) that he should 'cause the prayers of the Church of England to be read with all due solemnity every Sunday, and...to enforce a due observance of religion and good order', there was no attempt to ascertain whether or not there might be Scottish Presbyterians on Norfolk Island, even though Presbyterianism was the established religion of Scotland, any more than there was concern for any different needs of Roman Catholics, Protestant Dissenters or non-Christians. The useful legal device that the monarch was Anglican when in England, Wales and Ireland,

but Presbyterian when in Scotland, could not be transplanted to Australia, where in any case, as Governor Gipps put it in 1839 (HRA, I, XIX, p.79), 'individuals of different religious denominations are more separated and dispersed here than they are perhaps anywhere else'.

The institution of the Church and School Corporation coincided with rising opposition in Britain to forms of religious disability, and with the campaigns which led in 1828-9 to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts and to the Catholic Relief Act. It was in response to attacks on alleged Anglican privilege in the Australian colonies that attempts were made to define more precisely what the status of the Church of England had been and was in Australia, as well as to establish what it ought to be. One of the most extensive defences of the orthodox Anglican position was made in 1840 by Mr Justice William Westbrooke Burton, a judge in the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Burton argued (1840,p.43),

> Ever since the establishment of the Church in England, and the union of the kingdom under one sovereign head, the Church of England has existed as the national church; at first free and independent, then, for a time, overwhelmed by corruptions of foreign growth but again asserting and maintaining the independence of her foundation and the purity of her faith; and as such was by force of law, before the Statute 9 George IV c. 83 and by the express terms of the Statute the Established Church of the Colony.
> It would follow indeed without the aid of a declaratory statute of the Imperial Parliament but as a necessary consequence in the absence of any statute to the contrary that on the settlement of a country under the circumstances under which New South Wales was settled, the fundamental laws of England would become the laws of the new colony; and by force of one of those fundamental laws the Established Church of England became as such the Established Church of the colony.

Burton went on to claim (1840, p. 47) that 'the obligations of the Coronation Oath extend to every part of the Queen's dominions' and require the Sovereign to act 'to the utmost of his or her power to maintain the

laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the protestant reformed religion established by law'. His conclusion was that 'the maintenance and support of the protestant reformed religion would be by law, in the colony of New South Wales, as equally within the obligations of the Coronation Oath and the provisions of the Bill of Rights as the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law in England'. In 1840 Burton was fighting a losing battle to reverse the effects of Governor Bourke's Church Act of 1836 (7 William IV No.3), which had brought to a final end the surviving parts of the Church and School Corporation Act and ended any constitutional advantage of the Church of England, let alone its status as the Established Church. Burton and Bishop Broughton were utterly unsuccessful in their attempts to restore to the Church of England in Australia any advantages of establishment. Nonetheless the historical ties with the Church of England in England itself meant that the history of that Church and in particular of its relationships with the Crown continued for several decades to be of great concern for Australian Anglicanism. In particular the implications of the Statute 9 George IV c.83 for the Anglican Church in Australia proved very thorny.

The relationship between the Church of England and the Crown, in the persons of successive Governors, was a principal theme in early colonial history before the special position of that church was brought to an end. Johnson and Marsden showed considerable energy in seeking to foster the historical traditions of their church and to celebrate national achievements, past and present. They celebrated the triumphs of Nelson (Collins, 1975,2, p.201) and reminded their congregations of past English heroes, as well as telling the stories of patriarchs, prophets, apostles and the early Church. Johnson's was the first book written by a resident

of Australia, a religious tract which does not appear to have affected his flock very much, but which earned praise in the London Evangelical Magazine (Bonwick, 1870, p.6) that 'his language resembles that of the first century rather than that of the eighteenth'. His introduction of orange cultivation seemed more significant to many of his flock than his piety or historical lore. Lieutenant-General Grose accused Johnson of being 'one of the people called Methodists' and of being 'a very troublesome, discontented character' (HRA, I, I, p.451).

Marsden suffered much more than Johnson from the displeasure of Governors, especially after 1814 when he refused Macquarie's express command to read out in church a government notice. Macquarie took it upon himself to try to prevent Marsden from using Dr Goode's version of the Psalms in services, since, he assured Earl Bathurst, then Colonial Secretary, (HRA I,VIII, pp336-7) 'such innovations being neither justifiable by necessity, nor by that obedience to the religious establishment of this colony, which is alike his and your duty to uphold'. Whether the first Anglican clergy were solely military chaplains and thus legally subject to full control by the Governor, or chaplains to the entire settlement entitled to some of the independence from the civil authority which their precedessors and contemporaries enjoyed in England, was frequently in dispute. Marsden's unwillingness in his capacity as a magistrate to follow Macquarie's every wish created much dispute between them.

Greater clarity about the status of the Anglican clergy seemed to be created by the Letters Patent of 1824 which established the archdeaconry of New South Wales, under the spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the

Bishop of Calcutta 'according to the ecclesiastical laws of this Realm' (i.e. of England). The archdeacon, Thomas Hobbes Scott and William Grant Polding being the two clergymen who held the office, was to be the bishop's commissary and to administer the ecclesiastical laws, a task in which he was entitled to the assistance of all governors, judges and justices. The Letters Patent gave the Archdeacon exceptionally wide powers over the Anglican clergy, since the Governor was to require 'all the clergy of the established church and other of his Majesty's subjects to yield all due canonical obedience to the Archdeacon'. The archdeacon was to exercise all the duties and privileges of an English rector, but the whole colony was under his jurisdiction, although the Supreme Court of New South Wales was given 'such and the like jurisdiction and power of interfering by writ of Prohibition or mandamus subject to the same laws... exercised by our Court of King's Bench at Westminster in regard to proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts of England'.

The archdeacon was invested by the Legislative Council of New South Wales, itself set up by the Imperial Parliament in 1823 through the Judicature Act of New South Wales, with authority over the registration of births, marriages and deaths, including those of non-Anglicans, and with a veto over the granting of licences to publicans. These powers were short-lived however and the wider authority implicit in the Letters Patent was challenged as soon as Archdeacon Scott sought to exercise it, remaining in effect a dead letter, despite his and Broughton's energetic efforts to give it life.

Some of the problems in the way of the smooth application of the apparent intent of the Letters Patent concerned, as had many similar

earlier English cases, the ambiguity between what constituted a common law as against a canon law offence if a clergyman was the accused. A good example of this ambiguity arose in 1836 in Tasmania soon after Broughton was consecrated as Bishop of Australia, when the Reverend William Bedford was charged by Lieutenant-Governor Arthur with having made false returns in connection with the school in his parish. Arthur accused Broughton of seeking to revive benefit of clergy, while the Bishop accused the Lieutenant-Governor of establishing a Star Chamber to conduct secret trials (Shaw, 1978, p.119). Broughton argued that the proceedings against Bedford were 'subversive of the just rights of my Bishopric, and irreconcilable with the provisions of his late Majesty's Letters Patent' and constituted 'fatally interfering with the ancient and established constitution of the Church' (Broughton to Glenelg, 12 Dec.1837:P.P. Dispatch 133). Broughton was defeated on these questions both in Tasmania and in New South Wales. In 1846 in his Argument in Defence of Ecclesiastical Discipline in New South Wales Broughton cited Article 26 of the Thirty-Nine Articles and 6 and 7 Victoria c.35, as well as I Timothy, the Ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer and the Canons of 1604, but made no headway. Broughton's contention, that 25 Henry VIII c.19 'appoints that archbishops and bishops, having renounced papal authority, should proceed in the exercise of the episcopal office in the same manner as their predecessors had done', brought on his head the derision of Lang and Lowe, but failed to provide firmer grounds for his exercise of the authority possessed by Anglican bishops in England itself. It was especially galling that the Reverend John Duffus, when accused by Broughton on conduct unbecoming a clergyman should reply in August 1847 (Border, 1962,p.145),

> I therefore beg respectfully to protest against the arbitrary application of the English Act...to this colony. This Your Lordship will understand to be a protest made upon the general

> principle that English laws, especially ecclesiastical, cannot by mere virtue of their being parliamentary enactments be always applied to the British dependencies. "Colonists do not carry with them the jurisdiction of the spiritual courts to their plantations" (Blackstone); nor can Letters Patent of the Queen either enact such laws ecclesiastical for a colony, or institute a spiritual court in it.

Francis Russell Nixon also found very soon after he became the first Bishop of Tasmania some ticklish immediate problems about the control of 'Religious Instructors', appointed especially for the spiritual needs of convicts, which raised fundamental questions of deep historical significance. Sir Eardly Wilmot, the Lieutenant-Governor, with the support of Lord Stanley and then Lord Grey, as Colonial Secretaries in London, insisted on exercising control over the appointment, dismissal and duties of these Instructors or 'convict chaplains' as they became known and over the Supintentend of Convict Chaplains, a post offered to Nixon's own Archdeacon, the Reverend William Marriott. Mrs. Nixon said in a letter to her father in England (Border, 1962, p.115),

> My husband protests against this, as utterly destructive of his power of protecting the clergy against capricious aggression, and will not, without serious remonstrance and something more, if need be, be instrumental in handing over to laymen - who may not even be members of the Church - an authority which has never been conceded to or claimed by any Bishop at any period of the Church's history.

Bishop Nixon himself protested in 1846 in his Primary Visitation Charge to his clergy (Border, 1962,p.117) that the Government's policy 'strikes at the root of our independence, freedom of action and of the privileges of the whole colonial church'. The position was not supported however by the Archbishop of Canterbury, on whose intervention Nixon and Broughton had counted.

By 1850 the majority of Anglican bishops in Australia had come to view

the exercise of the Royal Supremacy as an hindrance rather than a help. Broughton argued (SMH, 15 Apr.1852) that 'in the colonial portion of the church the crown does not strive in support of the church', so that 'one scarcely can think it equitable to retain over the colonial church a supremacy'. He warned Gladstone, then Colonial Secretary, that 'the time may not be remote when the crown must be, if it be not even now, disqualified from the exercise of such a function in the colonies' (Shaw,1978,p.252). Among the historical precedents which Broughton and Bishop William Tyrrell of Newcastle came to regard as a serious handicap to the Anglican Church in Australia was the Submission of the Clergy (25 Henry VIII, c.19), by which no synod or convocation of the English clergy could take place without royal permission. Whereas during the 1830s Broughton had argued for the widest application of English ecclesiastical law to the Australian colonies, he came instead to urge that 9 George IV, c.83 had enacted for the Australian colonies only those English laws which could then have had immediate application and that these could not include the Henrican limitations on synods and convocations.

Broughton and Tyrrell agonized over 'whether Henry VIII did not exact from the Clergy by this Act of Submission a surrender of the just rights of the Church; whether this Act, instead of restoring to the King the ancient prerogative of the Crown, did not in reality wrest from the Clergy a right which they never ought to have resigned' (Boodle, 1881,p.133). They recalled that 'the great lawyers, Lord Coke and Judge Foster, have argued the case most powerfully in favour of the King's prerogative; the great Divines, Bishop Gibson and Bishop Stillingfleet, have argued certainly as powerfully in favour of the rights of the Church'. The experiences of the episcopalian churches in the United States after 1776 were also closely

studied for precedents and lessons they might render.

The Gorham Judgement of 1850 was for all the Australian bishops, apart from Charles Perry of Melbourne, a bitter blow, the unacceptable face of Erastianism. Perry was sympathetic to Gorham's view that belief in the baptismal regeneration of infants was not a necessary part of Anglican doctrine. Perry suggested that his fellow bishops sought the benefits of state support and establishment, but were unwilling to accept the authority and sanctions of the state in cases which went against them. He put the cast to Broughton in 1851 that (Robin, 1967,p.68),

> The powers which we have declared to be required for the self-government of the Church here can only be - I mean, practically, not theoretically, - can only be granted to us by an Act of Parliament. If this be 'Erastianism', it belongs to the present constitution of our Church and I do not see that any good end can be attained by attempting to veil it over. We cannot but acknowledge the power of Parliament to legislate for our Church, and the practical necessity of its doing so, in order to effect any change in our Constitution.

When Nixon refused to employ in Tasmania any clergy sharing Gorham's views, despite the decision of the Judical Committee of the Privy Council in his favour, Perry wrote to him in 1852 (Robin, 1967,pp.68-9),

> What were the exact views of Mr. Gorham, I regard as of little importance to the Church. The judges in his cause may or may not, have formed a correct decision respecting them, but I would rather trust in their decision than in the private judgement of any other person. As a Bishop of the Church of England, you are as much bound by that judgement as I should have been bound by the decision of Sir Herbert Jenner Fust (also a layman) if there had been no appeal against it. You may be dissatisfied with the legal constitution of our Church, and you may agitate for its reformation, or you may secede from it in consequence, but so long as you continue to hold office in it you are bound both before God and before man, to adopt the decisions of its duly constituted Ecclesiastical Tribunal ... I do not hesitate therefore to say that you are maintaining your own private judgement upon the law of our Church, in opposition to the authoritative decisions of the highest legally recognized Ecclesiastical Tribunal.

Bishop Tyrrell wrote in his diary in 1850 (Boodle, 1881,p.82) after conversations 'about some of the subjects which have caused so much dissension in the Church, as Baptismal Regeneration, Absolution, and other points which are so much understood. Oh that the members of our Church would carefully seek out what is the truth, and realise it and practise it!' It was however the Crown in Parliament which had the authority to declare what such truths might be for the Anglican Church in Australia, and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which could decide between conflicting conceptions of the truth.

Tyrrell was among the first of the Anglican bishops after Broughton's death to seek a decisive break with the Erastian past. Tyrrell said in 1865 (Boodle, 1881,p.202), that the Church is 'a voluntary Society .... in former times, even in England, those who would not attend the services of the National Church might have to endure penalties or imprisonment. Separation was then a crime, an offence against the laws of the land. Happily, in these our days ... it is not so'. He went on to tell his Diocesan Conference (Boodle, 1881, p.203), 'It is well to remember that our Church in this Colony, because unestablished, is happily free from many of the restraints which might have fettered her in the exercise of her spiritual functions'. Tyrrell expressed great satisfaction that the Anglican Church in Australia 'claims no alliance with the State, will not be destroyed by these recent judgments of the Privy Council .. esteems her freedom from the ecclesiastical laws of England a great gain, and would consider the discontinuance of its Bishop's Letters Patent no serious loss'.

This position was in complete contrast to that advanced by Scott and

Broughton before 1850, but it sensibly took into account the lack of any special provision by the Crown for Australian Anglicanism, the likely permanence of this effective disestablishment, and the advantages to be gained in this new situation of freedom of action. Belief in the possibility of retaining established status in the New South Wales and Tasmania was further weakened by the experiences of the Church of England in South Australia. When the Bill 'to erect South Australia into a British Province' was introduced in Westminster in 1834 it included no provision for state financial support for religion. The final Act contained a 'chaplaincy clause' authorizing the Crown to appoint 'Chaplains and Clergymen of the Established Church of England or Scotland' (Pike, 1957, pp.115-9; Howell, 1985, pp.25 ff.), but even shared establishment with the Church of Scotland was to be a dead letter. Most of the promoters of the colony of South Australia were Dissenters, such as the Baptist George Fife Angas, who advised J.H. Fisher, the Resident Commissioner in 1837 (Hilliard, 1986, p.4),

> Above all things avoid the establishment of any particular sect in Religion!...The Episcopalian system of the Church of England will best flourish when it sets the brightest and noblest example of humility, piety and benevolence. It is sound in Doctrine and needs not the puny arm of man to prop it up. If it looks to and depends only upon God it must prosper but if it resorts to earthly power, confiscation, taxation, and constraint of men's consciences or punishment of any kind for nonconformity, then its Glory has departed and it will infallibly decline by a slow but sure progress.

The attempts of the first Bishop of Adelaide, Augustus Short, to oppose the use by the Catholic Bishop Murphy of the title of Bishop of Adelaide as contrary to the laws of England were even less successful than the corresponding efforts of Broughton in Sydney. Dr Short feared after the first general election of a Legislative Council in South Australia in 1851

that English traditions in both church and state were in grave danger, since (Hilliard, 1985, p.19) the majority of its members,

> have been returned by a party ultra-republican in Religion and Politics, men who emigrated from England with embittered political and religious feelings, and who seek to assimilate this Colony in habits and notions to the United States.

The Bishop underestimated the influence of the English past on his fellow colonists, but the ancient connection between Church and State certainly could not be reproduced in South Australia or be sustained in the other Australian colonies. Short was vigorous himself in fostering affection for the Mother Country, giving public lectures on Shakespeare and on Oliver Cromwell, as well as his sermons.

Fears of the penalties of a Praemunire under the terms of the 1532 Submission of the English clergy inhibited for some time the establishment in Australian dioceses or provinces of synods in which problems could be resolved without fear of any breach of English statutes or ecclesiastical canons. Once these fears were overcome however, the precedents of the English Church loomed large in discussions about the form which such synods should take, particularly the status of the laity and the authority of the bishops.

If synods were to be held, were there to be any limitations on their authority over doctrine and, if there were to be such limits, who should determine when they had been breached: Canterbury? Westminster? a colonial legislature? If there were no limits, might the Thirty-Nine Articles or the Book of Common Prayer themselves be amended or scrapped? Much historical research went into deliberations on these and related questions.

Sir William Martin, for example, advised Bishop Tyrrell (Boodle, 1881, pp.213-4), in respect of suggested limitations on the powers of the Provincial Body envisaged,

> Such, certainly, has never been the jurisdiction of Provincial Synods in England; not in the old time, as may be seen in Johnson's 'English Canons'; nor in more recent times, as may be seen by the Canons of 1603. Such bodies always exercised as of right, a general jurisdiction extending from the greatest to the smallest matters. Every such body was the Parliament, in matters purely ecclesiastical, of the Province.
> If, in any part of the Christian Church, the contrary principle might have been expected to show itself, it would be in the United States of America ... But even there, with the plan of the new Commonwealth before their eyes, that plan was deliberately rejected by the Churchmen: and the Old English or Catholic principle was asserted ... There is no excuse for introducing this novelty among Churchmen, all our institutions at home and in the Colonies being founded on the contrary principle.

Sir William Martin sought to use the supposed practice of the early Christian Churches against the alliance between Church and State which Anglicans in England and Australia had until so recently been endeavouring to sustain (Boodle, 1881,p.213),

> What do these our Erastian friends think of the Church of the first three centuries? How incomplete a Church it must seem to them! Yet that Church achieved such a victory as has never been achieved since.

Tyrrell argued in 1866 for full independence from the Crown and from Canterbury, maintaining (Boodle (1881, pp.216-8) that 'any application to the Archbishop of Canterbury for their Mission would seem to be unnecessary and inconvenient', that 'there should be no appeal, in the accurate sense of the word to the Civil Courts, and thence to the Privy Council', that 'appeal to England from these Colonial Church Tribunals would, in my opinion, prove to be impunity to the rich and reckless and a denial of justice to the prudent poor', and that 'with respect to the Royal Supremacy as acknowledged by the Church of England, this, as referring only to an

established Church, seems to have ceased in the Colonies by the action of the Crown through its responsible advisers'. Tyrrell went even further in 1868 (Boodle, 1881, p.234) and stated 'I do not believe that I have any authority in my particular Diocese from the Queen's Letters Patent, but from the mutual consent of myself and my Clergy, shown by their acceptance of my license'. Like Sir William Martin, Bishop Tyrrell used early Christian history as a basis for the independence of the Anglican episcopate in Australia from control from Canterbury or London. He told a Diocesan Synod in 1872 (Boodle, 1881, p.255) that in the early Church,

> the Patriarch was consecrated, not by another Patriarch, but by the Bishops of his own Patriarchate ... Thus the 39th Canon of the Synod of Trullus, held at Constantinople A.D.683, directs 'that the Metropolitan be ordained by his own Bishops'. It is quite idle to call the Archbishop of Canterbury a Patriarch, on the ground that centuries ago he was twice addressed by that title in complimentary letters.

The early Christian Church was appealed to for many purposes, often for conflicting ones. Broughton, who was strongly influenced by the Tractarian movement, was as concerned as his episcopal rival John Bede Polding to base his authority on Apostolic Succession; each of them initially called upon the ancient canon which proclaimed that 'there can neither be two Metropolitans of one Province or two Bishops in one diocese', although enforced co-existence led their successors to abandon as vain any further attempts to impugn the titular claims of the other. A more ecumenical reference to the early Church was made by Broughton after he had spent several pleasant days in 1842 with George Augustus Selwyn, who was on his way to take up duty as the pioneer Bishop of New Zealand. Broughton said in his farewell sermon (Sydney Herald, 21 May),

> We have renewed, I sensibly feel, the example of episcopal union which attracted the reverential notice of the yet untainted church when Anicetus and Polycarp, bishops like ourselves, worshipped at the same altar.

Bishop Perry found in his studies of the early Church particular support for his views on the need for greater lay initiative in his diocese. In his pastoral charge to his clergy in 1852 he argued (Robin, 1967, p.153),

> the Christian minister, although he is called a priest, whereby, as it would seem, nothing more than presbyter is intended ... does not stand between God and the people. His office is that of an ambassador for Christ, and a steward of the mysteries of God; and it corresponds rather with that of the prophets, than with that of the priests among the ancient Israelites.

What all the bishops agreed upon was that the failure of successive governments to give any special consideration to Anglican claims to be the national or established church of Australia must force a fundamental rethinking of the significance of historical precedents.

Doctrine and liturgy

The storms which disturbed the Church of England during the nineteenth century blew strongly among Australian Anglicans. Relationships between Church and State, and between clergy and laity, were part of a wider and deeper turmoil about the nature and essence of the Church of England, in which historical disputes were rarely absent. William Grant Broughton believed that he was simply following in the footsteps of Hooker and Andrewes along a *via media* between the errors of Rome and Geneva, avoiding sectarianism and based firmly on a true apostolic succession and, he held until his last years of life, on the law of the land. On his Primary Visitation of his diocese as Archdeacon in 1829 Broughton urged his clergy to 'abide close by the spirit of the Apostles and the views of the Reformers', a conjunction he found wholly harmonious. Broughton's library contained many volumes of the Early Fathers, mainly in volumes donated

through the initiatives of his friend the Reverend Edward Coleridge in Oxford.

On occasion the apparent strength of the danger from Rome made Broughton relatively favourable to united action with Presbyterians and Dissenters. In 1836, for example, he wrote to Lieutenant-Governor Arthur to explain his support for the recently formed Protestant Association, typically using a seventeenth century analogy (Shaw, 1978, p.109),

> The danger being I think not less close and obvious than it was in the reign of James the Second, I took myself therefore the bold and perhaps hazardous resolution of setting myself at the head of the "Protestant Association", as it was termed.

More characteristically, however, Broughton was concerned to emphasise what was distinctive in the doctrines and liturgy of the Church of England, rather than to seek common ground in a 'general Protestantism'. His main concern in 1836 in the formation of the Protestant Association was to resist the Irish System, or any comparable school system, which had the effect (note from Broughton to Bourke enclosed in Bourke to Glenelg, 8 August, 1836, HRA, I, XVIII, pp.472-3) of 'interdicting either wholly or in part the use of the Holy Scriptures according to the Authorised Version, and of prayer in which the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity may be unequivocally acknowledged or implied'. Broughton's principal schooling had been in King's School, Canterbury, which exerted on him an influence he frequently acknowledged in later life (viz. SMH, 26 April, 1851). At Cambridge he was a member of Pembroke College, which had produced Nicholas Ridley, Archbishop Whitgift and Lancelot Andrewes, and where, particularly from Herbert Marsh, he imbibed the confident highchurchmanship which he never lost. Broughton was a genuine scholar, well versed in the latest biblical criticism of leading German theologians, and was by no means a

religious hack. He wrote an important essay on the authorship of the Eikon Basilika, which disappointed his fellow Tories and comforted the Whigs (whom in more partisan mood he labelled as 'pertinacious and vengeful when thwarted') by concluding that Bishop Gaden and not Charles I was its author. Broughton sympathised with many of Laud's opinions, but in his diary Broughton criticised him for engaging in civil government over and above the strict call of episcopal duty; as Archdeacon of Sydney, Broughton was willing to incur Governor Darling's deep displeasure by declining to attend meetings of the Executive Council which reviewed capital cases. Broughton could then be critical of elements of the tradition in which he was firmly placed, but he was entirely unwilling to permit that tradition to be diluted into insignificance.

Broughton had a tactical need to protect himself against charges that he and other Anglicans with Tractarian sympathies were crypto-Romanists, especially after the conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1848 of two of his clergy, Robert Sconce and T.C. Makinson. There was in any case little positive correlation between 'High' Anglican claims for the apostolic succession and for establishment on the one hand and Romeward leanings on the other. Broughton's vigorous defence of Anglican claims against Polding did not save him however from strong attacks from the other flank. John Dunmore Lang's The Colonist (29 September, 1838) attacked Broughton's advocacy of 'the sublime and papistical nonsense of apostolic succession'. Robert Lowe's Atlas, despite Lowe's membership of the Church of England, frequently published attacks on Broughton, including caricatures of him as Loyola advising Governor Gipps, as Julius II leading armed forces against Squatters, and as Cromwell giving thanks to God for the rout of his enemies (5, 19 and 26 July, 1845; 25 April; 18 July, 1846). The Atlas also

compared Broughton to Gregory VII and to Archbishop Laud. Richard Sadleir, a Liverpool layman, somewhat anachronistically compared himself to John Huss and Broughton to a would-be Counter-Reformation Pope seeking to persecute him (Shaw, 1978, p.259). Classical and Christian historical analogies were frequently combined, as when The Atlas commented on Ward's decision to follow John Henry Newman into the Roman Catholic Church (3 January, 1846),

> Reverend W.H. Ward's secession to the Church of Rome - a very lengthy letter has been addressed by Mr Ward to the editor of the Oxford Herald, from which it appears that he has at last crossed the Rubicon, on the banks of which he has been for some time shivering, and openly joined that communion of which he has so long been a secret member. We fear - might we not say rather we hope? - that his example will shortly be followed by others of his party.

Broughton's ideas on what constituted the doctrinal core of a defensible Christian education were indicated in his suggestions for the curriculum of Sydney College: Tomline's Introduction to the Bible, Archbishop Leighton's Short Catechism, and Paley's Natural Theology. None of these works took an exclusively Anglican view, although each was written by an Anglican. Broughton's experiences confirmed very forcefully the general lesson from the Christian past that no uncontentious version of Christian doctrine and history had ever been established or was ever likely to be. It was particularly irksome to Broughton that the distinctiveness of Roman Catholic doctrines was accepted as sufficient to establish a stong case for separate school funding, whereas it was widely assumed, by many Anglican laity as well as by non-Anglicans, that so little was distinctive in Anglicanism that its requirements would be met adequately by a general system of Bible-reading of the type developed by the British and Foreign Schools Society. Broughton considered that 'religion without a creed' was

as absurd as 'morality without religion' (Australasian Chronicle, 29 August, 1839). He warned the N.S.W. Legislative Council in 1839 that it was but one step from 'the fallacy that all religions were alike' to 'the still more fatal persuasion that all religions were unimportant (quoted in Whitington, 1936, p.103).

Charles Perry as Bishop of Melbourne was little, if any, less emphatic than Broughton on the importance of what was distinctive in the Church of England, although he was evangelical rather than tractarian in his sympathies, as well as more friendly to lay influence in the church than any of the other Anglican bishops of his time in Australia. Perry, born in London in 1807, could recall, unlike Broughton from his Canterbury days, little worthwhile knowledge of Christianity from his education: 'neither at Hackney nor at Harrow did I, so far as I can remember, receive any sound religious instruction' (Goodman, 1892, p.54). His mother made up for some shortcomings in his schooling by teaching him the collects, the catechism and Watts' hymns (Goodman, 1892, p.53), but she did not shape the precise form her son's religious convictions were to take, since she 'had a strong prejudice against the Methodism, as she called it, which had invaded the Church' (ibid), whereas at Trinity College, Cambridge, Charles Perry adopted evangelical principles.

Perry throughout his life grappled with the problem of how to reconcile two apparently irreconcilable goods: 'the right ... and the duty of private judgement in religious matters', which he claimed (Goodman, 1892, p.27) always to have accepted, and the right and duty of the Church of England to keep itself free from religious error. In his last sermon in Cambridge before he left for Victoria in 1847 Perry preached (Robin, 1967, p.39),

> So far as the (ordained clergy) are faithful to their trust, so far as they teach their people out of the Scriptures, the word they speak is not their own, but the word of God; if they have been moved by the Spirit to enter the ministry and regularly appointed thereto by those who have authority in the Church, they may humbly and confidently expect that the same Spirit will lead them to all truth.

It would be hard to construct a sentence which begged more questions. Perry simply ignored the vast range of disagreements between Christians, past and present, in the conscientious exercise of private judgement. Years later Perry told Victorian Anglicans (Church Gazette, 1862, p.96, cited in Robin, 1967, p.138),

> If I could prevent it, I would banish the terms Evangelical, High Church, Broad Church, Low Church, Puseyite, altogether from our vocabulary, nor would I care to retain Calvinist, Arminian and other of older standing, but equally liable to be misapplied and misunderstood.

Perry sought to draw from the Bible and church history a firm distinction between 'the great doctrines of the Gospel', which all members of the Church of England should be required to accept, and 'those matters as to which the Church has pronounced no decision or its language is ambiguous and so admits of divers interpretations', on which he advocated 'a mutual tolerance of all differences of opinion and practice' (Melbourne Daily News, 14 March, 1850). Just where this distinction was to be made, however, was at the heart of the divisions not only between the different branches of the Christian Church, but within each of them as well.

Perry did not hold that any text of the Bible was literally inspired; he argued in 1855 in the first of five sermons he preached in Cambridge on a return visit from Victoria, 'Nor do I consider a belief in it (Scripture's) verbal inspiration necessary to secure for any book the faith and reverence which is due to a revelation from God'. He was also deeply

concerned, however, to resist any scepticism which might follow a rejection of verbal inspiration, urging in his second Cambridge sermon,

> Although reason cannot enable man to form any conception of the Divine Being yet she bears unequivocal testimony to the fact that there is a God and to all the attributes which the Scriptures ascribe to Jehovah ... In like manner, it is upon the conclusions of reason that his belief in the Scriptures, as containing a revelation from God, is grounded. We must be convinced that God speaks to us in the Bible before we can receive on His authority the things which are taught us in the sacred volume, and this conviction must be produced by the proofs which we have of its Divine origin. To examine and decide upon those proofs is the office of reason.

Despite his evangelical sympathies Perry was unwilling to enter into any formal association with non-Anglicans. He explained (Church of England Record, vol. ii, 1858, p.140),

> I greatly lament the divisions which exist among Christians living together in the same land [and] I do not feel justified in throwing all the blame for those divisions upon other denominations or in disputing the claim of any who hold the fundamental truths of Christianity, to be regarded as members of the mystical body of Christ. But as a member, and particularly as a clergyman and bishop of the Church of England, I consider it neither wise nor right to connect myself in any way whatever with any Church which has originated in dissent from it.
>
> I would wish to see the members of our Church concentrate all their energies upon promoting its stability and extension, and leave their respective members to carry on (as indeed, they are always intent on doing) their own plans of advancement. In pursuing this course we shall give them no just cause of offence, and we shall avoid coming into any painful collision with them.

Perry engaged in many disputes with Victorian radicals who claimed to embrace a general non-doctrinal Christianity. The bishop chided one of them, John Pascoe Fawkner, whose opinions strongly influenced the Port Phillip Patriot, as follows (Melbourne Daily News, 14 March, 1850),

> If I mistake not, you belong to a very numerous class among professed Protestants who consider the great doctrines of the Gospel to be, at best, matters of doubtful speculation ... and

> according to your view, Christian charity consists in allowing every man quietly to retain his own opinion and hoping that he may be saved whatever the errors of his creed ... I regard this not as Christian charity, but as infidel latitudinarianism, which so far as it prevails tends to destroy all distinction between truth and error.

Perry wanted the Church of England to be as broad as was consistent with the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles, but it was precisely on what was consistent with these that controversy continued to rage. Towards the end of his life in a comment about Theological Halls in Oxford and Cambridge Perry, returned from Australia for ever, wrote (Robin, 1967, p.184),

> I would not willingly narrow the basis of our national church. This, however, is quite a different thing from marking out the limits of that basis more distinctly. It was never intended that our Church should comprehend, as at present in its ministry, on the one side men who are virtually Deists and, on the other side, those whose teaching and practice are more in accordance with the decrees of the Council of Trent than with out own Articles of Religion. As a Bishop of the Church of England I should not think that I was guilty of narrowing the basis of that Church by refusing to ordain or present a clergyman to any cure of souls to which I had the appointment, if he either denied the vicarious character of the death of Christ, or affirmed that the body and blood of our blessed Saviour were in any sense whatever present in the bread and wine upon the Lord's Table after Consecration, or advocated the use of sacramental confession.

In Australia too Perry rejected as unacceptable the beliefs and practices of some who considered themselves Anglican, just as he insisted on the distinctiveness of Anglicanism from any vague general Christianity. He refused to ordain or to license to preach those adhering to 'the doctrines held by Archbishop Denison on the real presence' (Melbourne Church News, 1867, p.308, cited with the following reference from Robin, 1967, p.159), and refused a license to Rowland Hayward because (Church of England Messenger, 1870, vol.ii.no.14, pp.7-8),

> he could not assure me of his soundness of doctrine on the presence of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the bread and wine at the administration of the Lord's Supper, and the confession of sins to a priest; and further, of his recognition of the bishop's authority to settle disputed matters of ritual in the celebration of Divine Service.

What was acceptable to Nixon in Tasmania or to Broughton in New South Wales was objectionable to Perry as unauthorized ritualism or as 'creeping Romanism'. Perry directed in 1857 (Robin, 1967, p.153) that,

> No portion of the Service of the Church shall be sung or intoned except such as are expressly authorized by the rubric; and there shall not be introduced into the service, either on the ground of ancient usage, or because it has been adopted in some churches in England, or on any other pretext whatever any ceremonial which is not directed or sanctioned by the Book of Common Prayer.

He told his Church Assembly in 1868 (Melbourne Church News, p.31).

> So long as I retain my present office so long shall I, God helping me, endeavour to keep out of the ministry of the church all persons who will not unite with me in resisting the movements which I regard as calculated to pave the way for a return to the doctrine and practice of the Church in England previous to the Reformation.

Leading Anglican divines disagreed as to which were the most central and precious aspects of their Church's tradition, but that did not imply any indifference to that tradition. Dr. Thornton, the Anglican Bishop of Ballarat, was typical of the episcopacy in condemning the many in the laity who viewed all attempts to establish 'definite Christianity' with 'a cynical impatient disrelish' (Adelaide Chronicle, 4 June, 1881). The Anglican Bishop of Brisbane, Dr. Tufnell, attacked the non-denominational religious instruction proposed in the Queensland Act of 1860 as 'diluted and colourless material from which everything positive had been extracted and which no member of the Church of England could conscientiously accept' (Royal Commission on Education (Queensland), 1875, p.103).

Yet, unlike the Catholic Bishops, the Anglican Episcopacy could not take the bulk of their laity along with them in fighting for denominational instruction in schools. Indeed, some prominent Anglican divines came to view an Irish System or British and Foreign Schools solution as the best that could be obtained for Anglican children. Perry's successor as Bishop of Melbourne, Dr. Moorhouse, argued, 'Give us the Bible in our schools, taught undemoninationally as it is at home and in Holland, and I think we could cheerfully support the law (Morris, 1895, p.147). In South Australia Archdeacon Marryat claimed in 1871 that the non-deminational religious teaching in government aided schools would be acceptable to 'nine-tenths of the Church of England' (Adelaide Observer, 14 October, 1871). Henry Hutton Parry, the second Anglican Bishop of Perth, also stated in 1880 (Alexander, 1957, p.36),

> Whatever differences exist as to matter of doctrine or discipline between ourselves as members of the Church of England and the various Nonconformist Denominations, I felt that we ought all to be agreed at the least in accepting the Holy Scriptures as the basis of all sound religious teaching, and should find no difficulty in taking joint action to secure the requirements of the Education Act being fully carried out in this respect.

There was thus some force in George Higginbotham's contention in 1869 that, although the Church of England was 'the largest of any of the religious denominations ... in all the Australian colonies', it was also 'unquestionably the most weak, undecided and inconsistent with itself of all of them' (Parliament Deb.(Vic), 8 p.1825). As early as 1839 Broughton's attempts to preserve distinctively Anglican doctrine in government-aided schools led to criticism from Governor Gipps, not only an Anglican but like Broughton a former pupil of King's School, Canterbury, that 'Rome had become more tolerant than Lambeth' (Gipps to Normanby, 9

December, 1839, HRA, I,XX, p.428). It can be argued that Anglicanism in Australia suffered from trying to maintain comprehensiveness without establishment and special identification with the nation, when even with such advantages the Church of England in England itself was finding it increasingly difficult to define its own identity. What cannot be denied to many of the Anglican clergy is their sincere concern both to clarify what was central in the historical record of their tradition and how this might best flourish in new Australian conditions.

Anglicanism and Science

Many Australian Anglicans during the second half of the nineteenth century became increasingly concerned with theological and scientific theories which inter alia challenged traditional Christian concepts of the time the world had existed. Bishop Colenso's doubts on the authorship and the conceivable accuracy of the Pentateuch, the seminal Essays and Reviews, together with the challenges of Darwin and Wallace to accepted chronologies, helped to fill the middle years of Victoria's reign with far-ranging discussions of an unprecedentedly radical character about the world picture which, despite their many deep differences on other questions, the Christian Churches had for the most part shared.

Contributions to these agonized debates by Australians were not on the whole particularly original, but there was no lack of interest in them. During a return visit to Cambridge in 1855 Charles Perry gave a series of sermons, much of whose content was devoted to these matters. In his second sermon Bishop Perry argued (1856, Sermon 1) that,

> it may happen that inferences drawn from discoveries are inconsistent with the received interpretation of particular

> portions of the sacred volume. Now in such cases it is not enough for a believer in the Bible to assert the supreme authority of the Word of God. The man of science demands to be met on his own ground, and the Christian philosopher must follow him in his investigations in order to determine whether his conclusion be true or false. If they be false they may be proved to be so by shewing either that his premises are erroneous or his reasoning unsound. If they be true a careful study of the Scripture will suggest how its interpretation is to be modified to suit them. Thus, while on the one hand the theory which would people the earth without the agency of a Divine Creator has been shown to be philosophically untrue, the discoveries of astronomy have long since ceased to trouble the reader of the Bible, and we doubt not that these discoveries will, ere long, trouble him as little.

When Perry gave a lecture in September 1860 on 'The Inspiration of the Book of Genesis as proved by the Science of Geology' over 300 citizens of Melbourne attended and many more failed to gain admission (Church of England Record, IV, p.140, cited in Robin, 1967, pp.131-2). Perry criticized Darwin in a series of sermons he gave in Cambridge on his next visit to England, which was in 1864 when controversy was at its height. In the four sermons, which were published in Cambridge under the title of Foundation Truths, Perry held Darwin's theory of natural selection to be wrong in that 'it attributed to nature a foresight in providing for future contingencies which belongs only to mind.' One of the objectives of The Origin of Species had been to refute Paley's argument from design, but Perry was advancing a position still widely held.

In a lecture in Melbourne in 1869 on Science and the Bible Perry seized on the main empirical weakness of Darwin's arguments, rather than any conceptual objection such as the argument from design, when he noted (p.10) 'the absence of evidence for transitional forms either among living or fossil animals', as well as 'the difficulty of crossing either species of the same genus and the absolute impossibility of crossing between

different genera'. Perry did not consider that he had succeeded in refuting Darwin, but he warned against premature acceptance of hypotheses which were at best very fluid and argued that scientific evidence had not been demonstrated to be incompatible with the Bible, were Scripture read aright (1869, p.17),

> ...I accept the phenomena of natural history described by Darwin, upon the authority of the various scientific men who have made these several branches their peculiar study, and whose characters justly entitle their statements to credit. They certainly present to us a problem...but I trust...that if it ever be solved, it will be in a manner consistent with the truth of the Bible.

One of the prominent Anglican laymen in Melbourne, Dr J.E. Bromby, in a lecture published in 1870 under the title of Creation versus Development, adopted the line often advanced during the eighteenth century Enlightenment (and indeed nearly two thousand years earlier by Philo of Alexandria and other Jewish philosophers faced by Greek sceptics) of reading the Bible as allegory or symbol whenever it clashed or appeared to clash with observation or with empirical date. Perry tried to resist Bromby's surrender of the historicity of the Bible (1869, p.15),

> The hypothesis by which he would reconcile the facts of science with the Bible story is not, in my opinion, admissible; and there were some expressions used by him in his lecture which I greatly regret, as seeming to indicate a doubt respecting the title of the Bible to our unqualified belief in matters of history.

Augustus Short was faced with a more ticklish challenge to orthodox belief when, as the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, he was called upon to pay tribute to its first Chancellor, the agnostic Lord Chief Justice of South Australia, Sir Richard Davies Hanson, who had died before he could give the inaugural address which the Bishop gave in his stead. Hanson had written a book entitled The Jesus of History which took

a similar line to that which Renan made famous. In his 1876 address Bishop Short explained that he felt it necessary to enter into areas of contention (Brown, 1974, pp.221-2) 'because I do not wish to class myself with those who denounce Philosophy, Science, the spirit of investigation, and the feeling of personal independence as inconsistent with the faith of a Christian'. Short gave much of the time of his very long address to the relationship between religion and science; his idea of what was significant in the human past was revealed as quotations from Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Congreve and Coleridge were marshalled, together with Virgil on Pantheism and Whelwell on faith and science. Short was unable to follow Newman's Idea of a University too closely, since the University of Adelaide was to have no Chair of Theology; in any case Short, who during his early career in England had nearly blotted his own theological copybook by writing a defence, which he friends persuaded him not to publish, of Newman's Tract No. 90, had no wish for too close a comparison with Newman to be made. He did, however, indicate what he considered to be the central contributions to knowledge of Astronomy, Geology, Botany, Chemistry, Meterology, Anatomy and Design.

The via media on which the Church of England was based was a path on which vigorous and often acrimonious dispute took place in the Australian colonies as well as in England during the second half of the nineteenth century. Disputes about doctrine and ritual probably took up more time and energy of Anglican laity as well as clergy in Australia than those about Bible and Christian history, baptismal regeneration, for example, more than the authorship of the Pentateuch. In the long run, however, it was the challenges to the historical foundations of belief which proved more significant than those intense doctrinal controversies which only had

meaning if those historical foundations stood firm. The relative openness of Anglicanism at least made possible gradual and small-scale adjustments of belief, whereas within Roman Catholicism the lack of internal debate about troublesome questions, while postponing the impact of modernism, often led in the long run to sudden and violent individual switches from one form of dogma to one of a totally different and incompatible character.

The Anglican Mission

The rapid resurgence of British overseas colonization after the sharp setback of the loss of the thirteen American colonies in 1783 strengthened among Anglicans in particular a confidence that Britain had been chosen by God for mighty purposes. The conditions of early settlement in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land did not encourage too sanguine a view of the workings of Providence, as a letter from Samuel Marsden to England in 1796 makes clear. Marsden wrote (Elder, 1932, p.31), of the state of New South Wales under Lieutenant-Governor Grose,

> I verily thought, from the contempt of God and religion and that countenance which was shown to unreasonable and wicked men, that some severe judgment would be inflicted upon us as a body of people by Divine Providence. The only consideration that checked these fears and apprehensions was that we were but an infant colony, and that I knew of no instance, either in sacred or profane history, where God had destroyed any people on their first establishment.

The belief that the sins and crimes of the colonists would invite divine retribution was frequently expressed in the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser by its editor, George Howe, who had spent time as a printer in London before sentenced to transportation, probably for sedition, but in Sydney became a force for Evangelical morality and for

patriotism. Howe routinely connected natural disasters, such as the flooding of the Hawkesbury in March 1806 with the divine wrath (Sydney Gazette, 6 April, 1806). Howe also believed that the British Empire was divinely appointed to extend civilization and Christianity throughout the world; he ensured that British victories in war, such as Trafalgar, and traditional anniversaries, were fully celebrated in the colonial press.

The wickedness of the world continued to impress Marsden when he wrote in 1825, after replying to attacks on him made by Wentworth and other critics, to the Church Missionary Society (Elder, 1932, p.55),

> I have never passed through more severe trials than what I have experienced from unreasonable and wicked men for the last three months: 'All that will live in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution'. I know the truth of St. Paul's observation by bitter experience. When our present troubles will end I can form no idea, and therefore must leave all in the hands of a good and gracious God ... The day is coming when the Judge of all the earth will do right. The Divine promises are my comfort.

Marsden was determined, however, to give active support to Providence. In contrast to the accepted opinion in missionary circles that Christianity could be intuitively apprehended by all mankind, Marsden told the Church Missionary Society (Jacobs, 1889, p.6) 'nothing in my opinion can pave the way for the introduction of the Gospel but civilisation'. Like Johnson, Marsden was a pioneer in agriculture and husbandry. In his 1826 An Answer to Certain Calumnies in the late Governor Macquarrie's Pamphlet and the Third Edition of Mr. Wentworth's Account of Australasia, Marsden defended the time he had spent on farming both as a good in itself in satisfying the bodily needs of the colony, but as a prerequisite for the success of the Gospel. He wrote,

> I entered the country when it was in a state of nature, and was obliged to plant and sow or starve. It was not from inclination that my colleague and I took the axe, and hoe, and the spade; we

> could not from our situation help ourselves by any other means, and we thought it no disgrace to labour.

Marsden's fear that the Aborigines could not absorb civilization led him to despair their ever understanding or accepting Christianity. Equally, however, he became convinced that the Maoris could master the arts of civilization were thus potential converts to Christianity as well. Marsden reported in 1815 to the Church Missionary Society (Elder, 1932, p.39),

> After mature deliberation we are unanimously of opinion that New Zealand opens a large and promising field for missionary labours, that the inhabitants are a noble and intelligent race, and prepared to receive the blessings of civilization and the knowledge of the Christian religion.

Marsden came to believe that the main purpose of Providence in the British settlement of New South Wales was that it would be the springboard for missionary work in New Zealand and the Pacific. In 1822 he wrote to the Church Missionary Society that (Elder, 1932, p.40) he felt 'the strongest persuasion that the poor heathen nations scattered over the islands in the South Seas will receive the blessings of salvation from this Colony'. In an expanded version of this idea he wrote in 1818 (Bonwick, 1870, p.31-2),

> The British settlement in New Holland is a very wonderful circumstance in these eventful times. The islands in the great Pacific Ocean could not have been settled unless there had been the settlement formed previously in this country. The missionaries could never have maintained their ground, had they not been encouraged and supported from Port Jackson. How mysterious and wonderful are the ways of God! The exiles of the British nation are sent before to prepare the way of the Lord.

The London Evangelical physician John Mason Good had no doubt that Marsden was himself a chosen instrument of Providence, when he wrote (Gregory, 1832, p.395) that 'Unborn empires are dependent on his exertions, and his

name will be the theme of the new world, as long as there is a heart to feel reverence or a tongue to utter praise'. A conflicting historical analogy was offered by Governor Macquarie's Secretary, John Thomas Campbell, in the Sydney Gazette (January 4, 1817): 'the Christian Mahomet' was Campbell's description of Marsden, whom he accused of making a profit by supplying South Sea Islanders, under the cloak of religion, with spirits and fire-arms. In his angry reaction to such attacks Marsden employed extreme historical analogies of his own, saying of Campbell in a letter to the Church Missionary Society in 1818 as (Elder, 1932, p.50) that, 'a greater enemy, in my opinion, never existed to the Gospel of our blessed Lord'.

Marsden had little interest in church history or in doctrinal disputes. In his first letter from Parramatta to England in 1796 he wrote (Elder, 1932, p.30),

> I have hardly enough time for the study of Divinity. There are no religious disputations in the Colony. We are not called upon to defend any particular points of doctrine, but to declare the plain and simple Gospel.

The situation was very different for Broughton who, like so many others of his generation, had been strongly inflenced one way or another by the claims of the Tractarians, who was a scholar and who could hardly avoid religious disputations had he wished to do so. That the Church of England was the Established Church of a new world empire made its origins, its claims to have continuity from early Christian orthodoxy and piety and to have purged itself from medieval corruptions, seem more relevant than ever before to Broughton. In a sermon published as The Counsel and Pleasure of God, Broughton told his new flock in 1829 that (p.10), since the establishment of British power in Australia was part of a divine plan for

the redemption of the heathen, 'we are therefore to consider ourselves not as placed here accidently for the fulfilment of a temporary or unimportant purpose, but as conducted by the Providence of God to bear our part of the execution of that eternal purpose which was laid in Christ Jesus before the world began'. Unlike Marsden, Broughton considered Australia as important not mainly as a base for further missionary work, but in itself in the purposes of the divine will,

> If there be any here present ... who have witnessed the exaltation of the English nation, and its gradual extension of power to the limits of the habitable world without ever considering this but as effected in the natural course of things, and not, as it assuredly is, by the particular and evident providence of the Lord, for the fulfilment of His own purposes; if such there be among us, let them, I say, awake and take a new view of passing events.

Some Anglican conceptions of the workings of Providence degenerated into the ludicrous. Dr H.B. Macartney, Dean of Melbourne, told a Melbourne audience in 1863 of moments in history when Divine intervention had ensured English success or prosperity. These included, Dean Macartney explained (Melbourne Herald, 7 May, 1863), the deaths of the Admiral and Vice-Admiral of the Spanish Armada just before it was originally due to set sail, the similar death of Napoleon I's Admiral Latouche Treville, the ending of the Crimean War in time for Britain to concentrate on suppressing the Indian Mutiny, and the discovery of gold in Australia just in time to enable the effects of the American Civil War on the cotton industry and British trade to be withstood.

Broughton agonized whether the traditions of the English Church and nation could put down deep roots in New South Wales. He hoped that the Sydney College, opened in 1830, would 'be the means ... of forming dutiful subjects to the Mother Country; subjects who would imitate her loyalty, her

literature, her justice and her glory (Australian, 27 January, 1830), but as late as 1842 he warned Edward Coleridge that 'there is no such feeling in the minds of those who were born here as that of loyalty', since the Queen was as distant to them as was the East India Company to the Hindus (Shaw, 1978, p.145). He shared with Darling the fear that there had already arisen among colonial youth 'a disposition to dogmatise upon questions relative to Government and Religion', without the safety net of long-established institutions to steady them. As the years went on however, Broughton came increasingly to share with the colonial-born Reverend William Macquarie Cowper the belief, which Marsden never adopted, that currency lads could be trusted to sustain and to extend the traditions and institutions of the Church of England and the British Constitution.

The lives of William Macquarie Cowper, who became Dean of Sydney, and of his father, Archdeacon William Cowper cover most of the nineteenth century and are very instructive among other things for the light they throw on Australian Anglican attitudes to English traditions. The Archdeacon was an affectionate parent, but he had no hesitation in sending his younger son 'Mac' to England in 1827 for his higher education. The future Dean spent eight years in England, which strongly influenced his whole life. He wrote on his return to Australia (Cowper, 1902, p.106),

> I cannot take leave of that beloved country without a few parting words of the gratitude I felt for the benefits derived from a sojourn of more than eight years in that highly favoured land. I went there a stranger unknown to all ... And what did I meet with everywhere? Nothing but kindly welcome, generous hospitality, sincere friendships, Christian society, and varied opportunities of improvement and culture.

The Archdeacon had filled his son with high expectations of England, so

that when he arrived he was thrilled to think (Cowper, 1902, p.95) 'that we were now in that renowned country of which we had read and heard so much'. Nearly half a century later on a return visit to England in 1876 Dean Cowper wrote (Cowper, 1902, p.175), 'how pleasant to feel that we were in that land of liberty and Gospel light and truth'.

Dean Cowper gave very little of his time to secular learning, and it was the Bible and English devotional literature which formed most of his reading, with Bunyan a special favourite. This was not uncommon among Evangelicals, both inside and outside the Church of England, and in the case of the Dean had been strengthened by the description of the death of his mother in Australia when he was first in England which he received from the Archdeacon (Cowper, 1902, p.225), 'Her departure I would compare to that of Mr Standfast in Pilgrim's Progress'.

The Archdeacon's eldest son took the secular path, and with such success that he became premier of New South Wales. The career of Charles Cowper is, however, best, understood in the context of the changed circumstances that faced the Church of England in the colonies. In his electoral debut, at Camden in 1846 where he was defeated, Charles Cowper shared the resentment of his father and Broughton against Polding's successful efforts to establish Catholic territorial sees in Australia and to obtain state aid for Catholic schools. He stated, (SMH, 28 March, 1843) 'For my own part I acknowledge that I cannot view without alarm the strenuous efforts...by the followers of the Church of Rome to obtain a political ascendancy among us... Would that the members of our own Church were equally zealous and consistent!' Charles Cowper tried also in 1845 to rally Anglican lay support for Broughton's educational policies by founding

and becoming the first president of the Anglican Lay Association, and backed the short-lived Southern Queen which advanced its views. Although this group had little positive effect, it aroused the bitter hostility of the Atlas, which, under the editorship of the Anglican but bitterly anti-Tractarian Robert Lowe and then of James Martin, a closet Irish Catholic, denounced it as 'Puseyite', meaning that it unduly emphasised the catholic and clerical elements within Anglicanism. Somewhat ironically James Martin became the most influential exponent of conservative values in New South Wales politics and Lowe, after his return to England, the principal enemy of a democratic franchise, whereas Charles Cowper became leader for some years of the radical-democratic factions in New South Wales.

Cowper was described as 'Slipper Charlie' for such changes of policy as his abandonment of church aid, but on this matter his path was not dissimilar to that of his much more conservative father and younger brother. Once he was convinced that the Church of England could not become established, he thought it better (SMH, 24 July 1851 and 9 Aug. 1851) that voluntaryism should prevail rather than that erroneous doctrines should be subisdised. On the other hand, if some errors were to be subsidised, why not all - in 1854 he moved from opposition to support of state aid for the Jews on the same terms as for Christians. What his critics denounced as deviousness was defended by Charles Cowper and his friends as a sensible pragmatism which took account of colonial realities and which was rightly willing to abandon traditions which only made sense when linked with establishment.

The clerical Cowpers shared the common evangelical indifference, if not

hostility, to medieval religious traditions, other than in church building. The Archdeacon wrote to Mac on his acceptance at Magdalen Hall in 1828 (Cowper, 1902, p.225) that the University of Oxford 'has been the source, and sometimes the scene, of many excellent and glorious, and of many base and horrible things in religion', the sufferings of the Lollards and of the Oxford Martyrs being the main examples of such evils. When Dean Cowper died in New South Wales at the age of ninety-one, his coffin bore, not one of the symbols of his ecclesiastical office but his Oxford M.A. gown and his Magdalen College cap.

In his survey of a century of Anglicanism in New South Wales, Dean Cowper gave full praise to those within the Anglican spectrum whose religious stance had been very different from that he and his father had taken. He wrote of Bishop Tyrrell..(Cowper, 1902, p.130) that he was 'a consistent High Churchman of the old school, having no sympathy with the medievalism of the present day'. He expressed great admiration too for that other formidable High Churchman, Bishop Broughton. Dean Cowper's strongest sympathies were, of course, with those who shared his own Evangelical outlook, particularly Johnson and his father's old colleague, Marsden. It would however be hard to find a greater contrast between Marsden's pessimistic view of the future possibilities of the convict colony and Dean Cowper's joy in the great progress he perceived to have been made morally and spiritually as well as materially in New South Wales during his long life, a progress which, he held, mirrored that made in England. For Dean Cowper the experience of Christianity in Australia had become part of the significant past in a way it could not be for his father, Marsden or others of their generation.

Summary

The British colonization of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land took place while the old religious order in England still stood, but there was little interest in the religious provision for penal settlements at the far end of the world in the years of the French Wars. By the time that the Church and Schools Corporation was set up in 1825 in New South Wales, the privileges of the Church of England were under attack and the Catholic Relief act and the Repeal of the Test Acts soon followed. Any possibility that the Anglican Church in the Australian colonies might become permanently established as in England was further reduced by the powerful hostility of the founders of the colony of South Australia to any ecclesiastical establishment.

William Grant Broughton and Francis Russell Nixon both made strenuous efforts to preserve, or to secure, established status for the Church of England, but by the end of Broughton's life he had come to the conclusion that in Australian conditions Anglicanism lost more than it gained by any connection with a civil power which gave it no special support, and which seemed on educational questions more willing to make separate provision for the distinctive needs of Roman Catholics than for those of Anglicans. Broughton, Perry and, with particular energy, William Tyrrell began to search the Anglican past for examples of ecclesiastical self-government, rather than for arguments for establishment.

Although the clergy who came out to Australia were not among the very leading thinkers of Anglicanism, their ranks included men of genuine scholarship as well as of administrative vigour. The main religious debates were, naturally enough, for the most part derivative, as were the

discussions on the relationship between science and religion, but they were by no means second rate. The best of Australian Anglican thought avoided provincial narrowness and placed itself within the broad stream of theology and ethics, without neglecting its own specific and, indeed, unique, context. This was especially true in discussions relating to the historical significance of the British settlement of Australia and to the possibilities it opened up of the expansion of Christianity in the South Pacific. Anglicanism became rooted in Australia, without any significant loss of historical continuity in doctrine or liturgy, although with a transformed constitutional status.

Chapter Nine

The Significant Past for John Dunmore Lang

Early Influences

John Dunmore Lang can hardly be described as a typical Scot or as a representative Presbyterian, yet his works reveal much about the influence of Scottish Presbyterianism on Australian conceptions about significance in history. Lang's career also illustrates vividly some of the individualist and secularist tendencies immanent within the seemingly authoritarian and firmly anti-secularist structure of Calvinist doctrine.

In youth and early manhood Lang sought advancement, first in Scotland and then in Australia, through the established Presbyterian Church of Scotland. At Glasgow University he studied Divinity under Stevenson Macgill, Church History under William McTurk, and Hebrew under Gavin Gill. Beliefs acquired then which remained with him throughout his life included an antagonism to David Hume's agnosticism, a contempt for episcopacy and claims to an apostolic succession, and a conviction that the Second Coming was at hand. The thought that the Apocalypse was nigh did not make any immediate task or dispute any the less important to Lang, but it was a comfort to him that divine retribution was close at hand for his enemies.

Lang's doctorate was granted mainly to give the Presbyterian Church prestige in Australia, rather than for his scholarly achievements, but he was widely read. He read the Bible, he claimed, in Greek, Latin, German and French versions, as well as the Authorised Version with which he was most familiar. One of his major literary productions was a volume issued in 1840

of Specimens of an Improved Metrical Translation of the Psalms of David. The acquisitions he obtained for his Australian College were broad in character, including Bossuet's History of France and Bentham's collected works, as well as Foxe's Book of Martyrs, Paley's Evidences of Christianity, and the Bible in more than a dozen different languages. By the time that one of Lang's many financial crises forced him in 1846 to put his library up for auction, it included over two thousand titles. Although works in English formed the majority of his books, there were also volumes in German, Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, Portugese and Arabic, as well as in Greek, Latin and Hebrew. The Calvinist classics were naturally well represented, especially Calvin himself and John Knox, as well as Anglican divines, such as Paley, Hooker, Butler and Berkeley, but sceptics and infidels were also to be found, including Hume, Voltaire and Montesquieu. The early fathers were represented by Lactantius and St. Augustine, and later Catholic authors by Erasmus and Bossuet.

Biblical Republicanism

Some of Lang's later beliefs, however, cannot be attributed directly to his teachers. One of these was that the government of the early Christian Church had been based on 'the representative principle' (1852, p.145) and was a model for republican government. Another, popular with English and Scottish Puritans of the seventeenth century, and viewed with favour by John Calvin and John Knox a century earlier, was that the Bible, particularly the Book of Samuel, commended republics as the most godly form of human government. Lang elaborated this case on several occasions, as in 1852 in The Golden Lands of Australia (pp, 65-9),

> ...it is a matter of sacred history that the only form of human government that was ever divinely established upon earth was the

> Republican - in the wilderness of Sinai - and that God himself interposed, in the person of his own accredited minister, to protest against the unwarrantable innovation, when that form of government was at length set aside in the commonwealth of Israel, and monarchy established in its stead. Monarchy doubtless prevailed for a long period in that country, by Divine permission, as many things else do in the lower world, that are certainly not of Divine appointment; but Republicanism existed from the beginning by Divine appointment; and it cannot, I submit, be very bad form of government, which can plead such authority in its favour.

Lang brushed aside replies that it was just as antithetical to democracy that Samuel should be regarded as God's accredited minister, any more than Saul or David, or that Lang seemed to claim for himself an even more intimate acquaintance with the divine will than did the Pope or the Archbishop of Canterbury. Fortunately for Lang, New South Wales had no John Dryden or Samuel Butler, so that he could continue to proclaim that Moses, Joshua and Samuel had clearly established 'the three grand fundamental principles of Republican government - Universal Suffrage, Perfect Political Equality, and Popular Election', without facing the sharp satirical shafts directed at his seventeenth century predecessors.

In his political orations and writings, as distinct from his sermons, references to the New Testament diminished over the years, but some of the teaching of the Old Testament gained in significance. In particular, Lang never tired of citing Genesis, 1.28: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it', as God's chief advice to the Anglo-Celtic races. Other favourite texts in this respect were Genesis xii,1: 'Get thee out of thy country, and from they kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee', and Genesis xlviii.22, that Jacob, and those who would emulate him in the Lord's work, must 'take their portion out of the hand of the Amorite with their sword and with their bow'.

Classical Influences

Lang's classical studies at school and university did not convince him that the learned languages were relevant to the needs of young Australians who were to enter business or even the professions; his proposals for the curriculum of his Australian College were briskly utilitarian. He once put it (1834, 2, p.383) that Latin and Greek might serve as a ballast but not form an entire educational cargo. Even as ballast he did not urge the claims of the classics very strongly. He learned from Gibbon, not that Christianity itself undermined good government and imperial power, but that Popedom certainly had that effect. His later republicanism owed most to his admiration for the United States, but also reflected a motif common in classical literature. Augustanism, original or English, is totally absent from Lang's thinking, but the stern republicanism of Cato the Censor and of the Greek city states entered into many of his arguments.

After he became a severe critic of British Governments, Lang liked to remind his audiences of the very low opinion leading Romans had once held of Britain, rather like that, he suggested, held in the mid-nineteenth century of the Falkland Islands. The first Eclogue of Virgil had pertinence here (1852, pp.156-7),

> Or, sadder still! on Britain's distant shore,
> Ne'er to be seen or known of mankind more.

Lang criticized Rome for colonizing 'expressly to extend the limits of the empire, or to hold, by military occupation, territories which had been acquired by force of arms' (1852, p.154), but at least, in contrast to British colonization, Roman settlements quickly became in most cases (1852,

p.157), 'wealthy and propserous...enjoying, within certain well-defined limits, the privilege of self-government, and exhibiting in no inconsiderable degree the civilization and refinement of Rome'. When discussing the fate of Roman Britain, Lang argued (1852, p.260) that long lack of self-government had rendered the Britons weak and effete, so that in The Groans of Britain they had been forced to beseech Rome to resume military protection after 410 A.D.. However, he also quoted Gibbon (1852, p.159) that once the Britons 'no longer relied on the tardy and doubtful aid of a declining monarchy, they assembled in arms, repelled the invaders, and rejoiced in the important discovery of their own strength'. Lang concluded (1852, p.161) that 'a people long habituated to the arts of peace', is 'ill-fitted to withstand the furious attack' of invaders, such as 'the half-savage hordes of the north, especially at a time when firearms were unknown'.

It was in the achievements of Greek colonization, however, that Lang gained greatest satisfaction from his classical studies. It is a striking feature of nearly every major work of Lang's in which he tried to persuade either British politicians or Australian colonists to adopt his ideas about colonizaiton, that he devoted considerable space and time to Greek colonization. Following Adam Smith and the four-stage model of the Scottish Enlightenment, Lang argued that commercial and maritime peoples develop more refinement and cultivation than do even the most virtuous and sturdy tillers of the soil. The Greeks, despite being 'broken up into almost as many sovereign and independent States as there are counties in England; and these States...in perpetual warfare with each other', had accomplished what Bacon had called 'heroic work', which in Lang's own words 'renders the utmost efforts even of Great Britain in modern times, and notwithstanding all the

appliances of modern civilizaiton, insignificant in comparison' (1852, p.88). Lang asked (1852, p.139), 'What, then, was the secret of the wonderful success of the Greek colonies of the ancient world?', and answered immediately that it is 'plain and obvious to every person who will honestly admit the fact - THEY WERE FREE AND INDEPENDENT FROM THE FIRST'.

Lang was lavish in his references to the leading contemporary historians of the classical world, to Niebuhr, Grote, Bishop Thirlwall and Mitford, in showing his readers the relevance of the failures and successes of Greek colonization to their own times. The 'haughty Corinthians, who seem to have been a regular Tory community of the old school' were castigated for their mistaken policies towards the Locrians, originally their own colonists, (1852, p.143), as were the Athenians, for forcing once free colonies into an empire. Despite classical education, the British ruling class was incapable of seeing what was plain and obvious to Lang and to all honest men, so that Westminster heeded not Athenian or Corinthian folly, and failed to follow the more enlightened examples of wise colonization offered by the Greeks. It could never be said of Lang that he made poor use of his own classical education, nor that he considered classical allusions to be wasted on large audiences and on what he hoped would be even larger numbers of readers.

Presbyterian Discords in Australia

In his early squabbles with other Presbyterians Lang urged the need for unity on the basis of the Westminster Confession and, organisationally, on the structures prescribed by the Church of Scotland. During the 1830s he was zealous in seeking legal precedents to strengthen the official status of Presbyterianism in New South Wales, and claimed that an Act of Parliament of

1818 for the relief of Presbyterians in Calcutta had force, since the colony was part of the Anglican Diocese of Calcutta (Baker, 1985, p.49). At that time Lang opposed the claims of the Anglican clergy, first William Cowper and later Archdeacon Scott and Bishop Broughton, to supervise the registration of births, marriages and deaths. Lang's objection initially was that the Church of Scotland was equally an established church, not that voluntaryism should prevail.

It cannot satisfactorily be determined whether Lang's earlier concern for doctrinal orthodoxy within the Presbyterian Church and for doctrinal teaching in its own schools was eroded by his failure to continue to control what counted as Presbyterian orthodoxy, or by genuine conversion to a belief that what was in effect a form of Congregationalism was best in church organisation and 'general Christianity' most appropriate in schools. In a letter to the Sydney Gazette (16 Jan., 1830). Lang argued that simple Bible-reading was all the doctrinal teaching needed in schools, since the Bible was self-sufficient, infallible and unambiguous. The basic principle of Protestantism was, he urged,

> God is his own interpreter,
> And He will make it plain.

Had Lang been in a position to lay down the law on those many matters which on earlier occasions he asserted were far from unclear or ambiguous, his educational policies might have been different. Similarly it was after his enemies, led by William McGarvie, gained control over the Presbytery of New South Wales Lang had once been anxious to establish, that he tried to set up a rival Synod. This Synod did not challenge the doctrines of the Presbytery, but, as though Lang confronted an Anti-Pope, it proclaimed

itself the true repository of received Calvinist doctrine.

In the 1830s Lang was zealous that the students attending his Australian College should have detailed biblical knowledge, even if no other people educated in Australia enjoyed the same benefit. He accused the Rev. Henry Carmichael (Colonist, 30 April, 1835), after that gentleman had left the Australian College, of failing to teach his charges 'who King David was, what or when Jerusalem was, and what had befallen the ancient cities Sodom and Gomorrah'. Carmichael replied (1936, p.13) with the claim that Lang was engendering 'the seeds of Sectarianism, and hateful bigotry', so that,

> In ages to come when the nations of Europe will be free throughout the ramifications of their scientific, literary and educational establishments from the curse of priestly rule and interference, this ill-fated country may have the thank the supineness and improvidence and nervelessness of its present founders, for a stintedness of intellectual growth and...a backwardness in all the arts and elegancies and comforts of life...

It was not unusual for Lang to accept later, although without acknowledgement, some of the ideas of people with whom he had exchanged fiery invective. During a visit to the United States in 1840 Lang decided that the American voluntary system was more effective in fostering Christianity than any established church could be, but he found it difficult to discard the teaching of Calvin that earthly rulers have a duty to protect and support true religion, a position solidly embodied in the Confession of Westminster. In some ways Lang walked step by step with his old adversary Broughton in concluding that, in the new conditions of colonies such as New South Wales, no establishment could be sustained, whether that of the Church of England or the Church of Scotland. Lang's change of heart was more fierce and bitter, of course, since the body he had wished to preside over

had become, in his view, a Synagogue of Satan controlled by apostates. After he became in effect a Congregational minister of his own Scots Church in Sydney, Lang, although never abandoning his ministry and the power base it sometimes afforded him, put more and more energy into secular rather than ecclesiastical politics.

In 1824 Lang rebuked Governor Brisbane for suggesting that the Presbyterian religion was tolerated in New South Wales through the good graces of the Church of England. Lang maintained that Scotsmen were born free and that their liberty and right to practice their religion freely had been won by the swords of their forefathers, was enshrined in the British Constitution, and was in no way a matter of Anglican grace and favour. The Act of Union, Lang argued, legally secured to the Scottish people wherever they might be in the British Empire, every right and privilege of the English.

Attitudes towards England

Lang's claims for full equality for Scotland and the Scots implied respect for, not hostility towards, English traditions, as Lang confirmed in verses he wrote in 1825 after his first return visit to Britain,

> Hail, happy England; land of free men hail!
> My heart breaks high to see thy shores again.
> The hearts of oak are cased in virtuous mail,
> Great legislatrix of the boundless main!
>
> The fettered Greek may tell the captive's tale
> And the proud Bourbon lord it over Spain;
> Slaves may admit and despots may command
> But thou are England still, Freedom's blest land.

By 1842 Lang's anger at the failure of successive British Governments to grant full internal self-government to New South Wales had quite

transformed this attitude. In his new journal, the Colonial Observer, Lang denounced Downing Street despotism, arbitrary military government over a hundred thousand free men, and taxation without representation, other than in an effete and toadying Legislative council. Lang still spoke in terms of the traditional liberties of Englishmen, which, to their shame, colonial lickspittles such as the Macarthurs, Berrys and Campbells were denying their fellow colonists by subservience to tyrannical rule.

Lang was as yet neither a democrat or a republican, nor did his first experience of Chartism in Britain convince him that manhood suffrage was an inalienable Right of Man. He was ever less willing, however, to confine his demands to constitutional rights already acquired in Britain, as James Macarthur and the colonial gentry did. Instead Lang set himself the task of establishing afresh a rational basis for the franchise: felons, Aborigines and women, it seemed to him, were clearly unsuitable to exercise the franchise, but other groups were in principle admissible.

By 1851 Lang had embraced democracy and republicanism. He had become as disgusted with the landowners and merchants of New South Wales as with the Governor and his officials and the distant bureaucrats and politicians in London. Again, whether this transformation was the result of Lang's rejection by these worthies or of a disinterested change of heart cannot be finally established. What is certain is that Lang became during the 1850s the leading advocate in New South Wales of complete independence from Britain. Lang chided Henry Parkes, who saw himself as an advanced radical, for failing to realise that the American and French Revolutions had inaugurated a new time scale in respect of industrial, social and political change. With his usual striving for the telling detail, Lang argued that

the Australian colonies were travelling along the high road of political change as twenty times the speed of the American colonies a century ago. For rulers, he claimed, the times for change was never ripe, but the Australia colonists must wait no longer on the pace for change acceptable to London (Empire 20 December, 1853).

Lang by no means limited his arguments for political independence to the acceleration in political and economic change he detected. Divine Providence pointed the same way as did common-sense interpretation of secular events. To Lang (1852, p.6), it was 'clear therefore as daylight that Great Britain has been specially called, in the good Providence of God, to the heroic work of colonization.' Her 'peculiarly energetic people' were 'the fittest on earth for this heroic work, and the most willing to engage in it heartily'. In a more detailed account of the expectations of Providence, Lang explained (1852, p.175),

> At an early period after the great Protestant Reformation, Great Britain was elevated to the high and honourable position of the first Protestant nation in Christendom...her peculiar mission among the nations - her high and holy mission was therefore to colonize the waste places of the earth with her Protestant people.

Unfortunately, far from having discharged this high mission, Britain had, Lang held (1852, p.177-8), become 'the bulwark of the Reformation' only 'in the sense of keeping it back, and confining it within the ancient territory which it had already attained only a few years after the death of Luther...it is entirely owing to her neglect of duty, her breach of trust, in regard to this vital interest of Protestantism, that the Reformation cannot now number millions and millions more of a people of British origin

and Protestant religion, in countries that are still only tenanted by the grizzly bear or the timid kangaroo'

Lang completely reversed his earlier poetic contrast between the tyranny of the Spanish Bourbons and the liberties of England. Instead he grouped together Britain, Spain and Portugal as exploiters of their colonists, as disrupters of colonial trade, misappropriators of colonial taxes and dumpers of aristocratic misfits as colonial governors. The history of Britain, as of the other two European empires under consideration, was marked by folly, injustice and oppression, backed by violence. Although, he argued, Australian independence would benefit Great Britain, as American independence had done, he feared that only force of arms ever secured national liberty.

In 1852 Lang condemned British politicians for 'their glorification of Kossuth and Mazzini', whereas they remained 'cold as the frigid zone' to the claims to freedom of their own colonies. By a strange coincidence the Freeman's Journal, which always saw him as an arch-enemy of Roman Catholicism in Australia commented on him (28 May, 1853) that 'this sanctimonious disciple of Knox and Calvin has taken the trade of Mazzini and Kossuth'. Lang was always confident (1852, p.281) that 'all the great names in the literature, both of our own and of foreign countries, are decidedly in favour of the entire freedom and independence of colonies as the best possible condition both for the mother-country and for the dependency', and listed in support of this proposition Grotius, Heeren, Milton and Cromwell, Franklin, Adam Smith, Say, Turgot, Talleyrand and Guizot, Locke, Malthus, Brougham, Huskisson, Baring, Ricardo, Torrens, Senior and James Mill. Lang fully endorsed (1852, p.220) Chatham's claim, 'I rejoice that the Americans

have resisted. Three million subjects of the British Empire, so dead to any generous impulse as to submit their necks to such a yoke, would be fit instruments to make slaves of the rest'. Conversely, the names and deeds of Lord North and George III aroused in Lang the most powerful indignation, although he was pleased to note that even that benighted monarch had finally the grace to admit to Dr Josiah Tucker, the Dean of Gloucester and an advocate of the rights of the American colonists, that the Dean had been right and he, the King, wrong. Only, however, after the Thirteen Colonies had been irretrievably alienated, as well as lost politically, had George III seen the light.

Despite his eloquence and his display of scholarship, Lang gained little more support during the 1850s for an armed rising against British rule than he had secured in his earlier campaigns directed to the Presbyterian clergy and to all enemies of episcopacy. A few malcontents, such as Charles Harpur, Daniel Deniehy and E.J. Hawksley cheered Lang on, but they were hardly enough to dump a cargo of tea into Sydney Harbour, let alone to lead a successful war of secession. Lang also found himself in a minority in his opposition to the Crimean War, with Harpur and Deniehy again his main allies. Lang could hardly put on the cloak of pacificism and use the anti-war arguments of Bright and Cobden in England, since few others regularly used such bellicose language as his. Nor was his argument well received that their isolation from the theatre of war incapacitated Australians from forming a judgement on it. Lang himself was seldom reluctant to pass judgements on distant places and times, while few Australians believed that their distance from Europe precluded them from participation in world affairs. Lang infuriated Parkes and others with whom he often co-operated by suggesting that any support given by New South Wales

to Britain's war effort should be conditional on the offer of wider political rights. This seemed very much like the old Irish slogan: England's danger is our opportunity. Lang's most effective ploy was to attack Britain as hypocritical for propping up the Sultan after failing to help the Hungarian rebels in 1849, when the Czar's armies suppressed them on behalf of the Hapsburgs.

Other possible sources of significance

Where the was Lang to look for inspiration, if England and Scotland were broken reeds? The Czardom and the Sultanate were abominations, while the practice of Roman Catholicism brought poverty and superstition in its train. The modern Greeks, despite showing some mettle in overthrowing Turkish rule, lacked the genius of their classical ancestors. In Asia and the Pacific Islands there was little to please Lang, whose 1854 phrase, 'Convicts, Coolies and Chinamen', to describe the immigration policies of his political enemies, was widely echoed. Lang had only contempt for what he knew of Asian governments and societies, and was convinced that large numbers of Chinese immigrants would simply drag down the Australian standard of civilization, if only because (1852, p.272) they were 'entirely ignorant, of course, of our language and laws'. Lang was not impervious to experience and was later impressed by the industrious ways of most Chinese he met in New South Wales and Victoria. He officiated at several marriages between Chinese men and women of British or Irish descent and could not judge the husbands inferior to their wives in literacy or cultivation. In time Lang, indeed, came to be regarded by Chinese Australians as an advocate and defender, but that did not mean that he ever regarded China's past or present as significant or valuable to Australia.

Lang had wide, if erratic, intellectual interests, including a fascination with the origins of the peoples of the Pacific. He supported monogenesis in his 1830 A View of the Origins and Migrations of the Polynesian Nation: Demonstrating their Ancient Discovery and Progressive Settlement of the Continent of America. Lang held that the Polynesians were descendants of eastward migrants from the plains of Shinar, or from Babylonia, in the post-diluvial period and that they had subsequently moved even farther eastwards to populate the Americas. Their past achievements, however, did not constitute for Lang a helpful model for what Australia might become. Lang had strong sympathies for the Maoris, whom he considered to have been grossly mistreated by whalers, traders and adventurers from the West. His solution for their problems, given in his New Zealand in 1839, or Four Letters to the Right. Hon. Earl Durham, was the immediate annexation by the British Government of both islands of New Zealand. Lang held that independence and self-government was right for those able to exercise it, such as the peoples of the British Isles and their descendants, but he considered that protection by Britain, where the Protestant religion and parliamentary institutions were firmly emplanted, was the best way forward for less developed peoples.

Civilization and Christianity

Lang's attempts to defend Aborigines, Maoris and other peoples who practised cannibalism involved him in historical conjectures. In his 1847 Cooksland in North-Eastern Australia, Lang referred to the existence of cannibalism among early Europeans, as attested by classical authors, and even among the Scots of the fourth century of the Christian Era, as argued for by Gibbon. Lang claimed that it was ethically superior to eat parts of the bodies of persons already dead, as the Aborigines did, than to hunt and

kill other people in order to eat them, as had been ancient European practice.

In direct opposition to the opinion of Samuel Marsden, Lang held that conversion to Christianity was the necessary condition for the civilizing of the Aborigines, not the reverse. Lang argued (The Colonist, 5 November, 1835) that the original state of man was, as vouchsaved by the scriptures and confirmed by historical investigation, orderly and godly, rather than savage and brutish, but that apostasy from God's teaching had, among other evil consequences, led to savagery. A restoration of or initiation into true religion would therefore remove impediments to civilization as well as to salvation. Lang did not think the task as easy one; indeed, he thought that a successful missionary would have to adopt the nomadic Aborigine life of hunting and ritual observances in order to gain their confidence and to be in a position to convert them. When the Roman Catholic Father Power sought to administer the sacrament of Baptism to an Aborigine, Tommy, before being hanged, Lang accused Power of impropriety, since the condemned man could not understand the nature of the rite and therefore could gain no possible blessing from it.

When Lang said it was the duty of the Protestant British to populate lands 'tenanted only by the grizzly bear and the timid kangaroo', he was not, of course, unaware, that human beings were also native to those lands, but he was convinced that they must perish in competition with a superior civilization. Lang wrote in 1852 (p.77) of the Aborigines of New South Wales Aborigines' 'Alas! most of them have already disappeared from the face of the earth; the last man of the Sydney tribe or nation, once a comparatively numerous body of people, having died a few years ago'. Lang

had genuine sympathies with Aborigines who suffered from palpably ill-treatment. For example, he moved a motion at a missionary meeting in January 1839, in the wake of the Myall Creek massacre, that (Colonist, 9 January, 1839),

> the frightful atrocities recently perpetrated on the black natives, at Liverpool Plains...(called) for increased sympathy and exertion on behalf of the Aborigines, on the part of all who are friendly to their christianization and civilization, while they demanded the hearty co-operation of those who are merely desirious of preventing such atrocities for the future.

Yet Lang's energetic immigration plans represented a more serious long-term threat to traditional Aboriginal society than did sporadic frontier violence or atrocity.

The Aborigine past presented severe problems to Lang's historical conceptions. Given that the world had existed for nearly six millenia, but that the period since the Flood was much shorter than this, how was it that the Aborigines were divided into so many different groups, whose languages were in most cases unintelligible to each other, that they had failed to develop new arts or even to maintain those known to Noah and his sons, and that they appeared to have no myths or legends which contained any vestige of knowledge of the true origins of mankind? Lang was especially puzzled, because he did not attribute the brutish existence of the Aborigines to any lack of intellectual aptitude. Indeed, he was impressed by the ease with which many Aborigine children learned to read and write, although, like others, he was disappointed that they made only limited use of their facility. Lang condemned the colonists for despoiling Aborigines of their land and for contaminating them with European vices and diseases. He was especially scathing in his 1839 National Sins: The Cause and Precursors of

National Judgements, but he could find nothing in Aboriginal life or thought which could help either them or the colonists to improve the situation.

The American Example

Lang's visits to the United States contributed powerfully to his political transformation. In 1836 he was still fearful (Colonist, 14 January) of 'a high pressure democratic engine from the manufactory of O'Connell and Co.', and considered a nominated Upper House an essential check on a popularly elected Lower House . During his first visit to America in 1840, Lang came to appreciate small units of government and the lack of sharp contrasts between rich and poor. By 1844, when Lang compared Governor Gipps, Bishop Broughton and Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Stanley, with Charles I, Archbishop Laud and Lord Strafford, he urged that the Americans, together with the France of Louis Phillippe, should be called upon for help in throwing off the colonial yoke. With 1776 as the analogy, Lang urged that, in the event of an Australian revolt, British seapower need not prove decisive, since troops could never penetrate effectively inland.

In his 1850 The Coming Event, or The United Provinces of Australia Lang first proposed immediate Australian independence and a federal republic along the lines of the American Constitution of 1789. A republic would be the most suitable form of government for this new brood, although the old hen in London might continue to cackle about the advantages of monarchy. Just as the United States of America had after independence spread rapidly westwards, so would the new United Provinces of Australia become the dominant power of the Pacific. New Caledonia would be the first of many islands to become states or provinces of this great new federation. What

dangers would they have to fear? France and Russia were possible dangers to Australians only because of the British connection. No danger could be offered by the Aborigines, by the cannibals of the Pacific, by the negroes of South Africa, by the puny Spanish republics in South America, or by Asian states, such as China, Burma or Japan. A glorious future faced Australia, if the American path were taken. Lang often argued that sheer distance had made inevitable the separation from Britain of first its American and then its Australian colonies, and he liked to quote on that issue Edmund Burke's great speech on Conciliation with America (Lang, 1852, p.13),

> Three thousand miles of ocean lie between you and them. No contrivance can prevent the effect of this distance in weakening government. Seas roll, and months pass, between the order and the execution; and the want of a speedy explanation of a single point is enough to defeat a whole system.

Lang completely disregarded this argument, however, when his theme was the glories of a vast future Pacific and Antipodean Empire with Sydney as its centre. With similar inconsistency, despite his demand that British power be immediately abdicated in Australia, he held that there was one last political action for Westminster to take (1852, pp.258-60): to ensure that hotheads in Port Phillip, motivated by 'petty jealousies' should not resist the fusing of all Britain's Australian colonies into one homogenous mass.

In an 1854 article (People's Advocate, 28 January), Lang asserted that the United States was the only country in the world which had acted according to the law of God and the rights of man in its colonial policies. The constitution recently offered to California especially impressed Lang. If the American leaders had offered the Californians a constitution similar to that dangled before the people of New South Wales by the British Government, he claimed, a lynch party would have been formed. The common

ploy of threatening to follow the American example of 1776, unless the British Government made immediate and major concessions, was used more by Lang than by any other Australian public figure.

It was the colonizing zeal of the Americans, particularly of the New England Puritans and of European Protestants who joined them, which won Lang's fullest admiration. He argued that the New England colonies alone had done more to fulfil the will of Providence that godly Protestants should subdue and populate the wastes of the world, erecting too a 'bulwark against the kingdom of Antichrist', especially in his Papistical guise, than Great Britain had ever done or sought to do. As a vociferous Voluntaryist, Land could not argue that it was the duty of governments to propagate religion, even the incontrovertibly true religion which inspired Lang himself, but Protestant governments could and should, be held, enable godly Protestant peoples to evangelise, which they would, provided that they were not impeded. In the energy of their westward movement, even more than in the successful establishment of their full political independence, it was to the history of the Protestant United States of America that Lang urged Australians to look for valuable examples and for inspiration to do likewise. Like Wentworth, Lang, during the debates on the establishment of a university in Sydney, suggested (1850, pp.13-4) that the colonists of New South Wales should be ashamed in their tardiness by reflecting on the speed with which the Puritans of New England had established Harvard University.

Lang's admiration for the United States did not embrace the 'peculiar institution'. He was disturbed that the Scriptures should be used to justify slavery, but his most interesting argument was that slavery had its origin in its profitability, so that Abolitionist campaigns would remain

vain whilst a slave-based cotton export brought in so much income. One of his arguments in favour of cotton growing in Australia was that, as well as being immensely profitable, free labour would be more efficient than slave labour and thus undermine the economic basis for negro slavery in the southern American states.

In a very real sense Lang had not found an alternative to British traditions as his significant past, since the path of independence already taken by the Americans and urged by him on Australians was, as he argued himself, the natural political consequence of English and Scottish free institutions. Like Cobbett, Lang made good use too of English precedents of radical action, so that defiance of the law often became the basis of new law and custom. The example of John Macarthur's virtual exoneration after his imprisonment of Bligh was often used by Lang to suggest that any future use of force to secure the liberties of New South Wales would result first in official indignation and condemnation in London and then, very speedily, in indemnity and acceptance of the fait accompli. The names of Judge Jeffreys, Laud and Strafford were readily used by Lang about his enemies, while he and his friends were the Hampdens and Sidneys of their day.

The shape of history

Lang's religious concerns were by no means obliterated by his secular interests, although they often took a subordinate role. On return visits to Britain it was places associated with John Knox, John Bunyan or John Howard, admittedly all in their own ways critics of government, rather than to places of more narrowly political significance, that Lang went out of his way to see. His habit, extremely irritating to many, of comparing his own trials and sufferings to those of the patriarch Abraham, the prophets

Jeremiah, Jonah and Daniel, St. Paul and of Jesus himself did not fade with the years.

Despite his political preoccupations, Lang always concerned himself with the significance for Christian belief of contemporary findings in geology and in related sciences. The landscapes of Australia, so different from those of his native land, stimulated him to write in 1846 an essay, The Mosaic Account of the Creation Compared with the Deductions of Modern Geology. Before writing it, Lang visited Mount Leura, a remnant of an extinct volcano and one of many such in the recently colonized Port Phillip area. Lang pondered on the processes which had created the landscape and the likely time-scale of their operation. He argued for the full compatibility of the Mosaic account with the eons of time seemingly required for the mighty transformations which must have taken place. Lang's view was that the first verse and a half of Genesis simply described the original act of creation and the state of the universe before the operation of the second half of the second verse: 'And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters'. Such movements of the spirit of God might well have taken millions of years to complete, so that the 'days' of creation should be taken as symbolic rather than as literally corresponding with conventional divisions of time.

Lang took up this theme again in 1862 in a lecture he gave in Forbes, included in his Notes of a Trip to Westward and Southward. In the Lachlan goldfields the gold was found in ancient watercourses, known as leads, some 140 feet underground. Lang wondered how the gold had been brought from its matrix, when those watercourses had streamed along the earth's surface and how and when gold and watercourses had subsequently been covered by alluvium

which extended over thousands of square miles. He assured the miners that these processes, although they may have taken millions of years to unfold, were by no means incompatible with the Bible, when both are properly understood. The phrase 'In the Beginning' must be interpreted, he argued, as a very remote past, and each of the six days of creation as a vast period of time. Lang followed British geologists in pointing to significant agreements in Biblical and geological explanation, such as that the earth began as a chaotic mass of incandescent matter, without shape or form. Properly understood, Lang claimed, the work of geologists confirmed the wonderful nature of God's power and was an aid and not a hindrance to faith.

Lang had little opportunity in Australia to reflect on the origins and purpose of ancient human constructions, but such questions often arose in his mind on his frequent return visits to Britain. In 1849, for example, when in the Orkneys, he was deeply impressed by the great Standing Stones of Stenhouse. Of the stones which had once formed a circle of about one hundred yard's diameter, fourteen still stood, but many had fallen and lay around, while others had at some stage been removed, perhaps for other buildings. Lang was caught between wonder at the effort and organizational skill needed to erect these twelve-foot megaliths and dismay that they were part of abominable superstitions, probably involving human sacrifice.

Contemplation of the twelfth century cathedral at Kirkwall, built by the Kings of Norway who had then ruled the Orkneys, filled Lang, not with joy in the faith witnessed by such a feat, but with revulsion against a monument to tyranny and priesthood, erected at the cost of exploitation and oppression. His response to viewing the ruins of Elgin Cathedral was that

only pious fraud and harsh constraint could have secured its construction at a time when Scotland had only one eighth of its mid-nineteenth century population. His inveterate anti-Catholicism not only denied him spiritual succour or inspiration from the greatest material survivals of medieval Christendom, but led him to prefer to them the pagan monuments at Stenhouse, since the Druids, or whoever built them, had received no opportunity to hear the word of God, whereas that word had been heard but perverted by the Church of Rome. During a visit to the great cathedral of Milan, Lang's main response was revulsion that it was the dead body of St. Borromeo, godly in his life as he may well have been, which was the object of worship, not the living Trinity. As with Elgin, Lang thought that the architectural glories of Milan Cathedral had been gained at the cost of the beggary of the people.

Lang and Rome

The evils of the Roman Catholic Church remained a central feature of the significant past to Lang throughout his life. Its doctrines and practices formed in his vision a suffocating incubus upon the human mind and spirit. He feared that Catholicism was a grat danger to civil liberties even when its adherents were in a minority, since Protestants, he argued, naturally took decisions as individuals, whereas Catholics could easily be manipulated from above, through a hierarchial system and ultimately by the Pope himself. In 1852 Lang explained in his Freedom and Indpendence for the Golden Lands of Australia that (p.xi) by his recent coup d'etat Louis Napoleon Bonaparte 'has taught the European world a very important lesson...that there is no security for civil liberty in any country in which Romanism predominates'.

Few experiences delighted Lang more than a thorough exposition, such as one he he heard given in an evangelical Sunday School during his 1840 visit to the United States (1840, pp.198-9), of the falsity of claims for St. Peter ever having been in Rome at all, let alone having initiated an apostolic succession to future Bishops of Rome. Thirty years later the loss of the temporal power by Pius IX impressed Lang as evidence of divine retribution for the proclamation of the false doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and of Papal Infallibility, and, indeed, as a portent that the last days were now nigh.

Romanism and poverty were always closely linked in Lang's mind, as 'Popery and wooden shoes' had long been among Protestants in the British Isles, and his visits to Ireland strongly confirmed this association for him. He claimed (1834, vol.2, p.31) that the line in Ireland between poverty and prosperity co-incided almost exactly with that between Catholicism and Presbyterianism. In his 1841 pamphlet The Question of Questions! or, Is this Colony to be transformed into a Province of the Popedom? Lang argued that not only were the Catholic Irish entering New South Wales in disproportionate numbers as compared with migrants from Great Britain and Ireland as a whole, but that within the Irish Catholics it was the most ignorant, poverty-stricken and violent, namely those from Tipperary, who were best represented. It was not at all difficult for an anonymous correspondent to the Freeman's Journal (31 July, 1851) to quote sections from Lang's writings which described the Irish as ignorant and morally debased, the most infallible aspect of Roman Catholicism as its proportionately greater contributions to prisons and gallows than any other religion, and its religious rites as absurd and blasphemous. Yet many Irish Catholics voted for Lang, to his own surprise and to the disgust of those

who wished to see a solid sectarian voting block. The explanation for the phenonemon may lie in the maxim that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Although Lang laid into the Church of Rome, even more of his energies were devoted to dismantling institutions and laws which were as inimical to Roman Catholics as to him. More positively, Lang had in youth supported Catholic Emancipation and was consistent in his advocacy of civil and legal equality for Roman Catholics. In 1843 Lang told an election meeting in the Port Phillip District that he and Daniel O'Connell were quite alike, the latter being the most abused man in Ireland and he in New South Wales. In his 1849 Repeal or Revolution, a glimpse of the Irish future, in a letter to Lord John Russell, Lang chided the British Government for its sympathies with the national aspirations of Italians and Hungarians and rejection of the same demands in Ireland. The arguments for self-government which Lang advanced for New South Wales and the Australian colonies, he was consistent enough to advance for Ireland too. There was the additional attraction that an independent Ireland would have no claim to export its surplus Catholic population to Australia. Lang's claim that Ireland had been misruled from London for generations through 'ukases from Downing Street', which consisted of 'a mass of folly, injustice and oppression, nay of absolute infatuation and downright insanity' pleased many Australian Catholics.

In New South Wales itself Roman Catholics had no reason to consider themselves singular or exceptional as objects of Lang's criticisms. In his 1847 Popery in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere Lang assailed Abbot Gregory as a principal example of the vices and follies of Catholicism, but within forty-eight pages he dealt at least as savagely with William Grant Broughton and the Anglican clergy and with the Presbyterian clerics he had himself brought out to Australia, but had turned out to be 'four Judas

Iscariots and eight full grown specimens of contemptible shuffling and drivelling sent out as ministers of the Church of Scotland in 1837'. Pleasure at Lang's denunciations of other Protestants, of British Governments, Governors and officials, compensated in the minds of many Irish Catholics for Lang's broadsides against them.

Summary

It cannot be denied that Lang's historical sympathies were far from comprehensive, but more remarkable than what his critics denounced as sectarian prejudices was the wide range of historical interest and allusion with which he suffused any and every debate into which he entered. Even in the case of his strong dislikes, such as the Roman Catholic, the medieval and the Irish, all three of which were closely linked in Lang's mind, he considered a correct judgement on their past to be a matter of great significance and relevance in everyday disputes. Lang was far from unique in ensuring that colonial discourse was neither on the one hand merely provincial and isolated from great historical traditions, nor on the other merely derivative from them, but none of the others who also broadened and deepened political debate in New South Wales did more than he to ensure that the third dimension, that of the past, was added to concerns about the present and the future.

Lang's career is also of particular interest in that, although he came to support the complete legal separation of churches and state, he was able to engage in both secular and clerical roles without too much difficulty. Whether or not his political convictions had the logical relationship to his religious beliefs he thought they possessed, the profession of a full-blooded Christian conception of past, present and future was not

adduced by many of his enemies as a reason why he should stay outside the political arena.

When, after Lang's death, Cardinal Moran offered himself as a candidate for the Federation Convention, more people questioned the appropriateness of his action. Rapidly during the twentieth century the situation changed from one in which there was legal separation between Church and State to one in which it became conventional wisdom that religious belief was an irrelevancy to political debate. Active believers would then play a merely marginal role in legislatives, rather than exert the powerful influence of a John Dunmore Lang.

Chapter Ten

The Significant Past in Roman Catholic Thought

Background

The main alternative perspectives to mainline English traditions in nineteenth century Australian thought about the significant past were provided by the Roman Catholic religion and by Irishness. The two were by no means indistinguishable or identical. As the American Catholic Bishop Verot quipped at the 1870 Vatican Council (Molony, 1969, p.132), 'It is true that the Irish believe in the Pope's Infallibility...but will the Cardinal of Dublin say that they believe Hadrian IV was infallible when he handed over Ireland to the King of England?'. At the decisive Battle of the Boyne on 12 July 1690, a date calculated more than any other to rouse Orange and Green to sectarian dispute, Pope Alexander VIII had given his support to William of Orange, because of Papal disputes with Louis XIV.

The central role of Britain in the wars of the 1790s against the French Republic led to good relationships between Britain and the Papacy during the early years of the colonization of Australia. This in its turn reduced whatever support and sympathy the Catholic Hierarchy in Ireland might in other circumstances have given to the 1798 Rising of the United Irishmen. When, during the 1790s, Douai and other schools for English Catholics in France and the Austrian Netherlands, were closed by the French Revolutionaries, they were permitted to re-establish themselves in Britain and a long chapter beginning in the reign of Elizabeth I came to an end. In the new atmosphere of cordiality it was not surprising that the Vatican should accede to pressure from London that ecclesiastical control over Australian Catholics should be in the hands of English Benedictines rather

in those of Irish secular clergy.

So much being conceded, it is true that, in general, Roman Catholic belief and Irish nationality were intimately associated in colonial Australia. Just as Protestantism had become associated in England with patriotic resistance to national enemies, such as the Spain of Philip II or the France of Louis XIV, so had the Catholic Church become associated with indigenous Irish resistance to English (and Scottish) invasion and rule. During the eighteenth century the Penal Laws deepened feelings of injustice, oppression and hostility, which had their origins in medieval and Elizabethan wars, and in the Reformation and the Cromwellian reconquest of Ireland. The belief became very strong among many Irish Catholics that 'England's danger is Ireland's opportunity', an understandable sentiment which, in its turn, strengthened English suspicions of the Irish and weakened sympathy in England for Irish grievances.

A complicating feature was that Irish national feeling was by no means confined to Roman Catholics: in 1798 and in 1848 Protestants played an important part in the Risings; Protestant supporters of Repeal of the Act of Union in the 1840s and of Home Rule in the 1880s strenuously denied Orange or Unionist charges that Repeal or Home Rule meant Rome rule over Ireland. The Celtic Association set up in Sydney in 1857 and re-established in 1859 under the presidency of John Hubert Plunkett 'to promote and sustain amongst Irishmen and their descendants in Australia the love of the fatherland', specifically banned any discussion of religion. During the Australian celebration of the centenary of the '98, Dr C.W. McCarthy, one of its principal organisers, frequently declared (O'Farrell, 1987, p.238) that the lesson of that year for the Irish, wherever they might be, was that Catholic

and Protestant must work together. The first Appeal called upon 'Irishmen and their descendants, of every shade of Irish Political Belief' for support. The Catholic Hierarchy, however, was suspicious of national movements which were not under clerical influence and which might develop some of the features of continental nationalism which, especially after Papal experience of the Carbonari and of Garibaldi, it had reason to fear. Attempts were frequently made in Australia to emphasise features of the Irish past to which both Catholic and Protestant could respond; on ship and on arrival in Australia Protestant and Catholic Irish often found (O'Farrell, 1984) they had much more in common with each other than either had with emigrants from other parts of the British Isles, but it was the historical sins and crimes attributed to each other by Orange and Green which aroused most passion and engagement.

Catholic attitudes towards the British and Irish Past

Migrations, like conquests and unifications, always pose choices about what should be retained and what discarded of the traditions of the land or people left behind. Irish migrants to Australia during the nineteenth century, whether they went in chains or by choice, were leaving a country whose Gaelic language was undergoing rapid erosion, thus weakening the fabric of traditional beliefs. For some Irish Australians the Irish past was a 'damnosa hereditas', to be jettisoned as soon as possible, but for others it formed a complex of tragic experiences which should for ever be remembered, whether vengefully or in pious veneration. Some wished to shake the traditional bonds of Irish communal life off as a stifling incubus, but others sought to re-create them as best they might. At many levels of consciousness and in many spheres of activity, there were wide variations among Irish Catholic Australians, even though some Protestant alarmists,

such as John Dunmore Lang, feared, and some Catholic organs, such as the Freeman's Journal, hoped to create, a monolithic Catholic political and ideological movement. The existence of such diversity did not, of course, mean that there were no features which, in general, distinguished Catholic patterns of thought from Protestant, or Irish ones from English, Scottish from Welsh.

It is clear, for a start, that many Irish-Australian Catholics felt a deep hostility to British traditions and methods of government and/or to Protestantism in all its manifestations. This hostility was displayed at many times and in many places. Among the most celebrated expressions of hared of England and all that it stood for is Ned Kelly's 'Letter from Jerilderie'. Kelly was Australian-born and had not shown much interest in history of an academic character, but the following passages reveal that there was much, whether actual or supposed, in the past which held deep significance for him (Wannan, 1965. pp.191-8)...

> Fitzpatrick will be the cause of greater slaughter to the Union Jack than Saint Patrick was to the snakes and toads of Ireland...the brutal and cowardly conduct of a parcel of big ugly fat-necked wombat-headed magpie-legged narrow-hipped splay-footed sons of Irish Bailiffs or English landlords which is better known as officers of Justice or Victorian police---he is a traitor to his country ancestors and religion as they were all catholics before the Saxons and Cranmore yoke held sway since then they were persecuted massacred thrown into martyrdom beyond the ideas of the present generation...he would be a king to a policeman who for a lazy loafing cowardly bilit left the ash corner deserted the shamrock, the emblem of true wit and beauty to serve under a flag and nation that has destroyed massacred and murdered their fore-fathers by the greatest of torture as rolling them down hill in spiked barrels pulling their toe and finger nails and on the wheel and every torture imaginable more was transported to Van Diemand's Land to pine their young lives away in starvation and misery among tyrants worse than the promised hell itself...in those places of tyranny and condemnation many a blooming Irishman rather than subdue to the Saxon yoke were flogged to death and bravely died in servile chains but true to the shamrock and a credit to Paddys Land...What would England do if America declared

> war and hoisted a green flag as it is all Irishman that has got command of her armies forts and batteries even her very life guards and beef tasters are Irish would they not slew around and fight her with their own arms for the sake of the colour they dare not wear for years and to reinstate it and rise old Erins isle once more from the pressure and starvation of the English yoke...

A more polished and extended account of the sufferings of Ireland, that provided by Charles Gavan Duffy, is given in the next chapter, but the two were not so very different in essentials. Australian Catholics were deeply divided in their responses to the activities of Ned Kelly, but the Jerilderie Letter had a powerful effect on some of those whose anti-English sentiments were already strong. The ambivalence in some attitudes to the Kelly Gang had, of course, appeared much earlier in bushranging literature. Verses in A.B. Paterson's version of 'Bold Jack Donahoe' include,

> His name it was John Donahoe of courage and renown -
> He'd scorn to live in slavery or humble to the Crown.
> ....
> He scarce had been a twelve-month on the Australian shore,
> When he took to the highway, as oft he had before.
> ...
> For I'd rather range the bush around, like dingo or kangaroo,
> Than work one hour for Government," said bold Jack Donahoe.
> ...
> There were Freincy, Grant, bold Robin Hood, Brennan and O'Hare;
> With Donahoe this highwayman none of them could compare.
> But now he's gone to Heaven, I hope with saints and angels too -
> May the Lord have mercy on the soul of brave Jack Donahoe.

Organised demonstrations in Sydney of Irish Catholic identity started with the laying of the foundation stone of St. Patrick's, Church Hill, in August 1840, although Ullathorne's claim, that before then 'national distinctions had been instinctively avoided in the Colony; all prided themselves on being Australians', was seriously misleading. When W.A. Duncan, a Scottish convert and always regarded with some suspicion by his new co-religionists, wrote in the Australasian Chronicle in April 1841 that

'Our religion is neither English nor Irish, but Catholic', he was finally dismissed from its editorship. Duncan, like Polding, urged (Suttor, 1965, p. 167-8) 'the utter impossibility of doing anything for the Catholic body in these colonies until they shall have transferred their patriotism to their new country', but his influence on Catholic opinion was limited.

Duncan's enemies on the Freeman's Journal feared that what he wanted to bring about might already be taking place. The view of the Freeman's Journal was that, although all should become Australian, this must be achieved 'without the ignominious sacrifice of noble principles - without becoming a recreant to his race and a traitor to his blood... and without giving the oppressors of the land of his forefathers the sweet delight of feeling that the children have despised all the father battled, perchance, bled for'. The Freeman's Journal advised Catholic families that at the very least 'there are a few great chapters of Ireland's story which every father is bound to teach his Australian child: he is moreover bound to make him learn it'. These chapters included the origins of the Celts, the civilization of Ancient Ireland, the foundations of Christianity in Ireland, Ireland as the Isle of Saints and Scholars, and the missionary work of Irish Christianity. These aspects of the Irish past were not narrowly sectarian and were in themselves in no way alien or repugnant to many Irish Protestants. Indeed, the schools histories of nineteenth century Protestant England commonly paid tribute to the great achievements of Irish Christianity in the 'Dark Ages'. It was not common ground that the Freeman's Journal usually sought, however, but reminders of past oppressions of Irish Catholics at the hands of Protestants from England and Scotland, especially those who remained to form the 'English Garrison'.

There were major disagreements among even the most patriotically minded of the laity about the oppressiveness of past English rule, or at least about the tactics of resistance which that oppression might justify. In 1867 under the editorship of Richard O'Sullivan, newly arrived in Sydney from Dublin and soon to depart for California, the Freeman's Journal was at its most vituperative against past and present English policies and sought full support for the Fenian campaigns. The concern created by O'Sullivan among the readers of the paper, to say nothing of the anger aroused among Protestants, made the Catholics of New South Wales particularly vulnerable to a Protestant backlash after the attempted assassination of Prince Alfred in 1868. O'Sullivan's political touch led him to organise a meeting of support for the Fenians newly released from imprisonment in Western Australia at Clontarf, the scene of the attempted assassination, a place deriving its name from the battlefield where Brian Boru had defeated the Norsemen and where O'Connell had backed down under duress from holding his greatest meeting for Repeal. O'Sullivan's activities helped to create the situation in Sydney described by the Protestant Nationalist J. Edward Kelly (O'Farrell, 1987, p.214) in a letter to the Fenian leader O'Donovan Rossa, 'Irish nationality stinks in the nostrils of the "respectable" community, but they glory in being Catholic and loyal to their Queen'. Michael Davitt, during his fund raising visit on behalf of the Irish Parliamentary Party in 1895, noted among Australian Catholics, especially in the homes of the clergy, what to Irish Nationalists was a strange combination of portraits: Queen Victoria, Gladstone, Parnell, Dillon and O'Brien.

The general tendency of Irish Catholic migrants to Australia was to become much milder in their attachment to Irish traditions and loyalties. Charles Gavan Duffy, who in the 1840s in Ireland denounced the policies of

O"Connell as weak and defeatist, was to become known, to his own satisfaction, as 'the O'Connell of the South' after a few years in Victoria; Duffy, as well as his Australian followers, was surprised that there was strong resentment in Ireland that such an enemy of the Great Liberator should be chosen to represent the Catholics of Victoria in his centenary. When the former leader of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, John Flood, was asked in 1888 when commanding the Gympie company of the Queensland Irish Volunteer Corps why he now wore the Queen's uniform, he replied (O'Farrell, 1987, p.214), 'I was never a disloyalist. If we had the Government in Ireland we have here I would have been wearing the Queen's uniform all my life'. The exiled Young Ireland leader Kevin Izod O'Doherty told a gathering in Melbourne in 1883 (O'Farrell, 1987, p.228),

> I can confidently aver that, as regards my own countrymen, a year or two of residence under the free Australian sky suffices to make loyal men of those who have been driven here from home with soured and embittered hearts...we have furled our old flag, the Irish sunburst, with all its attendant bunkum, for good and all...

A few kept the old flags flying, however. After nearly twenty years in Victoria Phil Mahony wrote about an ultimatum to harbour workers to join the reserve forces or be dismissed (O'Farrell, 1887, p.215),

> I pitched the Queen and all her followers to Hell and left. Of course, I was called a dynamitard but what did I care. I was and is still thinking that considering the cruel manner in which poor Ireland is used no Irishman should be so mean as to assist Queen Victoria in any shape or form.

The cultural flag was kept unfurled too, with J.G. O'Connor in Sydney and Morgan Jaguers in Melbourne playing leading parts in the last years of the century in organisation such as Celtic Clubs and Irish Pipers Clubs, as well as in branches of the more politically oriented Irish Land League,

Irish National League or United Irish League. The leading friendly society catering for Australian Catholics, the Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society also had historical and cultural interests, one of its aims being 'to cherish the memory of Ireland'. Yet the Gaelic Revival, so influential after 1880 in Ireland, had little effect on the Catholic laity in Australia. Cardinal Moran and the Hierarchy gave little support to the use of Gaelic, although they strongly encouraged the use of traditional Irish music. Hurling and other sporting symbols of Irish identity never competed effectively in Australia with ball-games of English origin, in which Australians of Irish Catholic descent were highly successful. It was the organised efforts of a priesthood mainly recruited from Ireland even at the end of the century, rather than the more haphazard strivings of enthusiastic laymen, which was most important in fostering a continuing Irish consciousness among Australian Catholics.

The Catholic Clergy and Irish Consciousness

Archdeacon J. McEncroe was a leading figure in early efforts, as he put it, 'to keep alive in the hearts of Irishmen in Australia that recollection and love of their native land, and thereby to animate them to revere and to practice the principles of that Religion, in defence of which Irishmen have endured longer and more cruel sufferings than any other nation' (Suttor, 1965, p.154). To this end McEncroe provided much of the money to set up the Freeman's Journal as an 'Irish and Catholic' organ, when the Australasian Chronicle folded. The Freeman's Journal was conscious of its debt of gratitude and gave McEnroe unfailing support in his attacks on his Archbishop and the 'clique' surrounding him. McEncroe was hailed (Suttor, 1965, p.177) as 'the man whom, of all others, we Irish Catholics look to for support in our struggle for emancipation from the highly harmful influence

exercised over our poor, patient, but highly gifted few secular pastors'. References to 'Saxon lies' and 'English Goths' were the stock-in-trade of the Freeman's Journal under the editorship of Michael D'Arcy, McEncroe's nephew. In D'Arcy's view (Suttor, 1965, p.162), 'England has systematically laboured for nearly three centuries, by rapine, murder, penal laws and confiscations, to root out Catholicity from the United Kingdom'.

When Patrick Francis Moran came to take office as the first Irish-born Archbishop of Sydney, Bishop Lanigan of Goulburn declared (O'Farrell, 1985, p.231), 'I hope the Irish Archbishop of Sydney will give us an Irish Race in Australia living the traditions of their race, and proud of their attachment to Holy Church'. Father P.E. Hurley declared in 1887 (O'Farrell, 1985, p.234). 'I have never here met a bad Irishman who was not a bad Catholic too...When they forget the land of their fathers. The faith of their fathers vanishes too.'

The Irish-born Bishops aimed at a religious colonization of Australia in a way which the Anglican and Scottish Presbyterian clergy seem never to have attempted. Polding was entirely unsuccessful in his attempts to persuade his suffragans to disavow old national loyalities. In 1851 McEncroe petitioned Pius IX (Moran, 1895, p.779) to appoint only Irish priests to Australian sees, since 'The Irish have suffered so much from England that they have in general dislike to be under the best of English Catholic Bishops.' McEncroe also wrote in 1859 to young priests in Ireland asking them (Moran, 1895, p.140) to come out to Australia to heed 'that same mysterious voice, the Vox Hibernorum, that spoke to St. Patrick of old, and said to him, on the part of our pagan ancestors, "Come over, generous youth, and help us"'. James Quinn, Bishop of Brisbane, wrote in 1878 to the

Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda to oppose the introduction of non-Irish priests into Queensland. He claimed (Moran, 1895, p.623) that 'foreigners are not suitable as Bishops here in Queensland. Religion must lose immensely by their appointment...The Irish Catholics, who are the only Catholics here, will lose their faith, and a gross injustice will be done them by placing over them people whose language and habits they don't understand, and who have little or no sympathy with them'. John McEncroe suggested, in his inimitable way, that (Roe, 1965, p.116) the sure way to end 'national antipathies and mutual distrusts' was to create new sees with Irish Bishops.

Robert William Willson consented to become Bishop of Hobart in 1842 only on condition that Father J.J. Therry be transferred from the diocese and that he could have as his Vicar-General another Englishman, William Hall. In the Hobart press Willson was denounced by Irish members of his flock as (Roe, 1965, p.116) anti-Irish' and for 'upholding British supremacy under the veil of Catholicity'. Factionalism was rampant in Western Australia, where the 'Bradyite' faction was bitterly hostile to Bishop Serra, whom they denounced in a petition to Pius IX in 1850 as (O'Farrell, 1969, p.138) 'a foreigner, ignorant of the English language and customs, and a perfect stranger to Irish and English feelings. The Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr J.A. Goold, had no sympathy with 'Bradyites', or with the political extremists McEncroe seemed to encourage, but he held too (Suttor, 1965, p.238) that,

> Everyone will easily understand that to successfully govern a people, even in spiritual matters, it is expedient to be acquainted with their disposition, their inclinations, their habits, their customs and their language...If this holds true for all nations in general, it is in a special manner true as regards the Irish...everyone is aware of the special antipathy of the

Irish towards England.

In his Lenten Pastoral of 1856 (Haines et al., 1962, p.96) John Bede Polding wrote,

> Even national names and animosities, the bickerings of race and clan in times gone by, are renewed and printed and reprinted, as if we had fallen back into barbarism, and as if the very characteristic vice of savages - the handing on the feuds of family and face from generation to generation - had regained possession of us...Before everything else we are Catholics; and next, by a name swallowing up all distinctions of origin, we are Australians; from whatsoever land we or our parents have arrived hither, be it from Ireland, from France, from England, from Scotland, from Germany, we are no longer Irishmen and Frenchmen and Englishmen and Scotchmen, but Australians...That man is a pest and a domestic traitor amongst us, who by naming the name of nation, or race, or class, or past injury, stirs up by word or pen one bitter feeling.

Polding appealed in vain. Similarly, when at the Provincial Council of 1869 which followed closely on O'Farrell's attempt on the life of Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, Polding called on his suffragans to consider themselves only as Australians, not as English, Spanish or Irish, the Irish-born bishops, with only Dr Sheil of Adelaide dissenting, replied through Bishop Lanigan of Goulburn (Birt, 1911, vol.2, pp.351-2) that they would continue to affirm their belief in the primacy of Irish traditions in the Australian Catholic Church.

The appointments to sees made by Pope Pius IX, three Spaniards and twelve Irishmen, but another English Benedictine as Polding's coadjutor, not Dr Murray, the Bishop of Maitland, whose claims they had pressed on Rome, exacerbated these conflicts. Lanigan protested (O'Farrell. 1985, p.219), 'Our flocks are so much Irish that you might as well send an English Metropolitan to a See in Ireland as to Sydney'. His colleagues claimed that Australian Catholicism had already suffered from 'the intrigues of Friars

and Monks' and opposed the continuation of 'the old rotten rule of the Benedictines'. It was ironical that it had been largely the achievement of Polding, whose initial title has been Bishop of Hiero-Caesarea in partibus infidelibus, that the British Government had permitted the establishment of the first Roman Catholic territorial hierarchy under the British Crown since the Reformation, several years before this was conceded in England and in the face of powerful opposition led by William Grant Broughton.

Another irony was that Australian Catholic resentment against the appointment of 'foreign' clergy, initially directed only against Italians, Spaniards and English, came in time to be extended to the Irish-born too. Lanigan, who sought as much as any of his colleagues to 'build up in Australian an Irish Church, that in the coming time, will rival in sanctity and learning, the unforgotten glories of the ancient church of Ireland', admitted in 1885 (O'Farrell, 1985, p.238) that 'There is among the priests growing spirit of dislike to the appointment of men who are strangers to Australia'.

The view that the Irish dimension was too strong in Catholic schools was put very sharply by W. H. Cooper at the O'Connell centenary commemoration meeting in Sydney when he struck a note of discord by declaring (O'Farrell, 1987, p. 218),

> ...the capture of Limerick was made a red letter day, but the date of Cook's landing had slipped out of the calendar...we had no O'Connell here to oppose his divine eloquence and dauntless heart against the wiles of schismatics among us, and therefore it the more behoved every man who wished this country to rise to the status of a great nation to aid in the destruction of these factions...

The Irish dimension which the Australian Hierarchy wished to foster was

not one in which Protestants or social rebels featured. The colonial authorities, like governments in Westminster, were happy enough that the Catholic Church should dampen down Irish disaffection or rebelliousness, but the identification of Irishness with Catholicity strengthened sectarianism and stimulated Orangism. A major expression of clerical control over forces once largely outside the direction of the Church was the organisation of the O'Connell centenary in Australia in 1875. Lack of universal support for celebrating the centenary at all was shown by the decision of an initial Brisbane meeting not to proceed, on the grounds, as a successful formal amendment put it, 'it is inexpedient in this dependency, the nation cherishing the memory of many of its illustrous sons, to single out for honour by a public demonstration, one whose fame principally rests on services rendered in particular to the Church in Ireland'. The Queensland celebration went ahead, thanks largely to the enthusiasm of James Quinn; the Bishop added an 'O' to his surname in a bizarre compliment to O'Connell.

It was not as an Irish Nationalist leader, but as a Catholic statesman and a general benefactor to mankind that O'Connell was presented in 1875. Thus the Englishman Roger Vaughan, then coadjutor to Archbishop Polding, was chosen to give the principal celebratory oration, in which he paid as much attention to O'Connell's work in Jewish emancipation, the freeing of slaves in the British Empire, and in parliamentary reform and free trade as to his successful leadership in the campaign for Catholic Emancipation and his failure to secure the Repeal of the Act of Union. Vaughan's emphasis on O'Connell's blending of loyalty to the Crown with a love for the liberties of the Catholic Church and of Ireland was not historically false, but the misleading impression was often given the O'Connell had been essentially a gifted lay spokesman for policies originating within the Church.

A similar clerical takeover befell the centenary of the 1798 Rising. It was only with the greatest reluctance that Cardinal Moran allowed the bodies of Michael Dwyer, the most celebrated of the exiles of the '98 who had remained in Australia and died there, and his wife, to lie in St. Mary's Cathedral before their ceremonial reburial. When the idea was first mooted of the centenary, Moran appeared to dismiss the Rising as 'a blunder and a crime', adding after there had been angry responses to his words throughout lay Catholic ranks, 'committed by the English Government' - words he claimed had inadvertently been omitted from his original draft. Moran sought to differentiate between Wolfe Tone and other infidel elements in the leadership of the '98, allied with French Jacobins and enemies of the Church, from the mass of ordinary Irishmen who, in giving their lives for the cause of national freedom, were true martyrs to their Church and to Ireland. They had been in no position to know, Moran argued, how corrupted some of those who had falsely seized the leadership had been.

Moran also, in taking over patronage of the Home Rule movement in Australia, sanitized it and prevented it from falling into extremist hands. On the other hand his combination of functions, as in his offering himself as a candidate for the Federation Convention, strengthened the fears of many Protestants that Home Rule would mean Rome Rule. Moran saw the matter as in part being a way for Ireland to enjoy the benefits which Australia already possessed, but Unionists in Britain and Australia doubted that a Catholic majority in Ireland would concede to a Protestant the equal position the Catholic minority had in Australia. In reply, Moran could point to historic grievances in both Ireland and Australia and to the failure of the Australian states to aid Catholic education.

There were thus many facets to the influence exerted by the clergy on attitudes to the Irish past, distant and more immediate. Several decades had passed, however, before Australian Catholicism came, with the succession of Moran to Vaughan, under the full religious leadership of an Irish-born episcopacy.

Benedictinism in Australia

Ecclesiastical authority over Australia's Roman Catholics was first invested by the Papacy in Edward Bede Slater, an English Benedictine from Downside, who was consecrated in 1819 as Vicar-Apostolic of Mauritius, with oversight of Britain's antipodean colonies. The first Vicar-General to be appointed to reside in Australia was William Ullathorne, who arrived in New South Wales in 1833. Two years later John Bede Polding followed him, already invested with episcopal authority. Both were English Benedictines, as was Polding's coadjutor and successor as Archbishop of Sydney, Roger Bede Vaughan.

The early nineteenth century was a low point in Catholic scholarship, following the closures and confiscations of the revolutionary era, but the English Benedictines retained high levels in learning and liturgical dignity, and a reputation for close adherence to the Benedictine Rule. Ullathorne, Polding and Vaughan all believed that the great traditions of European monasticism, which they had experienced themselves at Downside, provided the best possible foundation for the church in a savage land, just as once, in the crisis-ridden Europe of the sixth century, they had enabled civilization to survive barbarian onslaughts. The weakness of the civil order in the Australian colonies and desperate character of much of their

population, convinced the Benedictines that the vow of poverty and the discipline of a proven Rule would be invaluable safeguards against the corruption of the Church. In Ullathorne's words (Suttor, 1965, p.46). 'Past experience convinces me that in young missionary countries the vow of poverty alone can prevent the accumulation of wealth, the bane of the Church and the destruction of the individual'.

The Benedictine Pope Benedict XV agreed with this view, naturally enough, and advised Polding (Molony, 1969, p.39) that he believed that 'the institute that civilized and christianized the North of Europe' might repeat that work, a thousand years later, in the southern hemisphere. Benedict XV told the Spanish Benedictines, Joseph Benedict Serra and Rosendo Salvado, before they set off for Western Australia in 1845 (Moran, 1895, p.563). 'Forget not that you are children of that great Patriarch, our blessed father Benedict; be mindful of the example set you by those apostolic men, our brethren..and remember that you are entering on a work like to theirs'.

The English Benedictines tried in their different ways to show that they had great respect for and sympathy with Irish religious and cultural traditions, while seeking to integrate these in a new unity. Ullathorne described himself to the laity of Sydney in 1839 as (O'Farrell, 1985, p.48), 'but the empty capacious vessel of reception for the gifts of God as they unexpectedly came from many quarters. Ireland, as of old, supplied her saints, and England gave her money'. Polding greeted Daniel O'Connell's release from detention in 1845 and hailed the Repeal of the Union as a movement 'of justice, of morality, or religion, and of God', but such statements did not reduce the offence he gave to many Irish-born priests by his obvious conviction that a well-ordered monastic cathedral, as authorised

by papal decree in 1844, would, by regular recitation of the Divine Office, in choir at the canonical hours, not only display to the world at large 'the beauty of the holiness which is the ornament of the Catholic Church', but might serve to educate and cultivate them as well. Polding encountered strong resistance, and found (O'Farrell, 1985, p.64) that, although the high quality of music he fostered in St. Mary's Cathedral gained much praise among cultivated Protestants, his own clergy and choir regarded the 'Gregorian chant which I loved so much in dear old Downside', with suspicion and as alien to Irish religious traditions.

Polding was encouraged by his Vicar-General, H. G. Gregory, to believe that real progress was being made towards the achievement of his aims. Abbot Gregory's sister wrote in 1848 (Birt, 1911, II, p.9) that 'Here, if anywhere...we see our holy faith practised in its primitive fervour', but the destruction by fire of St. Mary's, after he had invested so much hope and energy in it, symbolized the failure as a whole of Polding's attempt to naturalize Benedictinism in New South Wales. St. Benedict could not rival St. Patrick in the Australian colonies, any more than in Ireland. Under the influence of Cardinal Moran, the achievements of the Benedictines in Australia were played down. As Cardinal Gasquet put it (O'Farrell, 1985. p.224), 'Moran is an aged Cuckoo, who having got possession of a Benedictine nest has always tried to ignore the works of his Benedictine predecessors.' There can be little dissent from the judgement that Polding, in particular, lacked many of the talents which make for successful ecclesiastical administration and leadership, but he made a tremendous effort to place Australian Catholicism within the mainstream of much of what was best in traditional thought and practice.

Polding, Vaughan and the significant past

It is hardly remarkable that Polding, both at Downside and in New South Wales, should have urged his clergy and laity to pay great attention to the discourses of Christ in the gospels and to the epistles of St. Paul, or that he directed his novices to study closely the Rule of St. Benedict. Nevertheless the range and appositeness of Polding's references, especially in his Pastoral Letters is very striking. Old Testament references in his Letters include Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Joshua, Chronicles, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Jonah and Zachariah. Joel and Daniel are frequently cited in Polding's Lenten Pastorals, as are Psalms and Proverbs in all the Pastoral Letters. Polding frequently cited passages in Books relegated by Protestants to the Aprocrypha, especially Tobit and Ecclesiasticus. References to the four Gospels are naturally frequent, with St. Matthew predominating. The Epistles of Paul are frequently cited, and the Apostle to the Gentiles seems to have been, apart from St. Benedict, Polding's main model as missionary or priest. As well as great western saints, such as St. Augustine, St. Cyprian and St. Jerome, Polding cited Greek Fathers, such as St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. He also found instruction in saints whose experiences seemed particularly relevant to different times of crisis, such as St. Genevieve, when the Archbishop of Paris was assassinated, and St. Philip Neri, when the Papacy lost the remains of its temporal power.

Polding saw little but delusion and wickedness in the Protestant past. During the controversies surrounding the establishment of a Roman Catholic territorial hierarchy in Australia in 1843, he described William Grant Broughton as (Molony, 1969, p.14), 'the Pseudo-Bishop of the Anglican church in New Holland'. Polding commented on the Anglican claim to supremacy and jurisdiction (Suttor, 1965, p.122),

> If they claim it by extraordinary authority, let them work miracles in confirmation of their claim. If they claim it by the ordinary authority as successors of the Apostles, they derived their authority from us, and when they left us we took it away from them.

As Broughton did not propose a miracles contest, similar to that between Elijah and the priests of Baal, Polding felt that he held the field. As late as 1869 Polding still recalled with satisfaction (Suttor, 1965, p.67) his securing the first significant Catholic victory in an English possession since 'England's forcible subversion of religion'.

In 1841 in his Report of the Mission of New Holland, or Australia to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, Polding attacked (Moran, 1895, p.234), 'the terrible effects of the factious spirit of the Anglican clergy in Ireland in the past, and their grasping at money', and wrote of the need 'to prevent, if possible, the renewal of such evils in the important colony of New South Wales.' Polding was by 1841 well aware, of course, that Protestant ministers had no clerical monopoly over greed for money. He considered the Anglican clergy the least of his dangers, since 'to suppose that the cold forms of Protestantism can ever have any effect on our abandoned population is absurd. Zeal amounting to enthusiasm is required. So long as Methodism does not come in, we have no rival to fear'. Methodist preachers gained short shrift from Polding too, however: 'I doubt very much whether Methodist Ministers will persevere long. Money is to be made more rapidly by tending the quadruped rather than the biped flock. Hence, most of them who come out here to preach the Gospel, sink into woolgrowers and herd feeders.'

Roger Bede Vaughan was more flamboyant than Polding in his

denunciations of Protestant wickedness in the past. In his 1879 address at West Balmain which fuelled the sectarian flames, Vaughan asked his listeners (SMH, 10 Nov.),

> Do you know that in the days of trial they had a special instrument for squeezing the life and blood out of those Catholics who declined to deny their God? It was a kind of press, with a screw at the top. The Catholic man or woman was shoved into this press, just large enough to hold one; the top was forced down with the screw until it touched the head and back of the victim. Then the real operation begun. By a slow, almost imperceptible, process, the top was continually pushed further and further down till the victim first lost breath, then the frame gradually gave way, and the whole body collapsed into a mangled bleeding mass. This was called 'The Scavenger's Daughter'.

Vaughan's highly selective stories of atrocities, together with his claim that the educational legislation proposed in New South Wales was a 'modern Scavenger's Daughter', more scientific and even more odious than the original, did little to increase sympathy and understanding between Catholic and Protestant in the Australian colonies.

Despite their antagonism to the Church of which it was the Supreme Governor and their abhorrence of the deeds of so many of those who had previously worn it, Polding and Vaughan had a deep respect for the Crown of England and found most of its representatives in the Australian colonies considerate and helpful. In his 1841 Report to Propaganda, Polding described Sir Richard Bourke as 'the excellent Governor', while Ullathorne regarded Bourke as (O'Farrell, 1985, p.38),

> one of the most polished men I ever met. In his younger days he had been a good deal under the influence of the celebrated Edmund Burke...Though not a Catholic, he had a great respect for the Catholic religion.

Polding wrote in 1843 (Haines et al., 1962, p.214) of 'the sublime

principle of Christian allegiance, which teaches us to reverence in our Sovereign the minister of God's authority'. He spoke of 'the many endearing titles our gracious Queen has to our love and gratitude' and contrasted this happy state affairs with past sufferings of the Church,

> The Bishops of Rome, of Smyrna, of Ephesus, and of other cities, with the flocks under their care, prayed constantly and fervently for the well being of the Pagan Emperors under whom they lived, even when doomed to death, victims of unjust and barbarous laws, enacted and executed by these very Emperors...How much more cogently are we pressed...to pray for the external and temporal welfare of our gracious Sovereign Queen Victoria, whose delight is to behold the happiness commensurate with the extensiveness of her sway...

At Victoria's accession the Loyal Address of the Catholic Clergy of New Holland, headed by Polding, gave thanks that in recent years (HRA, I, XIX, p.330),

> The Sceptre has not been laid aside for the Sword; unsullied by the tear of the Widow and Orphan its (Britain's) victories have been bloodless over ignorance and oppression.

In a Pastoral Letter of 1860 Polding went so far as to assert that 'The Church of Australia is more free than elsewhere on the earth', including, one must suppose, France, the Hapsburg Empire or any other Catholic Kingdom or Empire. For that matter when the laity in control of the Freeman's Journal reluctantly submitted in 1859 to Polding's authority after a bitter public squabble, they referred (12 March) to 'the constitution of our Government in this free country, where thank God! there is at present no established Church, and where the different bodies of religionists can be regarded by the Government as only so many sections of that people who, collectively, under the representative system, are the source of all civil power'. It would have been hard to find a clearer repudiation both of the Syllabus of Errors or of any suggestion that fuller freedoms were available

to Catholics in any political traditions outside those of Britain.

In the tense atmosphere following O'Farrell's assassination attempt, Polding not only repeated his call for an end to ancient national animosities among Australian Catholics, and, indeed, among all Australians, but drew attention to what he considered to be a lesson of the Christian past (Haines et al., 1962, p.313),

> From the time that St. Paul bade Christians obey and respect the powers that exist, because their power is of God, even should it be perversely and cruelly exercised...Why have secret societies been condemned again and again, but because they have been known to be foci of sedition and rebellion?

Vaughan was, if anything, even more zealous in proclaiming his temporal loyalty against any traducers. When accused of sedition and disloyalty by Henry Parkes during the Third Reading of the Public Instruction Bill in the New South Wales Legislature in 1881, Vaughan replied (Murtagh, 1959, p.96),

> Am I, who have...ever detested sedition as much as I have tyranny, to be branded with sedition. Cannot I appeal to many a bloody struggle since Agincourt, when he whose name was given me - Sir Roger Vaughan - was knighted on the field of battle by the Prince himself? Does my accuser imagine that, though the people of this country are opposed to my religion, they will stand silently and approvingly and see me gagged? Will they not repel this attempt to silence me and will they not treat as it deserves this unworthy effort to stain the minds of my fellow colonists with the notion that I am not true to English authority as well as to English freedom?

In 1854 Polding greeted with joy the news of the end of the Crimean War, including in his Pastoral Letter reference to 'that United Kingdom which is our common fatherland, to which we still attach the endearing name of home' (Haines et al., 1962, p.231). Yet he was no mere sycophant: his Pastoral Letter at the conclusion of the Indian Mutiny in 1858 sharply criticized the 'mismanagement, and the reckless greed of commercial gain'

which he held to have been its root cause. He found it difficult (Haines et al., 1962, p.252) to calculate 'the relative culpability of heathen atrocity, and of unchristian dealing in Christian men'.

Polding's sense of history was profoundly different from that of McEncroe who wrote in a Circular Letter to Clergy in 1854, at the outbreak of the Crimean War (O'Farrell, 1969, pp.222-3).

> We have evidence in the pages of History that the Christian Army obtained decisive victory over their enemies the Turks at the memorable battle of Lepanto, in 1571, when prayers and supplication were made, throughout the Catholic World to the Blessed Virgin, to help them by her intercession, and the Holy Pope Pius V then announced to the assembled multitude at Rome, the very hour when the Christians obtained the victory at Lepanto, at the distance of nearly 500 miles. Again in 1716, we find the Christian Army, under Prince Eugene of Savoy, defeating 200,000 Turks at Belgrade, when Pope Clement XI directed the Faithful to call on the Virgin Mary to intercede for them at the Throne of God, and they were accordingly successful.

Why similar prayers and supplications had been of no avail in earlier centuries in preventing the Turks, and the Arabs before them, from driving Christianity out of its original heart-lands, was not explained by the Archdeacon. He did recall, however, that the immediate enemy was not the Turks, who were instead the allies of 'our Gracious Sovereign, allied with the Emperor of the French, who had placed his fleets and army under the protection of the Queen of Heaven, the Patroness of the French Nation'. This did not embarrass McEncroe since the Emperor of Russia and his subjects, although nominally Christian, were 'Greek Schismatics' and 'as bitter enemies to the Catholics of Europe as the Sultan and Turks had ever been in past ages'. The monarchs of England had, of course, also been in past ages bitter enemies of many states of Catholic Europe, but the

Archdeacon resolved that difficulty with the thought that 'the first Christians prayed for the success of the Armies of the Pagan Emperors, even in the midst of their persecutions, and thus did our forefathers in the Faith pray, during the long period on which they suffered from the cruel Penal Laws of great Britain, for the King, and all in high station, that they may lead quiet lives...' If the Tsar's Catholic subjects, numerous as they were in Poland in particular, prayed for the success of his armies, while the Catholics of France and Great Britain prayed for their defeat, the Queen of Heaven faced a real problem, so Protestants conjectured who read McEncroe's view of the situation.

Polding could point out to his Irish suffragans that the Roman Catholic Church in the second half of the nineteenth century was engaged in worse conflicts with the Catholic House of Savoy than with the heretical Crown of England. Polding looked for historical parallels to the 'atrocious wrong and oppression' of the seizure of Rome, comparing the policy of the Italian government with 'the kiss of Judas, re-enacted with deadlier guilt' and with 'the wicked policies of Julian the Apostate and of Antiochus Epiphanes' (Haines et al., 1962, pp.167-169). Polding declared,

> Truly it is said that history repeats itself, and sad enough it is that in Syria three hundred years before Christ; in Constantinople and Alexandria in the fourth century after Christ; and again in Italy in the nineteenth century after Christ it should be possible to find such close parallels of inquity and infidelity.

The Pastoral for the Jubilee Year of 1875 went to the Old Testament for further comparisons to the iniquities of the Italian government (Haines et al., 1962, p.363),

> As Israel fell into the hands of her enemies, into the power of

> the Midianites, the Ammonites, and the Philistines, so seems it almost to be with the Holy City.

Later in the pastoral the misfortunes of earlier Popes were compared with sufferings of Pius IX,

> Think of the early history of the Church when, one after the other in succession thirty-three of our Sovereign Pontiffs were put to torture and to death for their religion. Think of St. Martin, who died in exile and became a martyr, of Leo V who was cast into prison; of Benedict V who was carried off into Germany; of Benedict VI who was first imprisoned and then murdered; of John XIV, who was cast into St. Angelo, and died of starvation; of Alexander III, who was flung into a dungeon on the very day of his consecration, and spent seven years of his Pontificate as an exile, amongst the Italian hills...

Much of the second half of the 1875 Jubilee Pastoral was devoted to an historical account of the nineteenth century as a period of deep decline,

> ...the world has been drifting steadily in an anarchical direction...the general indifference of Christians, secret societies, the desecration of marriage, and the mutilation and corruption of the Word God. The upheaving of civil society as a necessary consequence followed upon the relaxation of the moral order and the decay of bonds of faith...Parma, Modena, Bologna shook with revolution. Rome was filled with sectaries and Carbonari...Then Spain, taking lesson from France, fell into an anarchy from which she has not yet freed herself; civil war raged in Portugal; Switzerland and Holland took to ill-using the Church; while Prussia was preparing the way for those tyrannous persecutions of the Falck Laws which have thrown her from the light and freedom of the C19th back amongst the arrows, hatchets and tomahawks of uncivilised barbarians. Pius IX...was cast out of Rome by the revolution of 1848. He was deprived of two-thirds of his patrimony; and at this very hour he is despoiled of all, save of the Vatican and its garden...In Prussia the same temper and greed, aggravated by an intellectual vanity and military tyranny peculiar to a despotic imperialism, have been concentrated into a network of atrocious penal laws...The rebellion of 1789 was against kings; that of 1830 and 1848 against nobles; and now the masses of the people, like a heaving restless ocean, are dragging down everything to the level of the fierce democracy, which, having lost its guide in the Chair of Peter, is marching towards such a reign of anarchy and terror...

That Jubilee Pastoral is considered by the editors of Polding's

Pastorals (Haines et al., 1962, p.355) to be Vaughan's work, but the two men shared many similar views. Although they placed the tribulations of the Pope at the heart of their extrapastoral concerns and sought to dampen down old national loyalties, they both had great sympathy with the past sufferings and the continuing grievances of Ireland. Vaughan asked the Catholics of Irish descent in 1879 (SMH, 10 Nov),

> Have I not since the very day I landed here, now well nigh six years ago, held out the hand of brotherhood to all of you? And did I not tell you that our sympathies were welded together by bonds of ancient suffering, and that the thought of what your people went through on one side of the channel, joined to the thought of the persecutions suffered by my own on the other - did I not say that this bound me to you with an unconquerable sympathy, strong as charity, which is more powerful than death?

In this sympathy with Irish grievances on the one hand, and their strong loyalty to much in central British political traditions on the other, Polding and Vaughan might have been able to make an important contribution to a fusion of rival traditions into what Edward William O'Sullivan termed Anglo-Celticism. However, their Benedictinism, their aloofness from most of the day-to-day preoccupations of their laity, and from those of many of their secular clergy too, and their inescapably upper-class Englishness, inevitably reduced the effectiveness of their influence among Australian Catholics. Perhaps the nadir of the relationships between English Benedictine Archbishop and his Vicar-General and Irish laity was the charge of the Freeman's Journal in 1859 (23 Feb.) that, in consequence of the request of Abbot Gregory that a Protestant physician be appointed to the Committee of Management of the Catholic Orphan School, they had experienced.

> the bitter shame of seeing our Pastor undo the work which thousands of heroes, clerical and lay, from the time of Thomas a'Becket until now, have sacrificed life and limb and goods in

one unceasing warfare to obtain and preserve for us.

Few historical analogies can ever have seemed as inappropriate as that one to John Bede Polding.

Significance in the Catholic Past in Australia

As late as 1890 Dr Nicholas O'Donnell, perhaps the most ardent representative in the Australian colonies of the Gaelic Revival, constrasted the poverty of Australia's history with that of Ireland,

> No history excites, and no stimulant potion
> Of legend rides Fancy on dalliant wing;
> But that little isle in the northern ocean
> Has cradled my race, and to it will I sing.

During the course of the nineteenth century, however, several important beliefs were formed among Australians of Irish-Catholic descent about the experiences of their predecessors. Some of these beliefs were based on a sub-stratum of truth, but became increasingly detached from historical facts as time went on. These beliefs concerned, among other things, the character of the early convict population and the reasons for their transportation, and the treatment of Catholics and of Irish people in general in the early colonial decades.

The myths of origins were basically that the great majority of Irish Cathlics transported to Australia were honest patriots, victimized for political opposition to an oppressive regime, and that in character and conduct they were distinctly superior to non-Catholic convicts. William Ullathorne, who sometimes seems to have tried to compensate for his Englishness with extravagant expressions of sympathy with all things Irish, helped to launch these beliefs during the 1830s. Ullathorne wrote (1941,

p.115) that 'many men were marked and transported for the infringement of penal laws, for aggrarian (sic) offences, and minor delinquincies, whilst those from England were, with rare exceptions, punished for direct aggression on property or the person'. Dean Kenny wrote (1886, p.35) of the 'anti-Catholic bigots' who surrounded Macquarie, adding 'I suppose Penal Laws were to be expected in a Penal settlement'. Cardinal Moran claimed (1895, p.59) that Macquarie sought to extirpate the Roman Catholic religion in the colony, a position endorsed by Archbishop O'Brien, like Moran a prolific historian of Australian Catholicism, who wrote of Macquarie (1928, vol.1, pp.219-220), 'Catholicism he hated as ardently as did most Protestants whose religious reading had been confined to such treatises as Foxe's Book of Martyrs and John Knox's History of the Reformation'. In 1905 Moran claimed, with special reference to the rebels of 1798, but with wider application, (O'Farrell, 1987, p.52) that 'the great body of the people were genuine martyrs. Hatred of the Faith was the motive of those who forced them into rebellion, and they freely died for their Faith'. By 1921 Archbishop Kelly of Sydney could argue that the 1798 Rebellion was deliberately provoked by Pitt's Government as a pretext for imposing the Act of Union upon Ireland, but he was writing in the midst of a new Irish Time of Troubles.

Father J.A. Knowles claimed in 1903 in the Austral Light that a moral and pious Irish population was deliberately debauched by the British Government, which compelled them to associate with the worst English felons, England's 'own degenerate offspring'. Fortunately, Father Knowles held (O'Farrell, 1987, p.52), 'England had been thwarted in her fell design...These very men whom she had fondly hoped to see descend to the lowest depth of shame and infamy, became in time the brightest ornaments and

most respected citizens of her colonial empire'. The cunning English seem to have ensured that they benefitted one way or the other: either the Irish were consigned to infamy or they brought wealth and power to the British Empire. Equally, if Irish Catholics did not prosper in Australia, this was scarcely surprising, given the unfairness of their treatment; when they did prosper, that was testimony to their capacity to rise even above such handicaps. That any transformation of Irish convicts into ornaments and respected citizens did not take place overnight is shown by an 1839 letter from John O'Sullivan, a successful Irish Catholic freemigrant to Archbishop Murray of Dublin (Moran, 1895, pp.128-9),

> some of our unfortunate and wretched countrymen are foremost in perpetrating the shocking crimes that mark this colony...I did not think the Irish character capable of performing the villainous deeds that are daily blazoned forth...the blood-thirsty and treacherous acts of the ruffians are enough to make the genuine Irishman hide his face in shame.

Father Power wrote in 1828 to the Colonial Secretary about his flock (Waldersee, 1974, p.45), 'The first reform in the morals of the colonists can originate not with the old, who appear to be almost incorrigible, but with their youthful offspring, before they have time to be initiated into the vicious habits of their parents.' Ullathorne, too, was far from unaware of imperfections among those to whom he awarded victim status, writing in 1835 (pp.iv-v) of 'scum upon scum and dregs of the offscourings of mankind...a people, such as, since the deluge, has not been...whose men are very wicked, whose women are very shameless, and whose children are very irreverent. Whose occupation has been, and is, as that described by the prophet of sorrow, "to steal, to murder, to commit adultery, to swear falsely"'. Ullathorne's denunciations of the wickedness of the convict population, Catholic as much as Protestant, were used to great effect by the

Molesworth Committee to condemn transportation and the whole convict system, but his later works helped to persuade opinion that the Catholic portion of that convict population had not been so bad after all, and that the evils they committed were only responses to injustice and persecution.

Political offenders were proportionally more numerous among Irish Catholic convicts than among others, but not markedly so. O'Farrell estimated (1985, p.33) that 'political rebels in the strictly nationalist sense were less than 600 in the whole history of transportation, that is about one and a half per cent, and nearly all those arrived before 1806'. O'Farrell added that 'social rebels', those convicted of crimes of violent protest against property and poverty, were larger in number and constituted about a fifth of all Catholic convicts, but the large majority, as with those from the rest of the British Isles, were common criminals.

Even those who fought at Vinegar Hill were not always selfless patriots. Joseph Holt, one of the best-known of the leaders of the 1798 Rebellion transported to Australia described many under his command as (O'Farrell, 1987, p.24),

> a band of ruffians...many of them were inclined to become robbers...they were desperate and bloody minded...religion was pretext and excuse for their deceit...The political feeling, or sense of injury which brought them out in the first instance, was forgotten; and living so long at freequarters, made them think robbery and murder lawful.

The exiled leaders of the 1848 Young Ireland Rising also expressed disdain for the typical Irish Catholics they met in Australia. Patrick O'Donohue, who briefly edited The Irish Exile and Freedom's Advocate while he was in Tasmania (O'Farrell, 1987, p.49), found it 'contemptible to be

mixed up with the petty cabals of colonial rogues and rapparees - I look upon an Irish rebel in too respectable a light for that...God help me among such bloody curious medley of queer fellows'. John Mitchel, whose evidence some may discount on the grounds that he was a Presbyterian, although a fervent Irish patriot, wrote of the common Irish convicts he met, 'What a blessing to these creatures, and to mankind, both in the northern hemisphere and the southern, if they had been hanged'. Mitchel's general judgement of Australia was that 'there is no action, no living, properly so to speak, in a country so remote from all the great centres of the world's business'.

A second set of beliefs about their predecessors which gained currency among many later Australian Catholics was that they had suffered harsh religious persecution. Ullathorne was again a principal source of such claims. In his 1837 The Catholic Mission in Australia, Ullathorne claimed (pp.8-9) that Catholic convicts were victimized: 'the Irish Catholic was often, at that time, treated with extreme rigour. Clerical magistrates of another creed, awarded him the scourge and darksome imprisonment for refusing to enter the protestant churches, and to mingle in a worship which his conscience disowned'; one convict told him that 'he had never spoken one word of English until it was made fifty lashes to speak a word of Irish'. Ullathorne also alleged that Father Jeremiah O'Flynn, the first Catholic priest to come out to Australia voluntarily, had been persecuted by 'the British civil authorities', who were 'jealous of his happy labours'. At the St. Patrick's Day dinner in Sydney in 1841, Ullathorne cLaimed (Roe, 1965, p.123), 'If, sir, I for one moment take a retrospective view of my religion in this colony...what do I find during that period but one continued scene of cruelty and dire oppression'.

It is true that no provision was made for the religious needs of Catholic convicts, or, for that matter, of Catholic soldiers or free settlers, in the establishment of New Holland and Van Diemen's Land as penal colonies. It is also a reasonable argument that, since Roman Catholics relied more on the administration of the sacraments by priests and less on the reading of the Bible than did Protestants, the lack of spiritual leadership was especially harmful for them. On the other hand, there was an equal lack of religious provision for Protestants other than Anglicans - and little enough for Anglicans. Attendance at services was regarded as more important for mustering and official announcements by the colonial officials than for any spiritual benefits, so that refusal to attend, irrespective of reasons offered, was sometimes followed by extra punishment. Ullathorne's insinuation that Samuel Marsden and Governor Macquarie had treated Roman Catholic convicts vindictively has, however, little evidence to support it.

Claims of severe persecution were often made by leading members of the Catholic clergy when they were out of the colonies. John Bede Polding told a distinguished gathering, which included Daniel O'Connell, in London in 1841 (Sydney Herald, 21 Oct. 1841) that, in Britain 'when a wrong was done they were able to obtain redress, but such was not the case in New South Wales', a land where, he claimed, 'persecution had prevailed in is direst form'. The evidence offered by Polding for this claim was, like that of Ullathorne, that Father O'Flynn should not have been deported and certainly should never have been locked up in a cell, and that before his arrival in New South Wales Catholic convicts were victimized for their religion. The claims made by Ullathorne and Polding roused great resentment in the colonies. Furthermore, as Molony noted (1973, p.195), 'Polding himself had been treated with dispassionate impartiality by the very authorities whom he

was so ready to berate...he was replied to with promptness, courtesy and generosity, and he was entertained by Lord Stanley "in a splendid manner" before his departure for Sydney'.

There is little doubt that during the French Wars, Irish Catholic convicts were regarded with considerable suspicion. Hopes expressed by some of them (Collins, 1798, vol.2, pp.16-7) that French naval power in the Pacific might enable them to turn the tables on their captors strengthened such suspicions, while William Johnston, transported for his part in the '98, and the other organisers of the Castle Hill Rising of 1804 were as much concerned with long-standing Irish grievances as with immediate issues in New South Wales. Governor King blamed the Castle Hill Rising, not only on Jacobin and French influences, but on priestly intrigues which, he feared (King to Hobart 14 Aug. 1804, HRA, I,V, p.99), were a long-term legacy of Irish Catholicism.

There were very few priests to engage in intrigue, but Fathers Harold, Dixon and O'Neill, all of whom were transportees, were employed as government chaplains, just as many ordinary Catholic convicts, such as Michael Dwyer, were appointed as constables or in similar positions of responsibility, if they showed contrition and an industrious disposition. Father O'Flynn entered New South Wales without government authorization, was highly disingenuous in his replies to legitimate questions, and refused to give undertakings not to engage in activities without specific government permission. In such circumstances, Macquarie's displeasure would have been just as strong against any non-Catholic minister of religion, as Samuel Marsden discovered.

In few recitals of persecution was there any mention of the many ways in which government authorities or individual Protestants helped Catholics. Father J.J. Therry was not always the easiest of men to deal with, as his own ecclesiastical superiors well knew, but Waldersee (1974, p.33) comments on his correspondence with Protestant clergy in the Therry papers, 'every one of them breathes forth an air of friendliness and co-operation'. Offers were made to distribute Douai Bibles and other Catholic literature on his behalf. Other forms of help included the efforts of the Protestant Committee to Aid Catholic Brethren, presided over by John Macarthur, which gathered some two thousand signatures from respectable Protestants in support of additional government aid to Catholic chaplains, who were, of course, already in receipt of government stipends. Contributors to the cost of building the first Catholic chapel in Sydney included a Wesleyan Minister, the Revd. R. Mansfield, and J.E. Manning, a leading Anglican layman. Comparable assistance was given in most other states. When the Spanish Benedictine Mission at New Norcia faced bankruptcy, Governor Clarke gave free use of the Court-House to Rosano Salvado, an accomplished musician as well as a devoted missionary, for a fund-raising concert, whilst the Anglican vicar lent his chandeliers and the services of his verger to operate them (Bourke, 1979, pp.22-3). On the vexed question of the treatment of Father O'Flynn, Michael Hayes, one of many Irish Catholic convicts to become prosperous and respected citizens of New South Wales, wrote to his brother in 1817 (Waldersee, 1974, p.13) that 'Several Protestants expressed a desire of hearing Mr Flynn...the Governor in private said a clergyman of the Roman Church possessed of talents would be of great utility in this colony'.

O'Flynn's stay in Australia gave rise to what many Australian Catholics

believed to be the first miracle vouchsafed on the continent: the belief was that when Fathers Therry and Connolly arrived in Sydney in 1820, the former found that a consecrated wafer left behind three years earlier by O'Flynn remained uncorrupted. In 1953 Archbishop O'Brien expressed major reservations about the claim (Murtagh, 1959, p.227),

> It is strange that in the contemporary documentation, which is frequently of a kind that should necessarily have referred to so unusual a procedure, there is no allusion to it. Circumstantial evidence, at least, does not support it. Yet apart from the basic element in the tradition, namely the leaving of the Blessed Scarament, it seems very unlikely that the sacred Hosts would have remained for two years at Davis's cottage, because in November 1819, a French priest came to Sydney, as chaplain to the French expeditionary ship L'Uranie, and had constant dealings with the Catholics.

Nonetheless many Catholics made the uncorrupted Host part of their significant past, whereas Protestants, even those with the fullest faith in the miracles of the Bible, remained at best sceptical about the claim, which was commonly placed on a level with the belief of some early Irish convicts that China was but a little way beyond the Blue Mountains.

Sometimes an event about which there was no factual dispute created deep divisions of interpretation. A pertinent example was the scheme to finance the emigration to Australia of Irish Catholic orphan girls. John Dunmore Lang denounced it as part of a Romanist conspiracy to gain control over New South Wales, whereas Father Patrick Dunne and Archbishop Goold were among Catholic clerics who feared that good Irish girls were being placed at risk, in both body and soul, by being offered as wives or concubines to depraved 'bushmen and savages' (O'Farrell, 1987, pp.84-7).

An important aspect of expressions of grievance among Australian

Catholics in the nineteenth century is their tense. During the middle third of the century the general tendency was for present satisfactions to be contrasted with past injustices. To some extent Australian Catholic opinion went in step with Irish Catholic opinion after the Catholic Relief Act and during the period of O'Connell's co-operation with the English Whigs and of Peel's funding of Maynooth. The Famine, the death of O'Connell, the Young Ireland Rising and the growth of Fenianism all transformed the Irish political situation, but the effect of these events in worsening relationships between Catholic and Protestant in Australia was perhaps no greater than that of the great doctrinal changes which marked the pontificate of Pius IX. It was not the tragic turn of events in Ireland which widened the sectarian gap and led, indirectly at least to the ending of state aid for non-government schools and to a greater cultural isolation of Catholic Australians from their countryment, but the renewed doctrinal strife which followed the Papal encyclicals. A new situation was created, even if it be fully granted that no new doctrines were enunciated under Pius IX, but only clarification made of established dogma. Catholics who employed liberal arguments to support their political aspirations in Australia faced dilemmas once liberalism in its most generally understood sense was made anathema by the Vatican.

Pre-1850 Protestant Attitudes to the Catholic Past

The core beliefs of most Australian Protestants during the early nineteenth century included, in addition to theism, an identification of morality with Christianity and an acceptance of the Bible as God's word, all of which they shared with Roman Catholics, an aversion from what they conceived to be superstitious and persecuting in Catholicism. The spirit of the Gordon Riots, in the sense of hatred of supposed Papal despotism, of

subservience to absolutist regimes, of the cruelties of the Inquisition, and of deliberately inflicted poverty and ignorance by priests determined to keep their grip on the minds of the people, lived on, even in many minds not given to general reflection on religious matters. In New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, even more than in most parts of England, religious antagonism was strengthened by contempt for, although not markedly by fear of, the Irish among them, who were generally considered to have a lower material and cultural level than the other national groups represented in the colonies.

Among the more fearful was Samuel Marsden, who claimed in 1807 (O'Farrell, 1987, p.39) that 'if the catholic religion was ever allowed to be celebrated by authority...the colony would be lost to the British Empire in less than a year'. Marsden went on,

> The number of catholic convicts is very great...in general composed of the lowest class of the Irish nation, who are the most wild, ignorant and savage race...men that have been familiar with robberies, murders and every horrid crime from their infancy...they are extremely superstitious, artful and treacherous...They have no true concern whatever for any religion nor fear of the Supreme Being...was the catholic religion tolerated they would assemble together from every quarter not so much from a desire of celebrating mass, as to recite the miseries and grievances of their punishment, the hardships they suffer, and to enflame one another's minds with some wild scheme of revenge.

However, on this, as on many other questions, successive governors ignored Marsden's advice.

There was relatively little religious dispute in the first three decades of the British settlement, the arrival of John Dunmore Lang heralding the first significant controversies. The Gazette could claim with

some reason in 1830 (10 Aug.) that 'In no other part of the globe is the odium theologicum less visible than in New South Wales.' The lack of disputation on the Catholic side was, however, more the result of an absence of priests and of educated laity to give voice to grievances than of general satisfaction.

Among more educated Protestants, or at least among those with Evangelical sympathies, Tractarianism in England gave some cause after 1830 to fear 'creeping Romanism'. A leading Anglican layman in Adelaide, Marshall Macdermott told a meeting in 1848 (Molony, 1969, p.48),

> I need hardly remind you of the rivers of blood which were shed for the achievement of the great Protestant Reformation, which enfranchised the human mind from bigotry, ignorance and superstition; nor that the scope and tendency of the Tractarian movement is to restore the blackness of darkness and thraldom from which we have been emancipated.

Among wider sections of the population, not least among Ulster Protestants whose close acquaintance with Catholic neighbours had rarely led to greater mutual sympathy or understanding, the transportation of larger numbers of Irish Catholics was of greater moment than any theological disputations. The activities of William Ullathorne, especially his criticisms of squatters and others to whom convicts were assigned, caused sharp reactions and aroused historical controversy. The Sydney Morning Herald declared in 1838 (6 Aug.),

> We will not allow the English Protestant Colonists of New South Wales to be depressed by a faction of low Papists who are notoriously the opponents of all those civilizing institutions that tend to dignify and advance mankind.

William Grant Broughton denounced the establishment of a Roman Catholic territorial hierarchy as (Shaw, 1978, p.164) 'an act of direct and purposed

hostility' to the Church of England and as a claim that hitherto New South Wales had 'no canonical bishop, no Catholic Church, no such administration of the Holy Sacrament among us, as shall be effectual to everlasting salvation'. Broughton shored up Anglican defences against Roman Catholic attacks by issuing a pamphlet which sought to put the propriety of Matthew Parker's consecration beyond doubt, and by distributing throughout his diocese Parker Society editions of Anglican theologians and volumes published in the new Anglo-Catholic Library.

There was Anglican annoyance in other colonies too at the apparent success of Polding's initiative. In South Australia Charles Lowe told a protest meeting in Adelaide in 1842 against alleged Papal aggrandisement that (Molony, 1969, p.48) 'They were present to deny that the Bishop of Rome ever had or could have had lawful jurisdiction over that city and diocese' and to register 'their hearty disapproval of the corruptions of Romish doctrine, and the pretensions of Papal supremacy'. Similar sentiments were raised when a few years later the Roman Curia, perhaps encouraged by the Australian precedent, proclaimed the establishment of a territorial hierarchy in Great Britain. The Sydney Morning Herald editorialized (15 March 1851),

> the people of England have indeed demonstrated to the world, and thundered in the ears of the Sovereign Pontiff that...they are at heart truly and staunchly PROTESTANT, and will permit no encroachment to their PROTESTANT rights, no insult to their PROTESTANT feelings.

Yet, despite such rhetorical flights, opposition among Australian Protestants to the establishment of the Roman Catholic territorial hierarchy was not very vigorous; many Presbyterians and Dissenters, led by John Dunmore Lang, seized the opportunity to attack hierarchies in general,

including the Anglican episcopate. In Britain the Ecclesiastical Titles Act rushed through both Houses of Parliament by Lord John Russell remained a dead letter, not a single prosecution ever being brought forward under it. The majority of non-Catholics were willing to concede to Catholics the sorts of religious freedom and of educational provision Protestants thought suitable for themselves, and which they supposed, inaccurately on the latter point at least, would satisfy Catholics too. In addition, as explained above, practical help by Protestant clergy and laity to hard-pressed Catholic priests was by no means uncommon in the Australian colonies during the first half of the century.

Pre-1850 Roman Catholic Attitudes to Protestantism

T.L. Suttor held (1965, p.41) that between 1840 and 1870, although his claim, in so far as it is valid for that period, must have some force both before and after it, 'the vast bulk of the Catholic population...had no notion of the inner history of Protestantism, in Australia or anywhere else, no feeling for its psychology and its present problems. Protestantism was a great wall labelled "Keep Out"'. It could also be said that knowledge, or supposition, among Australian Catholics about the outer or public history of Protestantism was, more or less, confined to events in Ireland. Even Charles Gavan Duffy, who had a wider range of historical knowledge than the vast majority of Australian Catholics declared (Suttor, 1965, p.119), 'When you talk to an Irish Catholic of his creed being a symbol of persecution and Protestantism a symbol of liberty, he may well think you mad'.

When Catholics did refer to the history of Protestantism it was generally in markedly unfavourable terms, as in the opinions of John Bede Polding stated above. Reminders of the dangers inherent in the Protestant

reliance on uninstructed reading of the Bible were frequent: Francis Murphy and William Ullathorne were among the speakers in 1839 at a meeting in support of a Catholic petition on religion and education, at which (O'Farrell, 1969, p.258-9) Murphy spoke of Catholic opposition to 'a system which makes the sacred book of God a common class book, and which allows every child to interpret for himself the mysterious volume, because the Church, taught by the experience of ages, has long since learned that the wasp and the bee draw honey and poison from the same fragrant and beautiful flower'. Ullathorne warned that 'Protestants and Church of England men have powerfully developed in their writings the mischiefs consequent on degrading the sacred volume itself into a mere book for school exercises'.

John McEncroe developed the same argument in 1840 in an essay later included in his Searching the Scriptures (O'Farrell, 1969, pp.81-2). McEncroe concerned himself with 'those whose misfortune, rather than fault, it has been to be born of parents involved in, even culpable, error, and to be educated in the delusive and fatal error that each individual is able and competent "by searching the scriptures" to come to a certain and saving knowledge of all the sacred truths of revelation..."sects, schisms and heresies" exclude from the kingdom of heaven as well as "robberies, adulteries and murder"'. In contrast, McEncroe maintained, the Church of Rome had always been able to avoid heresy, and its 'light shines to the end of the earth to enlighten all who sit in darkness.' It is, of course, a formal truth to state that heresy cannot prevail in the Church Militant, just as treason cannot prevail in a secular state, since 'if it prospers, none dare call it treason' (or heresy), but McEncroe's line of argument was deeply uncongenial to all Protestants who encountered it. Highly abhorrent to Protestants, too, was Polding's reference to the translators of the King

James's Bible and its sixteenth century predecessors in English as,'Wicked men, whose object was plunder and sensual gratification, under the pretext of religion, translated the Word of God in the Sacred Scriptures and fashioned it to their own purposes.'

On the other hand, Murphy, Ullathorne, and McEncroe assured Protestants that they considered properly directed knowledge of the Bible to be of great benefit in the development of the Faith, while Polding, in a series of letters to the Australian utterly denied that Catholics were forbidden by the Council of Trent to read the Bible. Throughout his life Polding recommended that Catholics should gain a proper knowledge of Scripture. He advised his laity (Haines et al., 1962, p.96),

> Portions of the Sacred Scriptures you will read or cause to be read with the greatest respect and reverence. The Historical Catechism of Fleury, and History of the Bible, the History of the Christian Church, Butler's Lives of the Saints, the Catholic Christian Instructed, are works, all or some of which at least, we wish to be introduced into every family.

In 1839 Polding authorized a pamphlet, The Touchstone of Faith, which declared that Catholics revered the Bible, that priests had no power to forgive an unrepentant sinner in the name of the church, and that religious persecution of Protestants was an evil which the Catholic Faith did not countenance. Polding also ordered the distribution of William Coppinger's Principles of Roman Catholicism, a pamphlet which allowed that the Church might commit error in civil policies, that the Pope was fallible in matters of faith and doctine, as well on temporal questions, and that equivocation and mental reservation, in so far as they had been practised by individual Catholics, were spiritual evils, and that the Church enjoined civil obedience to heretical regimes. In general during his early years in

Australia Polding sought to find common ground with those Protestants who showed a decent respect for the Catholic church and its traditions, rather than to emphasise the areas of disagreement. A somewhat irritated Ullathorne recalled later in England (1941, p.158) that the Archbishop was happy to be cast in the press as the representative of 'a reformed Catholicity, that was universally charitable and tolerant', whereas he, his Vicar-General, stood charged with 'all the old mediaeval bigotry and intolerance'.

In the course of attacking Anglican claims to establishment and ascendancy, Polding was led to criticize all such claims. During the controversy about his status at the Governor's levee in 1839, Polding wrote (HRA, I,XX, p.270),

> the question at issue regards not vestments and habiliments, crosses and rings, but something of infinitely higher importance; whether each religious denomination is to enjoy freedom of conscience on the footing of perfect equality, or whether a hateful exclusiveness is to be introduced and established; whether one, whom the Right Honourable Lord Glenelg had distinguished as 'the Bishop of the Church of England in Australia' is to be the only recognized Spiritual Head in the Colony, or whether each religious denomination recognized by the Government in its Head and in its Members, looking upto Her Gracious Majesty as a common Protector and friend, free from all unseemly jealousy and contentious bickering for exclusive favour and domination, shall be recommended on the distinctly avowed basis of perfect equality...

This eulogy of voluntaryism was echoed in Tasmania by Bishop Willson, supported in this at least by his laity, who in 1846 described the Church Act as (Roe, 1965, p.110) 'the MAGNA CHARTA OF OUR RELIGIOUS RIGHTS AND STANDING.' It was also a constant theme in the speeches of Roger Therry and John Hubert Plunkett. During the 1840s Caroline Chisholm attacked sectarianism in immigration schemes and in the care of destitute women, and

established a multi-denominational committee to supervise her Immigrants' Home. Catholic temperance societies sought non-Catholic members and made them welcome. In 1846 Plunkett advised the Catholics of Maitland to continue to support the non-sectarian provision made in the district hospital, since (SMH 8 Oct),

> such a separation would be a strange departure from the sound policy which has been observed during the successive administrations of Sir R. Bourke and Sir George Gipps...the object of which has been to amalgamate all Christians as closely as possible in harmony, good feeling and charity towards each other.

John McEncroe, after explaining that non-Catholics stood in mortal sin because of their heresies, added (1841, p.68) that unwarranted suffering had taken place during the time of the Inquisition, but because of causes beyond the control of the church. A syllabus entitled Vindications was issued in 1845 by Francis Murphy, by then Bishop of Adelaide, which seemed to many Protestant readers to accept many of their standard positions. In 1846 the Morning Chronicle published extracts from Rev. John Gother's A Catholic Represented and Misrespresented, which asserted that Catholics were not obliged to believe the Pope infallible, 'this being a point never defined by the Church', although they were 'obliged to show that respect, submission and obedience which is due to his place'. When a document modelled on Murphy's was issued in Port Phillip in 1849, it drew in response a pamphlet by William Trollope, an Anglican clergyman, Are the Catholics of Port Phillip Tridentine Romanists?, which noted significant deviations in Murphy's publication from the doctrines on idolatry, Mariolatry, the Pope's power to remit sins, the use of the secular arm against heretics, and reading of the Bible, from the pronouncements of the Council of Trent.

There was a significant tendency among Australian Catholic publicists during the 1840s to suggest that their differences from Protestantism were exaggerated by bigots for sectarian ends. An extreme manifestation of liberal theology was J.J. Therry's assurance to the people of Hobart in 1839 (Colonial Times, 9 April), that he was ready 'cheerfully to sacrifice...everything but the stict integrity of faith, and the essential purity of morals. Even the discipline of our Church, sacred and salutary as it has been proved to be, might be materially altered'. Father Therry wrote in 1842 (Roe, 1965, p.112) that Protestantism had become 'simply a protestation against error, wherever it exists, and not, as formerly, against the Catholic Church'. It is not surprising that Father Therry, who enjoyed great personal popularity, was able on occasion to gain Protestant support, even that of Orangemen, against his Bishop.

In 1840 Therry advised Catholic parents to send their children to mixed schools set up under Governor Franklin's version of the British and Foreign Schools Therry wrote (Moran, 1895, p.254) that 'The high character' of the members of the Board and its Secretary' was 'sufficient guarantee that no objectionable interference with either the doctrine of discipline of the Catholic Church would be permitted'. Therry later complained that the regulations were not being fully observed, but at that time he found nothing intrinsically wrong with a mixed system, provided that the withdrawal of Catholic children from prayers and Bible-reading conducted by non-Catholics was guaranteed. On the question of seeking common ground with protestants, John Joseph Therry was at one with his Bishop, Robert William Wilson, if on few other matters.

Catholic tendencies to liberal positions were marked in the 1830s and

1840s in educational controversies. When in 1835 William Ullathorne and Roger Therry opposed Governor Bourke's plan to introduce the British and Foreign Schools system, wherein suitable passages of the Bible would be read in classrooms without doctrinal gloss or commentary, they argued that it would be better to have no religious instruction in the schools. In 1836 Polding openly supported the Irish National system, in which most of the school day was devoted to secular instruction, with specific times made available during which parents could opt for ministers of religion of their choice to give denominational instruction. Polding claimed (Australian, 23 Aug. 1836) that in Ireland the National System had 'smoothed down animosities...encouraged the spread of education...and introduced a noble range of feeling.' He added, 'I cannot condemn on the evidence now in my possession, a system which has received the sanction of such eminent divines and scholars as those confessedly are who compose the Board of Education in Ireland...As regards its fitness for the colony, no evidence for its unfitness has yet been adduced; the trial is yet to be made'. In other words in 1836 Polding did not find in the history of Catholic education any blanket condemnation of a system which had as its heart what Governor Bourke called the separation of 'literary and moral, from religious instruction'. Polding's favourable attitude to the Irish National System led Broughton to suspect that it was 'a jesuitical device' for preparing 'a way for the ultimate establishment of popery (Fogarty, I, pp.141-2).

The appointment of the Scottish convert W.A. Duncan as editor of the Australian Chronicle, started in 1839 as an organ of Catholic opinion in New South Wales, also indicated a conciliatary attitude towards non-Catholics, since he believed that on several controversial questions, including highly sensitive educational issues, there was much to unite Catholic and

Protestant as well as to divide them. Duncan made a powerful case for the fostering of common elements in Christian belief and tradition in a lecture he gave in Brisbane in 1850 (O'Farrell, 1969, I, p.197),

> And surely there is sufficient ground to all Christians of all denominations in this country, whereupon to fix the basis of good education. We all speak the same English language - with some variety of accent, it is true...Again, we all adhere - professedly at least - to the same principles of Christian morality. We all receive the holy Scriptures as a divine revelation. We are all perfectly agreed in the principles both of ethics and of physics. The rules of arithmetic and geometry are the same to all of us. If we have some prejudices on certain matters of history, these are - thanks to the researches of recent writers - every day becoming gradually fewer, and the whole field of antiquity is open ground to all.

It is hard to think of a claim that has been more completely falsified by subsequent events, even if it be conceded that it was justified on the basis of Duncan's experience of inter-denominational co-operation and sectarian conflict. Such arguments were not then, however, as unusual as they were twenty years later, and Roger Therry, John Hubert Plunkett, Edward Butler and Caroline Chisholm, in their different spheres of activity, also advocated close co-operation with Protestants.

Sharper confrontations: Catholic vs. Protestant

Events in Ireland and Italy during the 1840s were at least as important as those in Australia in increasing antagonism between Australian Catholics and Protestants. In Ireland the Famine and the 1848 Young Ireland Rising had powerful indirect effects on sentiments in Australia, as well as leading to a significant rise in Irish immigration, which itself exacerbated Protestant fears. It is unlikely that deaths in Ireland from 1846 to 1848 would have been any fewer had John Mitchel or Charles Gavan Duffy been in charge rather than, first, Sir Robert Peel, and, subsequently, Lord John

Russell. Duffy was a Free Trader and as unlikely as the English Whigs immediately after the Repeal of the Corn Laws to prohibit the export of wheat from Ireland or to interfere with trade more than seemed absolutely necessary. By a terrible irony the distribution of the foodstuffs collected in Britain for Irish famine relief may have aggravated the death toll by bringing together large numbers of people, including typhoid-bearers, at the distribution points. The Irish leaders did not during those terrible years use the slogan which later became popular that God sent the blight, but the English sent the famine, nor was the 1848 Rising a protest against alleged inhumanity in Westminster during the famine. Within a few years, however, in the Australian colonies as well as in Ireland and in the United States, it became conventional wisdom among Catholic publicists to proclaim, as the Victorian put it (2 Dec. 1862, p.392), that the Irish received no genuine rights from England but that 'the right to die of starvation in a workhouse is still reserved to the people of a country whose exports glut the markets of foreign countries'. The Victorian also accused the English of rejoicing at Irish starvation: the London Times, it claimed (4 April 1863, pp.2-3), had, on an unstated occastion, gloated over the extirpation of the Irish and expressed satisfaction that they had 'gone with a vengeance to lands far remote'.

In Italy the defeat in 1849 of the Roman Republic and of the nationalist movements throughout the peninsula by Hapsburg (or French) troops and with the full blessing of Pius IX, whose earlier liberal leanings had been rapidly jettisoned, was greeted with dismay be most Protestant opinion in Britain and Australia, and, indeed, by many of the Young Ireland leaders whose own aspirations were not very different from those of Mazzini and Garibaldi. The issue of the temporal power of the Papacy was to deepen

divisions between Australian Catholic and Protestant down to the entry of Victor Emmanuel's troops into Rome in 1870 and well beyond. The experiences of Pius IX of Garibaldists and of other groups associated with the Risorgimento helped to convince him of the dangers of modernism and of doctrines of progress in all their guises, and to set the pattern for the intensive doctrinal confrontations of the following decades, in which historical claims and counter-claims were always prominent. The political conflicts of 1848-9, together with the great doctrinal pronouncements of the pontificate of Pius IX, led to major rifts within European Catholicism, but in Australia there were very few 'Old Catholics', of the type of Dr Dollinger, or violent anti-clerical Catholics of the sort so numerous in France, Italy, Spain or Portugal. The absence of the first was perhaps the result of the thinness of theological study among Australian Catholics; the virtual absence of the second may have arisen from the traditionally close links between priests and laity in Irish Catholicism, although Daniel Deniehy and Charles Gavan Duffy, who had been described by Cardinal Cullen, the mentor of several of the Australian bishops, as 'the Irish Mazzini' sympathized with Italian nationalism and voiced in different ways opposition to clerical domination.

The Australian hierarchy fully supported the Pope in his defence of the temporal power and in his general criticisms of the nationalism as well as of the liberalism of the age. James Quinn, in a lecture he gave soon after his arrival in Australia, condemned (Molony, 1969, p.33) 'in the strongest terms the vile attempts of the secret societies throughout Italy, allied with the statesmen of England, to sow discontent and to stir up the embers of revolution throughout the Papal States'. His brother Matthew, like him soon to become an Australian bishop, supported the formation of an Irish

Brigade to fight for the Pope against Garibaldi's Republicans and against the armies of Piedmont. Matthew Quinn asked (Moran, 1895, p.376),

> Is it sensible for Irishmen to fight, for the last three centuries, England's battles all over the world - and not England's only, but those of every savage with whom she allies herself, and shall they be laughed at if they should shoulder a musket for the love of the head of their Faith and the staunchest friend of their fatherland?

As Charles Henry Davis, the first Catholic Bishop of Maitland, lay dying in 1854 (Birt, 1911, 2, p.349),

> he asked for a magazine he had been reading a few days previously, and he requested the attendant to read a passage that he pointed out. It related some of the impious practices of the Carbonari in Italy. When the reader had finished the Bishop said he hoped he had only been dreaming that he had so read it himself. He then appeared most deeply grieved, and said that he could not have believed that men would let themselves sink into such an abyss of wickedness.

Although the Italian question did not create a serious rift between cleric and lay, it certainly intensified bitterness of feeling between Catholic and Protestant. The Sydney Morning Herald compared Pius IX very unfavourably with his predecessor Benedict XV, claiming (10 Jan. 1853), 'In place of a wise and tolerant Pontiff, we have to deal with a bigot'. The Melbourne Argus made comparisons from the English past, declaring (23 Aug. 1861) that 'Tonsured bearers of inflammable matter are as rife now about Italy and France as in England in the days of Elizabeth', while the Jesuits, inconspicuous for some time, had found congenial employment 'in this subterranean work'. 'Jesuitical' and 'Loyolaian' were well-used adjectives in the Australian non-Catholic press during the 1850s and 1860s.

Australian Protestants found it hard to reconcile the claims of their Catholic compatriots for full civil equality, irrespective of religious

belief, in the British Empire, with their ardent support for papal claims that it was the duty of the State to ensure adherence to the certain truths established by an infallible church, and that to extend toleration to error was to emperil the salvation of each citizen and to allow the body politic to be corrupted. The denial of civil and religious rights in the Papal States, together with the persecution of Protestants in Spain, and to a lesser extent in other Catholic states, were frequently aired in the Australian press under headings such as 'Religious Liberty in France (Melbourne Herald, 15 Oct. 1861), 'An Italian Story' (Age, 5 March, 1861) and 'Protestantism in Tuscany' (Age, 15 Feb. 1860).

The standard historical argument of militant Protestants was that the past proved that Rome would use whatever arguments were most convenient, but that its aim of domination had not and could not change. As the Presbyterian Rev. I. Hetherington put it when commemorating the tercentenary of the Scottish Reformation in 1860 (Age, 15 Aug.),

> it was still their duty persistently and consistently to protest against the gross misrepresentations of God's truth by the Roman Church, remembering that its doctrines were still the same as when the first noble army of reformers protested against them, even unto death.

Protestant organs usually associated progress in general with the progress of Protestantism, although, as the Christian Times (26 Nov. 1859) noted, there was a 'progress in corruption' or general regression associated with Romanism,

> If we are desirous that this land of our adoption shall rise in the scale of moral grandeur, and be to the southern hemisphere what our own beloved land is proving herself to be in the northern, the centre of religious light and religious liberty...then the principles for which Wickliff and Latimer, Knox and Tindale, Hooper and Jewel, lived and laboured, suffered

> and died must be our principles...The numberless evils which at the present moment are afflicting...Europe, may be almost exclusively attributed to the influence and ascendancy of Rome...And only as we raise the standard of truth here, and build up barriers against the progress of corruption, can we hope to enjoy blessings similar to those that we enjoyed at home.

It was not infrequent, however, for the more responsible non-Catholic press to attack simplistic anti-Roman propaganda. David Blair, the editor of the Weekly Review and Presbyterian Messenger, who had a nose for Popish Plots, was often chastised by other Protestants for attacks on Catholics. The Melbourne Argus, itself a severe critic of many of the policies of John O'Shanassy and of Charles Gavan Duffy, put the rabble-rousing of Fawkner and Blair in its historical lineage (17 Oct. 1862): 'The memory of TITUS OATES, of the estimable Mr BEDLOE, of the pious Dr SACHEVERELL, of the gallant Lord GEORGE GORDON is green again as the old familiar cry No Popery is shouted from the democratic platform.' When, undismayed, Blair delivered on Guy Fawkes Day, 1862, at the Protestant Hall a violent denunciation (Age, 6 Nov.) of attempts during the Counter-Reformation and more immediately to 'undo the great work of Protestantism which Luther had originated' and detailed the 'atrocities and butcherings' of Protestants which had taken place at the instigation of many Popes, the Melbourne Punch commented (13 Nov. 1862) that 'we certainly do not envy the taste of a lecturer who, emulous of the maniacal bigotry of Lord George Gordon and the accommodating zeal of an Exeter Hall beadle, would select such a subject to be discussed at a building having such antecedents and on such an anniversary'.

After James Smith, the editor of the Melbourne Punch, was made Parliamentary Librarian by O'Shanassy, he gave several lectures on 'Irish Character from an English Point of View' (see Pawsey, 1983, pp.70-1; 184-5) which sought to dissipate 'a vulgar error' concerning 'the many traits to

the Irish character which are either systematically overlooked or disingenuously distorted'. Blair's Weekly Review was able (13 Dec. 1862) to remind Smith of 'the hundreds or so of columns he had filled with recapitulations of Irish helplessness, Irish dependence, Irish savagery, Irish bigotry, Irish ignorance, Irish indolence, and a thousand other objectionable Irish qualities' before his appointment.

As Bishop of Melbourne, Charles Perry found any co-operation with Roman Catholics a painful undertaking. Perry wrote in 1850 in the first issue of the Church of England Messenger that Rome was 'an apostate and idolatrous Church, the subject of the prophetical denunciations of Daniel, St. Paul and St. John'. On the other hand, his successor, Dr James Moorhouse, was to emerge as one of the few influential Protestants to support the Catholic case when the end of state aid was threatened. Bishop Moorhouse said in 1878 (Argus, 8 Oct.),

> Nor can I look upon the endeavour to starve the Roman Catholic into the acceptance of what his soul abhors as a measure of real expediency. That method was tried in Ireland and we all know with what measure of success...I will not join in the howl against Rome...Can I forget that Roman Catholics, with all their errors, love my Redeemer and that having such love they are nearer to my heart than the most enlightened secularist...Let others do as they please, I will never unite with secularists against Rome to keep Christ out of the Schools of this colony.

In 1864 the issue of the Syllabus of Errors marked a new effort by the Catholic Church to oppose and, if possible, to reverse, what its spiritual leaders conceived to be the main heresies and evils in the modes of liberalism and secularism becoming increasingly influential. The Reformation, with its emphasis on the individual will, was blamed as the source of these destructive forces. The Sydney Morning Herald was not unfair in its comments that 'The eighty points which the Pope concemns

include all the fundamental axioms on which European life is now based' and that in propositions 15-18 the Pope 'carefully points out that whoever imagines a Protestant can receive eternal salvation is most seriously in the wrong'. Even more antagonism was aroused among Protestants by the final proposition of the Syllabus that it was an error that 'The Roman pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself to and settle his differences with progress, liberalism and modern civilization', although glosses were offered to the effect that it was only particular manifestations of these with which Pius IX refused any compromise.

The effect of the Syllabus, together with that of the new definitions of the Immaculate Conception before it and of Papal Infallibility after it, was to widen the gap between Catholic and Protestant, but to make Catholics in Australia, as was the case in most other countries in which they constituted a minority, more closely-knit than ever before. The developments among Protestants and Catholic were not symmetrical, since it was a declining minority of Protestants who remained zealous in anti-Catholic or any other religious sentiment, while the majority became increasingly indifferent to doctrinal and historical dispute. The diatribes of John Dunmore Lang, John Pascoe Fawkner or David Blair became increasingly alien to Protestants of almost every shade, but Roger Bede Vaughan's 'Scavenger's Daughter' speech was in no way untypical of the language used to hold together the embattled Catholic faithful.

Contrasts between periods of Australian Catholic attitudes to mixed schools and other aspects of liberalism should not be made too sharp: there was no sudden turning point like Pius IX's volte-face of 1848. It was in 1844 that a petition against the Irish National System was first presented

to the Legislative Council of New South Wales (Fogarty, 1959, I, p.180). In 1849 Dr P.B. Geoghegan told the Denominational Board in Victoria that 'the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church imposed on the bishop the supreme management of the youth of his diocese', a task in which Protestants could not properly share.

Nonetheless it cannot be doubted that there was a far greater willingness among Australian Catholics to consider some sort of mixed schooling system and to identify elements in civic and moral traditions that they held in common with Protestants in the years before Pius IX's challenges to contemporary thought. Roger Therry, Plunkett and Duncan continued their advocacy of common schools, but very few leading Catholic clergy co-operated with Protestants after 1850. The most prominent among this minority, James Quinn, the Bishop of Brisbane, was an active builder of Catholic schools, but had few worries about any immoral effects the government schools might have. He not only approved of the abolition of state aid to religion, but held that Protestant baptism was valid and welcomed non-Catholics on committees for Catholic purposes, such as the building of All Hallows School in Brisbane.

The rest of the hierarchy insisted ever more vigorously on the need for Catholic children to be initiated into Catholic traditions and values in a fully Catholic atmosphere. Secular or 'general Christian' schools, with or without the reading of the Bible, and irrespective of which version of the Bible it might be that was read, came under increasing attack, culminating in Vaughan's denunciation of them as 'seed-plots of future immorality, infidelity and lawlessness'. One of the few prominent Catholic laymen publicly to oppose the Joint Pastoral of 1879, in which those words were

used, was M. Fitzpatrick who asked in the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales (NSWPD, 1879, pp.328-9), 'How is it that it never occured to the whole Roman Catholic world before now that these schools were seed plots of future immorality, infidelity, and lawlessness?...Are we to look for the patrons of this demoralising work in men like the John Hubert Plunkett, the late Roger Therry, the late Edward Butler, or William Augustine Duncan who survives...?' Fitzpatrick was mistaken in suggesting that such sentiments had never been expressed before the Joint Pastoral of 1879, but his general point was correct: that until recently, that is before the promulgation of the Syllabus of Errors, they had not been dominant in Roman Catholic thought in Australia.

Lay objectors such as Fitzpatrick were few, however. Even Charles Gavan Duffy, who had distanced himself earlier from Archbishop Goold's criticisms of the state education system of Victoria claimed in 1878, to the disgust of some of his moderate Protestant supporters, that the state schools pandered to the dirty, the foul-mouthed and the criminal; half of their teachers at that time were Catholics who had taught in Catholic schools before the end of state aid forced their dismissal and replacement by members of religious orders. There were few protests when the 1895 Pastoral Letter of the Australian Bishops condemned the state schools as 'poisonous founts'. Archbishop O'Reilly of Adelaide was merely repeating standard advice when he declared (Southern Cross, 21 April, 1899),

> That the version read was that of the Douay could in no wise affect the principle at stake. Bible reading pure and simple, even under the supervision of a Catholic, was not in the opinion of Catholics sufficient; it was not even safe religious teaching.

The increasing separation between the education and the temper of

religious belief of Catholic Australians and the rest did not in itself lead to sharp clashes in public culture, perhaps because in many ways, at least in contrast to European Catholicism (O'Farrell, 1987, p.67),

> Irish Catholicism was virtually 'Protestant' - austere, quiet, dignified, low key, with relatively undemonstrative liturgy. Especially from the 1850s, Irish priests were preoccupied with a reformatory puritanism close to the style and stance of Protestant evangelism. Victorian Protestantism with its emphasis on respectability, reserve, and decorum had an immense influence on the conventions of Irish Catholicism.

Of swingeing attacks on the errors of Protestantism there was no shortage at all, however. One of the most bitter public denunciations was made in the published version of Archbishop Redwood's sermon at the dedication of the rebuilt St. Mary's Cathedral in 1900, which declared (O'Farrell, 1985, p.279) that 'Protestantism has ever since the Reformation been the helper and instrument of the worst foes of Christianity. It desecrated the home, it polluted the marriage bed, it lowered the dignity of womanhood, it devastated the school, and it stopped the progress of science.' Had this type of argument, so strongly in the tradition of the Syllabus of Errors, been the only major strand in Australian Catholic discourse, there would have been very little common ground indeed for shared citizenship with non-Catholics. By 1900, however, a new Papal initiative had, without rejecting the doctrinal revolution of the pontificate of Pius IX, helped to rescue the Catholic Church from the isolation or marginality from Australian public life which seemed to threaten it during the 1880s.

The encyclicals of Leo XIII on the social ills of the late nineteenth century helped Australian Catholics who were critical of individualism to find important common ground with others opposed to laissze-faire regimes which appeared to benefit the rich at the expense of the poor. Not all of

Leo XIII's initiatives led in this direction: his 1894 encyclical Praeclara Gratulationis, which proposed a revived Christian unity on what seemed to be exclusively Roman terms, antagonized most non-Catholic opinion in Australia. It was the De Rerum Novarum, which provided a possible basis for wider social solidarity and more united political action between Catholic and non-Catholic, once Moran took up its basic theme and sought to present the Catholic Church as the traditional defender of the poor against the rich. Although he conceded that they might be misdirected, Moran claimed in 1890 that 'the present labour organisations are really the old Catholic guilds under another name...formed to protect the workman from tyranny, and to secure the workman just payment for his skill and labour'. The medieval principle of the 'just price' was to re-emerge in Australia, largely as a result of Moran's mediation of the new Catholic social doctrines, in the arbitration system of which H.B. Higgins was the dominant figure in its early years. The social ideas of Leo XIII and of Moran were of the type derided by Marx and Engels as 'feudal socialism' and as a step backwards rather than forwards in relationship to the 'classical' political economy of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, but they provided a useful ideological basis for the Australian Labor Party, which in its first half century was led mainly by Roman Catholics. Moran was not elected to the Federal Convention (and his candidature may have been an error), but he was certainly closer to election than any previous or contemporary member of the Australian Hierarchy would have been. Although 30,000 Protestants petitioned the Commonwealth Parliament in 1902 to protest against Sir Edmund Barton's visit to Leo XIII and his acceptance from the Pontiff of a gold medal, the visit itself indicated that during the last two decades of the century important elements of Australian non-Catholic opinion had become much more sympathetic towards Roman Catholicism.

Moran and the Significant Past

That the most valued traditions of Irish Catholicism proved fully compatible with the overall political framework of the Australian colonies at the end of the nineteenth century, despite a strong sense of past Irish and of early Australian Catholic grievances and despite the wider divisions arising from greater secularization among the non-Catholics and more sharply segregated schooling for Catholic children, owed much to the thought and policies of Cardinal Moran. Moran wished to place Irish religious piety, not Irish Nationalism, at the heart of Australian Catholic thought. Moran supported Irish Home Rule, but so did the Liberal Party in England, Scotland and Wales, together with nearly half the electorate of the United Kingdom. Had his only choice been between an independent Ireland, ruled by such men as had been prominent in 1798 and 1848 and in the Italian Risorgimento on one hand and a more equal position for Ireland within the United Kingdom, Moran would have chosen the latter.

Moran had a deep reverence for the priestly saints and martyrs of Ireland, particularly Oliver Plunkett, and an abhorrence for past persecution of Catholics in England as well as in Ireland, but he recognised that in Britain, and even more so in Australia, a basic freedom and equality had been achieved by the Catholic Church, whose position in many states with populations and governments which were nominally Catholic was much worse. He had little sympathy with the past policies of the English state, but he considered that further major progress for both Roman Catholicism and for Irish equality was possible within the general structure of the British constitution. When he accepted the freedom of the city of Dublin in 1888 Moran declared (O'Farrell, 1987, p.163),

> And whilst the Australians are thus one in heart and one in hand with their brothers of the dear mother country, (i.e. Ireland) we are not the less loyal to the empire of which we are proud to form part. In our sympathy with your struggles in the cause of liberty, we are impelled, not by hatred of England, but by love of Ireland; the freedom which we enjoy is the mainstay of the empire's strength, and we desire that Ireland should, to the fullest extent, enjoy the same freedom, without which the empire cannot stand.

Moran was concerned with what he conceived to be Australian rather than Britsh causes, but he developed a notion, not utterly unlike those entertained by Broughton and by Lang in their distinctive ways, about the role accorded to the British Empire by Providence. Despite all the evils English rule had brought to Ireland, the spread of British power had taken the Catholic faith in its Irish form to many lands. Australia might well be the springboard for the conversion to Catholic Christianity of China and the islands of the Pacific. Moran told his clergy in 1888 (O'Farrell, 1984, p.266), 'I trust that one of the fruits of Australia's faith shall be the spreading of the light of truth through those vast countries, and the gathering of those nations into the one saving fold.' Without the power developed by Britain these possibilities could not have arisen. Failures to carry out missionary work effectively in the Pacific had been, Moran maintained, the inevitable result of entrusting such work to Protestants, whose efforts were, and must continue to be, futile, fruitless and devoid of true spirituality, but he was confident that Australian Catholicism, if given adequate opportunity, would realise the immense missionary potentialities which God's prospering of the British Empire had opened up.

For such plans to mature the British Empire had to remain in existence for some time longer. Moran supported W.B. Dalley's offer to send a contingent from New South Wales to fight in the Sudan in 1885. The

proportion of Catholics in that expeditionary force, as in the Australian contingents which supported Britain in 1899 in the South African War, was slightly higher than their proportion in the population at large.

Moran buoyed the morale of Australian Catholics by his confidence in the future as well as his pride in the past. He told Archbishop Walsh of Dublin in 1886 (O'Farrell, 1985, p.277), 'The Catholic Church is assuming every day a position of greater importance whilst the Protestant Church is breaking up and sinking in public estimation.' In similar vein Father Michael Phelan (O'Farrell, 1985, p.278) claimed in 1893 that Anglicanism in Australia was disintegrating, because,

> The props of crown, aristocracy, respectability, centuries of tradition no longer uphold it here. Deprived of these human supports the complete absence of supernatural vitality immediately appears, and then a crumbling to pieces takes place.

Moran also exuded confidence rather than fears about the forces of modernism which had been attacked in the Syllabus of Errors; he considered that Positivism, Darwinism, Materialism, the Higher Criticism, Secularism, Rationalism and all other new doctrines were at root simply variants of the Protestant challenges which had been kept at bay with fair success. Moran and the hierarchy believed that these forces could still be resisted, and without any close examination of their historical or scientific claims being necessary, at least by the mass of the flock. This policy may well have served to delay erosions of faith of the type the principal Protestant Churches suffered from, but may have had the potential to make the reaction more intense and destructive, if and when Christian certainties were undermined.

Summary

During the first century and more of the colonization of Australia the conflicting traditions and values of Irish Catholics and of the Protestant (or simply non-Catholic) majority in each colony provided the main source for political and ideological as well as religious turbulence. National and religious antagonisms were not only deep rooted but were watered by new conflicts, such as the 1798 and 1848 Risings in Ireland, the Great Irish Famine of 1846-8 and the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in New South Wales in 1868, by the opposite sides taken by most Protestants and Catholics during the Italian Wars and struggles about the temporal power of the Pope, by the doctrinal disputes arising from the Bulls proclaiming the Immaculate Conception, the Syllabus of Errors and Papal Infallibility, to say nothing of antagonisms arising day by day among peoples with many cultural differences, but with a common language in which to offer and to hear insults.

Irish nationalism tended to become milder in the Australian colonies, but a predominantly Irish-born priesthood ensured that the sufferings of Ireland and of the Catholic Church were not forgotten. Australians of Irish Catholic descent were often divided between pride in their achievements in Australia and resentment that the dominant culture in the Australian colonies, despite the number of Roman Catholic government ministers, premiers and governors, was Anglo-protestant. Church and school kept earlier hardships and disadvantages in Australia green, with the claims of past persecution gaining strength the farther removed in time they were placed. The Irish Catholic convicts as innocent victims of religious and national persecution and the imprisonment of Father O'Flynn joined images of past evils inflicted by the English in Ireland itself.

Under English Benedictine Metropolitans the Irish bishops and priests

so maintained Irish traditions that it cannot be claimed that Benedictinism had more than a superficial influence on the life of Australian Catholicism, but such influence that Ullathorne, Polding and Vaughan (and the Spanish Benedictines) had was important in providing a wider European dimension. The arrival of Moran strengthened the Irish tradition still further, but ensured that lay influence or Irish political issues likely to disrupt the Australian Catholic community were kept as much as the margins as before.

The successful establishment of a Roman Catholic territorial hierarchy and the share gained by Catholic schools of government grants in most Australian states during the middle third of the century gave promise of an easing of the historical tensions between Catholic and Protestant, but the Irish Famine and the 1848 Rising, and even more the antagonism of the pontificate of Pius IX to compromises with the values and doctrines of liberalism and progress which were culturally and politically dominant in the Australian colonies (and which remained so even when Catholic ministers were in office), sharpened the old disputes and in many important areas separated Catholics more widely than ever before from their neighbours.

The social encyclicals of Leo XIII helped to provide new common ground with some Protestants for many Australian Catholics. In any case life went on outside the churches, and common experiences often entailed a sharing of traditions and inherited values. This will be further illustrated in the studies in the next chapter of the thought of some leading laymen of Irish Catholic backgrounds.

Chapter Eleven

Some Australian Politicians of Irish Catholic Origin

Roger Therry and John Hubert Plunkett

Not all Irish Catholics in Australia were utterly antagonistic to English laws and customs. Some, such as Roger Therry and John Hubert Plunkett, placed a high value on English constitutional and legal principles and traditions. Roger Therry was a member of a distinguished family of Anglo-Norman origin, which had suffered under the Penal Laws, but which retained most of the Castle Therry estate in Cork, partly through the influence and support of Edmund Burke, a friend of Roger Therry's father. Roger Therry was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where Plunkett was a fellow student, and was called to both the English and the Irish Bars.

Roger Therry was, like his father, an ardent defender of the Roman Catholic church and active in the struggle for Catholic Emancipation. He was free from bigotry and found patrons in Canning and Huskisson, both of whom met untimely deaths in their prime. He wrote a major biography and memoir of Canning, whose influence on his political thought remained strong throughout his life. Perhaps he would not have taken the post of Commissioner in the Court of Requests of New South Wales if Canning had lived.

Therry was often sharply critical of English rule in Ireland, claiming in 1863 for example (1974. p.93) that 'it is now conceded by all writers that perhaps there has never been a more trampled-down people than were the Irish peasantry at that period' (1798), although peasant families were then

in the middle of the most rapid population increase Ireland has ever known. He claimed (1974, p.94), putting Shakespeare to good use, that the rebels of 1798 had been driven into insurrection by 'the oppressor's wrong and the proud man's contumely', and when gazing on the ashes of the Earl of Tyrconnell and of Baron Dungannon in Rome, he compared the exiles of '98 to those of 1607. He often quoted Burke's words on the Penal Laws: 'the worst and most wicked that ever proceded from the perverted ingenuity of man'.

Therry was not always consistent, claiming in 1863 in his reminiscences (1974, p.145) that the attachment to Ireland of the '98 exiles was 'as ardent as on the last day they left it, and that they loved, in their conversation, to express the hope that "in the land where their first footsteps trod, their last might totter"', whereas earlier in the same book (pp.93-4) he examined why most of them held that 'life to them in their native country was a thing of no value' and why they wished to stay in Australia at the end of their sentences. There were few, however, even among those who wished that Therry would play a more dynamic role in sectarian politics, who could doubt the genuineness of his feelings for Ireland.

Plunkett came from an even more distinguished Irish Catholic family than Therry, one of his kinsmen having been the executed and canonised Archbishop Plunkett. John Hubert Plunkett had a strong sense of Ireland's past wrongs, but, like Therry, he accepted that Catholic Emancipation had transformed the Irish situation and that it was important to work for the fullest equality and co-operation between Catholic and Protestant, Irish and English, rather than to be obsessed with resentment and vengefulness. Both Therry and Plunkett also believed that English political and constitutional

traditions offered widening opportunities for equality and co-operation. Each might have obtained even greater professional success, had they not been prominent Roman Catholics in a predominantly Protestant society, but Therry did not affect sarcasm when he wrote to Lord Stanley in 1844 (21 Oct., HRA, I,XXIV, pp.43-6), 'To regard the accident of my religion as a bar to professional preferment...would be virtually to revive in my regard those penal enactments which Your Lordship bore so prominent a part in removing from the Statute Book of England'.

Plunkett, as Attorney-General of New South Wales, sought to eradicate sectarian exploitation of historical anniversaries, whether St. Patrick's Day, the Battle of the Boyne, or Guy Fawkes Day. Plunkett did not achieve anything like full success in those endeavours, or avoid charges of partiality from ultra-Protestants and of indifference to their needs from his co-religionists. But such contradictory accusations testify to his ability to find a via media. Therry and Plunkett, together with W.A. Duncan, were the most influential Catholic laymen in New South Wales to continue to press for Catholic support for the Irish National System in education, after Polding and the hierarchy had changed their position. Therry, in particular, argued vigorously that they should help children to 'forget prejudices which were not theirs, but their fathers'.

There was little to choose between Plunkett and Roger Therry in admiration for the central featurs of the British Constitution as it stood after Catholic Emancipation. When Lachlan Macalister accused Plunkett of perpetrating 'unheard of outrages upon British feeling, upon British rights, upon British justice' (Sydney Gazette, 11 Nov 1837), Plunkett immediately called for a rule for libel. Plunkett tried to replicate the British

Constitution in New South Wales as closely as could be achieved, arguing in the Legislative Council in 1853 (SMH, 25 Aug) that 'they had no desire for a republic (and) wished to stick to their monarchy...he could not conceive how a monarchy could exist with an elective Upper House.' References to Magna Carta, the majesty of the Common Law of England, and the ways of Westminster flowed from Plunkett's lips as much as from those of any English Protestant.

In pure matters of law, such as the jury system, it was as much Plunkett's doing as any other man's that Chief Justice Stephen could say in 1845 (SMH, 22 March) that 'in no part of the world were the responsible duties which devolved upon jurors more faithfully fulfilled'. Plunkett himself said in 1840 (Sydney Herald, 10 Oct), 'The bar will of course direct the jurisprudence of the country, which he hoped will always be upon the model of English institutions and in order to properly estimate their beauty they must be seen in the pure atmosphere of England'. The wit of Australian lawyers often reflected a depth of English historical as well as purely legal knowledge. When the Hon. R.D. Ireland, Q.C., a member of the Irish Confederation of 1848, was a member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly, on the Opposition benches, a government member looked across at him and remarked (Hogan, 1888, p.126), 'On the front Opposition bench, Mr. Speaker, I see neither a Pitt, nor a Burke, nor a Sheridan', to which Ireland replied, 'But I see a Fox on the other side of the House'. Therry and Plunkett were not themselves famed for repartee, but they admired wit and urbanity, rather than vulgar abuse, and sought to encourage it among their co-religionists, especially the journalists among them.

In constitutional debates, Roger Therry also urged the closest

imitation possible of the Westminster model, and frequently warned against taking the American path instead. He wished to prevent a situation in which (1974, p.474) 'all laws would virtually emanate from an uncontrolled ultra-democratic popular Assembly, and in effect substitute a purely republican Government for one partaking of the character of a mixed monarchy like that of England'. The American Civil War was, in Therry's view (1974, p.486) 'provoked, in a great degree, by her institutions converting every citizen into an angry politician' Therry's crystal ball let him down as he continued, 'Let them dwell upon her present fratricidal carnage and the utter disruption of her States, that can never again be reunited under the banner of the "stars and stripes", whilst the meteor flag of England floats, as it has done for a thousand years, triumphant, inspiring respect abroad, and securing peace and happiness at home'. Therry was convinced (1974, p.489) that,

> For the civilization she enjoys, and the prosperity she has attained, Australia is mainly indebted to England; and her highest abition, consistent alike with her duty and her interest, should be to cherish and preserve a connection, by which she has been raised from a lowly state, and, in far less than one hundred years, elevated into a higher position in the rank of nations, than other countries have achieved in several centuries of time.

Therry made the proviso that 'in this language of just and general praise, I desire not to be understood as compromising opinions previously expressed of the necessity of much improvement in England's Irish policy.' The enthusiastic support given by him and by Plunkett to the continuation of close political ties with Britain stood in sharp contrast to the opinions of many Irish-Australian Roman Catholics, but if the changes were made in England's Irish policy which Therry and Plunkett sought, there seemed considerable hope that conflicting Irish and English traditions could find, although by no means easily, a satisfactory resolution.

British reforms in Ireland after the failure of the Repeal agitation under Daniel O'Connell and of the Young Ireland Rising of 1848 may have been 'too little and too late', not only from the long-term interests of both Britain and Ireland, but from the standpoint of bringing competing English and Irish and loyalties into closer harmony in Australia.

Daniel Henry Deniehy

Daniel Henry Deniehy, born in 1828 in Sydney, was the child of Irish convicts who, like so many others, made good in New South Wales. His father, Henry Deniehy, was transported from Cork in 1819, but by the time Daniel was a boy he was a prosperous merchant able to send his son to one of Sydney's best schools. In his early teens Deniehy was taken back to Ireland on a visit which extended to France, Italy and Central Europe.

Irish traditions meant much to Deniehy. In later life he frequently recalled such scenes as (Pearl, 1972, p.3) 'the black waters shimmering by the home of Raleigh, and those sacred shades, wizard woods of Kilcoman, that with wild and shadowed beauty closed in about the vision of the dying Spenser'. Deniehy was a regular orator at the annual St. Patrick's Day Banquet in Sydney, at which, as in his recollections of Kilcoman, he was willing to evoke the shades of Protestant conquerors of Ireland and their descendants, such as Berkeley, Burke, Goldsmith and Sterne. His favourite Irish patriots, or rebels against English rule, such as 'the gibbeted Emmet and the broken-hearted Wolfe Tone', were not confined to members of the Roman Catholic faith. In his 1860 St. Patrick's Day speech Deniehy showed wide sympathies when (Martin, 1884, p.77) he noted that 'The Englishman was proud of his Hampden and the other great names which adorn his history; the Frenchman glowed with pride at the remembrance of those who had achieved so

much for the freedom and greatness of his nation'. In 1857 he suggested (Pearl, 1972, pp. 66-7) that 'Ireland's patriots were the world's property' who belonged to the English and the Scots as fully as did Hampden or Bruce to the Irish. In the 1860 address Deniehy suggested that patriots whose efforts had failed to date to achieve their ends deserved especial praise, as in Italy, Hungary and Ireland, the mid-century trio of radical nationalist support,

> there was a deeper and tenderer feeling connected with the memory of patriots. In those countries their heroic labours had not hitherto been blessed with a due measure of success, yet they were passionately loved and fondly remembered...

Deniehy viewed the English past with very mixed feelings. On the one hand there were the wounds of Ireland, with the Act of Union among the most grievous: in 1860 he said the Act was (Martin, 1884, p.78) 'carried by the suicidal vote of a base, corrupt, and venal parliament, - carried in spite of the god-like efforts of Curran and the handful of brave spirits who had ranged themselves under his banner'. In a swingeing attack on British policy in New Zealand towards the end of his life, Deniehy compared the fate of the Maoris with that of the Irish: 'slaughtering the natives or driving them into the bush....a modern verion of the "Hell or Connaught" alternative formerly practised in "another place"'.

Deniehy was often sharply critical of the monarchical and aristocratic elements in the British constitution. Two of his most famous speeches contain many points he made on many other occasions. At the Circular Quay protest meeting in September 1853 (Pearl, 1972, pp. 136-8), Deniehy ridiculed the veneration expressed by Wentworth and his friends for the British constitution. Deniehy conceded that Magna Carta, the Bill of

Rights and the Habeas Corpus Act were 'steps of the highest political importance', but he claimed that they were weak defences of liberty, since Charles II had been able to ignore laws he disliked, since Algernon Sidney had been unfairly tried and executed, since Wilkes had been arrested by the warrant of a hostile politician, and since Pitt the Younger had been able to suspend Habeas Corpus as he banded 'with the despots of continental Europe in reinstating the hated Bourbons on the throne of France. Deniehy lamented the political and historical ignorance not only of 'the inexperienced legislators of Macquarie Street', but of 'Montesquieu, and indeed every French writer who had attempted to describe the working of the English Constitution' as well.

In his 'Bunyip aristocracy' speech opposing Westworth's Constitution Bill in 1854, Deniehy tried to dispel this widespread misunderstanding (Martin, 1884, pp. 51-6) by showing that the Normans and their bastard Duke had only become the aristocracy and monarch of England by conquest and not by merit, that such titles had become 'the miserable and effete dignity of the worn-out grandees of Europe', and that in any case Wentworth and his ancestors did not have any rights through conquest in Australia. Britain, despite its vaunted constitution, was in such a mess that, Deniehy prophesied, Australians must 'prepare to open their arms to receive the fugitives from England, Ireland and Scotland, who would hasten to the offered security and competence that were cruelly denied them in their own land'.

The Catholic Deniehy and the Presbyterian Lang vied with each other in republican fervour and in conviction that great changes in the world were at hand. In a typical flight Deniehy told the electors of Argyle in 1856

(Martin, 1884, p.58),

> ..a crisis, you tell me, and I believe it, is at hand, or is rapidly approaching, and you want me. When the signal fires are reddening the hills at midnight, when the sharp tuck of the drum and the fierce, taunting invitation of the trumpet are abroad, is it for the recruit to plead that his drill is incomplete?

In the golden age ahead there would be, Deniehy told the Constitution Committee Rally in 1853 (McLeod, 1969, p.30),

> an aristocracy worthy of our respect and of our admiration. Wherever human skill and brain are eminent, wherever glorious manhood asserts its elevation, there is an aristocracy that confers eternal honour upon the land that possesses it. That is God's aristocracy, gentlemen; that is an aristocracy that will bloom and expand under free institutions, and for ever bless the clime where it takes root.

When his volatile nature was at its lower depths rather than its dizzy heights of optimism, Deniehy deplored in those around him the absence of modest levels of decency and cultivation and found few examples of natural aristocracy. Still, it takes time for the evil effects of bad systems to be overcome, especially when 'stumbling blocks' to independence, self-reliance and national development, such as the Sydney Morning Herald still exerted their baleful influence on deluded readers (People's Advocate, 29 April, 1854).

Deniehy could not abide flattering language which even his sometime allies, such as Henry Parkes, used about England. Deniehy wrote in the People's Advocate in May 1854,

> Here we should be all Australians and notwithstanding Mr Parkes's eloquent superfine sentiment about 'birth' and so forth, the less said about 'parent land' the better for the land of adoption.

Or, as Deniehy put it in a speech in May 1858 on electoral reform

(Martin, 1884, p.62), 'they had striven too long and suffered too sorely under the clique and caste system of England not to wish to strive for something better...'

On the other hand where were better historical precedents for freedom under law to be found, if English experience were rejected as worthless? Deniehy was no admirer of the noble savage. In an 1858 speech in Melbourne Deniehy (Martin, 1884, p.75D) praised 'the men who pushed civilization on from line to line, who dared with dauntless courage and adventurous energy the boomerang and the poisoned spear of unknown savages, loss of life and the destruction of their property by barbarians', not those who resisted such pioneers. In his bunyip aristocracy speech he found no place in a better Australia for 'bamboozled Chinese and kidnapped Coolies', while the final insult to the pretensions of Wentworth and his friends was that 'they might as well expect honour to be paid to the dusky nobles of King Kamehamake, or to the ebony earls of the Emperor Souloque of Hayti'. In a speech on Cowper's Chinese Immigration Bill in April 1858, Deniehy attacked (Martin, 1884, pp.62-3) 'the introduction of inferior races for the purpose of obtaining cheap labour', a policy which would 'impart to the country a barbarous and degraded aspect'. This viewpoint was orthodox in Deniehy's circle. Edward John Hawkesley, in whose People's Advocate and the New South Wales Vindicator Deniehy wrote some of his earliest published articles, denounced in his 1850 New Year editorial 'endeavours to import amongst us Coolies, Chinamen, and cannibals'.

Deniehy showed little interest in or liking for Jewish traditions and values. He described Saul Samuel (Martin, 1884, p.131-2) as a clever man but 'always a Saul among profits, and not only a financier, but a Jew

financier'. Deniehy suggested that 'the Eastern origin of the Jew comes out in his love of personal ornament. Up in George Street he doesn't put an aigrette of diamonds on his Sabbath turban...but look at the big chain on the velvet waistcoat, and the showy ring on the little finger'. It was seldom too that he found the Christian past very helpful in solving the practical problems of the day. He wrote to his friend and agent, James Hart, of the situation in New South Wales in the 1850s (Pearl, 1972, p.47) that 'Catholicism threatens to turn into a sheer priest-ridden slavery, as in Ireland, instead of being a fine union of social and political independence of feeling with profound religious faith, which it is on the European continent.'

Deniehy identified himself with Tom Paine, with the Jacobins, with Pierre Leroux and Louis Blanc and the Paris Revolutionaries of June 1848, with Garibaldi and the Risogimento - in short with all the forces condemned by Pius IX and by the Australian Hierarchy too. Polding and Gregory were seen by him as symbols of ecclesiastical tyranny, to such an extent that he came close to excommunication for the extremities of his outbursts against them in 1859. The issue, the appointment to the Board of Management of the Roman catholic Orphan School at Parramatta of a Protestant physician who had for a long time treated the children there, was one which damaged Deniehy in its substance and even more by his vehemence. Among his rhetorical flourishes he declared (Freeman's Journal, 2 March, 1859),

> in the history of the Catholic world, this matter of the nomination of a gentleman of another creed to the management of an institution specially connected with the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church, was unprecendented...if they were interested, on behalf of their posterity, in the safety of the venerable and glorious old faith for which their fathers - gallant, true and tried confessors and martyrs of English and Irish political history, had endured so much, they should

> remember that their supineness, their want of courage to-day, might prejudice their children's interests when they were dead.

For a supporter of Garibaldi to upbraid the Archbishop of Sydney and his Vicar-General for lack of sectarian zeal was a sad example of Deniehy's lack of steadiness and balance.

In 1862 Deniehy managed to attack both Anglican and Catholic beliefs in a criticism in the Victorian of Archbishop Whateley's 'Sermon on the Character of Judas Iscariot' which had just been placed on the Index, why did those solemn wags at Rome - the greatest practical jokers in Christendom in their own way, put on the Index Expurgatorius Richard Whateleys's heavy, harmless, unscientific book on Logic? Luther made mischief; Johannes Ronge looked as if he were 'miching malicho' twenty years ago in Germany; but what possible dint could poor patient, politico-economical Whateley leave on the Rock of Peter?

In his library Deniehy had a range of theological works, including those of Protestant divines such as Jeremy Taylor, South, Barrow and Robert Hall, as well as of French Catholic scholars such as Bossuet, Masillon and Bourdalone. Apart however from Joseph Butler, whose Analogy he found somewhat surprisingly more insightful than Gibbon's Decline and Fall (Martin, 1844, pp.151-2), Deniehy did not make as much use of his theological as of his other reading.

It was only in the United States that Deniehy found a historical tradition which was more congenial than that of England. During the 1853 debates on constitutuional reform Wentworth frequently quoted de Tocqueville and Calhoun on the failings of American democracy and argued

that American ways should not be imported into New South Wales. In reply Deniehy praised the United States as a model to be followed by a pioneering nation. In a speech in 1858 when he sought renomination for the Argyle constituency Deniehy said (Martin, 1884, p.66),

> The American land policy lay at the root of the national prosperity of the United States. During the fifty years it had obtained, it had peopled the country by tens of thousands; it had created and added to the Federation sovereign state after sovereign state; it had called into existence city after city in what had before been waste-places of the forest. It had carried religion, law, letters, industry, and the human affections into the heart of the wilderness, and it had borne Anglo-Saxon civilization, with freedom and plenty in its train, from the shores of the Atlantic to the sea-board of the Pacific.

Like most Australian politicians, including Wentworth, Lang and Lowe, Deniehy threatened British governments that Australia would follow the American pattern of revolt unless their demands were met. In an attack on proposals to tax New South Wales to help Britain to finance the Crimean War Deniehy in the Goulburn Herald (2 Sept. 1854, cited in Headon, 1985, p.63) described the idea as,

> about the most monstrous proposition we have ever heard and would tend as much to alienate the people of this Colony from the parent stem as the infamous Stamp Act of America accelerated the rupture with, and ultimately produced the separation of the American colonists from the British Crown.

Deniehy had considerable admiration for American institutions. He defended American politicians such as Webster, Clay and Calhoun from criticism, and praised the diplomacy of Hunt, Everitt, Irving and Buchanan. His reading included American politicians and philosophers, such as Jefferson, Franklin, Henry, John Adams, Emerson, Parker, Channing, Fuller, Holmes and Bryant, as well as poets and novelists such as Poe, Longfellow, Melville, Hawthorne and Fenimore Cooper.

Deniehy faced a dilemma in respect of the influence that he wished even American works of unblemished republican and anti-aristocratic principles, let alone frequently tainted English productions, to exert on the Australian writers of the future. On the one hand, without an interest in the best models in the language, Australia was likely to remain in, or to slide into, mediocrity. On the other hand such influences might overpower potential Australianness: Harpur and the expatriate Frank Fowler might become merely Australian Emersons, or Kendall only an Australian Poe (Barton, 1866, p.115; SMH, 10 Oct. 1864).

Deniehy was widely read in western literatures from the Greeks onwards. In an early sketch, 'Love at First Sight' published in the Colonial Literary Journal (13 Feb. 1845) Deniehy described a young man very much like himself as having 'a rather circumscribed acquaintance with the lore of Greece and Rome', but this was over-modest and his writings are filled with Greek, although not Latin, allusions. The ghost of Alcmaeon, the sandals of Parthenos, Telemachus waiting for Mentor, Circe prowling round the Isles of Truth, the attractive ugliness of Aesop, the rival contributions of Hippocrates and Antaeus to human progress compared with those of Lysippus and Phidias, are allusions made in typical Deniehy speeches or articles. Yet he was unable to find much in the ancient world which could act as a political model. In a speech on electoral reform in 1858 he rejected any analogies between the 'Grecian democracies' and the policies he was supporting, since (Martin, 1884, p.61) 'there was not the slightest similarity between the popular institutions of those days and the representative system of England' and since 'Socrates, Plato, or Demosthenes had as much idea of representative government as they had of

the Acts of the Apostles'.

Although he rarely referred to Roman authors, Deniehy read widely in medieval and renaissance Italian literature: Dante, Boccacio, Ariosto, Tasso and Tassori. In later centuries the Italians were replaced in his reading by the French, from Voltaire to Balzac, Stendhal, de Musset and Beranger, by Heine and Goethe, and by Cervantes. Yet, despite his criticisms of British traditions, it was English literature which gave Deniehy greatest reward. His work includes references to Chaucer, Spenser, Sidney and Milton, although fewer to Shakespeare than in the writings and speeches of other comparable nineteenth century Australian thinkers. Deniehy looked with particular favour on writers with radical ideas, such as Burns, Paine, Byron and Shelley, but he his taste was not narrowly partisan. He esteemed Swift, Samuel Butler (of Hudibras), Cowper, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Carlyle, Burke and Gibbon, and found value in the histories of Lingard and Macauley, different as their perspectives were from his own. The breadth and liberality of his taste was shown in an article in 1859 in the Southern Cross (Martin, 1884, pp.79-80)

> A good edition of Gibbon's Rome is for instance...sufficient for any provincial public library in a colony like ours. But the National Library in the capital, should have the Byzantine historians, as well as the other fontal sources at which he drew. Sismondi's 'Literature of the South of Europe' would be, perhaps sufficient on the subject, in the country. But the cycle of historians of Italian letters - Tiraboschi, Muratori, Ginguene, nay, the great works of Bouterwek and the learned Germans, the man of letters would look for, as matter of course, in the National Library. A fair Greek text of Plato, Sydenham's version, and the translation of the contributors to Bohn's Series - and possibly, by way of luxurious addenda, Victor Cousin's performances in French, would make a tolerable rural item for Platonic philosophy - quite as much as for all practical purposes, would be requisite. But in the Public Library in the metropolis there should be fairly accessible the files of the Neo-Platonists, the Italian Platonic thinkers, and as much as might be, of the literature in later days, of this most influential of all purely secular philosophies on the mind of

man.

An enlightened conception of what is significant in the past was shown by Nicol Drysdale Stenhouse and other members of his circle, such as Frank Fowler, Richard Rowe, Joseph Sheridan Moore and James Lionel Michael, but by none more so than Deniehy. As editor of the Southern Cross, he tried, while avoiding any presumptuous attempt to rank writers on a single scale, to establish some defensible canons of evaluation and comparison. In the wake of Coleridge, De Quincy and Leigh Hunt, he tried to distinguish imagination from mere fancy, and genius from mere talent. His wide reading sometimes gave rise to interesting comparisons, as when on first reading Robert Browning he found some similarities in tone to Voltaire and Byron. He was capable of critical errors, such as his excessive praise of Horne and Edward Whitty in New South Wales and of Frederick Robertson in England, but his faults were those of undue generosity rather than of narrowed sympathies.

Deniehy had a particular admiration for Burns and Beranger, who both, he believed, embodied the essence of the spirit of their respective nations. He showed no interest in Gaelic, however, or in any Irish variant of English of the type of Burns' Lallans. Deniehy wished to encourage the emergence of voices of Australia's 'native Youth', but just what these would sound like or have to say was uncertain. Harpur was judged by Deniehy to be Australia's most gifted poet to date, but was his voice distinctively Australian and what would it mean if it were?

If Deniehy had achieved the same measure of fairness and sound judgement in his political career as in his literary criticism, he and New South Wales would have been the gainers. An example of his misuse of

historical comparison was an attack on Governor Fitzroy in 1855 which was reported in the Goulburn Herald as (Pearl, 1972, pp.42-3),

> Seldom or ever has it fallen to the lot of a colony of province - whether under the sway of the Roman Eagle, the Crescent or the Cross - to be governed by a more salacious old gentleman than the one who has presided over the destinies of this continent for the last eight years.

To be sure Fitzroy was no saint, but the hard-drinking Deniehy was not a candidate for sanctity either. Like Harpur, Deniehy's basic problem was perhaps not the bottle, but a deeper rooted confusion of identity and purpose.

For all his attacks on past and present abuses of English society and government, Deniehy found within the English political and literary traditions most of the examples of what he prized most in life and which he hoped would grow, freed from error and distortion, in Australia. Deniehy found at least as much to antagonize him in the polity of his own church and in the people of his own descent, deep as was his affection for both, as in the Anglo-Saxons and their culture. He was never able to integrate the different traditions and values which pulled and drew him.

It is hard not to feel compassion for Deniehy when he wrote to the recently arrived Charles Gavan Duffy (Duffy, 1895, 2, p.185) to invite him to live in New South Wales, rather than in Victoria, where 'you have as yet no native youth'. Deniehy wrote of the 'small politics', with 'coarse squabbles and the vile and vermicular intrigues', and implored 'how I should be heartened and directed - how perpetually should I be refreshed and directed - how perpetually should I be refreshed with thoughts of the great coming benefits for the suffering section of humanity yet to fly hither - if

I had Mr. Duffy as my leader'.

James Martin

James Martin arrived in New South Wales in 1821 as a babe-in-arms, although on some occasions during his later political career he claimed to have been born in Australia, a true nativist candidate. He was the child of Catholic parents who had left Cork as free migrants seeking to better themselves and who were able to provide him with as sound an education as the colony could offer, under William Timothy Capes in Parramatta and subsequently at Sydney College. James proved a very capable student, with a love of poetry, especially of Blake, Wordsworth and Byron, and with powerful ambitions to shine in the world, perhaps as a second Wentworth. He gained, too, a lifelong interest in classical literature, the Greek mainly in translation, but some of the Latin authors in the original.

On leaving school well before his seventeenth birthday, Martin was confident enough of his literary powers to seek to make a living by his pen. His articles were accepted by the editors of the Australian and of the Sydney Times, some under his own name and some under pen-names such as 'Hirundo' (the swift or martin), Cato, Junius or Brutus. One was on the career of Pitt the Elder, a favoured figure in the Australian colonies on account of his sympathy with the demands of the Americans during the 1770s, which seemed so similar to current grievances in New South Wales. While still in his teens, Martin persuaded James Tegg, the printer and bookseller, to publish a volume of his essays under the title of The Australian Sketch Book, after the popular Sketch Book of Washington Irving. Martin's essays included reflections on 'The Colosseum at Rome', on 'Genius' and on 'War', which, if unremarkable intrinsically, show a powerful talent and strong

historical interests. It is unsurprising that a talented youth in the New South Wales of debates about convicts, transportation and the powers of Governors and of Secretaries of State in distant London should, even if he were not of Irish Catholic descent, take up radical, or at least liberal, positions, and Martin at nineteen had already made Burke and Junius his political models. In 1839 he planned a new journal, the Australian Patriot, which would have at its masthead the passage from The Letters of Junius.

> Let it be impressed upon your minds, let it be instilled into your children, that the liberty of the Press is the palladium of all the civil, religious and political rights of an Englishman.

In similar vein Martin replied to a toast to Civil and Religious Liberties on the 1842 anniversary of the First Fleet (Grainger, 1970, p.32),

> We are in a condition such as no 150,000 individuals and above all, no 150,000 Britons and their offspring, should be suffered to remain in for one hour.

It was notable that Martin made little or no reference to the 'wrongs of Ireland' question, but associated himself, and by implication, others of Catholic Irish descent, with the 'rights of Britons', in which he considered that he and his had as great a share as any others. Once the transportation and internal self-government issues had been substantially resolved by the mid 1850s it was an easy transition from radicalism to conservatism for Martin, with Burke as his historical and Disraeli as his contemporary models.

During the 1843 elections for the Legislative Council, Martin showed contempt for those colonists, naturally enough the large majority, who lacked his own erudition. He attacked William Bowman, a prosperous Hawkesbury landowner who was a candidate (Australasian, 11 May, 1843),

> with such a man an acquaintance with the leading facts of history, the fundamental principles of commerce, or the prominent features of legislation, or, in short anything with which a gentleman or scholar should be conversant, is entirely out of the question.

It was not wise for a radical to be contemptuous of a lack of cultivation or scholarship in colonial New South Wales, nor for a conservative to belittle successful experience. Bowman took some later revenge on Martin for this unprovoked attack, but in Martin's later more conservative period, became one of his supporters. When faced by the occasional rebuff or lack of recognitions for his talents, Martin consoled himself with the thought that other choice spirits had suffered similarly. In a lecture in 1841 he noted that Byron had been derided in the columns of the Edinburgh Review as 'an intruder in the groves of Parnassus', and that 'the deep, for a short time, blighting influence which this critique produced upon the mind of Byron could only be understood by those who were acquainted with the peculiar sensitiveness of his disposition', and, it was implied, those who shared these qualities with him.

When Martin edited the Atlas from 1845 to 1847, his editorials frequently articulated the principles of Magna Carta, Habeas Corpus and the Bill of Rights, together with indignation that those sacred principles were honoured more in the breach than the observance in the Australian colonies. He began to study law during these years and qualified as a solicitor, later becoming the first lawyer in New South Wales to become Attorney-General without having been called to the bar. His ambition to enter politics was fulfilled when he was elected in 1848 as Member of the Legislative Council for Cook and Westmoreland.

As a parliamentarian Martin made far wider historical and literary allusions than was common. These were usually pertinent, although his claim that ancient Carthage had declined in power because it had adopted Free Trade seemed inaccurate and inapposite (Empire, 23 July, 1852). Martin was unafraid to take an unpopular stance and was one of the few Protectionists in New South Wales politics, numerous as these became in Victoria. His reading was put to better use when in 1848 he castigated Earl Grey, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, for betraying his father's principles. Martin told a large public meeting in Sydney's Victoria Theatre that Grey's constitutional scheme for New South Wales was (SMH, 20 January, 1848), 'worse than the rotten borough system at its height', yet was proposed 'by the son of the statesman, who for more than half a century, battled, and battled successfully at last to abolish these rotten corporations'. On that occasion, as in many of his parliamentary speeches, Martin used quotations from Edmund Burke to support his arguments.

The 1848 Revolutions in Europe and the extremism, as he saw it, of hotheads such as Deniehy, Harpur and Lang, made Martin more cautious about the pace of political change, but increasingly interested in historical precedents. In one of his lengthiest constitutional disquisitions, Martin told the Legislative Council (Empire, 26 August, 1853),

> I believe that this is the first time in history that the right to select a Constitution has been conceded by the Home Government to a colonial legislature ... The subject of constitutions has occupied the attentions of statesmen, of historians, of lawyers, from the earliest ages of the world, and it is a subject on which these great men have left for our guidance the result of their experience and their researches. This gives a body at the present time an immense advantage at coming to a decision ...

All historians no doubt hope that Martin was right in this respect and that

knowledge of earlier constitutional debates helps to ensure increasing wisdom. In that same speech Martin offered a classical definition of British-Australianism,

> Heirs of the British Constitution ourselves, it should be our pride, as well as our duty, to hand down our noble inheritance, intact, undimmed, undiminished, in all its full and unclouded splendour, to our posterity ... So shall we lay the foundation of a nation, not only speaking the language and imbued with the literature, but in every way worthy of that great people who first taught the lesson of freedom to mankind.

Some imitations of the splendour of Britain were perhaps less felicitous. In 1868, when Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, made his ill-fated visit to Australia, Martin was Premier of New South Wales. Martin and his ministers decided to don formal court dress for ceremonial functions, which led a radical critic, Le Flaneur, to comment (Empire, 22 February, 1868),

> The blue and gold costume introduced by our leading officials has excited a good deal of comment, but no one seems to have formed the slightest conception as to the real meaning of this novelty ... Does a native chief cover himself with red paint for the mere fun of the thing? Is there no arriere-pensee in this costume? Was there none in the laurels of Caesar, in Eugenie's crinoline, or the beggar's rags of Ignatius Loyola?

For Martin the trappings meant much less than the flesh of the law and the constitution. In 1880 he described the Courts over which he presided as Chief Justice of New South Wales as (2 NSWLR, L237),

> ...the embodied force of the community whose rights they are appointed to protect...The enforcement of all those rules which immemorial usage has sanctioned for the preservation of peace and order, and for the definition of rights between man and man, is entrusted to its keeping..Without armed guards, or any ostentatious display...it derives its force from the knowledge that it has the whole power of the community at its back.'

Martin did not see his role in social control as an enforcement of

class oppression, but of protecting and extending historically grounded rights. James Anthony Froude was so impressed by the force with which that line of argument was advanced by Martin, James Service and several other leading figures in the Australian colonies that he commented (1886, p.180) 'in respect of intellectual eminence, the mother country has no advantage'; in this judgement Froude emphatically included a concern for developing a living tradition, rather than protecting fossilized conventions.

Martin and Froude saw eye to eye on the historical framework in which the United Kingdom and the Australian colonies had become part of 'Greater Britain'. In 1885, by then Sir James Martin and Chief Justice of New South Wales, he was at the forefront in supporting Dalley's offer to sent troops to the Soudan. He declared at a public meeting (SMH, 21 Feb. 1885),

> the day when the troops of this colony shall embark for the Soudan (shall be) for ever memorable in the History of New South Wales...they would raise themselves from colonial to Imperial rank...hitherto they had been merely tacit sharers in...(Britain's) triumphs but now they had shown their readiness to uphold her renown'.

During his long public life, whether in parliament or as Chief Justice of New South Wales, Martin continued to interest himself in the classical past. Friendship with Sir John Young, a Governor of New South Wales who had previously been Lord high Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, and with Dr. Badham, another enthusiast for Greek culture, strengthened Martin's interest, while the considerable wealth he acquired from his political and legal careers enabled him to indulge it. Sir John Young obtained for him the exact dimensions of several Greek relics, which were reproduced for him from blocks of Pyrmont freestone by a Sydney sculptor, Walter McGill. Martin almost bankrupted himself through the extravagance of his attempts to

re-create the world of the classical Mediterranean. The chief of his obsessions was a palatial new dwelling, which he named 'Numantia', after the town in the mountains of Castile which had defied the legions of Scipio Africanus until every one of its defenders had been killed. This passion for the classical past had been common in Britain in the age of Gibbon and Burke, with which Martin always sought to identify himself, but made him a rare bird in New South Wales.

Martin's Irishness was, to say the least, not paraded. O'Farrell described him (1987, p.211) as 'closet-Irish, (1985, p.97), as 'well-known to be anti-clerical, if not anti-Catholic', and (1985, p.99) as 'ex-Catholic'. O'Farrell claimed (1985, p.156) that after the assassination attempt on the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868 Martin 'exploited the tension to split the community and focused its fears on the Irish and the Catholic church'. Some Catholic clergy, such as Father George Dillon, made Martin's apostasy a favourite subject. If nothing else, Martin's career showed that birth and religion did not necessarily determine political and religious convictions, that a man of Irish Catholic birth could have a successful political career as a colonial conservative, and that many Irish Catholics would find it very difficult to forgive any who thus left the fold. Martin's career does not represent a fusion between English and Irish traditions; he simply became more English than the English.

Charles Gavan Duffy

Charles Gavan Duffy had been for some years a leader of the Young Ireland movement, and latterly a member of the Westminster Parliament, when he decided in 1856, in disgust at jobbery and intrigue within the Irish Party in the House of Commons, to emigrate to Australia. Duffy returned to

Europe after a quarter of a century of political activity in Australia, which included the premiership of Victoria. Duffy's direct involvement with Irish Nationalist movements was greater than that of any other nineteenth century Australian, but, although he was clearly far from typical in the statistical sense, his life and thought embodied aspirations and sentiments which many Irishmen in the Australian colonies as well as in the United Kingdom felt in less developed and coherent ways.

From early childhood Duffy was obsessed with the past sufferings of Ireland and with the problem of how to secure Irish independence. His father was a prosperous shopkeeper in Monaghan, but Duffy (1898, I, p.2) took pride in an ancestry 'in which soldiers, brethons, and scholars' had been plentiful in centuries long before his maternal grandfather had 'succeeded in emerging from the obscure and trampled multitude.' Since there was no suitable Catholic school, Duffy was sent to a classical academy taught by a Presbyterian minister, where (1898, I, p.7) he boasted that he was 'the first Catholic emancipated in Ireland.' He added that 'though tolerated I was never allowed altogether to forget that I belonged to the race who were beaten at the Boyne'.

During his active political life Duffy had a sharp change of opinion about mixed schools. Duffy had fond memories of his own schooling among Protestants and in 1845, together with most of the Young Irelanders, he supported Peel's proposal to increase the grant for Maynooth college and to enable Catholic and Protestant students to study together in colleges affiliated to a Queen's University. In the 1860s in Victoria Duffy accused George Higinbotham of proposing in his education bill (1898, II, p.293) 'to compel Irish Catholics by a penal law to attend schools where some religion

which is not theirs shall be taught'. By that time he argued that 'you might as well give children the salt that ought to flavour their daily meals to eat by itself at a separate hour, as give them the religious teaching which ought to flavour their daily lessons in the same fashion.'

About the sorrows of Ireland Duffy showed no similar inconsistency. The lessons about the past of Ulster which he learnt from the senior Catholic curate in Monaghan remained with him for the rest of his life. He recalled in old age,

> how the native princes, who were Catholics, were lured into foreign countries, and their fertile lands given to Scotchmen and Englishmen. How when the natives rose to regain their own, they were savagely repressed and almost exterminated...How when the natives rose to support King James and were defeated at the Boyne by a foreign army, they still held Limerick year after year till the new king, with whose hooked nose Orange banners made me familiar, sealed a treaty with them, securing them the enjoyment of their lands and their religion; and how the Puritan Parliament in Dublin, with a shameless disregard of honesty and honour, denied them the rights so secured. How the daughter of James...sanctioned laws designed to exterminate the Irish race. They were not permitted to till the lands except as serfs; it was crime punishable with crushing penalties to teach them to read or write; and a priest, who performed the sacred function for which he was ordained, was liable to be hanged.

Duffy frequently found similarities in the heroic past of Ireland to the situations he encountered. When Thomas Davis died in 1845 Duffy compared the loss to Ireland to that it suffered by the deaths of Brian Boru at Clontarf, of Hugh O'Neill in exile, and of Owen Roe O'Neill after the Irish victory at Benburb. He inspired similar evocations in others: when he and Victoria's other leading Catholic politician, John O'Shanassy, were in conflict he was told by leading members of his committee (1898, 2, p.199), 'To our people in Australia, it will be as fatal as the quarrel of Flood and Gratton in Ireland'.

Duffy never forgot the impressions which Dublin had made on him as a young journalist: 'the Hogarths in Charlemont House, the historic portraits in Trinity College, Grindling Gibbons' carved ceilings at Kilmainham, and the noble palaces which Gandon erected on the Liffey'. It was the associations with Irish Nationalism which were most deeply etched on his mind: 'The sites where the Volunteers had been reviewed, where Emmet had been tried, where O'Connell defended his life against D'Esterre, where the Catholic Association had met' (1898, pp.28-9).

The young Duffy was thrilled to learn (1898, I, pp.19-20) that 'only a generation ago there was an Irish army led by Irish gentlemen, which swept the Britsh forces out of two counties, and might have swept them out of two-and-thirty but for adverse accidents'. The year of years for the young Duffy was, however, not 1798 but 1641, and his greatest hero was Owen Roe O'Neill, who had been succeeded as general by a Monaghan man, Heber MacMahon, chief of the MacMahons and also Bishop of Clogher. In 1846 Duffy left the erratic John Mitchel in charge of The Nation, the Young Ireland organ, while he sought complete solitude in which to complete a book on the 1641 Rising. Duffy never wrote the book and Mitchel, both politically and financially, nearly ruined The Nation while Duffy was away.

Duffy admired Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmet, the Protestant martyrs of the '98, and sought to create a new unity among patriotic Irishmen, irrespective of religion, but Orangemen were, so to speak, outside the pale (or in it?). As well as historical instruction from the Catholic curate, Duffy received 'object lessons' from the local Orangemen, such as (1898, pp.13-4),

> The Orange drum was heard on every hill from June till August to celebrate the Boyne and Aughrim...the Orange processions forbade us to forget the past, and there was a history transacted under our eyes of which it was impossible to be ignorant.

At school, according to his later recollections, Duffy was asked by a Protestant schoolfriend, Mat Trumble (1898, I, p.21),

> Don't you see that to irritate the Northern Protestants is to defeat, or at any rate to postpone, the liberation of the Catholics? You can't get rid of the Ulstermen - we are fighting fellows with England behind us; and if you could get rid of us it would be a gross injustice, for time settles such disputes as ours, and we have been here two hundred years...Thirty years ago we were better Irishmen than any of you, and I assert that we might, could, would, and should become so again. But when an Orangeman is maimed in a Catholic riot the most moderate Protestant in Ulster thrills with sympathy. Like Falkland I cry "Peace, peace, peace!".

Duffy replied, 'Peace! does that mean abject submission to contumely and wrong?...the Orangeman or his sympathisers will never listen to the claims of justice till we become strong enough to be dangerous. Peace by all means, if we are treated with some approach to fair play, but if the Orangeman breaks the peace, thrash him; that's my doctrine...'

Some forty years later, in March 1869, Duffy wrote in a letter from Melbourne to his old friend Thomas O'Hagan, who had just become Lord Chancellor in Gladstone's ministry (1898, II, pp.308-9),

> I would pass an Act of Parliament repealing the insolent and virtually penal law, which maintains the statue of William III in College Green (in Dublin) as a badge and symbol of conquest...is it indispensable to continue celebrating the battle of the Boyne to insult Irish Catholics?

Duffy never seems to have tried to understand the historical conceptions of the Protestants. As a youth he was (1898, I, p.8) 'horror-struck by a copy of "Fox's Book of Martyrs", with illustrations fit

to poison the spirit of a community for a century'. He seems never to have investigated whether any of the incidents in Fox were truthfully narrated; furthermore, he strongly approved of the circulation of not dissimilar materials which recounted English and Protestant atrocities in Ireland. The selective use of atrocities is almost habitual in historical disputes, but there were many Protestants who were deeply concerned about evils committed by Protestants as well as by Catholics, but few Irish Catholics, Duffy included, had any interest in probing the historical sins or crimes of their own nation. Duffy never understood how double-edged was his comment (Suttor, 1965, p.119) that 'When you talk to an Irish Catholic of his creed being a symbol of persecution and Protestantism a symbol of liberty, he may well think you mad.'

During the 1840s Duffy broke with O'Connell mainly on the issue of the justification of violence in the struggle for Repeal of the Union or for any other political objective. O'Connell held that no revolution was worth the spilling of a single drop of human blood. One of Duffy's early poems, Fag a Bealach (Clear the Way), included the stanza,

> Know, ye suffering brethren ours,
> Might is strong, but Right is stronger,
> Saxon wiles or Saxon pow'rs
> Can enslave our land no longer
> Than your own dissensions wrong her.
> Be ye one in might and mind;
> Quit the mire where cravens wallow;
> And your foes shall flee like wind
> From the fearless fag a bealach!

Although Duffy was antagonistic to the way in which John Mitchel used inflammatory language, while failing to take any constructive steps to organise for success in an armed struggle, should it occur, he defended in 1846 Mitchel's call to sabotage the newly built railways should they be used

by the British govenrment to move troops. In 1848, deluded that the February Revolution in France and other insurrections in Europe would provide a Young Ireland rising with allies, Duffy in an article entitled 'The Creed of the Nation', while expressing a preference for gaining his political objectives without violence, made it clear that he would use force if persuasion were unavailing,

> How can we answer but with the sword of Ireland? If famine has weakened the right arm of the people it has not paralysed His arm who rules the destinies of battles and fights by the side of the oppressed. Shall we tamely submit to see the late remnant of the Irish race and name sacrificed to the greedy and insolent spirit of English dominion? With God's blessing no..All Ireland, from sea to sea, is arming and organising to uphold and enforce this rights...If we cannot save our country by peace, I am for war. And that we may save it by peace or war, I am for the universal arming and organisation of the people.

The prima facie evidence against Duffy for treason was very considerable, and it is unlikely that had Young Ireland been in revolt against any state other than Britain, he would have found himself so soon a member of first the metropolitan and then a colonial legislature. On his arrival in Australia Duffy resolutely defended his past (1898, 2, p.133),

> I am still an Irish rebel to the backbone and to the spinal marrow. A rebel for the same reason that John Hampden and Algernon Sidney, that George Washington and Charles Carroll of Charles of Carroltown were rebels - because tyranny has supplanted law in my native country.

It is instructive that Duffy's examples were taken from English history or from that of revolting British colonies sharing the same constitutional and political traditions. It would have been politically damaging for Duffy to compare himself to Mazzini or Garibaldi, the enemies of the Pope, although Cardinal Cullen did not hesitate to describe him as (Molony, 1969, p.21) 'an Irish Mazzini...a wicked man to act with whom, after his conduct

in 1848, was impossible'. Duffy also understood that the lessons to be gained from the study of revolutions in France were far from encouraging. In urging Smith O'Brien in 1848 that they must seize the leadership of a revolutionary rising he thought inevitable, Duffy argued that (O'Broin, 1967, p.49),

> if things are left to take the course they are tending towards, we will see the life of the country trampled out under the feet of English soldiers...or you and I will meet on a Jacobin scaffold ordered for execution by some new Marat or Robespierre, Mr.James Lalor, or Mr. somebody else.

In Australia Duffy was often caught between opposing sentiments. Sometimes he expressed pleasure with the political progress made, with the status of Irish Catholics and with the comparative lack of sectarian bitterness. He endorsed the opinion (1898, 2, p.141) that 'an Australian Conservative...is a man who accepts only four of the six points of the People's Charter.' He boasted (1898, 2, p.153) that his electoral victories were 'largely attributable to the testimony of Irish Protestants and Presbyterians', even if 'mainly to the unpurchasable zeal of countrymen who shared my religious and poliical convictions'. On other occasions he deplored the operation of sectarianism against him, George Higinbotham being a favourite example, (1898, 2, p.292),

> Mr. Higinbotham in manhood was influencd and controlled by the prejudices which an Irish Protestant boy rarely escapes. He had been educated at a school endowed by funds diverted from Catholic purposes, and in a Protestant University endowed with the confiscated lands of a Catholic University...He was not a conscious bigot, but he had for his allies all those who had transplanted the secret conspiracies and rancorous bigotry of the old world to the new.

Despite the political success enjoyed by O'Shanassy and himself, Duffy

claimed (1898, 2, p.139),

> To strangers at a distance who read of Murphys, Barrys, MacMahons, and Fitzgeralds in high places, it (Victoria) seemed the paradise of the Celt - but they were Celts whose forefathers had broken with the traditions and creed of the island.

As well as gaining support from both Protestant and Catholic, Duffy also found himself attacked from both sides. He wrote to the Bishop of Kerry in response to congratulations on his gaining office in Victoria (1898, 2, p.173) that he had been,

> howled at in both ends of the earth by parties more asunder than the Antipodes on diametrically opposite grounds of complaint! Yonder for betraying the interests of religion; here for being its slave and missionary.

Attacks from the Catholic side were especially galling; a remarkable feature of Duffy's two volume autobiography is that, although it includes many references, mainly hostile, to Cardinal Cullen, his bete-noire in Ireland before his emigration to Australia, never once is there any mention of the name of Archbishop Goold, a thorn in his flesh in Victoria. Yet they met many times, once when Duffy was a guest of honour at the Provincial Council which met in Melbourne in 1869, Duffy responded to the toast 'The Laity of Victoria' with the words (Molony, 1969, p.121), 'With all deference to the venerable Archbishop...he was sure that the roots of Cathlicity and its progress, was its Irish nationality'. The Archbishop Duffy referred to was Polding, with whom, despite his Englishness, he might have enjoyed better relationships than with Goold.

Historical associations powerfully affected Duffy when in Rome; he was moved to see (1898, 2, pp.274-5) in the Collegio Romano,

> the identical rooms occupied by eminent missionaries and saints of the Society of Jesus two centuries ago, still containing the books and furniture they used when they were students or professors, and its noble library, where it was a pleasant surprise to find the works of Savonarola on its shelves, and the portrait of Galileo in its observatory.

He wrote too, 'where can the early history of Christendom be better studied than in the Catacombs, the hiding-place of early popes and saints, and richer than the Colosseum itself in the blood of Christian martyrs?' Most fascinating for Duffy was the Accademia Polyglotta,

> where students from Asia, Africa, Australasia, and America spoke, each of them, the language or chanted the music of his birthplace, and from three continents and their outlying islands bore names that marked them of our own indestructible people. The remote history of Europe, when the children of Conn gave missionaries to half the known world, seemed revived again in that spectacle.

Duffy also recalled that 'Irish friars were the hosts and often the trusted counsellors of princes from Charles and James Stuart, and Charles Edward in a later generation down to Albert Edward of Wales in our own day'.

However attractive the antiquities of Rome, Duffy had no sympathy for the political traditions of the temporal power. Duffy was prepared to defend the Pope's sovereignty over Rome itself, which continued during the 1860s, telling Lord Odo Russell, the British Consul in Rome, (1898, 2, p.277) that its seizure by the Kingdom of Italy would be 'a robbery, not only of the Pope but of Catholic Europe; whatever ancient monument was preserved, whatever modern edifice was erected, was sure to be inscribed with the name of some good pope who spent the offerings of Catholic Europe in these good works'. When Russell replied that 'much might be admitted on this head if the people of Rome were not so eager to get rid of him, but it was entirely adverse to the modern spirit, and to one's sense of justice, to

impose a government which they distrusted and disliked on a quarter of a million people on any pretence', Duffy's natural rejoinder was 'By my faith, I believe you're right; let us begin by applying the maxim to Dublin'. Duffy did not seek to restore the former temporal power, however.

Duffy was somewhat less enthusiastic for American forms of government than were most Irish Australians. He feared the levelling tendencies he lived with in Victoria and of which (1898, 2, p.301) 'the dusty deshabille' of Abraham Lincoln had become the embodiment, even though George Washington had, very rightly in Duffy's view, adopted a princely style which was 'more respectful to the nation which he represented'. Following De Tocqueville, Duffy feared that (1898, 2, p.172),

> Suspicion is a sentiment never long absent from democratic communities. Washington was suspected of desiring to turn the Republic he had founded into a Monarchy; Hamilton was suspected of conspiring to ape in the new country the imperialism of Chatham.

It is probably even more true to say that suspicion, envy and jealousy are seldom long absent from any communities, but in Australia Duffy found the atmosphere of parliamentary politics much less edifying than that in the House of Commons he had quitted in disgust at the baseness of some of his Irish colleagues. On a visit to London he met Robert Lowe, whose Australian experiences had convinced him that mass democracy was a grave threat to individual freedoms and liberal institutions and policies. Lowe warned Duffy (1898, 2, p.262), 'Wait till the larrikin comes on the stage'. Duffy publicly defended the reputation of Australian political life from the more extreme of Lowe's attacks, but he feared that the dangers against which Lowe warned were real ones.

Duffy was not always consistent in his attitude towards party politics. He usually took the orthodox mid-Victorian view that the party system had many more advantages than weaknesses. He wrote (1898, 2. p.203),

> Party organisation has grievous drawbacks. It sometimes teaches men to stifle their consciences, and to prefer the interest of their faction to the interest of the country. But where there is no party the necessary alternative is apathy or corruption.

On the other hand he found the parties in Victoria excessively factional and unprincipled, and when contemplating a return to Irish politics he refused to take up a position for or against Isaac Butt's Irish League, holding (1898, 2, p.360) that 'such a one as Mr. Bright had adopted in England, taking always the course which I thought was right' was the only one suitable policy for him. Edmund Burke, an Irishman although a Protestant, was perhaps the figure Duffy looked back to most often for guidance in relationship to problems of party and representation.

Duffy had no desire to see the immediate political independence of the Australian colonies. During the late 1850s he feared that the main danger was that a combination of radicals such as Bright and of Conservatives such as Disraeli wuld throw off what the latter called 'a millstone round our necks'. Duffy wrote (1898, 2, p.182),

> I did not sympathise with Mr. Bright's policy: cutting off the colonies to lighten the progress of the empire seemed to me like cutting off the wings of a bird to disembarrass its flight. George III shook off the millstone of the North American colonies with a result we are all familiar with, and if Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Bright had given effect to his conviction he would have a done a work as disastrous.

Duffy did not consider that Aborigine culture could have any relevance to the new Australia, although (1898, 2, p.149) he held,

> Provision for them should be the first charge upon the land fund. Hitherto we have behaved to them like cowards, tyrants, and swindlers, selling millions' worth of their land, and refusing them the most miserable pittance. We should now give them food, shelter, protection, clothing and medical attendance, while any of them remain.

Duffy's main interest in the Chinese was that (1898, 2, p.208) 'they represented a reservoir of population by which we could be deluged and swamped', so that the supported 'measures or restriction'.

On his arrival there Duffy considered that Victoria showed a lamentable lack of interest in history and in literature. In the public library, he found (1898, 2, p.134),

> All the great eras of history were blank. There was not a single book on the English Commonwealth, but Clarendon and an anonymous life of Dromwell, nor on the American Revolution but Bancroft, or on the French Revolution but Thiers, or on the Bonapartean era but the spiteful and libellous memoirs of Bourienne. There was not a single volume on Australian affairs, and political economy was ignored.

That comment threw light on Duffy's concept of the significant past, since he went on to admit that 'the antiquities of Athens and Attica were abundantly represented. Three hundred volumes of Greek and Latin classics and the Book of Common Prayer in German, French, Italian, Greek, modern Greeky, and Spanish; twelve volumes of the Bridgewater Treatises and their antithesis, Hobbs (sic) in sixteen volumes were offered as refreshment to the weary'. Duffy made conventional references to 'the taint of convictism', while his comment (1898, 2, p.248) that after the gold discovery 'the worst convicts in Tasmania and New South Wales found their way to the Victorian diggings, and a serious portion of the public expenditure was incurred in defending society against their exploits'

suggests that he did not attribute to convicts the victim status accorded to them by some other I rish Catholics of his time. In general, however, Duffy displayed little interest in pre-1850 Australian history, despite his criticism of its neglect in the public library.

As Premier of Victoria Duffy was determined to end the situation that (1898, 2, p.323-4), 'nothing had been done for the imagination of the people' and that 'scarcely anything soared beyond the level of provincial mediocrity'. Recalling the Pincian Hill in Rome where 'a long array of historic busts lifted exactly to the level of the eye...makes the grand history of Italy familiar to the people' and praising 'the imagination the Belgians have put into their Palais de Legislation', Duffy 'induced a few men of adequate knowledge in Melbourne to prepare a list of the statesmen of the empire who ought to be so honoured'. No long array of imperial (or Australian) statesmen was constructed, however, to make a significant past familiar to the people of Melbourne.

Duffy had been deeply influenced as a boy by his other reading, as well as by that about the sufferings of Ireland. He recalled (1898, 1, pp.9-11) his boyhood favourites: Gil Blas, Robinson Crusoe, Peregrine Pickle, Roderick Random, stories of Robin Hood, and some odd volumes of Shakespeare and of Swift, as well as more didactic or patriotic literature, such as Ward's Cantos, which Duffy described as 'a burlesque history of the Protestant Reformation'. Despite (or helped by) his lack of a university education, Duffy was throughout life an avid reader, as well as essayist and poet. He became the friend of the Carlyles, John Forster, John Stuart Mill and Robert Browning, as well as of Irish writers such as Clarence Mangan and the Rev. Dr.Murray, the 'Irish Priest'. Deniehy admired him as man of

letters as well as a patriotic and disinterested stateman, while Marcus Clarke consulted him about the structure of His Natural Life.

When he first arrived in Melbourne he was as disappointed by the paucity of the literature in the public library as well as that in historical works. He complained that 'the modern poets were represented by Samuel Rogers and a single poem of Tennyson's. The modern novelists stopped with Scott. The philosophers were nowhere. Carlyle, Landor, Browning, Helps, John Wilson, De Quincey, William Hazlitt, Henry Taylor, Cornewall Lewis and Thackeray were not to be found.' Perhaps Duffy's expectations were too high of a colony only two decades old when he arrived. At any rate his support, as well as the efforts of people of a totally different political hue, such as the Anglo-Irish Sir Redmond Barry, helped to transform Melbourne into a city whose visitors were highly impressed by its concern for history, literature and art.

Although Duffy gave his most famous poem a Gaelic title, he, in common with most other Irish patriots of his time, had little interest in the ancient language of the island, but he was deeply concerned that its cultural heritage should be preserved and advanced. During the 1840s the Young Ireland leaders, none more avidly than Duffy, were (1894, p.9) 'busy digging up the buried relics of our history, to enlighten the present by a knowledge of the past'. Looking back after half a century, Duffy considered (1894, p.12) that, partly because of the Famine and partly because of the destructive effects of 'detective or other sensational stories from England or America, and vile translations from the French of vile originals', the hopes of the 1840s had been set back, so that 'the youthful mind which used to be kindled and purified by the poetry and legends of Ireland, runs

serious risks of becoming debased, perhaps depraved, by battening literary garbage'.

Duffy deeply regretted that by the 1890s the works of Thomas Davis, Clarence Mangan, John Blake Dillon, John O'Hagan and other talented Irish writers of the early nineteenth century had become unknown in Ireland. If this was so in their homeland, the hopes for such literature to take root in nineteenth century Australia were feeble indeed. Duffy, perhaps unconsciously, uttered contradictory messages. On the one hand were the glories of Ireland, 'where the more debasing currents of European civilization only reach it at high tide' and where 'the fine qualities of the Celtic family' had been 'fortified by the sterner strength of the North, and disciplined by the Norman genius'. On the other hand the Irish people had failed to realise their potentialities. Was it because of foreign conquest? The Scots, whose country gained its name from an Irish people who had crossed from Ulster well after the time of St. Patrick, had also been conquered by England, but in Australia and in North America, as well as in the United Kingdom, the Scots were very well represented in the higher professions and in commerce, whereas, Duffy had found of Irishmen in Australia (1894, p.23), 'multitudes of them sank to be waiters in hotels, barbers and cabmen'. Perhaps it was that (1894, p.46) 'a change has come over the national character in latter times which is not altogether for the better. The people...are more gloomy and resentful, and something of the piety and simplicity of old seems to have disappeared...hard laws and hard taskmasters have sometimes perverted their native disposition'.

Was it the systemic misrepresentation or neglect of Irish history? Duffy lamented 'even in Australia its brief history of a single century has

been made a school-book in State schools; but in Ireland the national history is never in the schools called national'. Duffy did not always remind his audiences or readers that the paucity of Irish history in the schools was the result of failure to agree on how that history should be taught.

Duffy frequently pointed out that political success, to say nothing of artistic achievement or commercial prosperity, had had little correlation with size: Venice had held the gorgeous East in fee. He believed in the power of ideas, maintaining that Adam Smith had transformed the trading policies of Britain, the French Philosophers had created the conditions for the French Revolution (and Edmund Burke the basis for resistance to it), Harriet Beecher Stowe had made slavery morally untenable in the United States, and Jeremy Bentham, Dickens, and Charles Reade had been the main forces by which apparently deep-rooted abuses in English society hand been swept away. Whether in Ireland or in Ausralia, Duffy sought to effect changes on a similar scale. If he did not succeed, his efforts were great and his influence far from negligible.

Edward William O'Sullivan

Edward William O'Sullivan was born in Launceston on St. Patrick's Day, 1846. His father was born in Ireland, as was his mother's father, who had served in the British Army and had received a land grant in Hobart Town after service there with the 63rd Regiment. In later life O'Sullivan recalled (NSWPD, 1st series, XXIX, p.1717) that he 'came from a line of soldiers' and that his earliest childhood memories were (Mansfield, 1965, p.3) of hoisting the flag on the Queen's Birthday.

His grandfather's honourable military career may have made O'Sullivan as a politician less hostile to military traditions than most of his fellow radicals. Although on occasion O'Sullivan was a strong opponent of higher military budgets, and although he considered a large standing army to be 'a menace to the people and a danger to free institutions', he admired the idea of a soldier-citizenry, once arguing (NSWPD. 1st series, XXXIV, p.5981) that 'every one who had a right to vote ought to be compelled to shoulder a rifle to defend his country'. Like Henry Lawson, O'Sullivan disliked the pride and panoply of traditional officer corps, but admired men willing and able to defend themselves, whether at the Eureka Stockade or, if necessary, against foreign invaders. He recalled in his unpublished From Colony to Commonwealth: Half a Century's Reminiscences (Mansfield, 1965, p.5), 'seeing the soldiers leave Hobart in a steamer towards the close of 1854...It was this skirmish that accentuated the hostile feeling between the colonists and the military...I can easily understand from what I saw then how the bitterness arose between the people of Boston and the English soldiers which afterwards culminated in Lexington, Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Yorktown, and independence'.

O'Sullivan had a more limited schooling than James Martin, but entered journalism even earlier, working at the age of eleven in the printroom and later as a journalist on the Mercury and during his twenties as journalist and then editor for the Tribune. Like Martin, O'Sullivan admired Edmund Burke, whom he quoted in his first editorial on the Tribune, for his stance on the American War of Independence, but he had little sympathy, even before he became a labour organiser, with Burke's later thought.

The 'wrongs of Ireland' were an important theme in O'Sulllivan's

thinking about history. In his first speech after election as member for Queanbeyan in 1885, O'Sullivan declared (NSWPD, 1st series, XVIII, pp.358-62), 'Since the grey dawn of civilization' men had struggled for mastery over the land, with 'happy and prosperous France' representing a satisfactory outcome of such struggles, and 'poverty-stricken and unhappy Ireland' a victory for monopolists over the people. Landed aristocracies, such as those established by William the Conqueror in England and by his Anglo-Norman successors in Ireland, should be avoided at all costs in Australia. O'Sullivan was never able to think of Henry Parkes as other than (NSWPD, 1st series, LXXVII, pp.6253-4), 'a very bitter foe of my co-religionists...and of my father's race', although this sentiment did not prevent him from co-operating with Parkes from time to time. In speeches on various St. Patrick's Days, O'Sullivan, in referring to the Irish character, spoke warmly of 'their fibre and their elasticity, their keenness of perception, their sparkling wit and vivacity, their powers of oratory, and their administrative capacity', or bemoaned 'their story of sorrow, lightened with but few gleams of sunshine during the last few centuries' (1906, pp.34;41). He complained (1906, p.37-8) that the Act of Union was,

> a mere sham, a deception upon the people of England, as well as those of Ireland...The union of Great Britain and Ireland had not put an end to lawlessness, nor terminated the feud between Protestant and Ctholic. It had not made the Irish prosperous, nor taken away the causes of Irish discontent.

During the 1880s O'Sullivan expressed support for an Australian Republic, although he does not appear (Mansfield, 1965, p.260) to have joined George Black's Republican Union. O'Sullivan's most extended parliamentary critique of the British political tradition castigated its aristocratic and monarchical elements (NSWPD, 1st series. XXXV, p.599),

> It is not the masses of the British we have to find fault with; it is the governing class - the same class who ruled as an oligarchy for centuries in Venice, and who stillrule and dominate Ireland, and dominate Scotland, and who, in my opinion, are responsible for the disgrace attaching to the British name. If the masses of the British people had the same institutions, if they had the same amount of liberty and freedom that the Americans have grown up under, I venture to say we should hear very little about aristocratic domination; and with the aristocracy would go all the abuses that disfigure the British name.

Yet, for O'Sullivan, affection for Ireland did not entail root-and-branch antagonism to England or to English institutions. He disclaimed any sympathy for Ned Kelly, although he described him as (Mansfield, 1965, p.33) as 'a clever and courageous man, and would have made a splendid guerilla general in his own or any other country'. Even his republicanism was of an unorthodox character: in 1884 in an article entitled 'The Coming Republic' O'Sullivan advanced the idea that Britain and the United States should form a federal republic in which all 'Anglo-Celts' would be united and Ireland itself enjoy Home Rule.

By the 1890s O'Sullivan had come to admire the forms of representative government which Britain, and in particular England, had evolved. He did not claim that the British Constitution was perfect, but he asserted (NSWPD, 1st series, XXXVII, p.648) that its provisions 'are conducive to liberty, to the maintenance of the rights of the people and of freedom of speech'. As for the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, which Westminster had granted the colony, he assured its members (NSWPD, 1st series, XXXVIII, p.1213), that 'there was no form of this House, however tedious or unnecessary it might appear, which was not useful and wholesome'. As O'Sullivan's republicanism faded, he started to adduce different constitutional lessons from the past from those he had drawn earlier. He

came to the conclusion, for example, that unicameral legislatures had always been a disaster, claiming (NSWPD, 2nd series, XXX, p.158), 'In every case where the Upper House has been wiped out bloodshed and revolution have followed...I do wish honourable members would read a little more of history, because in this, as in other matters, all history repeats itself'.

O'Sullivan told the mainly Irish-Australian readership of the Freeman's Journal (29 Jan., 1889) that 'There has never been a civilizer like the British Empire'. As the grandson of an Irish soldier in the British army, apart from his own success and that of so many other Irish men and women in the British colonies, O'Sullivan (1906, p.35) considered that Australians of Irish descent should view the British Empire as 'theirs, because they have helped to build it, and to establish the high form of civilization which it confers.' He asked, 'What would we think of a man who set fire to the warehouse of his own firm because he had had a quarrel with his partners in bygone times?'. O'Sullivan was by no means unusual in this stance. In 1885 O'Sullivan supported the initiative of the premier, W.B. Dalley, in pledging a New South Wales contingent to help Britain in the Soudan, and who had joked that, despite all the Orange talk of 'plotting Papists and Fenian rebels, the first men from Australia to serve the Queen on the field of Battle are being sent by a Paddy and a Holy Roman'.

O'Sullivan's 'Anglo-Celtic' idea remained a favourite with him. In 1888 he envisaged (NSWPD, 1st series, XXIX, p.1717) a collection of Anglo-Celtic states, 'one in language, laws and literature...the whole being united by a federal tie'. The growing strength of Britain's imperial rivals, fear of dangers in Australia's isolation, and a longing for a constructive solution to political discontent in Ireland, were brought

together in a speech in 1902 (1906, p.9),

> In view of the danger to our combined race, and the possibility of establishing a glorious unification of people, it is worth while to forget ancient feuds and prejudices, and to trust the strong sense of justice in a mighty democracy to right the wrongs caused by the rule of class or clique in ages past.

O'Sullivan was greatly attracted by democratic and socialist ideas. In his maiden speech as a parliamentarian he advanced (NSWPD, 1st series, XVIII, p.362) the standard view of those who claimed to represent the labouring classes, 'Good statesmanship should ever aim at the elevation of the masses...Let us do all in our power to alleviate the condition of the masses by enacting sound and salutary labour laws...Privileges should be ended and political and social equality should be established'. O'Sullivan denied that Free Trade, either in goods or in labour, could be even part of the answer; he supported strict immigration controls, so that wages would not be brought down, and demanded protective tariffs, to build up industry and employment. In one argument, interesting in that a century earlier comparibility with Venice would have seemed overly ambitious, O'Sullivan claimed (NSWPD, 1st series, XVIII, p.794), that free trade had made Sydney 'a mere antipodean Venice - the emporium for New South Wales, Queensland and the Pacific Islands'. He claimed more widely (NSWPD, 1st series, XXXVII, p.465),

> ...when the Government can step in to assist any interest or industry, they should do so. I disagree with the doctrine of my free-trade friends, that we should leave things alone. The greatest states in the world have been built up by the active interference of government, by means of protective tariffs, state subsidies, or the application of the intellect at the command of the people in the shape of the government.

O'Sullivan attacked Free Traders as impractical idealists, who failed to learn the harsh lessons provided by history. He argued (NSWPD, 1st

series, LV, p.4282-4),

> ...from an abstract point of view, free trade is logical and to prevail; but why does it not prevail? Simply because we have in the world a difference of races, we have inequality with regard to conditions and circumstances under which men live...free trade is logical in the abstract. So is the brotherhood of man. We ought to have no war, we ought to have no theft, we ought to have no wrong or evil in the world; but somehow or other, with all our desires for the brotherhood of man, we have to build gaols, to maintain standing armies and to look to ourselves. If we did not, depend upon it that the crafty would triumph over the simpletons, and we should have a relapse into barbarism.

Like most Australians of his time, O'Sullivan feared the 'yellow peril'. He denied (NSWPD, 1st series, XLI, pp.4172-4), that he wished 'to raise a cry against the Chinese simply because they are Chinese', but still spoke of them as 'an inferior race' against whom 'white civilization' must be defended. How could such people, he asked, (Freeman's Journal, 27 Nov. 1897) share equally with Australians 'in all those privileges with which long centuries of war and evolution, storm and bitter experience have crowned the free man?' O'Sullivan was well aware that Chinese society had existed for far more centuries than that of Britain, and that Chinese military and industrial inferiority might be very temporary. O'Sullivan said in 1890 (NSWPD, 1st series, XLIV, p.476), 'China is a slumbering volcano. She has had in her past philosophers, statesmen, and warriors, and a civilization that we know little about. Some day she will become a massive power in the eastern world...'. In 1900 he argued (NSWPD, 1st series, CIV, p.1299), that China 'may become a menace to all Christendom...one of the mightiest nations of the earth, a nation between whom, and ourselves, there is almost a racial hatred'.

Britain's imperial rivals were an immediate rather than a potential threat to Australia. O'Sullivan warned the readers of the Freeman's Journal

(11 June 1898) of the dangers of Britain's international isolation and of the folly of Australian complacency. He used a historical parallel,

> Mexico and Peru were rich and peaceful countries like Australasia, and were also, like her, distant from the aggression of European conquerors; yet Cortes and Pizzaro found their way thither, despoiled Mexico and Peru of their riches and enslaved their people.

There were, O'Sullivan thus feared, many obstacles to the establishment of a brotherhood of man by the workers of the world, but he was attracted by the socialist theories, such as those expressed by Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, which were reaching the Australian colonies from London and from Western Europe. O'Sullivan was alarmed, however, despite his support for state intervention into trade and industry and for extensive welfare legislation, by threats to individual liberty he discerned in many brands of socialist theory. He considered (NSWPD, series 1, L,pp.5978-9) that 'ideas now floating about in despotically governed countries where the working-classes are in a state of semi-serfdom' might have some value for the subjects of the Czar or the Kaiser, but were irrelevant to any 'Anglo-Celtic community', in which there was 'ample scope for every man who desires to do so to better his condition of life'. Mere levelling did not attract him, although the type of functional hierarchy advocated by the Saint-Simonians, he conceded (NSWPD, 1st series, XLIX, pp.5319-20), 'comes very much nearer to my idea as to what should be the reward of exertion'. O'Sullivan referred respectfully to Karl Marx as 'the most powerful and philosophic of the socialists', but held that Marx's apparent aim of 'superseding the existing government by a vast international combination of the workers of all nations without distinction of creed, colour or nationality' was utopian.

As a convinced Roman Catholic, O'Sullivan was deeply worried by the anti-clerical and, indeed, anti-religious character of late nineteenth-century socialist doctrines. He perhaps underestimated the coercive power of the state, understandably since nobody then anticipated the massive structures of twentieth century totalitarianism, when he argued (NSWPD, 2nd series S, XVIII, PP.135-6) that the 'socialist ideal' could only be achieved through 'a profound religious or devotional feeling in the work undertaken, which will induce those who undertake the work to submit to self-sacrifice and self-denial', although his second condition, 'strict discipline by which all the regulations of the community can be rigidly enforced' has a very modern ring. The Peru of the Incas and the Jesuit communities in Paraguay were the historical examples of socialism at work which he offered, although he thought it unlikely that William Lane and his followers would succeed in creating a new socialist regime in Paraguay.

O'Sullivan sought to keep Australia and the political groups with which he was associated in touch with the traditions and values of Christian Europe. In a Freeman's Journal editorial in 1897 which Mansfield (1965,p.279) attributes to O'Sullivan, he was concerned with strengthening 'a more vivid and real appreciation of the inherited tradition of great bishops, scholars, preachers and saintly men who have done their work through the Christian ages', a goal which the building of great cathedrals in Australia would, be believed, would be of invaluable service in achieving.

Like many other Australian Catholics, O'Sullivan responded to the attacks in the Syllabus on many of the political ideas which he held by successful compartmentalization of his mind. The Catholic social theories

developed in Europe during the 1880s provided a way in which religious orthodoxy and viable democratic politics could be genuinely integrated. The new emphasis in Papal encyclicals, such as the 1891 Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII, was on ways in which the Catholic Church had been in the past, and was still, the enemy of inequality and political injustice, rather than a prop of established regimes. For O'Sullivan Rerum Novarum and Leo XIII's advice to French Catholics to co-operate with the Third Republic were great boons, since there need no longer be a choice between progressive politics and the teaching of the church. As the Freeman's Journal put it (16 July, 1898),

> The first Republic failed and gave place to an even worse tyrant than the Bourbons, because it denied religion, persecuted the Church, and imbued its hands in innocent blood; but the Third Republic, guided by wiser counsels and blessed with Papal approval, seems destined to endure.

In February 1898 in the Freeman's Journal O'Sullivan described the Church as 'the same power that smote down the kings and barons of the Middle Ages'. O'Sullivan adopted the familiar strategy of British radicals of claiming that their programmes, and well as being modern and progressive, also represented a return to valued traditions which had wrongly been forgotten or abandoned. He described medieval guilds as (NSWPD, 12st series, LXXIX,pp.945) 'the forerunners of our trade unions'. Indeed, the origins of the unions lay beyond the medieval guilds, he claimed (NSWPD, 1st series, XLVIII.p.4011), in the frithgilds of the Teutonic tribes of the fifth century.

In the writings of the Roman Catholic social movement towards the end of the nineteenth century, the terms 'medieval' and feudal' tended to part company, the former gaining honorific tones, but the latter remaining pejorative. O'Sullivan's Freeman's Journal, for example, accused Bismarck,

a detested figure because of the Falk Laws and the Kulturkampf, as well as for Prussia's defeat of Catholic Austria and France, as (11 Jan. 1873) the restorer of 'the worst traditions of the feudal times'.

O'Sullivan was following a line of argument used in Australia long before. As early as 1826 E.S. Hall serialized in the Monitor extracts from Cobbett's History of the Reformation, which sought to show that the once 'Merrie England' had been destroyed by the Reformation, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the establishment of a despotic Tudor monarchy. The copy of Cobbett which Hall had used for this purpose had, significantly, been lent to him by Father J.J. Therry (Waldersee, 1974, p.33). The enthusiams of Carlyle, of the Pre-Raphaelites, the Gothic Revival and William Morris, had all recently strengthened nostalgia for the medieval, while the expositions of economic history of the Liberal Thorold Rogers and of Karl Marx had at least one similar feature, in that they placed the advent of capitalism in the sixteenth century and portrayed it as a disaster for peasants and artisans. O'Sullivan was acquainted, if only at second hand, with these movements of thought and applied them vigorously to Australian conditions.

O'Sullivan's conception of Australia's own history was triumphalist. In his main political testament (1906,p.1) he divided it into 'four great eras...the early settlers' age, the pastoral age, the golden age, and now the industrial and political age. Each of the four periods had seen great advances, the only real hiccup being the injustice meted out to the gold-miners by 'silver-laced puppies', who had learned the wrongness of such ways since the Eureka Rising. Australia had become, although not yet the most powerful, the best and most just country in the world: 'in no other

country is labour so well-organised, its position and demands so much respected'; 'the lot of the Australian workman is one to be envied by the civilized world'; 'the Australian working classes, having achieved industrial freedom, have decided they will extend a helping hand to the suffering millions of the old world' (this last in 1890, when Australian unions gave strong financial support to the London dockers during their major strike); and so on.

In that same 1890 article O'Sullivan looked forward to an extension of Australia's role as 'a home of the oppressed and down-trodden people of Great Britain and Europe, for they had here a virgin soil in which to plant the germs of true liberalism in all its varied forms' (Mansfield, 1965, p.274). Only the people of the United States could compare with the Australians in felicity, in O'Sullivan's view. He wrote (Catholic Press, 23 March 1901), 'Abraham Lincoln's utterances influenced my earlier life, and, in my opinion, the aim of every young man should be to secure advancement by merit and all legitimate means, remembering that individual effort is the surest road to success'. Samuel Smiles and many British Victorian moralists could have been cited, of course, in similar terms. The United States was not, however, anywhere nearly as significant in the historical and political thinking of Australians of O'Sullivan's generation, which already enjoyed virtually complete self-government, as in the two preceding generations, when American precedents had loomed so large in Australian debate.

O'Sullivan's career is of particular interest in that it demonstrated that a constructive combination could be effected of English and Irish Catholic traditions. This was probably easier for the Australian-born to achieve than the Irish-born, and relatively easier after the change in the

emphasis of Papal policies and during the years in which a peaceful transition to Home Rule in Ireland seemed highly likely.

Summary

Even a short study of only a few nineteenth century Australians with Irish Catholics backgrounds indicates, if nothing else, that facile generalization about Australian Catholics is fraught with danger. Roger Therry and John Hubert Plunkett were highly capable members of that first Irish generation to derive substantial benefit from the Catholic Relief Act. They brought to Australia that admiration for many aspects of English legal and constitutional traditions (on matters non-Irish at least), combined with Catholic piety, which characterized the thought of Daniel O'Connell. In Bourke they found a particulary congenial governor to work with, but they also worked effectively under his successors.

James Martin was perhaps the best example of those born Irish Catholics who took on an entirely different political and cultural persona from that with which he was born. He is an instructive case when considering the question of how much influence past traditions must have on those who inherit them. For all who dwell in open societies, but especially for migrants from one open society to another, there is an important area of choice about what to retain and what to discard of old cultures. In the case of Deniehy much was consciously retained. In Martin's case almost everything was consciously rejected. It is difficult to escape altogether from the past, however: for Martin the legacy of ancestry was a series of accusations of apostasy for failing to walk in the ways of his forefathers. Martin assimilated the dominant culture of New South Wales with such success that such charges of betrayal seem to have affected him very little, if at

all.

Daniel Deniehy was born in New South Wales in comfortable circumstances, even though his father had been transported to the colony, and he enjoyed considerable political and literary success early in life. In many ways he was in an ideal position, so far as the radical wing of New South Wales politics was concerned, to reduce sectarian antagonisms and to construct a programme to remove Catholic grievances and to secure more rapid constitutional advance. Deniehy was conscious of the importance of Protestants such as Tone and Emmet in movements for Irish independence, and he was able in the early 1850s to work closely with non-Catholics such as Parkes and Cowper. Deniehy's erratic temperament often alienated both religions, rather than enabling more common ground to be found. He was at his worst in attacking Polding and Gregory for being insufficiently sectarian and exclusive, after having for years denounced their acceptance of reactionary policies. Given his wide cultivation and wit, it was not only his personal tragedy that he became widely regarded with amused contempt, but a great misfortune for Australian letters and politics.

Deniehy thought he might have done much greater things had he had a leader such as Charles Gavan Duffy. Duffy's high-mindedness placed him beyond many of the weaknesses to which Deniehy was prone and many of the personal criticisms he received. Duffy's chief personal weakness was to see himself so much as the embodiment of the past and present of the Irish nation, that any fancied rebuff to himself was likely to be taken as a slur on his people, but there is no doubt that his presence in Australia lifted the tone of historical, cultural and political debate, particularly among the Catholics of Victoria. Duffy was accused by ultra-Protestants of

subservience to the Hierarchy, yet suspected by Archbishop Goold and many other influential priests of being an arch-enemy of the temporal power and a seditious rebel. He adopted educational policies designed to appease the Hierarchy, but he failed to gain their trust, while at the same time antagonising Higinbotham and many others whose long-term political aims had much in common with his own. Duffy prided himself on his ability as a political organiser, but he lacked, fortunately perhaps, the will or the skill to play the factional games in which his great Catholic rival John O'Shanassy was so adept. No politician did so much as Duffy to make Irish history and culture significant and respectable in Australian thinking, although others, such as J. P. O'Connor, J. F. Hogan and Morgan Jaguers worked hard in that cause and longer in Australia.

Edward William O'Sullivan had more commonplace abilities than the other men considered in this chapter, but his very ordinariness made him a representative character in more than one sense. His lack of analytical depth was of some help in his early years in public life when the anti-liberal encyclicals of the Vatican were in full flow, but when O'Sullivan and many other Australian Catholics relied on liberal arguments of various sorts to buttress their political policies. O'Sullivan was prepared to take up independent positions: on protection and on military training, for example, but, although he did not simply follow public opinion opportunistically, his sentiments were usually those which many others had already adopted. After a flirtation with republicanism O'Sullivan decided that the historical evidence was that a constitutional monarchy was safer; after supporting a single chamber legislature he became a convert to an Upper House. His centrality in political thought lay in his antagonism to past British policies in Ireland and his desire to see Ireland (and the

Australian colonies) remain within a British Empire in which they enjoyed full internal self-government. Similarly, O'Sullivan was attracted by state intervention to relieve poverty and to promote prosperity, while fearful of excessive governmental powers. A desire to foster rapid political progress co-existed in O'Sullivan's mind with a strong affection for an imagined medieval past of social solidarity under the protective shade of the Catholic Church. For people like O'Sullivan the pontificate of Leo XIII was a great blessing which enabled a more fruitful combination of their religion and their politics, and of the different strands of their historical imaginations and valued traditions. In 1900 the prospects for O'Sullivan's brand of Anglo-Celticism seemed full of promise.

For all those considered here, except Martin, the central problem concerning the significant past was that they abhorred what had been done in Ireland by the British, principally the English, but that it was only in British, and principally in English, traditions of civil government and law that they could find much guidance about the sort of society they sought. There was nothing in the traditions of Australian Aborigines which had meaning or attraction for them; there was nothing in the ancient civilizations of Asia to interest them politically, apart from making them fearful of yellow and other perils. Unlike many of their priests, none of them had sympathy for the political policies with which the Papacy had been so closely associated, both in respect of the temporal power and of support for the ancien regime in Europe. During the 1840s the United States was an object of great interest to Australian Catholics, as well as to non-Catholics seeking rights of self-government for the Australian colonies; this concern was smaller after internal self-government was achieved, especially after the American Civil War had taken place, apart from interest

in the prominent part played by Irish Catholics in American life.

For Deniehy and for Duffy, the two who in their different ways were most antagonistic politically to British policies, there was the additional complication of their deep affection for English literature. To be sure, Duffy worked hard to encourage the study of the legends and poems of Ireland and to encourage a new Irish literary movement, but he and Deniehy were warmly attached to the English language, of which England itself was not only the historical but the ongoing world centre.

Chapter Twelve

Three Fathers of Federation: Parkes, Pearson and Deakin

Henry Parkes

Parkes had been an artisan in Warwickshire, where he was born in 1815, before emigrating to new South Wales in 1839. He had been strongly influenced by the reform and radical movements of the 1830s, recalling (1892, 1, p.10) that he 'had looked silently on the tremendous agitations for the first Reform Bill...hung upon the voice of Daniel O'Connell' and heard also Thomas Attwood and William Cobbett address great meetings. He soon became active in radical causes in Sydney in the heady years before internal self-government was achieved.

By 1848, the great year of European revolutions, Parkes had emerged from obscurity to become a leading member of a radical group calling itself the Constitutional Association and publishing the People's Advocate and New South Wales Vindicator. The Advocate carried an editorial motto from Lamartine: 'Political economy has hitherto occupied itself about the production of wealth. It must now occupy itself about the distribution of wealth; so that the labourer may no longer be left without his fair share to the produce'. The radical Catholic Edward Hawksley was its first editor, and, interestingly in view of Parkes' future reputation, was attacked by the Sydney Morning Herald as having 'a strong tendency towards the Church of Rome'.

Enthusiasm for France fired Parkes, an avid reader of Byron, Moore, Shelley and Leigh Hunt in his youth and a persistent poet throughout his life, to yearn for an Australian Lamartine (People's Advocate, 21 April, 1848),

Still may pale France they genius feel,
Ripening her pure and equal laws,
Till far off nations spring, all zeal
And bravery, to the common cause!
Of all the sunbright names that make
The daylignt of our human world,
First shall they turn to thine, when wake,
Young States, with Freedom's flag unfurled,
And oh! if conflicts fierce and high
Should ever rend Australia's heart,-
May one ont less than thou be nigh
To do and teach the patriot's part!

The June Days in Paris, the poor showing of Lamartine in the French Presidential elections, and the subsequent career of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, all helped to confirm that revolutions in France seldom consisted entirely of sweetness and light. The French and Lamartinean strain rapidly disappeared from Parkes' lyre.

The United States of America was also frequently invoked for inspiration in the Australian colonies during the 1840s and early 1850s. At an anti-transportation meeting in April 1852 Parkes (Empire, 8 April) quoted in full the peroration of Patrick Henry's famous attack on George III and called on the Tasmanians to follow the example of the American colonists by refusing to permit the landing of any more convicts there. (In 1850 Parkes had persuaded some of Sydney's wealthier radical sympathisers, such as Thomas Ware Smart, Edward Flood and T.S. Mort, to finance a new paper, the Empire, which he would direct, so that his speeches and other comments are most frequently found in its columns subsequently). At that time there were many references to debates in the Continental Congresses and at the Philadelphia Convention of 1789; during his long but successful speech at the Circular Quay on 5 September 1853 Parkes was sufficiently confident to challenge John Hubert Plunkett's interpretation of the American Articles of

Confederation. Patrick Henry was again pressed into service by Parkes in an oration later in the year (Empire, 13 Dec. 1853),

> If it be possible for a British Ministry and Parliament in this enlightened age to pass a measure fraught with the darkest essence of feudalism - then a crisis, not unprecedented in history, is at hand. Franklin wrote, when the voice of the colonists had fallen in Westminster upon deaf ears: 'The sun of liberty is set, henceforward we must light the lamps of industry and economy'. Patrick Henry replied, with the quicker insight of his race, 'We will kindle lights of a very different kind'.

During his visit to the United States in 1882, when he was Prime Minister of New South Wales, Parkes was delighted with the cordiality of his reception: he wrote later (1892, 2, p.70), 'Among no class did I ever hear a word of hostility to England; but then I did not come in contact with the class known chiefly for its anti-British hatred'. The pleasure of avoiding the American Irish and of receiving many compliments may have led to Parkes deceiving himself about the song sung by members of the Lotus Club in New York after he addressed them. According to Parkes (1892, 2, p.69), 'When I sat down the whole company sprang to their feet and sang the National Anthem of the old country, and they sang it as I had never heard it sung before'. It seems very likely that they sang 'My country 'tis of thee', the words set to 'God save the King' in the 1780s, but that Parkes did not pick out the words, only the tune.

The Empire (17 Aug, 1853) went back beyond George III and Lord North when it accused Wentworth of advancing,

> principles and opinion upon representation, upon the power and monopoly of classes, upon the habits, feelings and dispositions of the people - which belong to the reign of Charles the First, or the era of Louis the Fourteenth...

Parkes' enemies used historical analogy as well. James Martin (Martin,

1980, p.115) compared the Constitutional Committee of which Parkes was a leading light to the Jacobins. Wentworth (Empire, 5 Sept. 1853) accused Parkes and his friends of trying to impose a 'Yankee constitution' on New South Wales. Even at the height of his radical enthusiasms Parkes was careful, however, not to allow himself to be presented too readily as a foe to English constitutional traditions.

In 1849 Protest against Transportation, of which Parkes was the principal author ended, after a statement of grievances, as follows (Martin, 1980, p.58),

> For these and other reasons - in the exercise of our duty to our country, for the love of our families, in the strength of our loyalty to Great Britain and from the depth of our reverence for Almighty God - we protest against the landing again of British convicts on these shores.

At a June 1849 meeting at Circular Wharf Parkes declared (SMH, 19 June), 'we are assembled here today to assert the spirit of British freemen, in demanding those rights to which we are entitled by birth...'. The Great Exhibition was another occasion on which Parkes and the Empire could eulogize their British inheritance, claiming (Empire, 21 Aug. 1851) that 'in none of the gigantic cities of ancient times' would such an achievement have been possible', whereas in London, 'the Capital of the world, in the middle of the nineteenth century, are concentrated the trophies of a civilization which extends "from China to Peru" and from Australia to Lapland. An appropriate radical ingredient was added: 'It is the crowning of industry - the apotheosis of labour - the homage of the human heart to the irresistible might of the Worker.'

Parkes always made good political use of his own origins. Sometimes he

emphasised their lowliness to show how far he had risen by his own exertions; he often quoted a stanza from Thomas Campbell's 'Lines on the Departure of Emigrants for New South Wales which he had first read when preparing for his own voyage out,

> On England's shore I saw a pensive band,
> With sails unfurl'd for earth's remotest strand,
> Like children parting from a mother, shed
> Tears for the home that could not yield them bread.

On other occasions he placed the stress on the respectability of his family, as when he told an election meeting in 1853 (Empire, 4 March) that he was 'by birth as good as some of his fellows. He was the son of an English yeoman, whose family had for a century held a respectable position in the county where he was born (Cheers). He had been reared in one of the most prosperous and public spirited communities in the world; and it was no matter of surprise that, under these circumstances, he had early in life imbibed those liberal principles which he had consistently cherished throughout his life'.

In his speech at Circular Quay in 1853 against the Constitution Bill, Parkes rejected Wentworth's description of him as an 'Arch Anarchist' (Empire, 1 Oct. 1853), and, although he was then in close alliance with Lang and Deniehy, 'spurned the attempt to fix republican notions on him'. He went on,

> It was his heartfelt desire that that flag (pointing to the British ensign over the hustings) might wave in peace and security over his grave and the grave of his children, and in ages to come might float the banner of a great and glorious country here, affiliated by all the bonds of affection and justice to that land from whence they were all descended (Great cheering).

It was hardly surprising that Daniel Deniehy, happy enough though he was to pay tribute to a different fatherland, should have commented sharply in a letter to John Dunmore Lang (Martin, 1980, p.126), after Parkes distanced himself from the republicanism of his friends, that 'Mr Parkes has too much not of the Englishman in him, but of "Englishmanism" about him'. Parkes was well aware, however, that his 'Englishmanism', genuine enough though it was, was also a political asset and gave rise to much of the 'cheering' reported in the Empire. Even had his rhetoric been utterly insincere, its use is evidence of the power of the sentiments to which it appealed.

The thinkers and politicians whose maxims Parkes most often quoted with approval in his early public speeches were English whigs and liberals, such as Macaulay or Bentham, although he considered (1892, 1, p.253) that 'principles of government', including those of Bentham and Locke were less important than practical experience of representative government. Parkes was also happy to claim kinship with imperial patriots such as Chatham, and with the fathers of Free Trade from Adam Smith to Cobden and Bright. Even Conservatives were not too bad, however, when in Britain, although in the Australian colonies only a degenerate version was available. An Empire editorial maintained (22 April 1851) that,

> The character of an English Conservative is as widely different from that of the Botany Bay Conservative, as Queen Victoria is from a Fejee Island princess. The one, generally speaking, is a thorough gentleman, who fervently loves the institutions for which his fathers bled; the other is a downright blackguard, who hankers for the institutions under which the poor convict formerly bled for his father.

Forty years later he expressed a similar sentiment in his reminiscences (1892, 2, p.297),

> the English Tory is, as a rule, an educated man who honestly believes that he knows what is best for the people better than the people know themselves, and who openly professes what he believes, while the Australian Tory, with no claim, as a rule, to education or any other elevating quality, seeks to carry out his own will in public affairs, and to shelter himself under the cloak of Democracy.

Parkes frequently drew analogies from English history to support his arguments. In his letter to the electors of East Sydney in 1872, for example, he claimed (1892, 1, p.267) that 'a little more than a year ago a political combination took place in this country which has no parallel in English history, unless it be indeed the untoward union of Mr Fox and Lord North in 1783, which is thus described by Sir Thomas Erskine May: "the principles of the two parties were irreconcilable; and their sudden union could not be effected without imputations injurious to the credit of both'. That Parkes himself, both before 1872 and between 1872 and 1892 when he wrote his memoirs, had entered into very similar combinations to that which John Robertson and James Martin had just formed did not inhibit him from making the comparison. In the same letter he compared James Martin with the Stuarts: 'The Toryism of Sir James Martin is unlike anything known to modern times; it is the Toryism of the Stuart dynasty, when the will of the obstinate king or the facile minister was sought to be carried out by the corruption of Parliament...the electors must determine whether this colony is to be governed, not by the DIVINE RIGHT of James the Second, by the DIVINE RIGHT of James the Third.'

Whether on minor matters such as where members sat, on which he quoted (1892, 1, p.309) the eccentricities of Cobbett and their futility, or on major constitutional questions concerning ministerial responsibility or the power to dissolve parliament, on which his citations were many and varied,

including Chatham, Canning, Grey of the Reform Bill, Peel, Melbourne, Russell, Palmerston, Gladstone and Disraeli, Parkes had no doubt that the constitutional history of England had the most intimate significance for self-governing Australian colonies. Parkes acted sometimes as though he enjoyed a monopoly of English historical references. During an 1881 debate in the New South Wales legislature on a Liquor Traffic Bill, the member for Gundagai speculated on what Fox or Burke might have said on local option. Parkes (1892, 2, p.55), after suggesting that 'Fox would have spent a night at Brook's', doubting that 'Burke, with all his brilliant abilities, had very much regard for the temperance cause', and recalling that 'the most eminent Prime Minister of that period never consoled himself with less than two bottles of port before going to bed,' finished with the rebuke,

> What is the use of telling us about Fox and Burke in the discussion of a question of this kind? Have we not men living in the present day who will figure in English history in a position equally eminent to that of those eminent men?

Parkes' 'Englishmanism' certainly grew no weaker with the years and was strengthened by his experiences in England as a commissioner for emigration in 1861-2, when he was often feted and when he had the opportunity to make the friendship of people such as the Carlyles, Tennyson, Froude, Richard Cobden, Thomas Hughes, and the Brownings, who had been far distant from his sphere as an ivory turner in the 1830s. In any case the hard times of the 1830s and the 1840s had eased, although the American Civil War threw Lancashire back during the early 1860s to some of the former hardships. The progress brought about by the Reform Act, by Free Trade, and by a more popular monarchy impressed Parkes, who thought the change was symbolized in the passion for building statues in honour of public benefactors. He wrote in 1861 (1869, pp.38-9),

> England is becoming a land of statues. It is beautiful to see in the bosom, as it were, of every city and town, the people's statue of the great minister who gave them untaxed bread, with the one word 'Peel'...A few years hence every English child will have some local statue of Albert the Good, benignly crowning its early associations.

Despite the progress made by Britain, Australia was advancing even more rapidly, Parkes assured his audiences, but he had the good sense to praise the Old Country just as much as the New. His usual peroration went as follows (Martin, 1980, p.194),

> If people liked to stay in England, all he had to say was God bless them in the dear old country. He was just as much an Englishman as any man present. The people in Australia were as thoroughly English as the people of the mother-country; they had forfeited nothing by going to a distance of 14,000 miles. Shakespeare and Milton belonged as much to them as to the people of England; they possessed by right of inheritance an equal share in the grand traditions, the old military renown, the splendour of scientific discovery, and the wealth of literature, which had made England the great civilising power of the world.

He liked too to quote a stanza from Campbell's emigration poem, with the comment that England's glories were present as well as past and would extend into the future, so that wealth and fame would be shared by the Old Country and the New.

> Delightful land, in wildness ev'n benign,
> The glorious past is ours, the future thine!
> As in a cradled Hercules, we trace
> The lines of empire on thine infant face.

Parkes' relationship with the Catholic and Irish traditions in Australia was perhaps the most consistently troublesome theme in his turbulent career. Parkes' conflicts on this front started even during the years in which Deniehy and Hawksley were among his closest alies. This is perhaps hardly surprising, since those were also the years of the Roman

Republic and its suppression and the onset of the age of Pius IX. An Empire editorial (13 Oct. 1851 summed up Parkes' basic position,

> We live in an age pregnant with great events...But there is nevertheless even now going on a struggle on the issue of which the fate of civilisation itself depends...that struggle is a struggle between Light and Darkness - between the expansion of that glorious intellect which God has given us, and its extinction - between that grovelling superstition which seeks to fetter and degrade, and that pure religion which tends to liberate and exalt. Rome has furbished up her rusty arms, and assumed an aggressive stance.

The local representatives of superstition and aggression were naturally more of concern to Parkes than were the Pope and the College of Cardinals. An Empire editorial (25 July 1851) called on,

> the intelligent electors of all persuasions, whether Protestant or Catholic, to nip this embryo intolerance in the bud, and to teach Archdeacon MacEncroe, and the foolish zealots who shout and clamour at his bidding, that in this free and British colony there is a spirit abroad among the people, superior to every species of domination - hating tyranny in all its shapes and under every disguise - and detesting sectarian intolerance above all things.

The basic problem was that what Parkes defined as an unsectarian and tolerant British spirit, many Australians of Irish Catholic descent saw as the essence of English and Protestant ascendancy. In 1867, for example, in reply to a Parliamentary attack on him as anti-Catholic, Parkes declared that (Empire, 18 July),

> while he would accord to that large section of his fellow-citizens, the Roman Catholics, every privilege he himself possessed, if they sought more than this he would resist them by every power he possessed. (Cheers). As a British subject, in a Protestant nation, under a Protestant Crown (hear hear) he would claim for them all civil privileges...but if he found they were encroaching on the rights of the people, arrogating to themselves power that did not belong to them, then it was time for him, and for every other man who valued the liberties of this country to take a stand and resist them.

That the nation was Protestant, or that they were not fully part of 'the people', or that their policies were likely to reduce rather than to enhance liberties, were, of course, the very propositions which most Catholics resisted.

The attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868 converted Parkes for some time into a latter-day First Earl of Shaftesbury or Lord George Gordon. He was convinced that a monstrous Fenian plot existed of which Charles James O'Farrell was only a catspaw. It was possible that such a conspiracy existed; it was quite wrong to claim that one did without any evidence. Parkes was fortunate to escape without any formal censure on his conduct, of which his final speech in the Parliamentary debate on the report of the committee of inquiry into the alleged conspiracy was typical. In his own mind Parkes himself, rather than Prince Alfred, seems to have become the principal target against whom conspirators had been most determined to strike.

On the great education question Parkes considered that his policy was even-handed between Protestant and Catholic, whereas the non-sectarian classroom with facilities for separate Christian instruction at stated hours seemed to most Australian Catholics, although not to Roger Therry, W.A. Duncan John Dillon, Michael Fitzpatrick, or Edward Butler, to be a Protestant system. Parkes' most revealing comments on Catholic education were made on 18 June, 1875, when he opposed in the New South Wales Parliament George Dibbs' proposal to withdraw public support from all denominational schools. Parkes said,

> ...a large body of men and women in this country, numbering one-third of the whole population, are members of the Roman Catholic Church. Whatever their view may be, they are subjects of Her Majesty...they live under the same laws as we live under; they pay their share of the same taxes...it is said that the Roman Catholic body, as matter of conscience, will not send their children to schools where they will not be instructed as Roman Catholics. On the other hand it is said that the State will provide public schools for them where denominational instruction is shut out, and that if they do not like to send their children to those schools, it will be their own faults...But these purely secular schools will be paid for out of the public revenue, and the Roman Catholics will be required to contribute as much as those who make use of the shcool...Call it what you will, this will be felt as nothing short of repression...The thing itself is unjust. So long as we appropriate the revenues of the country for the purposes of education, we have no right to apply them in a way that will exclude a large proportion of the population from the benefits of the expenditure.

The Joint Pastoral of 1879 of Vaughan and the Catholic Hierarchy, with its denunications of government schools, attended by thousands of Catholic children, as 'seedplots of future immorality, infidelity, and lawlessness' helped to transform Parkes' position. Parkes claimed in his reminiscences (1892, 2, p.14) that 'what the secularists had failed to do by their many moves, the Archbishop and his associate bishops contrived to do by one blind move.' The 1880 Public Instruction Act embodied what Parkes had denounced in 1875 as unjust. It would be hard to deny that the policies of the Catholic Hierarchy were provocative and potentially self-destructive, but Vaughan's contempt for the pre-1880 compromise should not have made it less defensible from Parkes' standpoint. As it was, the gulf between Protestants and Catholics was considerably widened. It must also be borne in mind, however, that basically the same process occurred in the other colonies in which Parkes' animus had no effect.

Parkes had a deep admiration for Charles Gavan Duffy and there is no reason to think he was hypocritical when he told a meeting to honour Duffy

in 1856 that (Empire, 12 March) he 'yet knew this of Irish history and Irish wrongs, that had he been himself an Irishman - with his temperament and his principles - he believed he should have been a rebel like him (Mr Duffy).' By the time of the highly sectarian 1880 elections in New South Wales, Parkes had perhaps taken the view that he might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb. He told an eve-of-poll meeting (SMH, 17 Nov.), that,

> He was as friendly to Irishman as to any other class - and his whole life proved it. But he did not wish to see them in the ascendancy...he wanted to see this community thoroughly British. He wanted to see the Anglo-Saxon stock predominant in it - and he wanted to see the Protestant religion predominant. He wanted to see all these things because they were the only guarantee we had for the preservation of the freedom of all for us.

Parkes and the Empire usually gave strong support to White Australia policies. In 1852, for example, the Empire (19 June) opposed the admission to New South Wales of 'half-castes of India', multitudes of them the offspring of licentiousness'. They were said to be 'unused to every thing purely British' and it was described as 'suicidal to have our children trained up with anti-British notions among a herd of serfs, who can never be inoculated with the virtues to us as a nation - the growth of a thousand years, and our preservation amidst the revolutions of the world'.

Only two years later Parkes, when faced by a strike by the compositors on the Empire, tried to bring in as replacements printers from Madras, most of whom were racially the very 'half-castes' he had previously denounced. Their new description was 'sons of Englishmen by Indian mothers' and 'intelligent and responsible young men, for the most part well-conducted and educated.' In 1858 Parkes supported a trans-Pacific route to Europe, mainly because he considered that Australians had much more in common with the peoples of the Americas than with those of Asia. Looking back in 1892 (1,

p.145) he thought his stance correct, since 'This country had little in common with the inhabitants of the Asiatic countries. Beyond taking from them supplies of tea, sugar and spices, they had scarcely any commerce with these countries; they had very little social affinity with any of the populations of the East.' The main single reason for opposition by Anglophile politicians like Parkes to closer imperial unity was that this might entail free entry into Australia of British subjects in African and Asian possessions.

Parkes was also as strongly resentful as any other Australian politician to discussions between the British and Chinese governments which concerned any aspects of Chinese entry into Australia. In the 1888 debate in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly on the Chinese Restriction Bill, Parkes argued (1892, 2, p.211) that 'if this young nation is to maintain the fabric of its liberties unassailed and unimpaired, it cannot admit into its population any element that of necessity must be of an inferior nature and character' and that admission to Australia should be denied to those 'who cannot come amongst us, take up all our rights, perform on a ground of equality all our duties, and share in our august and lofty work of founding a free nation'. He added, 'it is on this very intelligible, this solid ground that I, at any events, have been adverse to the admission of Chinese'.

Parkes claimed that he had 'for thirty years, many times and often, borne testimony to their law-abiding industrious, thrifty and peaceable character, and I have never for a single moment joined with those who have held them up as in many respects more disreputable than a similar number of English subjects'. He stated that he did not 'agree with any of those

persons who think that China is an inferior Power, with whom we can trifle', adding 'I, then, neither despise the individual character of the Chinese, nor underrate the majesty of the power of China; and it is for these very reasons, and because I believe that China is fast becoming a great Power; because I believe her people are endowed with great though homely virtues - the virtues of industry, of provident care, if foresight, of unmatched patience, and vast powers of endurance; it is because I believe in all these things that I do not wish to see the Chinese element increasing in our midst'.

Thus Parkes blew hot and cold: the Chinese were to be excluded because of their inferiority, or because of their superiority in several respects. He was on more solid ground when he noted that Chinese Governments bitterly resisted the entry into China and employment there of non-Chinese, while demanding free entry of Chinese into Australia. The more basic question was that of whether Chinese immigrants, irrespective of their other virtues, could absorb, let alone forward, the way of life which Britain had created and which the Australian colonies had inherited and developed. It was one thing if they were a small minority unable to influence the basic structure of society and government, but quite different if they became sufficient in number to transform that structure.

The tendency of many Australians, including Parkes, to be more British and more imperialistic than most prominent British imperialists, emerged with great force when between 1883 and 1885 the British Government not only repudiated the attempt of Queensland to annex New Guinea, but agreed to a German protectorate over a large part of that island. At a large public meeting in Sydney, Parkes (SMH, 5 Feb. 1885), after reminding all present of

his love for Britain, attacked its government's 'apathy and unconcern...as to the ultimate destiny of this great Australian Empire'. Parkes advanced geographical reasons why New Guinea and other islands of the South West Pacific should be regarded as part of Australia, but his historical arguments were more startling. For nearly a century, he argued,

> Englishmen and Englishwomen had been creating this world of Australasia with their industry and with their privations in the earlier days of their struggles, with their farsightedness which fashioned the life of the country, and latterly their enterprise, which had given a value to New Guinea and those other islands...it was to be lamented that the British flag did not wave over the whole of the territory to which he had alluded.

Parkes view that 'the ultimate destiny of this great Australian Empire' was to dominate the whole region was very similar to that advanced earlier by Lang. As yet there was no united Australia, and Parkes' historical argument was based on what the English (or British) had achieved rather than Australians alone, whether as a whole or within each colony, but, as Shortus noted (1973, p.38), his claim was that history required that 'the Empire follow where the colonies lead.'

Parkes was ever ready to extol the virtues of Australia: in 1882 he told a dinner given in London by the Institute of Civil Engineers (1892, 2, p.81),

> in Australia the British race have before them an experiment in working out British institutions under circumstances more favourable than in any other part of Her Majesty's dominions. We are removed from all possible hostility from other nations...we live in a climate favourable to the advance of our race...We are free from all the errors of the older civilised states of the world, while we have just as much as you possess of the rich inheritance of all scientific and literary performances - in one word, the inheritance of all the glories and all the knowledge of the old land from which we havae sprung.

In the last chapter of his reminiscences, which to be sure omit at least as much as they reveal of his public and private life, Parkes gave a bird's eye view of Australian history. Aborigines do not gain any mention, nor do they appear in the index of the two volumes. Parkes wrote (1892, 2, p.396),

> in forming any estimate of the Australia of 1892, it is unfair and unreasonable to go back to the year 1788...for many years after the landing of the motley group of pioneers under Arthur Phillip, there was no sign of prevision, or forerunning thought...the first impetus to a more progressive condition was given by the enterprise and public spirit of private individuals. John Macarthur in the field of production and industrial activity, and, at a later period, John Dunmore Lang, in the province of social life...fifty-five years passed away from the arrival of the 'first fleet' of Governor Phillip, before the British people settled in Australia obtained the faintest voice in the management of their public affairs.

Parkes could not bring himself to mention the name of Wentworth together with those of Macarthur and Lang as luminaries of that first half century. Coinciding with the arrival of Parkes to New South Wales began a period of rapid constitutional growth and material expansion, in close harmony with the mother country. As a result of unprecedented progress, Parkes was able to write,

> If there is any part of the habitable globe where men are free, it is Australia...the British tie gives us a standing in the world, which is illumined by all the glory of the fatherland, and which carries in its very fibre the heroic greatness of our race...we have had planted in the colonies institutions as free, as open, as much in our own hands to mould to our own advantage, as the human mind could devise or conceive. Our liberties are absolutely in our own keeping...The colonies possess a system of Parliamentary Government modelled on the grand type of England, which was achieved through so many generations of strife and suffering, and as the cost of so many lives.

Parkes addressed an apostrophe to 'the native-born Australians of the future' which crystallized the whig or liberal-progressive conception of

British history and of Australia's role in its extension (1892, 2, p.400),

> Let them drink in the moral splendours from the great lives of their ancestry; let them seek light from Pym, who, when all was dark and uncertain, raised a giant's voice for English liberty; from Hampden, who died on the battle-field for English liberty; from Eliot, whose life ebbed away in a damp dungeon for English liberty; for Vane, who laid his gracious head on the block for English liberty. Let them kneel to Milton for inspiration, let them sit at the feet of Locke to receive lessons of wisdom, let them feed their souls on the luminous pages of Burke. The heroic figures of the first half of the seventeenth century - the men who entered upon the deadly struggle with King Charles and Strafford - must for ever command the homage of the students of our constitutional history...They wrote the lessons which they set before us in their own blood. The magnificent fabric of freedom, founded many generations before their time, which the Stuart kings laboured so strenuously to destroy, rose from their ashes with renewed splendour; and every age since has produced wise and enlightened minds to enlarge its foundation...it was left for the beneficient reign of Victoria to give fulness and harmonious proportion to that constitution, which has been evolved through centuries of tumult, by noble efforts often foiled, and through the blood of patriots prodigally spilt.

It was difficult to stop Parkes's pen, or his voice, once he was in full flight. It may be objected that in Parkes' private and public life the sordid overshadowed anything sublime, and that selfish artifices prevailed over disinterested principles, but there can be little doubt that the historical vision he so often articulated, partial and simplistic as it was, was sincerely held by him, or that such sentiments were the ones which his audiences and readers wanted and responded to, usually with sufficient enthusiasm to overcome misgivings about his character and policies. In that picture of an heroic past, especially of the seventeenth century, the Irish Catholics only entered as dire enemies of liberty and progress, while the Chinese had no place and could never win one.

It is very likely that the choice of 'Commonwealth' as the title of the federation of the Australian colonies was in large part the result of

Parkes' admiration for the early seventeenth century opponents of the Stuarts, together with that he also entertained for the fathers of the American Revolution. Alfred Deakin claimed in 1898 (1963, p.48) that Parkes 'had been accustomed to lecture upon the heroes of the great political convulsion which had culminated in the Great Civil War and it was but natural therefore that the name "Commonwealth" should occur to him'. Parkes never gave a public explanation for his successful suggestion, but Le Nauze (1971, pp.62-4) gave examples from Parkes's reading of the use of the word: Shakespeare, frequently, Milton, in Areopagitica before the proclamation of the English Commonwealth in 1649, the title of the Commonwealth of Virginia, home of Patrick Henry, and of several other of the original thirteen British American colonies, Lang's Freedom and Independence for the Golden Lands of Australia, Froude's Oceana, and Bryce's even more recently published The American Commonwealth.

There were initial objections that the name of commonwealth had offensive republican associations, Queen Victoria herself having some qualms thereon. In an article in the Sydney Daily Telegraph on 23 January 1888 (cited in La Nauze, 1971, p.67) Parkes had written, 'If Hampden and Pym had lived, the commonwealth of Cromwell would never have existed', and Oliver's name was conspicuously absent from Parkes' list of seventeenth century heroes of English liberty, but it is doubtful whether Hampden and Pym would have met with Victoria's approval, or those of colonial conservatives, much more than Cromwell. However, although the first Federal Convention of 1891, over which Parkes presided, approved of the name by only one vote, afterwards it was never seriously challenged. The significant past of Henry Parkes still influences us in that respect at least.

Charles Henry Pearson

Charles Henry Pearson was born in London in 1830, a son of the clergy like so many other leading figures in the English-speaking world during the nineteenth century. His stern father ensured that Charles was well versed in Latin at an early age and gained an abiding love for literature and history. Like many others of his generation he came to have a highly ambivalent attitude towards the traditions in which he was raised. He wrote in 1893 his most famous book National Life and Character: A Forecast (p.275),

> Puritanism is no longer a force in art or letters or statesmanship; and the Puritan tradition of family life is dead and can never be revived. The results of that iron drill were obtained at a cost which none who passed through it can forget, or would submit to again, or could endure to see inflicted on their children...Instead of this we have got a new family life, which is infinitely genial, and charming, and natural...Only the sense of obligation, of duty to God, of living forward into eternity has disappeared. When all is said, the man who orders his life as if it were to end with the grave, or if his thoughts and works here would not follow him beyond the grave, can scarcely fail to live more in the present than the future.

What a great force resided in that 'only'! In so many of Pearson's generation the torments of doubt about the religious beliefs in which they were raised led to great constructive achievements, irrespective, it seems, of whether they retained or lost their initial faith, but, as Pearson implied, those unconcerned about ultimate questions are likely to lead less creative, although less troubled, lives. Those brought up under a drill of iron had built a mighty empire; those whose childhood was genial and free from intensive pressures could just as easily lose it.

Pearson was sent to Rugby, from which, like the fictional Flashman but

for, one assumes, totally different reasons, he was removed at the request of the headmaster, in Pearson's case by Arnold's successor; he completed his secondary education at King's College, London. There he came strongly under the influence of Frederick Denison Maurice, one of the leaders of the Victorian tendency to see Christianity as essentially a gospel of social reconstruction. Pearson went on to Oriel College, but found much to criticize in the unreformed Oxford. He wrote later (1900, p.51-2) that it was 'impossible for the coming generation thoroughly to understand the badness of the Oxford teaching'. His main strictures were reserved for its ethics, metaphysics and science, but he allowed that,

> The history teaching, though less pretentious, was on rather sounder lines, because Grote and Thirlwall, and even Niebuhr, transmitted through Arnold, supplemented our studies in Thucydides and Livy with greater life and completeness than our philosophy teachers put into Plato and Aristotle.

The inefficiencies of his education did not turn Pearson against learning: during his twenties he was reading works in German, Russian, Italian and Swedish, as well as in Latin, Greek and French, with such avidity that his eyes deteriorated severely under the strain. In 1855 he became first a lecturer in English Language and Literature and then Professor of Modern History at King's College, London. During his time there were published his The Early and Middle Ages of England in 1861, a two volume History of England during the Early and Middle Ages in 1867, and his Historical Maps of England during the First Thirteen Centuries in 1869.

Pearson's 1867 volumes were sharply criticized by E.A. Freeman, the protagonist of the Anglo-Saxon origins of English institutions and a bitter foe to claims, to which Pearson was sympathetic, that there had been considerable continuity from Roman Britain. Among Freeman's barbs were,

> 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...No one can be more guiltless of anything like 'vivid narrative'...I suspect that Mr Pearson rather despised his period. Most people do till they understand it...Mr Pearson has not despised the thirteenth century as he evidently despised the earlier period.

Later historians were more charitable to the book, but agreed that Pearson had little sympathy with Anglo-Saxon society. Once involved in Victorian politics Pearson showed little interest in thirteenth century history either, giving the impression that his medieval labours were the result of necessity rather than undertaken out of compelling interest. What did continue was his belief, expressed in the preface to that 1867 edition, that 'since the beginnings of civilization all changes in the constitution of our society have been gradual and partial'. His experience of Victorian politics did nothing to convince him that heroes made history.

During his years at King's College, as well as after his return from Australia, Pearson had other opportunities to travel widely, visiting the United States, France, Italy and Germany, and, more unusually, the Russian Empire, especially the Kingdom of Poland, and Serbia. He wrote a powerful account for the Spectator in 1853 of the Russian suppression of the Polish Rising, describing the cruelties as (Tregenza, 1968, p.31) 'the abominations which the crime of unjust dominion inevitably entails', but asserting that 'what the Cossacks are now doing in Poland is no worse than what we have done in Ireland and India'. In an Age editorial (12 July 1882) he condemned the British bombardment of Alexandria as an 'immoral and dangerous' act carried out simply 'because of the Egyptian people wishes to have the effective control of its own revenues, to be governed by rulers out of its

own people, and to be delivered from the perpetual intermeddling of foreign consuls and financiers'. Pearson believed that Britain was not only as guilty of national crimes as any other state, but more so, since the British should know better. He argued (Tregenza, 1968, p.33),

> If it be allowable to believe that we were made a great nation with some other purpose than to trade and bank for the world, to accumulate and to spend, it is, at least, possible that we have a direct interest, from the imperishable side of life, in maintaining liberty and law, and whatever makes life endurable to the weak.

His tendency to attack English institutions for a failure to meet standards which he did not demand of others was frequently revealed, as in a denunciation of the Victorian clergy in an Age editorial (18 May 1883),

> ...Who has ever heard a clergyman denounce the greed of house owners, which has led them to convert whole streets of our populous city into rookeries and clusters of brothels? Does any clergyman ask Dives, with his large rents derived from the sale of women, to stand aside from that table which it is supposed only the pure in mind should approach? Take again the Queensland traffic in human flesh...where do we read of a Presbyterian synod waiting upon a Premier of Queensland and asking him to stop it? Does anyone dream that Mr Service, who has been helping Queensland to get New Guinea, will be asked by the clergy to watch how the new dependency is governed, so that men may not be shot down, or women taken for the worst uses by their captors?

During the nineteenth century traditional providential interpretations of history came under heavy fire, but among those who led the assaults were many who, like Pearson, merely secularized Providence into historical duty or necessity. Pearson's thought remained teleological throughout his life, although his view on ultimate purposes changed from time to time. He demanded to know in 1893 in National Life and Character (pp.337-8), '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?' What indeed is one reply to this question. How can a reification such as

'society' have a purpose? and what dangers may there be when individuals or groups take it upon themselves to ordain that all must share the purposes they hold to be immanent in the human condition and necessary for these purposes to be achieved?

Disappointed professional hopes in England and favourable reports from contemporaries about prospects in the Australian colonies brought Pearson out in 1864 for a three year stay and back again in 1871 for twenty-one years. Pearson was unsuccessful as a farmer to South Australia, where he married in 1872 on his return visit, but subsequently acquired considerable prominence in Victoria as university lecturer, headmaster of the Presbyterian Ladies' College, and politician.

In Victoria during his time there Pearson did as much for historical study as anyone, other perhaps than Sir Redmond Barry who determined that all the works cited in Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire and in other standard authorities should be obtained for Melbourne's Public Library. Willy-nilly Pearson found himself adopting some advice which his old friend F.J. Furnell had given him in 1873 (Tregenza, 1968, p.68),

> I hope you'll give up early History, and teach your fellows contemporary History...this is the thing to be done, while the Early is to be left undone till the late is got into fellows' heads...leave Anglo Saxonism out in the cold for a long while.

Pearson did much to stimulate interest in Victoria in history. One early contribution was his founding of a small debating society which met in a room in the Athenaeum club, and which was attended by Alfred Deakins, William Shiels, Henry Bourne Higgins, Alexander Sutherland, T.F. Bride, Theodore Fink, and H.N.P. Wollaston. As well as historical lore in his

contributions to parliamentary debates, Pearson was intensely active as a journalist, producing some 650 articles, many of a historical character, for the Age or the Leader between 1880 and 1884 alone. It was in the introduction of history as a school subject that Pearson made his most obvious, although not necessarily his most important, contribution to an interest in the past in Victoria.

Pearson found some paradoxes in Victorian politics. On the one hand there was much truth in Charles Dilkes' comment, based on his travels in the British colonies in 1866-7, that (1890, 1, p.185), 'Victoria has been the leader in the democratic and State-socialistic movements which render Australia a pioneer for England's good'. In this perspective Victorian Victoria would lead and Victorian England follow, rather than the colony emulate the metropolis. Yet Victoria had grave weaknesses in Pearson's eyes as well. At the personal level he discovered that Dilke had not exaggerated when he described the bitterness and rancour of party in Victoria; Pearson deeply regretted the absence of the club-like atmosphere he would have enjoyed had he been in Westminster. There were institutional weaknesses too: he told an English friend in a letter in 1874 (Tregenza, 1968, p.74) that 'our special difficulty lies in our constitution, which is a grotesque parody of the English, so contrived that the Legislative Council, our House of Peers or Senate, never gets a really able man, and has the power of creating perpetual deadlock'. The abuses of parliamentary procedure by 'stonewallers' and by 'gaggers' in the Legislative Assembly was a further blemish. A more fundamental problem lay in the relationship between state provision and individual initiative. Pearson was of the advanced liberal school which considered that far more state intervention was needed to combat social and economic problems than Bright and Cobden had allowed, but

he wanted the state to supplement, not to replace, personal endeavour. In Victoria, in sharp contrast to the United States, citizens waited for action in school building and other social provision by the central government, instead of creating their own institutions. Pearson wondered why two Anglo-Saxon peoples should have responded so differently to similar challenges in a new world. One explanation was that in the Australian colonies the main forms of revenue were the sale of crown lands and the taxation of imports, both in the hands of the central government, whose control of the purse strings discouraged local initiatives.

On the other hand Pearson remained confident in the reality of progress in general and of that in Victoria in particular, claiming in a lecture in 1875 (Tregenza, 1968, p.79), 'Fielding's sketches of a country squire and country rector would be libels upon an average bullock-driver of to-day'. He agreed with his friend Catherine Helen Spence when she wrote in 1877 (Tregenza, 1968, p.93),

> The lowering of the character of the Legislature, the corruption of the Civil Service, the enormous difficulties 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.

Pearson was convinced that if men such as himself, and women such as Spence, too, as soon as possible, entered politics its character would be raised. The possibility also existed that the educated, the refined and the hitherto scrupulously honourable would be corrupted by mass politics, as De Tocqueville and Robert Lowe feared. The rapid transformation of Pearson from a staunch advocate of Free Trade to an apologist for the tariffs so strongly supported by his new Victorian Liberal allies led the Argus and the

Melbourne Punch to suggest that he had succumbed very quickly. Pearson retained his basic optimism about past and present progress even after many setbacks and after he had become alarmed about the external dangers to Australia and to white civilization. He wrote in the Age (March 1, 1890),

> For us the passage from the old richly coloured and various word to the new order has all the charm of adventure. It is, perhaps, the conscious sense of creative energy, the feeling that we are building up something such as history has never yet recorded, that fascinates us with such a belief in progress as our ancestors have not known even in dreams.

Pearson brought a wide range of historical arguments to bear on fiscal questions and on land ownership. In a speech at a public meeting in 1877 which led to pressures on him to resign his headship, Pearson sounded like another Cobbett in declaiming (Age, 20 Feb.)

> 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 deerparks, shut up schools, refuse a site for a dissenting chapel, or a Catholic church, or to interfere with the marriages of the people. Yet this kind of thing had been witnessed in their own country. 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.

In this speech Pearson also argued that the French peasantry had flourished ever since the 1789 Revolution had sub-divided the old feudal estates, and that the recent Land Laws for Ireland in the Westminster Parliament, and even the land laws of the reign of Edward I in respect of the medieval English peasantry had some advantages over those of Victoria, in which, he claimed, 'half the land which had been alienated was in the hands of some 700 proprietors'. Perhaps carried away by his own rhetoric Pearson quoted with approval the old revolutionary slogan, 'War with the palace, peace to the cottage', which was often to be used against him by conservative Victorians who had first welcomed him to their midst. One of the reasons

that Pearson backed a land tax so strongly was that it might be an alternative to income tax, which he considered stifled initiative and corrupted by leading men to make false returns which were difficult to expose, and to tariffs. He had to accept tariffs as well, however, in order to play a leading part in the National Reform and Protection League, the core of the Liberal Party in Victoria.

After his resignation from the Presbyterian Ladies College, Pearson was appointed by the Liberal leader Graham Berry, who had gained office even though Pearson failed to gain the seat which he contested, as a special commissioner to investigate public education in Victoria. In his report Pearson proposed that history be made a distinctive subject in the state schools, arguing in respect of the history of the colonies (1878, p.92),

> ...an ordinary boy or girl will, I think, be interested in the history of the Australian colonies, and able to understand it. Why certain parts of the colony were first settled, and what were the special circumstances of each settlement; the history of exploration, and of pastoral settlement, and of gold discoveries, and of constitutional government, are all matters that have an unmistakeable freshness and meaning for the present generation.

Pearson expanded on this subject in a lecture entitled 'History in State Schools' he gave in 1890 when he was Minister of Public Instruction in Victoria. This lecture was reprinted in several colonies, including in the South Australian Education Gazette of September 1890; he urged that children should be saturated 'with a few dozen vivid stories from old time, taken preferably from English history', but that in addition they should learn about Australian history, since 'it is easier for children to learn about their own land, and it is more necessary that they should go out later into life with at least this outfit of knowledge'. Pearson feared that Australian history lacked romance and that it was too short to reveal major

patterns of progress or development, but he was confident that 'a skilful literary man might find a good deal to tell pleasantly, and in the form that children affect, about Australian history'.

Pearson was well aware, however, that disputes about the past and its significance made history teaching in the schools a dangerous business. He knew that the removal of any mention of religion from school history would distort the past just as much as the most indoctrinative and prosletyzing account, but understanding a problem is not enough to solve it. It was, of course, sacred and Biblical history which proved the most powerful cause of educational dissension in the colonies, rather than the history of the colonies themselves or English history. Pearson strongly resisted all demands that Bible-reading be once more permitted in the state schools of Victoria. The main campaign he faced was for the use of the Irish National Scripture lesson-books, whose scripture readings had been chosen by a committee headed by Archbishop Whateley and Archbishop Murray, the metropolitans of the Church of Ireland and of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland respectively.

Pearson acknowledged that the Irish National texts were the best available for the purpose, that the extracts were in general well chosen, and that the foot-notes were intelligent and helpful to young readers, but he was convinced that no text, irrespective of how unsectarian it sought to be, could satisfy all the interested and conflicting parties. In a major speech in the Victorian Legislative Assembly opposing the re-introduction of Bible reading (VPD 60, 723-5), Pearson, perhaps rather unworthily, invoked sexual prudery on his side by suggesting that some readings would raise unsuitable questions in children's minds, such as 'Why did God destroy Sodom

and Gomorrah?' and 'What does circumcision mean?. Pearson's erudition led him into more dangerous paths when he quoted Archbishop Whateley as having claimed that his main reason for promoting the Irish National Scripture Bible lessons was that 'Those extracts contain so much that is inconsistent with the whole spirit of Romanism, that it is difficult to suppose that a person well acquainted with them can be a thorough-going Roman Catholic...The education supplied by the National Board is gradually undermining the vast fabric of the Irish Roman Catholic Church.' There was much dispute as to whether Pearson had quoted Whately correctly, while Catholic fears were inflamed that mixed schools were simply a Protestant trap for the destruction of the Catholic faith. Parties to agreements often have different aims and there was nothing hypocritical in Whateley's belief that fuller access to the Bible would weaken Roman Catholicism, nor anything foolish in Archbishop Murray's belief that the Bible readings selected would have no such effect. In the event it was the fabric of the Church of Ireland rather than that of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland which was crumbling during the decades in which the Irish National System operated. Pearson's citation of Whately in the debate was counter-productive and only succeeded in sharpening rather in assuaging sectarian strife in Victoria.

On constitutional questions it was usually with more constructive results that Pearson brought a wide range of historical knowledge into play. In his second speech in the Legislative Assembly he impressed members by an argument that change rather than resistance to it had been the secret of England's constitutional greatness; in the course of his address he took in Magna Carta, the changes wrought by the Reformation, the Bill of Rights, the Acts of Union and a selection from nineteenth century adaptations of ancient ways. E.A. Freeman would have criticized him for failing to give adequate

weight to the Anglo-Saxon contribution to English laws and liberties, but the politicians of Victoria did not question him on the significance of pre-1066 antecedents. In a more complicated analogy Pearson said in 1879 of the stonewalling tactics of the Legislative Council (Tregenza, 1968, p.147),

> It is not easy to give an exact parallel from English history, but it is a 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 public indignation by a proposal that all peers should in future be elected out of the Baronage, like Scotch Peers, for a single Parliament.

Pearson's greatest influence on his time came towards the end of his life and in a manner which could hardly have been anticipated. Much of his political thought had been devoted to criticisms of British and colonial governments and of the Christian clergy for failing to act according to the highest liberal-democratic-radical-humanitarian principles. It was on the vexed question of race relationships that he became most widely read and cited, but mainly by the sort of people he had denounced for most of his life. Was there a basic inconsistency?

Like many others, Pearson's patriotism increased with long years far from his native land. Although he condemned the bombing of Alexandria, he was shocked by Gladstone's acceptance of British defeat in the Transvaal and in the Soudan. These reverses increased his worries about Australia's vulnerability to immigration and ultimately military invasion from Asia. Pearson increasingly deduced from history that racial differences were not superficial or contingent in ways which governmental policies could readily affect. Like most liberals and radicals in Australia he feared that the

presence of large numbers of non-Europeans would undermine the possibility of social equality, since a permanent under-class would be formed. The effects on whites would be entirely negative: he argued in an Age editorial (12 June 1883) that 'the less energetic will undoubtedly sink into the state of the whites of the southern States of the American Union and of Natal, and will consider it undignified to labor. The ambition of every small farmer and tradesman will be to have a coolie to himself. These are the results that have always followed, wherever the the experiment of mixed labor on a large scale has been tried.' During the early 1880s Pearson opposed claims that history showed that tropical and semi-tropical areas could not be farmed by whites, claiming, for example, in an Age editorial (12 June 1883) that large districts of the Southern States of the U.S.A. which were once farmed by black slaves were now 'worked with the most perfect ease by whites' and that it ought not to be concluded prematurely that Britons could not work effectively in Northern Queensland, and that Spaniards, Portuguese and Italians, whose cultural traditions were much closer, should be brought in rather than Asians, should it prove that the climate was impossible for the British.

Although Pearson did not want coolie labour in Australia, he was convinced that the best future for peoples such as those of New Guinea lay in coming under the protection of a benevolent government, such as the British. The 'White Man's Burden' was the secularized form of the Christian evangelism which was rapidly falling out of fashion. Pearson objected to the Queensland push into New Guinea because it was, he believed, based on a greed for profit and not on concern for the welfare of native peoples. Not only did Pearson favour a British protectorate in New Guinea, but he backed French occupation of Indo-China, since he considered the likely alternative

to European colonization was Chinese occupation, once the Chinese Empire regained, as he thought it would quite soon succeed in doing, military equality with the West. Strangely enough for one who often talked in terms of moral imperatives in foreign policy, Pearson believed (Age, 11 Sept. 1883) that China's claims to suzerainty over Anam (sic) and Siam were sound in international law, but that their realization would have the most serious political consequences for Australia, especially since Britain had 'foolishly allowed Chinese immigrants to settle in the Malay Peninsula, till they are practically the dominant population'.

The more he thought about recent history, the more Pearson became fearful that social Darwinism might work against the so-called 'higher races of men, or those which are held to have attained the highest forms of civilisation' (1893, p.84), whose fate might well be to be 'elbowed and hustled and perhaps even thrust aside' by the peoples over whom Europeans had apparently established an unchallengeable ascendancy. As his former pupil Alfred Deakin noted in India, European science and technology had enabled a massive population increase there, but they remained and would remain peasants, unable to absorb a higher civilization but ultimately numerous to overwhelm it. Europeans transplanted Asian and African populations for their own purposes, but the indentured labourers had bred more rapidly, while manual labour of many vital kinds became distasteful to the whites, who would become increasingly at the mercy of black and yellow races. Whites would never people the tropics, but the Chinese and the peoples of the tropics would prove increasingly dangerous competitors everywhere, once they availed themselves of the technology and the military organisation of the West. New Tamerlanes who would be even worse Scourges of God were likely soon to arise, although Pearson was guardedly optimistic

about the survival of Anglo-Australianism (1893, p.16),

> We are guarding the last part of the world in which the higher races can live and increase freely, for the higher civilization. We are denying the yellow race nothing but what it can find in the home of its birth, or in countries like the Indian Archipelago (Indonesia) where the white man can never live except as an exotic.

In his rapid transition from a lofty conception of the white man's burden to a fear of the yellow peril and alarm for the security of the small white populations of Australasia, outnumbered to their north over a hundred-fold, Pearson achieved an international fame he had never had before, although British confidence and complacency in the period before the South African War led to his predictions being widely dismissed as unduly alarmist. He may be justly termed a father of Australian federation, in the very important sense that his scholarly exposition of fears widely held but inadequately articulated throughout the Australian colonies proved a significant impetus to Australian nationalism. Few works were more frequently cited than his National Life and Character during the debates in the first Commonwealth Parliament on the Immigrant Restriction Bill, by which time Pearson had been seven years dead. The final fame was a strange one for a Victorian Liberal who was an authority on early and medieval history. In one sense he had taken his old friend's advice to 'leave Anglo Saxonism out in the cold for a long while'; in another sense of the term he had become an apostle for the defence of Anglo Saxonism.

Alfred Deakin

Alfred Deakin was born in Melbourne in 1856 of parents from the North

of England who had recently migrated to Australia to better themselves. His father was a fairly successful manager in a transport business, after having previously having worked for himself. Alfred's family was affectionate and admiring, and he was enabled to attend Melbourne Church of England Grammar School, then and long afterwards staffed mainly by Oxbridge graduates. Alfred was a wide reader, but unsystematic and casual. To his later regret he gained no real competence in Latin or Greek, although he attended lessons in them; even French, in which he finally became proficient, was re-learnt when he was thirty. He drifted around for a few months, but was permitted during the year to attend law lectures and he passed in Law, Part 1 in 1872, finally qualifying for the Bar in 1877.

One of Deakin's closest friends as an undergraduate was David Mickle, who introduced him to Spencer, Buckle and a range of other agnostic and positivist authors, as well as to Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall and Moncure Conway. Mickle was very disappointed when Deakin showed an inclination for spiritualism. Deakin was a prodigious reader and easily influenced by his reading, passing rapidly through Byronic, Carlylean and Ruskinian phases. More abiding influences were those of Wordsworth and Swedenborg. A common feature of these thinkers is their prolixity, which Deakin might have developed without their influence, but which his reading must have strengthened in him. During his late teens and early twenties Deakin wrote more than most of his contemporaries read, much of his literary production being narrative or dramatic blank verse based on Elizabethan or Jacobean models, or on historical themes inspired by the Philip von Artevelde of the then highly esteemed Henry Taylor. One of Deakin's verse plays, Quentin Massys written in unrhymed iambic pentameters, was, indeed, set in fifteenth century Flanders.

Deakin's reading continued to be prolific and eclectic throughout his life. In 1879 he listed among his recent reading (La Nauze, 1979, p.39; Gabay, 1987, p.527) Madame Blavatsky's Isis Unveiled, Storey's Constitution of the United States, Mallock's New Republic, Harriet Martineau's Autobiography, the Ramayana saga, Bunsen's God in History, Masson's Life of Milton, Boswell-Smith's Mohammedism, Plato's Republic, Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, Disraeli's Curiosities in Literature, and John Stuart Mill's Political Economy and his Logic, together with the plays of Moliere and Massinger, Hugo's Les Miserables and his Notre Dame, some Chaucer, Voltaire, Fielding and George Sand for lighter reading. He then took on a trip to Fiji Max Muller's Origin of Religion, Sterling's The Secret of Hegel, Morely's Rousseau, and Leslie Stephen's English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, with the Decameron to dispel undue seriousness.

Deakin developed an impressive delivery of poetry and prose at an early age; the foundations were laid for the journalistic cliche that he was Australia's 'silver-tongued orator. He became a leading member of a Spiritualist Sunday School, the Progressive Lyceum, where he met his future wife when she attended one of his classes. At the age of twenty-two Deakin became President of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists and was soon its most popular lecturer. Addresses which indicate some of his historical interests included 'The Ideal Religion', 'The Religion of the Nineteenth Century' and 'Spiritualism in Shakespeare'. Deakin wrote in 1877 the Lyceum Leader, a compendium of songs, poems, and extracts from stories, a common feature of which was their exalted nature and their frequent invocation of Science, Knowledge, Reason and Philosophy. Its particular aim was to enable students to learn of the lives of the great and the good, a non-sectarian

grouping which included Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and Zoroaster, together with more secular figures: poets, scientists and inventors. Women figured prominently, including Florence Nightingale, George Eliot, George Sand and Elizabeth Barrett Browning among the living and Joan of Arc among the departed. Deakin also wrote a number of unpublished plays on historical themes, such as Cross and Crescent, set in Spain after the Moorish conquest and telling the story of a Muslim enamoured of a Christian virgin slave. The Moor has a very spiritual nature and seeks success, not by force, but by prayer, abstinence and sacrifices, which secure the Prophet's intervention on his behalf. In retrospect Deakin decided that the 'most hopeless' of his dramatic efforts in these years was a play on the life of Robespierre which he wrote in 1876, but others must have challenged it closely for this distinction.

Another bizarre creation during Deakin's early spiritualist phase was his 1877 A New Pilgrim's Progress, a work which he seems initially to have believed had been dictated to him by the spirit of John Bunyan. Since Deakin was not an orthodox Christian of any sort, it might have seemed strange to him from the start that he should be the chosen medium through which Bunyan wished his allegory to be adapted for the late nineteenth century, and in later years Deakin tried to distance himself from authorhsip of the book. It is, however, a revealing insight into Deakin's thought. He identified himself with the role of a Bunyan: that of the enlightened individual seeking to wean the foolish masses from their errors, although the content of the truths Deakin wished to convey were very different from those of Bunyan, not to say less coherent. The place of Christian is taken by Restless (later becoming Redeemer), who abandons sloth and the pleasures of the world in order to teach mankind how to avoid vice and to gain

virtue.

The 'Spiritual Diary - Personal and Mundane', started by Deakin in 1880, is in similar vein. This diary recorded Deakin's 'communication with unseen intelligences' during seances. Those who communicated with him included not only various contemporaries, but historical figures such as Sophocles, John Knox, Dr Johnson, John Stuart Mill, Edmund Burke and Lord Macauley, who were also anxious to share their thoughts with him. Deakin soon concluded that he had been in error in supposing that the famous dead were anxious about his political prospects, and even about his state of health, but he continued to believe that a core of truth lay somewhere within spiritualist teaching and to read profusely, first within the western mystical tradition, from Plato and the Pythagoreans to Emerson, Tauler, Swedenborg and G.R.S. Mead, and then even more widely to embrace Hindu and Muslim mysticism.

Deakin's deep interest in the mystical and the transcendental continued throughout his political career. He remained convinced that answers to the fundamental questions about the purpose of the universe and the destiny of humanity could best be found by studying the works of the founders of religions and philosophies, such as Socrates, Jesus and Mohammed, but the revelatory experiences of Wordsworth and of Emanuel Swedenborg were the particular sources from which he sought to derive 'Inner Light'. From 3 August 1884 onwards Deaking compiled a 'Boke of Praer and Prase', the archaic spelling of which denoted that Deakin did not consider that it was in the mundane transactions of political and public life that he considered ultimate verities to lie. Deakin's thought was syncretic, eclectic and pan-theistic: he sought to apprehend the 'Infinite Spirit of Unity, Order

and Harmony' which might provide adequate purposes for human endeavour and whose instrument he might be. The identity and nature of this spirit was not, Deakin believed, to be found in any single religious tradition or creed, or in any single philosophical system, but a patient and sincere seeker after truth might piece together the many clues provided by thinkers from many different times and places.

Deakin came to believe that the synthesis which had greatest potentiality for providing 'a complete theory of the universe' was a combination of the insights of Wordsworth, Shakespeare and Swedenborg. He set himself first to discover and expound 'Wordsworth's Gospel of Nature' and Shakespeare's 'Gospel of Man', after which in 1889 he started on Swedenborg's 'Gospel of Immortality', which he considered would be the hardest nut to crack but also the most valuable of his studies. Deakin accepted as literally true Swedenborg's claim to have gained release from his body, first in 1745 and often subsequently, and that in this state he had acquired direct knowledge about the meaning of the Bible and about the ultimate fate of humanity. Deakin concluded also that the writings of, among others, Cellini, Loyola, Bunyan, Blake and Cowper, could only be understood on the assumption that they had undergone similar experiences to those he attributed to Swedenborg.

In 1897 Deakin returned to the study of Mohammed, whose life, together with the Koran, had fascinated him two decades earlier. He produced a work of one hundred and twenty pages which concentrated on the paranormal experiences of the Prophet, comparing these with those of Old Testament figures, of later mystics such as Boehme, Bunyan and George Fox, and of contemporary Spiritualist mediums. Deakin continued for many years to be

fascinated with the personality of Mohammed and deeply impressed with the uncompromising monotheism of the Koran, which he compared very favourably with the tangled and conflicting doctrines concerning the Christian Trinity. Deakin would have preferred the militarism of the Koran to have been sublimated, however.

It was not for his insights into the nature of the ultimate, but for his quick grasp of the here-and-now that Deakin was taken up during his twenties by David Syme as a leader and feature writer for the Age, an excellent launching-pad for a political career. After one false start, when, after being elected he resigned over a dispute about voting irregularities not of his making, he entered the Victorian lower house in 1880 as a young man of twenty-four, in the interest of the Liberals.

It would be unfair to upbraid Deakin simply because the link between his mystical yearnings and the policies of Victorian Liberalism was not very clear; there is no reason to suppose that there was any closer compatibility between political creed and religious belief in the thinking of the typical Roman Catholic, Anglican or Presbyterian. Nonetheless, there is a remarkable lack of common content between the political objectives for which Deakin strove so energetically in his public activities and the spiritual objectives which took up so much of his personal and inner life. The only overlap seems to have been a brief but energetic effort Deakin made in the late 1890s (Gregory, 1973, pp.181, 189-92; Gabay, 1987, pp.535-7) to reintroduce the reading of scripture into Victoria's government schools; Deakin became momentarily convinced that Swedenborg's allegorical interpretation of Genesis and his distillation of the ethical teachings of the New Testament would provide a structure which the contending Christian

churches and secularists could alike accept. Since he cited in favour of his proposals Cardinal Newman and Frederick Denison Maurice, as well as secular figures such as Kant, Carlyle, T.H. Green, Ruskin and William James, Deakin deluded himself that he had found a solution to sectarian dispute and a way of introducing the children of Victoria to the deepest wisdom acquired by the human race.

Deakin became the main proponent of liberalism in its Victorian context: the extension of the franchise, the constitional superiority of elected legislatures over all other branches of government, payment of members of parliament, the opening up of the land to small farmers, and the rest of the old radical-democratic programme, supplemented by a call for much more governmental intervention in order to achieve desirable social goals. In contrast to the liberalism of Bright and Cobden, Deakin's was highly protectionist and supported state regulation of wages and conditions of work, provision of pensions, provision of and control over education. Within British liberalism this sort of programme was first advanced by Joseph Chamberlain before his break with Gladstone on the Irish question, but became the basis of the legislation of the Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith governments after 1906.

The American scholar Josiah Royce was impressed when he met Deakin (La Nauze, 1969, p.125-6) by his 'grand and intelligent confidence in the power of the State to do a great deal for its subjects' and concluded from his views and the successes they had already achieved 'at this rate, before another century Australia will show some of the most remarkable experiments in State Socialism that have ever yet been seen'. Deakin had a very optimistic view of the effect a labour party might have: he wrote in 1891

(La Nauze, 1969, p.144), 'We live in no prosaic time, but in a stirring and romantic age. The rise of the labour party in politics is more significant and more cosmic than the Crusades'. Deakin had none of the apprehensions of De Tocqueville or Robert Lowe about the potential effects of mass democracy on individual freedoms, and did not often reflect that the State can do much to as well as for its subjects.

In his analyses of Australian history Deakin thought that the gold rushes had been a major stimulus, not only of wealth and population, but of more advanced political thought. In a 1912 review he wrote (La Nauze, 1969, p.105) that 'it gave us a large proportion of the best of our population, men with a far wider and more advanced liberalism than had been acclimatised before the gold era'; 'the good, enterprising, active, inventive, effervescing gold settlers' were 'staunchly protectionist as a rule' and 'they shouldered the preliminary cost of establishing "native industries" more spiritedly than the agricultural and pastoral industries...'.

In his study of the events which culminated in the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia, Deakin wrote (1963, p.173),

> Looking backward the future will be tempted to say that the Australian Union was Australia's destiny from the first, and that nothing could have prevented its consummation. But if this be true, it is certainly not true of its present accomplishment, whatever might have resulted in later times...if anything ought to be styled providential it is the extraordinary combination of circumstances, persons and their most intricate interrelations of which the Commonwealth is about to become the crown. To say it was fated to be is to say nothing to the purpose. Any one of a thousand minor incidents might have deferred it for years or generations.

Did Deakin's wide reading in history help him to avoid facile historicism and to appreciate the influence of the contingent and the unforeseen?

Perhaps it did, but it must be said of Deakin's private writings that in general they ignore the minor incidents and the combinations and circumstances and seek instead to discover beneath or behind them patterns about which in his political judgements, as in the case of the history of Australian federation, he displayed a healthy scepticism.

Even more difficult problems arise when Deakin's private vision of the historically significant is compared with his public view of the position of the Australian colonies, and subsequently of the Commonwealth of Australia, in the world. In his personal writings Deakin continued to be eclectic and syncretic, excluding no tradition or school of thought from being potentially a contributor to ultimate wisdom and understanding. In his public thought Deakin was a spokesman of those who saw themselves as 'Independent Australian Britons', to whom the British inheritance was as precious as their political independence and to whom many other traditions were palpably incompatible with or hostile to their own. A reconciliation between the two positions might be made, if it were argued that openness to a wide range of traditions is only possible in an open society of the type of which Britain, the United States and the other white English-speaking countries were the main examples, whereas such openness would soon end if other systems were allowed to prevail. In terms of such an argument, the enlightened study of the contribution of Mohammed to the stock of human wisdom was possible in late nineteenth century Victoria, but not in the Ottoman Empire or anywhere else where Islam was predominant. Deakin never pursued such an argument very far, however, and the two sides of his mind seem to have operated independently of each other.

It was as much axiomatic to Deakin as to any other contemporary

Australian politician that Chinese, Indians or other Asian or non-White peoples, possessed traditions, beliefs and habits which were incompatible with the way of life the independent Britons in Australia had created. Deakin's defence of a White Australia was not based on lack of knowledge of past or present non-European societies. Deakin had visited India, where he had seen some major irrigation schemes (one of his special interests), but his conclusion was pessimistic. In his Irrigated India he wrote, (1893, p.14), 'New land feeds its thousands, and irrigation its tens of thousands, but they remain the same helpless creatures as before. There are more of them - that is all'. Deakin was very much influenced by the thinking on these matters of his former teacher, Charles Henry Pearson.

Like Parkes, Deakin applied Morton's Fork to non-White immigration. On the one hand he argued during the debate in 1901 on the Immigration Restriction Bill that Chinese and Japanese immigrants were (CPD, IV, 4809) 'The least educated and least informed of their countrymen. It is not the highly cultured who come here', so that criticisms of them in Australia were not to be taken as expressions of hostility to Chinese or Japanese societies. On the other hand he implied that it might be even worse if those who were most educated and best informed came to Australia, (CPD, IV, 4812),

> ...the Japanese require to be excluded because of their high abilities...the Japanese are the most dangerous because they most nearly approach us, and would, therefore, be our most dangerous competitors. It is not the bad qualities, but the good qualities of these alien races that make them dangerous to us. It is their inexhaustible energy, their power of applying themselves to new tasks, their endurance, and low standard of living that make them such competitors...It is the business qualities, the business aptitude, and general capacity of these people that make them dangerous, and the fact that while they remain an element in our population, they are incapable of being assimilated...

It was the problem of assimilation which was uppermost in Deakin's mind. The United States was a dire warning, he argued (CPD, IV, 4806) of having in one's midst 'a population which, no matter how splendid it may be in many qualities, is not being assimilated, and apparently is never to be assimilated in the nation of which they are politically and nominally a part'. To Deakin it was the mental rather than the physical assimilation, important as that was to him as well, which was the key consideration. He declared (CPD, IV, 4807),

> The unity of Australia is nothing, if that does not imply a united race. A united race means not only that its members can intermarry and associate without degradation on either side, but implies one inspired by ideas, and an aspiration towards the same ideals, of a people possessing the same general cast of character, tone of thought - the same constitutional training and traditions - a people qualified to live under this constitution...

Deakin strongly denied that he harboured any feelings of racial antipathy, urging (CPD, V, 5819),

> exclusiveness on the part of the Australian people is perfectly independent of the mental and moral status of the Japanese, when measured by the only standards that can properly be applied to them, namely that of their own race and of their own history...These people have their own independent development, their own qualities, and also the civilization, forms of life and government, which naturally attach to them. They are separated from us by a gulf which we cannot bridge to the advantage of either. The attitude of Australia is not an offensive one when it becomes understood that it is based upon these principles. it is not based upon any claim of superiority.

Here, again, Deakin offered a form of cultural relativism which accorded ill with his private search for wisdom and truth wherever the wind listeth. If men and women were confined to 'their own race and their history' for instruction or for models, much of his study was bound to be in vain. If, on the other hand, there were universal criteria by which human thought

might be judged, further argument would be needed to show that the Japanese could not, like Deakin, respond to experiences other than those of their own race or culture. In everyday politics Deakin was at one with the overwhelming majority of voters in preferring as potential immigrants into Australia people 'capable of being anglicised without delay', as he put it in one of his anonymous articles in November 1901 in the London Morning Post (La Nauze, 1969, p.280). On the basis of this test he noted that 'Our Antipodean suspicion is directed at immigrants of the lower Latin type; and is decidedly antagonistic towards newcomers from South-Eastern Europe', as well as towards non-Europeans.

On matters of race and colour British colonists in the late nineteenth century, whether in Australia, New Zealand or South Africa, were, like those long before them in the American colonies, much more exclusive than Westminster and Whitehall. During the 1897 Colonial Conference Joseph Chamberlain had made it clear that the Imperial government would disallow any colonial legislation which explicitly used race or colour as a basis for exclusion or discrimination. The growing amity between the British and Japanese governments was a further reason for London to oppose such legislation in the Australian colonies. Deakin was accused of hypocrisy in supporting the use of educational tests in the English language, of the type first used in Natal, to exclude unwanted non-British immigrants, rather than backing unambiguous racial barriers, but he was probably motivated less by concern for the susceptibilities of the Japanese or Indians, than by reluctance to cause embarrassment to the British government.

Deakin's attitudes towards Britain and the British Empire had some paradoxical features, some more intractable than others. He wanted some

sort of greater unity, but no effective British or other outside interference in Australian affairs, but this was not uncommon in Australia; he had a mystical affection for Great Britain, but not for British governments or Colonial Office officials, but this was not uncommon in Britain itself; he wanted a strengthening of the British Empire, defined as the United Kingdom and its colonies of advanced, self-governing communities, but not necessarily of Britain's Empire of possessions and dependencies. This was a more difficult distinction to maintain. John Morley, when Secretary of State for India, wrote with annoyance to Lord Minto, the Viceroy, in 1907 (La Nauze, 1969, pp.480-1) that Deakin 'actually contended that India had no right to a place at the Conference table, because not self-governing...I laugh when I think of a man who blows the imperial trumpet louder than other people, and yet would banish India, which is the most stupendous part of the Empire - our best customer among other trifles - into the imperial back kitchen'. Deakin was also worried about the racial balance in Canada and South Africa. He wrote in 1907 (La Nauze, 1969, p.483) that he had 'no confidence until a British majority in both Houses can exist apart from the Quebec vote - and then probably as in the Transvaal the other element will divide them.' In more optimistic moments Deakin thought that other European peoples at least might be successfully integrated into societies of a British character. He told the Commonwealth Parliament in 1910 (CPD, LIX, 6861), 'It is the British brood which is the British Empire. On it the Empire was built, which is now uniting to itself peoples originally hostile, who will make citizens as loyal and valuable as any of ourselves'. He was by no means confident about this, however, and about non-Europeans even less so. In an earlier debate in 1904 he argued (CPD, XVIII, 718-9), in a bitter attack on the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal,

> Shall we not say that if we are anything we are a nation, and founders of nations yet to be within an Empire which is British? It is not British in the colour of all its subjects, but in the number of its white citizens, who control it, who give it authority, force and weight; whose character and courage sustain it in the hour of battle as well as in industrial tasks from hour to hour. The Empire is great because it is British, and the stronger and more numerous our Britons the stronger the Empire must become.

Deakin's worries about further dilutions of the Britishness of the Empire, as well as about the Anglo-Japanese alliance, made him ever more anxious that Australian relationships should be close with the other major centre of the English language and of British political traditions, the United States. In a letter to Leo Amery in 1908 defending his initiative in inviting the American Fleet to pay a ceremonial visit ot Australian ports, Deakin wrote (La Nauze, 1969, pp.490-1).

> It has nothing to do with our national development but everything to do with our racial sympathies...The closer the alliance between us the better for though I am fully alive to the many objectionable features of their political life, after all they are nearest to us in blood and in social, religious, and even political developments.

Deakin seldom gave himself what other men and women might consider relaxation. His waking hours were spent mainly either in dealing with immediate crises and trying to cope with the squabbles and jealousies which are unavoidable on the greasy pole of politics, or in seeking truths of a permanent and, indeed, transcendental character, an engagement which also entails unending efforts to resolve disputes and discords. Some politicians, including some of his own time such as Lord Salisbury, Winston Churchill and Lenin, seem to have found ways in which each of these two very disparate activities contributed to success in the other, but Deakin's two selves remained as separate as he supposed the spirit of Swedenborg to have

become from his body. This is not to say that he did not carry out widely different tasks effectively. In his public life he was able to adopt a very different tone as the anonymous commentator on Australian political life in the Morning Post from that he used as a protagonist in the debates on which he reported, while his enquiries into the spiritual and the mystical were written in yet another mode, but with equal fluency. Compartmentalization of the mind, however, together with a much more sensitive nature than that of the typical politician, placed great pressure on Deakin and may have contributed to the rapid decline of his powers. It is perhaps ironical that Deakin, who, above all else, sought to bring into unity great but hitherto disparate and unconnected traditions of human endeavour, was far less able than men of far inferior parts such as Parkes to achieve harmony and fusion between the different elements in his own thinking.

Summary

Parkes, like Graham Berry in Victoria, was a leading example of the career open to the talents, even, or perhaps especially, to mediocre ones, in the Australian colonies. After his bankruptcy of 1858 when he had to sell the Empire, Parkes was a weathercock of opinion rather than one who sought initially to form it. Pearson, for all his constitutional knowledge, was not versed in the same way in the school of hard political knocks and had a relatively unsuccessful political career compared with that of Parkes. Deakin had a remarkably quick and easy rise to political office, comparable to that of James Martin, but beneath his veneer of smoothness and unflustered calm, 'affable Alfred' worried more deeply about ultimate problems of the human condition than almost any of his contemporaries, Pearson being one of the few similar to him in that respect.

All three were strongly Protestant, in the negative sense of being opposed to what they considered the authoritarian, intolerant and superstitious core of Roman Catholicism, although each had some sympathy for the past wrongs of Ireland and admired moderate Irish Catholic patriots such as Charles Gavan Duffy. Parkes had least genuine religious feeling but was the most deeply engaged in sectarian politics; Pearson was one of the many nineteenth-century children of the clergy whose thoughts were frequently engaged in questioning the faith of their fathers; Deakin was in his eclecticism and his mysticicism perhaps a precursor of the counter-cultural relativism which threatened to undermine the conditions of an open society in which the individual pursuit of truth was most fully available.

Parkes and Pearson were both born in the United Kingdom, but only Parkes, after trying on other hats in his early ultra-radical days in New South Wales, made 'Englishmanism' part of his stock-in-trade. Pearson was in many ways a conscious critic of the conservatism of tradition, until in the late 1880s the fear of the yellow peril made him like both Parkes and Deakin, critical of Salisbury and the Conservatives, let alone of Gladstone and the Liberals, for being insufficiently zealous in imperial expansion. Deakin made full political use of being an 'Australian Native', but was just as emphatically a British Australian.

Parkes, Pearson and Deakin were all men of wide reading, Parkes conspicuously less so than the other two but able to hold his own with leading literary and political figures in Britain as well as in Australia. Their own studies made them concerned about education and public culture, although their fears that the study in schools of history, as well as of religion, clashed with their desire to initiate children into what they all

saw as a great English tradition of public law and individual rights, tapping in to Hellenic and Hebraic sources, which could be extended as well as preserved in Australia. Deakin read widely in Islamic, Hindu and Buddhist, as well as in European literatures, but his respect for and interest in other cultures in no way diminished his conviction that the best future lay in being a land of independent British Australians who stood firmly in the legal, constitutional and political traditions of Great Britain. Pearson had been a student of medieval society and, although he gave away his professional Anglo-Saxonism and despite his disappointment with the quality of public life in Victoria, he remained convinced that parliamentary institutions of the Westminster type, as constantly modified and as in need of ongoing modification, were a great achievement of human ingenuity. His criticisms of what he supposed to be current inadequacies in them in no way entailed that he thought that a better model was to be found elsewhere, even in the United States or in constitutional states in Western Europe. This was equally true for Parkes and Deakin.

In their support for Australian Federation Deakin and Parkes in no way sought to weaken the Britishness of Australia, any more than they thought that the Acts of Union of 1707 or 1801 had weakened Englishness (although Scottishness and Irishness might have been differently affected). In the creation of the Commonwealth of Australia, Deakin held that over a century of British settlement had come to its logical conclusion. Parkes, a principal actor in the first Federation Convention, and Pearson, whose National Life and Character had given federation such an impetus, had both died before the Commonwealth was founded, but they would entirely have agreed with Deakin.

Chapter Thirteen

Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall

Gordon's Background

Adam Lindsay Gordon was born in 1833 in the Azores where his maternal grandfather, once Governor of Berbice in the West Indies, was a plantation owner. Since his father had served in the British Army in India, Gordon, like so many nineteenth century Australian colonists, had a varied background. It seems likely that he spent some time in France as a boy, in the company of his mother, whose extravagance consumed a lot of a large family fortune. Gordon had a chequered school career at Cheltenham College, where his father taught Hindi after retirement from the army, and at the Royal Grammar School Worcester. At Woolwich Royal Military Academy it has been suggested, he was reckless with horses and money, before being shipped out to South Australia at the age of twenty. There Gordon served in the Mounted Police, but, finding the discipline irksome, he became a professional horse-breaker and keen rider and hunter who won many races, although sustaining many injuries. His father died in 1857 and his mother in 1859, but it was not until 1864 that the remains of the family fortune came into his possession. His legacy eased the early years of his marriage and enabled him to take up politics. Gordon's parliamentary career lasted from 1864 to 1866, but he had limited success, many of his speeches being studded with elaborate classical references which passed over the heads of his listeners. His resignation may have been hastened by the loss of most of his money, which he had invested in Western Australia. Despite his parliamentary career, his poetry has no concern with contemporary public

questions, or with the historical and cultural origins of the Australian colonies and future, which so absorbed Robinson, Wentworth, Harpur, Deniehy, Kendall and many other colonial poets.

Gordon was famous as a horseman before he became a poet, so that it was not surprising that his poems of the stirrup were among his most popular. 'The Sick Stockrider' became the chief poetical representation of pioneering days fast departing from most parts of the colonies. As Barcroft Boake wrote to his father in 1889 (1913, p.200),

> ...there is not a bushman or a drover who does not know a verse or two of 'How we Beat the Favourite' or 'The Sick Stockrider'...Gordon is the favourite - I may say the only - poet of the back blocker...

He was also deeply grounded, however, despite his erratic school career, in classical and English literature and in the Bible. Gordon was also considerably influenced by several nineteenth century writers: he used epigraphs by Scott, Byron, Charles Kingsley, Thackeray, Tennyson, G.A. Lawrence and Poe in his poems, while several works clearly owe much to Scott, Shelley, Browning, Swinburne or Tennyson. He had also a fair knowledge of German, French and Spanish as well as of English and Scottish ballads.

Gordon and the Bible

Gordon's Biblical references are not always easy to interpret. In the fourth section (or 'Fytte IV') of 'Ye Wearie Wayfarer', are references to 'the Hittite's wrong' and to 'Zeruiah's offspring, who served so well,/Yet between the horns of the altar fell'. Uriah and Joab were both victims of David's treachery or ingratitude, so that the concluding couplet, 'Neither

you nor the bravest of Judah's kings/ As a pattern can stand before us', may be ironical, or may simply imply that if the son of Jesse committed evil, what can be expected of ordinary mortals? There is a similar ambiguity in Gordon's Delilah, in which the voice of the temptress is convincingly seductive, but the imprecations against the 'fork'd tongue of adder', the 'woman allied to the serpent' and the 'beauty with venom combined' are much more strained. In the deeply pessimistic and morbid 'Wormwood and Nightshade', Gordon's use of Joshua's halting the sun over Gibeon seems perverse, since the message of the poem is one of hopeless regret for what cannot be changed, whereas the Biblical story surely relates a triumph of spirit over nature, or of the will over external determination. In a more optimistic moment, in 'Art is Long', Gordon warns against Job's comforters and holds that 'God/ More ready to reprieve is,/ They know, who rest beneath the sod'. Whatever view Gordon took of the Children of Israel in Biblical times, he had little sympathy with their successors. Scene VII of his unfinished 'The Road to Avernus' refers to 'the usurer Nathan Lee...Lee the Levite!- some years back Herbert horsewhipped him-the cur/ Show'd his teeth and laid his ears back. Now his wealth has purchased her'.

Gordon and the medieval

Unlike Kendall, Gordon had a strong interest in balladry and in medieval themes. Although Gordon was older than Kendall, the great nineteenth century affection for the medieval and the gothic influenced Britain first, and only entered Australian thought in a diluted form - there were, after all, no medieval buildings or ruins in Australia to arouse a commparable nostalgia, nor the industrialization which evoked hostile reactions from many British Victorians. Gordon's medieval poems include 'Unshriven', in which, after a day in which he has married and murdered, a

knight goes out to his own death, and 'Fauconshawe', a very Scott-like tale of passion and treachery which includes a stanza which sums up the code of chivalry at its best,

> We have faced each other where blows were dealt,
> And he was a stalwart foe,
> I had rather have met him hilt to hilt
> Than have found him lying low.

'A Rippling Water' tries to examine through a peasant girl's eyes her choice of spouses; 'Confession', although in stiff verse, grapples sensitively with the problem of forgiveness for sin. The best of Gordon's medieval poems are perhaps 'The Feud', the first of his poems to be published, and 'The Rhyme of Joyous Garde', in which the aged Lancelot laments his betrayal of Arthur and recalls his passion for Guinevere and its doleful consequences for king and kingdom, queen and lover. By far the longest is a verse play, Ashtaroth, centred on a Faustian Norman knight with interests in the occult and the forbidden and a Mephistophelean tempter by the name of Orion, and including Vikings, outlaws, and nuns in distress.

'The Romance of Britomarte' combines Gordon's passion for horses with another strong historical interest, the Great Rebellion. The heroes are Cavaliers and Gordon expresses his distaste for hypocritical psalm-singers, but the other side too 'fought like fiends (Give the fiend his due).' The ballad was based on the idea derived from the 1860 'Holmby House' of the now forgotten historical novelist G.J. Whyte-Melville, whose work Gordon greatly admired and which inspired him to write one of his best pieces.

Gordon and the classical past

Classical themes attracted Gordon too. He made some felicitous

translations, such as the passage from Horace on the seduction of Helen by Paris and its consequences. His 'Achilles' Farewell' expresses the stoical resignation which he advanced in his role of stockrider,

> But the toughest lives and the brittle,
> And the bravest and the best
> Lightly fall - it matters little;
> Now, I only long for rest.

In bluff mood in 'Sunlight on the Sea (The Philosophy of a Feast)' the authorial voice urges,

> Make merry, comrades, eat and drink,
> (The sunlight flashes on the sea)
> My spirit is rejoiced to think
> That even as they were so are we.

The reference is to the 'Three hundred soldiers' who 'feasted high/ An hour before Thermopylae'. Yet neither bluffness or stoicism were easy for Gordon to sustain in his art or in his life. Just as reckless riding seems to have been necessary for him to prove some point, to himself rather than to others, so his verse oscillates between conflicting and unreconciled emotions. 'Doubtful Dreams', after recalling again that Achilles' reward was as early grave, continues,

> Nor for mortal toiling nor spinning,
> Will the matters of mortals mend;
> As it was so in the beginning
> It shall be so in the end
> The web that the weavers weave ill
> Shall not be woven aright,
> Till the good is brought forth from evil,
> As day is brought forth from night.
>
> Vain dreams! for our fathers cherish'd
> High hopes in teh days that were;
> And these men wonder'd and perish'd,
> Nor better than these we fare;
> And our due at least is their due,
> They fought against odds and fell;
> 'En avant, les enfants perdus!'

We fight against odds as well.

Gordon was at the opposite end of the spectrum from those who entertained millenarian hopes for a transformed society; he well understood that there were brave men before Agamemnon and that there are some deep continuities in the human condition. On the other hand, while it may have been true that he was one of the 'enfants perdus', that was not how the Australians or the British of his time saw themselves, except in the trite sense of knowing that death comes to all. Far from perishing without making any impression on the world, his Australian readers had transformed a land and were continuing to do so. At bottom many of his readers were more genuinely stoical than was Gordon.

Gordon, England and Australia

Gordon's later eclipse in critical reputation owed something to his own lack of conscious interest in questions of 'Australian identity', as well as to the partial dependence of interest in his work on his reputation as a dare-devil in life and on his tragic death. Gordon's greatest appeal, however, for many of his contemporaries was that he fused a love for the Australian present and the English past, a combination repugnant to some varieties of Australian nationalist. In 'Ye Wearie Wayfarer', whose overall construction creaks badly, the two are ever intertwined. After,

> Lightly the breath of the spring wind blows,
> Though laden with faint perfume,
> 'Tis the fragrance rare that the bushman knows,
> The scent of the wattle bloom,

follow memories of the mist on the Cotswolds and of a fox-hunt long ago, one at least of whose number fell in the Charge of the Light Brigade. The most memorable passage in the poem combines the Australian and the English even

more intimately,

> Hark! the bells on distant cattle
> Waft across the range,
> Through the golden-tufted wattle,
> Music low and strange;
> Like the marriage peal of fairies
> Comes the tinkling sound,
> Or like chimes of sweet St. Mary's
> On far English ground.

Gordon wrote of common Australian sights and sounds in a new way, but he was not a public laureate of the Kendall kind. His 'Gone', written to mourn the death of Robert O'Hara Burke, who had 'gone, my friends, where we all must go', was enormously popular, but suffered with the later criticisms of Burke's faults as bushman and leader. Many of his poems rooted in the Biblical, the classical or the medieval past served inter alia to widen the historical sympathies of his readers, but it was not so much Gordon's conscious or deliberate evocation of a significant past which influenced his readers, but that for the two generations following his death his verse of the bush and the race-course itself embodied the core of a stirring past rapidly receding from them. That he was an English gentleman, that he loved Australia and affected no superiority, that there was no conflict of loyalties between his love for the countryside and the people of his youth and for those of his manhood, and that he ended his own life so dramatically, all strengthened the appeal, particularly of the poems based on Gordon's own experiences, but also of those set in ages he sought to keep green in the human memory.

Kendall's Background

Henry Kendall's father, Basil, was born in England, spent his boyhood in New Zealand and served as an officer in the Chilean Navy before marrying

the daughter of an Irish policeman in New South Wales. Like Henry and his twin Edward, who were born in 1839, Basil Kendall was alcoholic and unable at times to distinguish between thine and mine. He died in 1852, leaving his widow and five children in difficult circumstances, but Henry Kendall recalled him as a 'mild, gentlemanly and educated' man, whose choice for sheep farming at first Grafton then the Manning River in New South Wales placed his son among sights and sounds he always loved: its lyre-birds and forest flowers, ferns and moss, creeks and waterfalls, remained prominent in his imagery throughout his life. Kendall's mother seems to have had a lively Celtic imagination and to have introduced him not only to fairy stories, Bunyan and the Bible, but by the age of nine to a translation of Homer.

Despite his humble origins and notwithstanding the constant complaints about his hardships which were an unattractive part of Kendall's character, his precocious genius received considerable support. His first poems appeared in print before he was twenty and at twenty-two Joseph Sheridan Moore helped him to gain publication of the first volume of his poems. Strong encouragement was given to him by Nicol Stenhouse, John Woolley, Daniel Deniehy, Edward Kennedy Silvester, a poet and critic, the journalist Richard Rowe, the artist William Wilkes, and the Sydney lawyer and poet James Lionel Michael. As a result of the patronage of Henry Halloran he gained a Civil Service position, made permanent at one hundred and fifty pounds a year in 1864, and through the support of Henry Parkes he was promoted in 1866 to a post worth two hundred and fifty. Although it was difficult for a young Australian poet to make his way when the English language boasted more poets of the very highest stature than most readers could master in a lifetime, this was as much a problem for poets in England

as in Australia.

Kendall and the literary tradition

Like Charles Harpur, Kendall wished to be not only a national poet of Australia, who interpreted to the world its scenery and human experience, but also an heir to and an ornament of the English literary tradition, itself rooted in Biblical and classical, as well as in purely English forms and themes. Kendall read widely in great poetry: those attracting him most included Gray, Collins, Cowper and Thompson in the eighteenth century, Wordsworth, Keats, Scott, Shelley and Coleridge among the early Romantics, the Americans Poe, Emerson and W.C. Bryant, and, among English contemporaries, Tennyson, the Brownings, Arnold, D.G. Rossetti, and Swinburne. He also admired contemporary Irish writers, such as Thomas Davis, Mangan, McGee, Callanan and Ferguson. Kendall possessed in his more objective moments a very keen understanding of his own inferiority to the greatest poets. His 'The Muse of Australia' is at its most moving when he expresses to the Muse his realisation that,

> I never can reach you, to hear the sweet voice
> So full with the music of fountains!

This honest self-judgement was perhaps at the heart of a melancholy which very easily became despair. Yet at the same time, Kendall knew that, with the possible exceptions of Harpur, a generation older than he, and Gordon, an immigrant, his was the highest poetic talent in Australia. Resentment at inadequate recognition often led to a stridency which mingled uneasily with his painful self-indictment for not being a Wordsworth.

In the task of building an Australian literature and culture which

would be a worthy heir and sustainer of the western heritage, Kendall could be generous in his appreciation of his predecessors and contemporaries. Harpur received his highest praise, as when he wrote (1966, p.42),

> I would sit at your feet, for I feel
> I am one of a glorious band
> That will own you and hold you their Chief,
> And a Monarch of Song in the land!

There is intense pathos in his 1867 'In Memoriam Daniel Henry Deniehy', a man whose failings as well as merits so closely resembled his own.

Among those to whom Kendall offered notable poetic tributes were Stenhouse, Henry Halloran, William Bede Dalley, Samuel Bennett, Archdeacon McEncroe, Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon, Edward Butler and Caroline Chisholm. He was not inhibited by sectarianism. John Dunmore Lang was praised in 1861 when still in full vigour as 'one who dares to death oppression's steel/ To save his country, so she should not kneel'; after his death Lang was exalted to the company of the Apostle of the Gentiles (1966, p.410)

> I knew of they fierce tribulation;
> Thou wert ever the same in my thought-
> The father and friend of a nation,
> Through good or evil report.
> At Ephesus, fighting in fetters,
> Paul drove the wild beasts to their pen;
> So thou with the last of they letters,
> Whipped infamy back to its den.

Kendall and Aboriginal traditions

In his early twenties Kendall knew that he had it in him to become the outstanding 'Native Australian Poet' of his generation. One distinctive aspect of Australia he had to confront was the Aborigine presence, but, as with most other non-Aborigine Australians, Kendall was unable to find a

fruitful response to the Aborigine past and present. In several early poems Kendall tried to dignify the Aboriginal past with heroic encounters between groups led by chiefs such as those described among barbarian tribes in European and in derivative American literature. Examples of this genre are the 1860 'The Cannacha's Death Song Over His Chieftain' and 'A Legend of Tanna', the 1861 'The Ballad of Tanna' and 'Urara', and the 1862 'Kooroora' and Ullmarra'. These poems express the sorrows of followers, descendants or widows, who lament among solitary landscapes the death of an Aborigine warrior chief, in verses such as (1966, p.11),

> He dreams of a battle - of foes of the past,
> But he hears not the whooping abroad on the blast,
> Nor the fall of the feet that are travelling fast.
> Oh! why dost thou slumber, Koowoora?

Or, (1966, p.22),

> 'Wahina', they whispered, 'Alfanna lies low,
> And the ghost of thy sire hath been gladdened
> For the men of his people havr fought with the foe
> Till the rivers of Warra are reddened!'.

The best of Kendall's poems in this genre is perhaps the 1864 'The Last of his Tribe', whose subject dreams of battles and hunting long ago, of the lubra who bore his children and tended his fire, and of those dead tribesmen with whom he will soon be reunited. Kendall does not allocate blame for the destruction of traditional Aboriginal society; the foes in the poems are ancient tribal enemies. These poems lacked effectiveness, in part because they were not based on any authentic Aboriginal myths or legends,- indeed, traditional Aboriginal societies lacked the sort of chieftainship which Kendall tried to celebrate. The failure of Aborigines to act in accordance with his romantic imagination perhaps helped to induce in Kendall the contempt which he expressed in his last years of life in stanzas such as this in the 1877 'Black Lizzie',

Still, if the charm called Beauty lies
  In ampleness of ear or lip,
And nostrils of exceeding size,
  You are a gem, my ladyship.

His attitude can scarcely be termed a prejudice, since his original pre-judgement was highly favourable to Aborigines, but it was entirely negative and destructive.

Kendall and Biblical and Classical traditions

Kendall read widely in classical literature in translation and had considerable Biblical knowledge. Sometimes his classical and Biblical references seem decorative rather than integral to his work; sometimes the two sources are mixed (although there were good precedents for this in Milton and in many others), as in his 1874 'The Voice in the Wild Oak', which includes references to the punishment of Cain on the one hand and to Niobe of the trees and Tithonus of the wood on the other, or in his 1871 'France', in which 'Ruin on the heels of Attilas' is juxtaposed with 'the Gallic Rachel weeps/ In wasted Rama for her children dead'. In his de profundis 'Narrara Creek', Kendall's basic literal belief seems to be in the pantheon of Zeus rather than in the Trinity,

Because I believe in the beautiful story -
The poem of Greece in the days of her glory -
That the high-seated Lord of the woods and the waters
Has peopled His world with His deified daughters -
That flowerful forests and waterways streaming
Are gracious with goddesses glowing and gleaming -
I pray that thy singing divinity, fairer
Than wonderful women, may listen, Narrara!

Some of Kendall's best work was based on Biblical stories, mainly from the Old Testament. These include 'Achan' (1862), in which he suggests that Achan disobeyed the order to destroy all the spoils of the Ammonites for the

sake of a woman, an explanation not implied in Joshua, the 1880 'Lilith', which seems to have been influenced more by Goethe or by Dante Gabriel Rossetti than by Isaiah or Rabbinical literature, and two quite different poems on Elijah, in the second of which (1870) he inadvertently, he later apologized, included some lines from Adam Lindsay Gordon. In this second 'Elijah', Kendall, then in the middle of a long spell of dissipation, called for the appearance of a new Elijah, 'whose words/ Directly coming from a source divine,/Would fall like flame where Vice holds festival,/And search the inmost hearts of nations'. If the stern Tishbite did return in a new guise he was disregarded by Kendall, as well as by most of the rest of the population. Kendall wrote a sonnet in 1869 on 'Attila', which took up the theme of divine retribution for moral evil which occupied the two versions of 'Elijah'.

Kendall's 1870 'Manasseh' is based on the Chronicles version of the imprisonment of the wicked King Manasseh in Babylon, where, after his repentance, divine grace enables him to return to Judah to undo his former evil, which he does with success. Very few Christian poets have chosen Manesseh rather than the Prodigal Son to illustrate God's infinite mercy. The 1881 'Gehazi' contrasts, without much force, the dishonesty of the servant of Elisha with the steadfastness of later martyrs at Rome and Ephesus for the Christian faith.

The most powerful of Kendall's poems on Biblican themes is his 1869 'King Saul at Gilboa'. Both Achan and Saul incur divine vengeance because they disobey an alleged divine instruction to destroy every possession of and all life among a defeated enemy, and it may be that Kendall had misgivings about the fairness or morality of their fate, especially about

the destruction of Saul for showing some mercy to the Amalekites. Kendall would have been aware of the two variants in Samuel on the death of Saul, as in nearly every other aspect of the early history of the monarchy in Israel, so that it must have been a conscious decision to choose Saul's Amalekite slave rather than his armour bearer as the agent of his suicide. It was unfortunate that Kendall allowed himself to be overly influenced in the exchanges between Saul and the slave by Tennyson's handling of Arthur's pleas to Sir Bedivere, so that the poem's reception was prejudiced by accusations of excessive borrowing.

The attraction for Kendall of the story of Saul is also shown by the two poems he wrote entitled 'Rizpah', in both of which the concubine of the dead Saul, who guards from scavengers the bodies of her sons, slain by orders of David, is treated as a general representative of suffering womanhood, especially those bereaved by the American Civil War. In the second, written in 1867, Kendall appears to accept at face value the assurance in 2 Samuel that on hearing of Rizpah's sorrows, 'David, son of Jesse, spake no word,/But turned himself, and wept against the wall', even though Rizpah's sons were the objects of David's vengeance, contrary to his promises and his protestations, against the House of Saul.

'To Damascus', on the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, is Kendall's only important treatment of a New Testament subject. Religious interests emerge in some other poems, such as the semi-doggerel 1880 'A Hyde Park Larrikin', in which he condemns those who mock the man who 'has that faith which sees/ Before the high Creator/ A Virgin pleading on her knees-/ A shining Mediator!'. In a confused tribute to John Bede Polding on his death in 1877 entitled 'The Good Old Archbishop', Kendall describes Polding as having worn

'Elisha's gleaming garments' and as having helped to fill a gap left by 'the gentle Stenhouse.' One stanza is especially peculiar, given the great struggles of Pius IX, supported by Polding, against the forces of contemporary liberalism,

> But eyes that fill and trembling lips attest
> Far more than any song of mine, the bright-
> The marvellous love which, like the liberal West,
> Shed light on all - a large abundant light'.

In 1880 the zeal of the Catholic Church in Spain, which customarily aroused the indignation of Protestants throughout the English-speaking world, was the subject of 'On a Spanish Cathedral'. The poem may have been at least in part opportunistic, since it was dedicated to William Bede Dalley, from whom Kendall sought favour. It describes 'the wanderers poor who knelt on the flints and the sands/ When the mighty and merciless Moor was lord of the Lady of Lands' and the builders of Seville Cathedral,

> Just think of these men - of their time - of the days of their deed, and the scene!
> How touching their zeal - how sublime their suppression of self must have been!
> In a city yet hacked by the sword, and scarred by the flame of the Moor.
> They started the work of their Lord, sad, silent, and solemnly poor.

Kendall's poems on classical subjects include two somewhat voyeuristic pieces, 'Syrinx' (1868) and 'Daphne' (1869), in both of which sexually harassed nymphs are saved by metamorphosis from a fate worse than death at the hands of a satyr and of Apollo respectively, and a 'Merope' (1866), which seems to have been influenced by Matthew Arnold's treatment of the same subject. More substantial is 'Ogyges' (1869), 'written after the manner of Tennyson's "Tithonus" and Horne's "Orion"', according to Kendall. Kendall uses the myth of Ogyges to advantage to portray the desolation of

senility and the faint memories in great age of a youth of fame and vigour. Perhaps the best of Kendall's classical poems is his 1866 'The Voyage of Telegonus', again influenced by Arnold (this time by 'Sohrab and Rustum'), which relates the death of Ulysses at the hands of his son by Circe, Telegonus, whose greatest wish had been to be united with his father. The Homeric theme that man cannot avoid his fate is treated by Kendall with strength and conviction. In his 1880 'Pytheas' Kendall's subject is the first voyage of a Greek sailor to Britain, then the Ultima Thule. Pytheas cannot imagine what Britain's future greatness will be,

> Man who knew resplendent Athens set and framed in silver sea,
> Did not dream a dream of England - England of the years to be!
> Friend of fathers like to Plato - bards august and hallowed seers-
> Did not see that tenfold glory, Britain of the future years!

Kendall followed Robinson and Wentworth in hinting that, just as Britain outdistanced Athens in glory, so the first British voyagers to Terra Australis may have discovered a land which will outdo their own.

Kendall's polemics on the recent past

In general Kendall made good use of his classical knowledge, but several of his late poems pointlessly berate the ignorant for lacking the cultivation which he possessed. In the 1880 'A Hyde Park Larrikin' the Larrikin is teased, or would be were he to read the poem, that he has not heard of Proclus and knows not who helped the Lycian leader. In 'Christmas in the Splitters' Camp' Kendall laboriously points out the lack of the classical spirit in 'Charley, and Jim, and the blue-shirted Bill,/ And Jack with a snake buckle on': 'These gents, I admit, are not classic and Greek:/ Their dress has not style of the fashion antique...Lucretius and Plato are not in their line;/ But they've never mistaken a beech for a pine...Their

thoughts are not decked in an elegant dress-/ In the diction of Virgil or Homer,' etc. Similarly, in 'Jim the Splitter', Jim 'hasn't Euripedes much in the head;/ And, let it be carefully, tenderly said,/ He never has analysed Homer'. Shelley, Ruskin, Rossetti and Dante are also among those about whose works Jim will never be troubled. Kendall had some admiration for the practical skills of the bushman and the sawyer, dating from the period of his rehabilitation during the mid-1870s, but he was full of contempt for their typical insensitivity to the natural beauty amongst which they worked and for their obliviousness to the best in human achievement. Like Marcus Clarke, Kendall felt no impropriety in condemning faults which he possessed in abundance. In his 1880 'The Song of Ninian Melville' he expressed a desire 'to tan/ Back of that immense impostor that they call the "working man"!/ Drag upon our just employer - sponger on a worn-out wife-/ Boozing in some alley pothouse every evening of his life!.' Ironically the pot-boiling ballads which poked fun at the bullockies and the rest gained him more readers than his serious work.

During his twenties Kendall retaliated to rather than initiated the trading of insults and, since his nature was softer and his position in society more vulnerable than those of most of his critics, he came out of such exchanges a Pyrrhic victor at best. His most extended youthful satire, the 1866 'The Bronze Trumpet', was a counter-blast at the gibes of George Burnett Barton and other contributors to the Sydney Punch. After his return to public life after his worst time of troubles, Kendall was as easily affronted as before, but tougher in sustaining exchanges of invective. Some of his lampoons hardly seem worth his time and effort, such as the 1880 'The Song of Ninian Melville', which was removed at considerable cost from the Songs of the Mountain, of which it originally formed a part, since the costs

of a defamation action would have been even higher. Worse was his 1879 'The Gagging Bill', a vitriolic personal attack on Henry Parkes. After invoking as pioneers of Australian independence, freedom and decency, Wentworth, Lowe, Bland, Forbes and Windyer (all New South Welshmen of course), Kendall portrays a fall 'from Pericles to - Henry Parkes'. Parkes had found positions for Kendall and had lent him money, asking for it back at an awkward time for Kendall but at as bad a one for himself, since he was facing another of his periodic bankruptcies, yet Kendall could describe him as,

> A wretched flunkey in a 'ducal' dress -
> He bridle Liberty - he gag the Press!
> He put it out - the fine imperial flame,
> And make an English-speaking people tame!
> A thing like him - a mushroom of the mire -
> Is he the one to cope with lordly-fire?

In a sequel, 'The Sawyer Who Works on the Top', Kendall scoffed at Parkes' humble origins in Birmingham,

> Is he fit for his eminent post?
> Does he know how to 'sharpen' and 'set'?
> In spite of his swagger and boast
> You know he is Brummagen yet.

At least when Henry Parkes' son died, Kendall expressed remorse for his criticisms of the father, ending his 'In Memory of Robert Parkes' with the mea culpa,

> I know that once I wronged your sire;
> but, since that awful day.
> My soul has passed through blood and fire;
> My head is very grey.

Kendall and the first Australian century

Kendall at his best sought to be the laureate of the first century of

Australian experience. He paid tribute to early free emigrants (he never referred to the transported) in poems such as the 1860 'The Australian Emigrants', who muse,

> For we'd seen as the shadows o'ercurtained our minds
> The cliffs of old England receding behind;
> And had turn'd in our tears from the view of the shore
> The land of our childhood to see it no more.

In Kendall's vision the explorers held a central place: the early 'The Fate of the Explorers' mourned the death of Burke and Wills, while 'At Euroma' dealt with the death of Charles Gray on that expedition. In the 1866 'Twelve Thousand Miles Away', Kendall tackles the theme of a lone Englishman perishing in the exploration of Australia,

> The fierce Australian forests -
> The woods of waste and fire,
> Have broken down the Stranger,
> His face is past desire
> The son of other summers,
> And other lands and times,
> .....
> Beyond the rainless Barwan,
> Beyond the red Barcoo,
> The fiery Sprite of Famine
> Sits all the yeartime through!
> But you and you of England,
> The banded and the brave,
> Have dug within her fastnesses
> Your gallant comrade's grave.

The more substantial 1869 'The Glen of Arrawatta' also recalls 'the lonely lands/ Beyond the lonely tracks of Burke and Wills,/ Where, when the wandering Stuart fixed his camps...'. This poem is very similar in structure to Harpur's 'Glen of the White man's Grave', a lone explorer being finally overwhelmed by,

> A band of fierce fantastic savages
> That, starting naked round the faded fire,
> With sudden spears and swift terrific yells,

Came bounding wildly at the white man's head,
And faced him, staring like a dream of Hell!

Kendall emphasised the Englishness of the explorer in a way Harpur did not: the explorer recalls 'the brooks/ Of England through the sweet autumnal noons'; it is far away in ancestral England that tales are told of him after his death,

Often by the hearths
In winter nights, and when the wind was wild
Outside the casements, children heard the tale
Of how he left their native vales behind
(Where he had been a child himself) to shape
New fortunes for his father's fallen house;
Of how he struggled - how his name became,
By fine devotion and unselfish zeal,
A name of beauty in a selfish land;

Other poems on the theme of the death of the lone explorer included two on Leichardt. In 1859 'Oh, Tell Me Ye Breezes' asks, 'If Leichardt's bold spirit has fled to its rest?/ Where moulders the traveller's clay?'. In the 1880 'Leichardt', Kendall asked of the dying Leichardt: did he ever pause and dream,

Of the cool green German valley and the singing German stream?
When the sun was as a menace glaring from a sky of brass,
Did he ever rest, in visions, on a lap of German grass?

Yet Kendall's mind turned yet again to England, which he had never visited, as he continued,

Down a dell of dewy myrtle, where the light is soft and green
And a month, like English April, sits - an immemorial queen,
Let us think that he is resting - think that by a radiant grave
Ever come the songs of forest and the voices of the wave!

In the 1880 'Blue Mountain Pioneers' Wentworth, Lawson and Blaxland were accorded heroic status and cast in classical mould: 'For twenty spaces

of the star and sun/ These Romans kept their harness buckled on'. The greatness of the British progenitors, who transmitted the heritages of Greece and Rome, of the Prophets and of Christ and his Church, will not fail, Kendall urged, to expand in Australia. Wentworth, native-born and statesman as well as explorer, was a major figure in Kendall's conception of Australian history; the passage of time between the bitter political attacks on Wentworth of the early 1850s by his radical enemies and his death in 1872 made it easier for Kendall's 'Honor the Hero' to exclude unharmonious notes and to offer an unsullied paeon,

> Honor the Hero! the laurelled Australian
> He who stood out in the dark elder days,
> Fighting our battles, when Freedom, an alien,
> Paled in falst splendour, in Tyranny's blaze.
> Honor the Hero! the fine, fearless spirit,
> Liberty's grandest Hierophant here,
> He through whose sacrifice, lo, we inherit,
> All that the sons of old England hold dear.
>
> Ah, in the days when his bones will by lying,
> Lulled by the waters he loved in his life,
> Think of his courage, exalted, undying,
> Warring with evil, - with wrong, - to the knife!
> His was a spirit men never found swerving,
> His was a nature that hated a lie:
> Honor him therefore, our WENTWORTH deserving,
> Praise, and the homage that never can die.

De mortuis nisi bonum, of course, but it was typical of Kendall that the supposed tyranny and evils against which Wentworth struggled remain entirely unspecified: it would certainly not have suited Kendall to refer to Wentworth's support for continued transportation or to his call for an aristocracy to be established in New South Wales. Convictism was once more a stranger to the early life of New South Wales.

Throughout his poetical career Kendall sought to write a national epic as well as lyrical verse. The early 1859 'The Far Future', which he may

have written in collaboration with his twin brother Edward, begins with a standard prophecy,

> Australia, advancing with rapid wing'd stride,
> Shall plant among nations her banner with pride,
> The yoke of dependence aside she will cast,
> And build on the ruins and wrecks of the past.
> Her flag on the tempest will wave to proclaim
> 'Mong kingdoms and empires her national name.
> .....
> A Gem in its glitter has yet to be seen
> when progress has placed her where England has been;

Like most other Australian poets from Harpur to Lawson, and in the vein of 'Locksley Hall' which he admired, Kendall liked to sound a martial note. In his 1860 'Australian War Song' he declares,

> Men have said that ye were sleeping -
> Hurl - Australians - back the lie;
> Whet the swords you have in keeping,
> Forward stand to do or die
> .....
> When the foeman seeks your stations,
> Will you willing slaves be found?
> You the sons of hero fathers -
> Sires that bled at Waterlool

Just where and why this ardour and courage were to be deployed was not indicated.

In the ambitious 1879 'The Sydney International Exhibition' Kendall started by arguing that Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, is as much at home in New South Wales as in Ancient Greece: 'Here is a land whose large imperial grace/ Must tempt thee goddess in thine holy place'. He continued with references to the supposed visions of the Great South Land by the Chinese and of Marco Polo, to the voyages of the Frenchman Le Testu and the Dutchmen Dirk Hartog and Tasman, before, with the arrival of 'The darling son of gray old Yorkshire', the true history of Australia begins.

Cook was merciful to the Aborigines: he 'spared the Hector of his native land', but finally died at savage hands: 'Who died like Him of hoary Nazareth,/ That death august - the radiant martyr's death'. Forby Sutherland, 'The blue-eyed Saxon from the hills of snow' was given special mention as the first of the British to die and to be buried in Australia. Then Arthur Phillip finally ended the prehistory of Australia,

> Here, in the hour that shines and sounds afar,
> Flamed first old England's banner like a star;
> Here, in a time august with prayer and praise,
> Was born the Nation of these splendid days;
> And here, this land's majestic Yesterday
> Of immemorial silence died away.

Great changes had been wrought in but ninety years,

> Where now the warrior of the forest race,
> His glaring war-paint and this fearless face?
> The banks of April, and the groves of bird,
> The glades of silence and the pools unstirred,
> The gleaming savage, and the whistling spear,
> Passed with the passing of a wild old year!

What had been lost was trifling in comparison with what had taken its place,

> A new age 'cast in a diviner mould'
> Comes crowned with lustre, zoned and shod with gold!
> What Dream is this on lawny spaces set?
> What miracle of dome and minaret?
> .....
> Lo, this was built, to honour gathering lands,
> By Celtic, Saxon, Australasian hands!
> .....
> And, on this great auspicious day, the flowers
> Of Labour glorify majestic hours.
> the singing angel from the starry sphere
> Of dazzling Science shows his wonders here.
> And Art, the dream-clad spirit, starts, and brings
> From Fairyland her strange sweet glittering things.
> .....
> Yea, here are all the miracles sublime -
> The lights of Genius and the stars of Time!.

Kendall also wrote a 'Sydney Exhibition Cantata' for the occasion. The Chorus calls on the visitors from all nations to see 'How like England we can be,/ Mighty nations! let them view/ Sons of generous sires in you'. The tenor sings,

> By the ways that sound afar,
> Sound and sine like star by star!
> By the grand old years aflame
> With the fires of England's fame -
> Heirs of those who fought for right
> When the world's wronged face was white -

Again a vague mist pervades, so that it is uncertain just which struggle for right was being evoked, or why the world's face was white - with fear, one assumes, rather than with racial purity.

Kendall also made a spirited effort to give an historical dimension to his 1880 'The Melbourne International Exhibition', which did not gain a prize. Outstanding individual pioneers were more difficult to find than in the case of New South Wales, but David Collins, the leader of the early settlement of the Port Phillip District, was celebrated as 'Collins the Deathless', and was accompanied in the roll of honour by 'Flinders and Fawkner, our forefathers gray'. Batman was prudently left unmentioned. There was safety in numbers when Kendall recalled,

> Nine and seventy years ago,
> Up the blaze of yonder bay
> On a great exalted day,
> Came from seas august with snow -
> Waters where the whirlwinds blow -
> First of England's sons who stood
> By the dep green bygone wood,
> Where the wild song used to flow
> Nine and seventy years ago.

Much of this later verse was hack-work: although by no means without

merit, it constituted what Kendall thought the public wanted, rather than what he believed to be best. Before this last phase of his writing Kendall had plumbed the depths of life, sponging, forging and stealing, drinking away the money needed for food and clothing for his children, blaming his wife for leaving him when she had put up with more than was reasonable for her to take, close to final insanity and inner destruction. It was unfortunate for Gordon that in his hour of despair in 1870 it was Kendall at near bottom that he chanced to meet. Their drink together would not have helped in Gordon's choice between life and death. It was a wonder that Kendall made a recovery and was able to write much of great merit in the last few years before his death in 1882.

Kendall's critical reputation

Kendall was faced in life with the opposite critical question from that asked by later Australian nationalist savants. He stated the contemporary charge and his answer to it in 1872 in Punch Staff Papers as follows (Wilde, 1976, p.139)

> Why, they have asked, should we foster a new and immature growth when we have the magnificent literary possessions of the old country at hand? By this they infer an intention on our part to create a literature utterly independent of what is justly a source of pride to Englishmen, but we have no such purpose in our heads. What colonial men of letters are anxious to do ought to be obvious enough. They look upon the grand results of British genius with as much exalted joy as their fathers did; but at the same time they naturally desire to take advantage of the novel elements by which they are surrounded, and to gather from these (speaking figuratively) fresh sap for the ancient stock.

It was not long after his death that he came under attack from the Bulletin school, followed by the Palmers, etc., for showing concern with the ancient stocks of Britain, Greece, Rome, Israel or any other lands distant in place and time. In much of Kendall's best work is a sense of loss of a

golden past and of failure to reach a golden future which is near yet ever elusive: 'Yearning for a bliss unworldly, yearning for a brighter change,/ Yearning for the mystic Aidenn, built beyond this mountain range'. This feeling is often deepened by recognition of opportunities wasted and hopes betrayed, a failure to take the right steps to discover the 'unknown shores', 'undiscovered skies', 'cliffs and coast by men untrodden', 'the land where man hath never been, the country where ethereal glory shines'. A moving expression of this feeling comes at the end of 'Narrara Creek', (which he subtitled 'Written in the shadow of 1872' - the year of his lowest degradation),

> Though knowest, O sister of deities blazing
> With splendour ineffable - beauty amazing,
> What life the gods gave me - what largess I tasted -
> The youth thrown away and the faculties wasted!
> I might, as thou seest, have stood in high places
> Instead of in pits where the brand of disgrace is;
> A by-word for scoffers - a butt, and a caution,
> with the grave of poor Burns and Maginn for my portion.

Even in such a transcendental moment Kendall linked up his own personal suffering with great human traditions which had their origin outside Australia and without which, he believed, neither individual experience nor national possibilities could be understood. To be a 'National Australian Poet', Kendall knew, as many of his later critics did not seem to do, that much more than Australian experience and knowledge was needed, for that experience to be understood fully and placed in a universalistic context.

Summary

Critical judgements of Gordon and Kendall have fluctuated and no doubt will do so again, while estimates of their characters have also oscillated, with some being more willing to extenuate their faults than others. It is

easy enough to lose patience with their failings, especially with those of Kendall. What cannot be doubted is that the two men possessed the highest poetical ability of their time and place, and that each combined a highly positive response to the sights, sounds and smells of Australia with a deep affection for the English landscape which Gordon knew directly and which Kendall saw in the mind's eye. Both of them drew on a great store of historical events, of myths and legends and of literary forms and images, whether in their treatment of Australian scenes or themes, or in showing that Australian writers possessed the then as well as the now, and the there as well as the here, as the material of their art. Despite later reactions including some ignoble and mean-spirited ones, against their achievements, Gordon and Kendall were alike highly successful both in rooting Australian poetry in rich English, European, Classical and Biblical traditional forms and themes, and in bringing forth from them new and fruitful varieties.

Chapter Fourteen

Convictism and Pioneering as Significant Past

Convictism as contemporary experience

Important aspects of attitudes towards convictism of both convicts and the free during the early colonial period have already been considered above. James Tucker's unpublished Ralph Rashleigh was discussed in chapter five as a convict novel by a convict which, while losing nothing of the sensational in the telling, gave a fictional account which accorded closely with the historical record. Indeed, apart from some special pleading, Tucker's aim was to present the typical and the representative.

In chapter four some aspects of the Bigge and the Molesworth Reports were considered. It was noted that one of the main thrusts of the Bigge Report of 1823 was to attack convictism, not for its severity or cruelty, but for the lack of close correspondence between offence and conditions of servitude and, in particular, the relative freedom enjoyed by most convicts on assignment which, in Bigge's opinion, greatly reduced the deterrent value of transportation to New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land. The Molesworth Committee sat in London and, although many witnesses were interviewed who had considerable experience of convictism, its distance from the scene, coupled with the initial hostility of its majority to transportation and to penal colonies, made it difficult for objectivity to be achieved.

So far as New South Wales was concerned, the condemnation by the Molesworth Committee of the convict system on which the colony had been founded met with a mixed reception. There was widespread rejection of

root-and-branch condemnation of the system and of suggestions that the colony was a pariah society because of the stain of convictism. On the other hand, many emancipists, as well as almost all free emigrants who were not squatters or others facing immediate or potential labour shortages, were willing enough that there should be no more transportation. Attempts to revive transportation to New South Wales during the late 1840s and early 1850s met with strong resistance from the large majority of the politically active in the colony.

It did not take long before a substantial gap emerged between retrospective conceptions of the convict period and its actuality. The most accurate generalizations that can be made about the convict system are,

1. The typical convict was male, in his twenties and from a city or town.

2. He had previous convictions and was transported for larceny for seven years.

3. Conditions on the voyage out were little worse than those experienced by free migrants.

4. On arrival in a penal colony the convict was assigned to a settler.

5. During the period of assignment he would be found guilty of about five further offences, notably disobedience, drunkenness and absence without leave.

6. Since most convicts worked in relatively unconstrained conditions, since there was very little policing, except by convict and ex-convict police, and since, for those to whom convicts were assigned, little effective protection against convict violence, punishments for convict offenders were very harsh.

7. About fifteen per cent of convicts offended sufficiently seriously to be sent to a secondary penal settlement.

8. Most convicts were never flogged, although large numbers, perhaps as many as one third, were.

9. Tickets of leave were usually obtained within three years, so that, subject to regular reporting to the authorities, convicts could work on their own account.

Convictism in Tasmanian Consciousness

The social structure in Tasmania was significantly different from that in New South Wales, particularly in respect of convictism: a larger proportion of the Tasmanian population were convicts, and among the convicts a larger proportion were in the harsher secondary penal settlements for hardened or recidivist criminals. The association between the role of the governor as chief gaoler and as head of the civil adminstration was also more intimate, and consequently more vexing, in Tasmania than in New South Wales. It was only to be expected, therefore, that convictism should have been even more central in the life of Tasmanians during the convict era, and far more significant subsequently in their historical consciousness, than in that of the mainland colonists.

The first major account of Tasmania's history, Henry Melville's 1835 The History of the Island of Van Diemen's Land had as one of its principal objectives the denunciation of the convict system in general and of the policies of Sir George Arthur as lieutenant-governor between 1824 and 1836 in particular. The name of Arthur, together with that of Port Arthur, the grim secondary punishment centre named after him, looms over so powerfully over the early history of Tasmania that it is a shock to recall that he was in charge for less than thirteen years. Whether or not Arthur deserved Melville's description as a despot whose sway 'was superior to the power of any prince in Christendom' is an interesting question. There is no doubt that Arthur was determined that no future Bigge should condemn his penal arrangements for laxity, or for failing to act as a sufficient deterrent to crime in the United Kingdom. Neither can it be denied that he tried hard to suppress criticism by his many opponents, who included Andrew Bent, Robert Murray, Gilbert Robertson, David Burn, and Evan Henry Thomas as well as

Melville. Yet his attempts to control the press were disallowed by London in 1828 and his critics continued to be able to snipe at him, although Melville suffered a prison spell in 1835 for contempt of court which was in the circumstances a synonym for defiance of Arthur. The Canadian rebel of 1837, Caleb Lyon, described Arthur as a 'bloody Robespierre', but his survival to tell the tale suggested that the analogy was inexact. The revolt in Upper Canada of which Lyon was a leader took place soon after Arthur arrived there as Governor, a promotion from Van Diemen's Land, so Lyon had a chance to study Arthur's methods in two continents.

The Congregationalist minister John West arrived in Tasmania in 1838 after Arthur's departure, but his 1852 History of Tasmania had a similar objective to that of Melville: not only were the names of Macquarie Harbour and of Port Arthur to be 'associated exclusively with remembrance of inexpressible depravity, and degradation and woe', but they were to be symbolic of the penal history of the island and of its best-known governor. It was through fiction, however, rather than histories that convictism gained its chief significance in the consciousness of subsequent generations. Ironically enough the first convict novel written in the Australian colonies, Henry Savery's Quinton Servinton, published by Henry Melville in 1831 a decade before Tucker wrote Ralph Rashleigh, painted a picture of convict vice and folly rather than of the oppression cruelty of the system. In the case of Savery, Arthur was accused for once of undue leniency in assigning him in 1827, two years after he had been transported, to be superintendent of the Van Diemen's Land Establishment, an unsuccessful development company whose affairs were investigated for fraud. Savery was exonerated on charges in that matter, but was later found guilty of forgery while on ticket-of-leave. He was sentenced by Algernon Montagu, whose

reputed affair with Savery's wife Eliza on board ship when she was sailing out to join her husband (another alleged leniency by Arathur) had led Savery to attempt suicide. In many ways Savery's life was more compelling material than his novel, which admonishes the wilfulness and lack of self-control which had led him and those like him to so unpleasant a fate, but which was not intended to arouse the indignation of the reader against alleged social injustice or legal atrocities.

Caroline Leakey's 'The Broad Arrow'

Savery's novel was not as widely read as one published in 1859, in the decade after his death, by Caroline Leakey, writing under the pseudonym of Oline Keese, with a woman convict, Maida Gwynnham, as its central figure. Leakey lived for some years in Hobart Town, where she was able to gain authentic knowledge about convictism, although The Broad Arrow was written in 1859 after her return to England. The framework of the novel was a familiar one in nineteenth century popular literataure: the seduction and ummerited sufferings of a woman, the final exposure of the seducer, and the death of the woman in a condition of redemption amidst recognition that she is more sinned against than sinning. Maida's misfortunes go beyond the normal, since she is transported for forgery and for infanticide, neither of which has she committed. Another common theme is the cheerful acceptance of suffering by a youthful invalid, whose final death has a powerful effect on those around her. The death of Beth in Little Women transforms Jo and enables all who know her; the death of Emmeline Herbert in The Broad Arrow leads to Maida's conversion and perhaps to that of many of the male convicts who have known her.

The Broad Arrow went through several editions and in Hergenham's

judgement (1973, p.32) 'was much more widely read than most other novels about Australia of the last century'. It offered a critique of the way in which transportation and convictism operated, while accepting that the system was in principle defensible and capable of reform. Leakey did not write a political novel which proposed legal or administrative changes, but, through the medium of somewhat stereotyped characters, pleaded for proper treatment of those within one's own direct power to influence; she shared the intentions of the worthy Mr Evelyn, who 'prepared himself to do what would be well if every reflecting man would do when disappointed in the performance of some act of public benevolence, namely, to try how most effectually he could serve the little circle drawn immediately around himself'.

Since Leakey's purposes were ultimately evangelical, she doubted that private benevolence, any more than public policy, could put all right in this fallen world, but she recognized, with Tucker earlier and Marcus Clarke after her, the important political truth that unlimited power corrupts the human mind. She noted authorially (257-8),

> It is not wise to trust the best men with unlimited power; the heart's vanity cannot stand it. Abstracted from the inspection of the public as these settlements are, there cannot be too much care in the selection of fitting instruments to work the system. Where there are several hundreds of men all at the mercy of one free man, what is to be expected if that free man be one of ferocious temper or ambitious views?

Fact to face with hundreds of convicts it was also only too likely that only jailors with some measure of ferocity would survive; the better a custodian, the more open he was likely to be to the temptations of power.

The Broad Arrow had nothing like the impact of His Natural Life, but in

some ways it is more convincing. Mrs Evelyn, who controls her husband and her convict servants without brutality, who prides herself, indeed, on being an excellent and most liberal convict-mistress, but who has a cold disregard for any feelings other than her own, is a more subtle cameo of the corrupting influence of power than any of Clarke's characters. More broadly, its implicit critique of the subordination of the church's concern for the spiritual needs of the convicts to the interests of the civil power, and its central metaphor of church and society founded on the unjust shedding of blood, both of convicts and of Aborigines, is the more powerful for Leakey's lack of a political axe to grind. The religious service which, marks the true climax of the novel, as the preacher declaims the opening words of Isaiah 61, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me! He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound', is dramatically powerful and historically illuminating.

Marcus Clarke: Background

Marcus Clarke's early experiences made him deeply aware of the power of the unexpected and the uncontrollable in life. His mother died when he was four and his father was aloof and unable to give him a sense of personal affection. His career at Highgate School was in many ways a happy one, since he was a brilliant student in subjects he found interesting and since he had some close friends of the calibre of Gerald Manley Hopkins and his brother Cyril, the latter being his close correspondent throughout his life. Clarke thought that his father's distance from him resulted from tiredness through his efforts to make enough money to give him good prospects of wealth and a career in the Foreign Office, but when he was seventeen his father fell insane and soon afterwards died, bankrupt and his affairs in

deep disorder. Family connections enabled Clarke to be shipped out to Victoria at the age of seventeen to try his lot there.

After a short stint with the Bank of Australasia, Clarke spent two years on a sheep station, during which time his first articles were published. Far from meeting rejection or ostracism (he claimed with typical lack of moderation to have been treated as 'a literary Ishmael'), Clarke very quickly enjoyed literary and social success in Melbourne, becoming by the age of twenty-one a columnist on first the Australasian Monthly Magazine, and later the Argus and the Australasian, and a published novelist. Clarke remained a leading journalist until his early death at thirty-five, but lack of self-discipline led to failures as a publisher and editor. These failures, combined with drink and dissipation, contributed to his bankruptcy and early death at thirty-five, leaving behind him a destitute wife and six children.

Marcus Clarke and competing traditions

Clarke was a capable linguist and an avid reader. Some readers and critics considered him guilty of affectation in his use in newspaper articles of phrases in French or Latin, Horace and Juvenal being his favourites there, which few could understand, but Clarke saw himself as a man of letters whose range ought not to be restricted because he wrote in Melbourne rather than in Mayfair. He reduced his classical references over the years, however, and did not revive the persona of the 'Peripatetic Philosopher' with which he first made his name in Melbourne. He presumably decided that references such as that to Bishop Moorhouse appearing at a fancy-dress ball as Terpsichore (Australasian 21 Dec. 1867) were insufficiently understood to impress or amuse.

Clarke was widely read in American fiction and poetry, including Emerson, Holmes, Hawthorne, Poe, Cooper, Melville, Whitney, Longfellow, Mark Twain and Harte, as well as in English contemporaries such as Ruskin, Carlyle, Browning, Thackeray, Marryat, Rossetti, Reade, Trollope, Collins, Dickens, Sala, Jerrold, Swinburne and Mayhew, and in the literary canon, including Wycherley, Massinger, Farquhar, Defoe, Tom Paine, Sterne, Dr Johnson, Fielding, Keats, Byron and Milton. His Shakespearean references are relatively light, with Henry IV (both parts) predominant, Falstaff, Hotspur and Shallow being his favourites for quotation. More unusual in the Australian colonies than a wide knowledge of English and American authors was Clarke's enthusiasm for French literature, the great literary tradition being represented mainly by wits such as Rabelais and Voltaire, although he refers to Montaigne, naturally enough, and more surprisingly to Bossuet. It was nineteenth century French literature which interested Clarke most, however: Dumas, Hugo and Balzac were all in their ways models he sought to emulate in style and method. Les Miserables and Charles Reade's It's Never Too Late to Mend were perhaps the chief literary influences on the conception of His Natural Life.

During his early years in Victoria Clarke often tried to score a point, but more often simply made unnecessary enemies, by lampooning colonial ignorance. He referred with contempt, for example (Australasian, 18 April, 1868), to his readers' apparent failure to understand references to Nero, to Sterne or to Renan. More defensibly Clarke used historical analogy in condemning snobbery of a somewhat different character from that in which he indulged himself. He condemned those who combined democratic or republican rhetoric with subservience to rank whenever they had contact with the great

and good (Australasian, 11 Jan. 1868),

> They talk like Camille Desmoulins, and act like Jeames in a new suit of plush...They profess to admire Cromwell. They talk about liberty of soul, but would disdain to nod to their tailor if they met him in the street.

Even in this passage he spoiled his effect by adding, 'They...can read Horace tolerably with the aid of a dictionary and Anthon's notes'. At his best Clarke was able to poke fun at his own displays of erudition and snobbery, as in Humbug of 22 December 1869 (1972, p.221) when he describes himself, in an article filled with palpably irrelevant Latin and French tags, as having 'played pool for forty-eight hours with Prince Metternich' and having been told anecdotes by Brigham Young.

Diverse groups towards whom Clarke displayed contempt included Jews, Aborigines and Chinese. Aborigines had a very limited interest for Clarke or for most of his readers, his satire being directed mainly at those he thought pretentious in their claims about Aborigines. Nonetheless his humour often seems a little misplaced. In a 1869 Humbug (1972, p.201) he satirized (rather as Furphy treated Mrs Falkland-Pritchard in The Buln-buln and the Brolga) a woman who 'has written an "Aboriginal Ode" and was an authority on gunyahs'; in the Australasian of 5 September, 1868 (1972, p.34) he wrote, ironically perhaps,

> My humble opinion, founded on experience and consideration is that 'aborigines' are a mistake. The converted aboriginal is, if possible, rather worse, mentally, lingually, and sudorifically, than his heathen brother. The only thoroughly Christian blackfellow I ever had a personal acquaintance with, was named King Peter, and had a profound conviction, which no amount of argument could shake, that queen Victoria was the Author of his Being. He was considered a triumph by way of conversion.

Jews played a much more important part in Clarke's life than

Aborigines, if only because he was often in debt to Jewish moneylenders. He described the typical Victorian sharebroker in the Australasian of 9 February 1868 (1972, p.18) as 'not infrequently of Hebrew descent, and the names of his friends read like a chapter from the Book of Numbers'. In Australian Monthly Magazine in May 1866 (1972, p.87) he wrote, 'the Jews of the pawnshop, or the monster tailoring establishment, would hold grave conversations with the Croesus of Jewry, Moses Mannasseh, Esq...would split hairs over the merits of a pair of pantaloons with Ikey Solomons...'. Of a group of young thieves (Argus, 28 Feb. 1868) one '"Nosey Samuels" is a jew boy, and has already done four years' imprisonment'. At the Melbourne Spring Race Meeting of 1867 (Argus, 4 Nov.) 'the air was darkened with the shadow of the noses of the daughters of Judah'. In another passage (Argus, 13 April, 1872) anti-Semitism is mingled with a swipe at other groups,

> ...we have a large body of influential Irish, chiefly publicans, among us. On the other hand, we shall never be converted to Romanism, because of our large and varied assortment of Scotch 'soft goodsmen' (SOFT GOODSMAN, anglice draper), who are all Presbyterians. Cockneys are sufficiently numerous, so are Yankees, but the balance of power is preserved by the Jewish element, of which there is a strong flavour. Indeed, in the latter respect we resemble Wycherly's ancient countess, 'who had just as many teeth left as sufficed to give a haut gout to her breath'.

Many of Clarke's Sketches of Melbourne Low Life were set in Chinese gaming-dens and brothels. Clarke was well aware of Chinese cultural achievements and wrote in the Argus (9 March 1868),

> This mysterious people invented printing and gunpowder (the two rulers of Europe) when the Druids were sacrificing human beings on their altars on Cornish plains, and were guiding their clumsy junks by the aid of the magnetic needle when Palinurus, the star-gazer, had lost his way with the ship of Aeneas. Their civilisation was complete before ours had commenced...but the Chinese genius is eminently conservative. They are all rank Tories. They refuse to be improved, and insist on keeping up the customs of their ancestors. Consequently, Chinese in Melbourne

> must live as in China. A Chinaman must have his chopsticks, his paper shoes, his gambling house, and his opium saloon.

Clarke painted lurid descriptions of opium-smokers and of the degradation of the white women procured for the evil purposes of the Chinese men, the Melbourne Chinese being decribed as 'usually the scourings of the seaport towns of their native country' (Argus, 9 March 1868). Clarke denied that he implied that the sordid infamy of the low-life scenes he offered was representative of the life of the Chinese in Victoria, let alone in China, but he made little, if any, effort to redress the balance. His journalism about the Chinese, as about the Jews, anticipated the imbalance of His Natural Life.

Clarke cannot lightly be called a racist, since his disadin for other races was little greater than his contempt for people of his own sort. He constantly enveighed against the Establishment, his barbs being all the sharper because those who lorded over Victoria were even more philistine than their equivalents in England. The 'Smellfungus' was his term for those who considered themselves the respectabale natural rulers of the colony. Voltaire wished to 'ecraser l'infame', but no Church was sufficiently powerful for Clarke to single out as a target to be erased, the monarchy was represented only vicariously and there was no hereditary aristocracy. The whole bourgeois society which gave 'Upper Bohemians' and social critics wider space than any previous (or subsequent) social order was, as with the European artists and writers with whom he identified, the target of Clarke's vituperation. It galled him that 'the well-dressed mob which crowds the ballroom or the racecourse is composed of high-bred importers of soft-goods, haughty produce dealers, and noblesse of the counter, proud of their money and their business shrewdness'.

Clarke was one of that relatively small minority who became more radical rather than more conservative with the passing of the years. His greater radicalism did not arise from his finding the masses any more attractive than before, but from finding their self-styled betters ever more odious. 'The Model Legislator' published in the Weekly Times in March 1874 (1972, p.355 ff.) is a hostile caricature of the worst features of Victorian parliamentary life, which takes no account that some men such as Charles Gavan Duffy were of a different calibre. That article, together with others such 'The Model Sharebroker' in the Weekly Times later in the same month (1972, p.342 ff.) have some resemblance to Trollope's The Way We Live Now, which was published the year after His Natural Life, but Trollope was able to offer some conception of what he found admirable, whereas Clarke stood as an antinomian adversary to all existing and conceivable structures.

In one of the few articles Clarke wrote which showed a serious concern for the interests and the arguments of his contemporaries, he explained in 1877 to readers of the conservative London Daily Telegraph (1972, pp.382-3) that, 'The real history of Australia is to be read in the struggle between the small farmer and the great grazier'. That may well be something of an over-simplification, but Clarke gave a thoughtful analysis based on appropriate evidence to back up an argument which would have been at first sight repugnant to its readers. In the course of the article, Clarke rebuked 'those gentlemen who make fiction serve the purposes of history'. As in so many of his wiser remarks, he was himself all too often guilty of the sin he chastised.

Clarke was tolerant of religions, not so much because he respected them all, in the manner of Alfred Deakin, as that he felt equally superior to them. He opposed Roger Bede Vaughan's claim that, in Clarke's paraphrase, 'This is what secular education proposes to do for you, to cut away your faith altogether, and land you a pure unbeliever in the miraculous. If you once abandon Catholicism you must embrace infidelity', but few Catholics were likely to take Clarke as a serious or sympathetic commentator. The articles he wrote on religious controversy in his 'Noah's Ark' Dialogues in the Australaisan in 1872 and 1873 are often amusing and even-handed, but in the final analysis they fail to go beyond the facetiousness of the ending of the Dialogue of 16 August 1873 (1972, p.285),

> ...two-thirds of the civilised world at strife about Catholicism and Protestantism, while the remedy - to a thinking mind - is exquisitely simple. Let them make a Protestant Pope; then the Pope, being infallible, will command all the Catholics to change their religion, and the thing will be done.

Clarke could also be urbane about the relationships between Victoria and the United Kingdom. In two articles in Humbug (10/17 Nov. 1869) under the titles of 'Mr Higinbotham and the British Lion' and 'What shall we do with our girl?' Clarke discussed coolly and wittily George Higinbotham's aversion from Great Britian. Clarke's impartiality arose more from his distaste for the contending parties rather than from his sympathy with them. He was dismissive of 'cant of patriotism and allegiance to the mother country', but doubtful of the capacity of Victoria to benefit from political independence: 'Victoria is a very promising young lady, but she is not quite old enough to leave school - at present'. His main generalization on the matter was that 'the truth is, that the tie between England and Victoria is one of interest, and of interest only'. That was a strange judgement from one who, through lack of prudence, had little sense of his own

interests, and whose most important creation, Richard Devine/Rufus Dawes, displays so much altruism.

Clarke was a strange bundle of contradictions. At his worst he was crudely sensationalistic, offering sexual titillation under the guise of investigative jounalism and moral censure, in a way little superior to that of Reynolds in England, whom he affected to despise, or later in Sydney by John Norton. At their best his sketches of 'Lower Bohemia', the unrespectable life stripped of all glamour, and of the outcast poor of Melbourne, offer not only graphic description but a sense of alienation and anomie, of a wilderness within a civilization, which is more fully developed in his accounts of the secondary penal settlements of Van Diemen's Land, the 'moral Ultima Thule'. Clarke portrayed the Hobbesian war of each against all or the Darwinian struggle of the fittest, first of all in the 'outer darkness' of the city (Argus, 21 Aug. 1869),

> ...the wilderness creates a race of ment for herself, hardy, silent, keen, and quick-witted hunters, trappers, dwellers in the deserts. Civilisation has its wilderness, which has given birth to a race of Ishmaelites, whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against them. These men have no home, they wander. They tear their substance from between the paws of the law, and every now and again the law wakes up and kills one or two. They are the Crusoes of society, the 'trappers' of the city-wilderness.

In His Natural Life these conditions operate once more, but Clarke suggests, that they work constantly beneath the surface of official society too. Normally they are concealed by a veneer of law and civility, but among the outcasts the hidden sores are exposed to view.

These are Clarke's ideas in moods of darkness, which became more frequent and intense, but much of his writing continued to be insouciant and

carefree in tone. An integral part of these contradictions was that his judgements of others were often self-condemnatory. In the Humbug of 15 September, 1869 (1972, p.195), under the title of 'The Curse of the Country' he castigated Australians as 'simply a nation of Drunkards', although he was already well on the way to becoming an alcoholic. A fortnight later in the same journal he wrote an entertaining article 'On Borrowing Money', the amusement value of which is reduced when it is recalled what misery Clarke's insolvencies brought on his wife and children. The most remarkable is a flippant discussion in the Australasian of 17 May, 1873 (1972, p.271) of religious objections to ending the prohibition of marriage to a deceased wife's sister; Clarke's wife was by no means deceased, but he was carrying on an adulterous relationship with her sister.

On the surface Clarke sought to be cynical, blase, witty, indifferent to praise or blame, and utterly self-confident. The recklessness of his exuberant moments was balanced, however, by darkness and despair after drinking bouts or other follies. The deep divisions within his nature were to find powerful literary expression in the dual personalities and confused identities of the principal characters in His Natural Life.

Clarke and Convictism

Unlike Leakey, Marcus Clarke had no experience of living in a convict society. In his writings before the Argus sent him to Tasmania to research the convict past, he had shown little interest in it, nor, except in his articles on 'Lower Bohemia', had he shown much sympathy with criminals or larrikins in contemporary Melbourne (Elliott, 1958, p.259). In an article in the Australasian (19 March, 1870) Clarke ridiculed the idea of appealing to the better nature of larrikins and asked 'Where is the good of talking

morality at one of these gentlemen?' His answer was that there was no good in it, but that near certainty of a good flogging would be a useful deterrent. In Tasmania Clarke read deeply in the convict records and then perused the evidence to the Bigge and the Molesworth Committees, before he wrote For the Term of his Natural Life, originally serialized as His Natural Life in the Australian Journal between 1870 and 1872.

L.L. Robson (1963) drew attention to some important differences between the experiences of typical convicts, so far as the historical evidence enables one to judge, and those of Rufus Dawes and his fellows,

1. Dawes is innocent of the charges against him and is a first offender; few convicts were first offenders and very few claimed to be innocent.

2. The ship on which Dawes sails is vilely overcrowded; the Bigge Report held in 1822 that 'as the voyage is now conducted, it produces no greater degree of bodily inconvenience to ordinary men than many are exposed to who are not in a state of punishment, and certainly it is not found to be productive of injury to their constitutions'.

3. A mutiny breaks out on board Dawes' convict ship; no mutiny on a male convict ship ever succeeded and the few actually attempted, as distinct from being discussed among convicts, were early in the history of transportation.

4. Typhoid breaks out also on Dawes' ship; this was very unusual on convict transports.

5. Dawes, mistakenly taken to be a ring-leader of the mutiny, is sent directly to Macquarie Harbour; on average only 350 men at any given time were at Macquarie Harbour, almost all of whom were sent there after violent crimes committed after arrival in Van Diemen's Land.

6. 85 deaths occur at Macquarie Harbour in the one year; Clarke's source, the Quaker James Backhouse, spreads these same deaths over eleven years.

7. Grummet Island is used for the solitary confinement of Dawes; some 30 to 40 prisoners were normally confined on Grummet Island.

8. The escapees from Port Arthur in Clarke's novel cannibalize each other one by one, Agatha Christie like; in the main authenticated case of cannibalism presented to the Molesworth Committee the convit Pierce had eaton his companion Cox and claimed that another convict, Greenhill, had once got away with cannibalism, but no incident like that in For the Term of his Natural Life was ever recorded.

9. A hundred lashes are routinely inflicted upon convicts in Clarke's novel; although flagellation was severe in the penal colonies, 25 (the 'Botany Bay dozen'), was the usual limit.

10. Boy prisoners at Point Puer are graphically depicted by Clarke as choosing suicide by jumping off a high rock, rather than endure further suffering; no such cases are recorded, although the killing of an overseer by a Port Puer boy with a hammer is.

11. Some if Dawes' fellow convicts commit murder so that both killer and killed can escape from their misery; C.J. Forbes, who made this claim to the Molesworth Committee, was unable to give any specific case of its happening.

Clarke made little attempt to depict typical conditions of convict life in his novel, but, instead, portrayed dark extremes as though they were representative rather than exceptional or aberrant. In his 'Author's Preface', Clarke asserted that his aim was to prevent the possible return of the terrible conditions portrayed in His Natural Life, but this was hardly on the political agenda. His basic purpose in searching through the convict records seems rather to have been to find enough evidence to launch a highly damaging attack on a tradition for whom he had conceived an intense loathing, perhaps because of slights, real or fancied, he had suffered. It is very rare in the annals of literature for an author to have been so ready to change the structure of his plot, provided that its ideological content remained undiluted. Clarke's willingness to change from happy to tragic endings epitomized the dualism of his own nature and the instability of his view of the human condition.

In each version of the novel the arm of co-incidence is always very long and many key moments are highly melodramatic. Nonetheless Clarke knew something of the long night of the soul, of personal humiliation, and of the way in which apparent security can be destroyed in an instant. The power which he infuses into what were often enough miserable and tragic

experiences in the penal settlements of secondary punishment have continued, on the printed page or through stage, film or television versions, to dominate the historical imagination so far as convictism in Australia is concerned.

The Bulletin and 'Price Warung' (William Astley)

J.F. Archibald and his circle held two main ideas about convictism. One was that it was irrelevant to the real history of Australia, which had only begun with the Eureka Stockade, 'the day that Australia set her teeth in the face of the British lion.' The other was that convictism had so profoundly influenced Australian life that the most determined efforts were needed to banish the ugly shadow it still cast. The Bulletin boycotted the 1888 Centennial celebrating 'the day we were lagged' with the assertion that (21 Jan),

> Australia began her political history as a crouching serf kept in subjection by the whip of a ruffian gaoler, and her progress, so far, consists merely in a change of masters. Instead of a foreign slave-drive, she has a foreign admiral...

The Bulletin greeted the centenary of the diabolical cruelty it alleged against the British in New South Wales by a year-long series by Arthur Gayll, which was also published as The Bulletin's Illustrated History of Botany Bay. It was a Grand Guignol of atrocity and cruelty, illustrated by Phil May and Livingstone Hopkins (Hop), with the central theme that few of the convicts were really vicious criminals, unlike most of the gaolers and soldiers in charge of them. The founding fathers of New South Wales received short shrift: 'There were many privileged ruffians in early New South Wales, but none so richly deserves to be tied up to the triangles of history and flogged with the 'cat' of honest criticism as Captain John

Macarthur', is a typical sally. On the basis of the principle that the enemy of my enemy is my friend Governor Bligh was dealt with relatively kindly. Although very much in a minority, the Bulletin by any means stood alone in its attitude. The expatriate Professor of History in Sydney University and 'bit of a rebel', Arnold Wood made similar noises, while Vance Palmer was typical of his school in his 1954 judgement (1966, p.96) of the Illustrated History that 'there was nothing false in its version of history, and its point of view is largely accepted now, but just then it had an eruptive effect', i.e. among the unenlightened masses of New South Wales.

The Bulletin's main assaults on convictism were made by William Astley, who wrote under the pen name of 'Price Warung'. Astley needed little encouragement by Archibald to follow in Clarke's footsteps and to condemn the evil of convictism and the brutality of the gaolors, always associated with Britian, and to praise the pluck and sympathize with the sufferings of the convicts, who were identified as true Australians. Many of the stories which first appeared in the Bulletin were published as Tales of the Convict System (1892), Tales of the Early Days (1894), Tales of the Old Regime and the Bullet of the Fated Ten (1897) and Tales of the Isle of Death (Norfolk Island) (1898). In some instances Astley gave new life to older convict tales, such as the poem 'A Convicts's Tour of Hell', which was probably written in 1839 by 'Frank the Poet' (Francis MacNamara), and which describes a tour of the underworld, where Captain Logan, Governor Darling and other penal administrators are found to be suffering from the torments they once inflicted on others.

The most effective of Astley's stories were those based on the supposed

convict Ring: 'The Bullet of the Fated Ten' and 'The Secret Society of the Ring'. As with the Bulletin's basic attitude to the importance of convictism, there was a fundamental contradiction in Astley's treatment of his stories. On the one hand he wished to expose the political oppression exerted by the British government and its colonial minions; on the other the main excitement for his readers lay in the infamies and villainies of the convicts themselves. Astley sought sympathy for convicts as victims, even for the Norfolk Island lifers, whose diabolism and commitment to evil were, he implied, in pseudo-Dostoyevskian fashion, a way of preserving some pride and independence in a system which accords them no value or hope, but at the same time he aimed to shock and horrify by the magnitude of their wickedness. Astley claimed not only verisimiltude but literal accuracy for many of his stories, but even Nettie Palmer, who with her husband Vance championed him as a writer and as an historian, came to have doubts about his reliability (Age, 26 July 1962), as did Russel Ward who conceded (SMH, 8 Oct. 1960) that, perhaps through a search for 'colourful copy', Astley 'distorted the past for his readers by describing the part as the whole' (see Hergenham, pp.338-41). In his discussion of Astley's work, Vance Palmer (1966, p.59) commented on the 'community feeling' revealed by the convict oath sworn in Tales of the Old Regime,

> Hand to hand,
> On earth, in Hell,
> Sick or well.
> On sea, on Land,
> On the Sequre, ever.
>
> Stiff or in breath,
> Lag or Free
> You and me,
> In Life, in Death
> On the Cross, never.

Since, as T. Inglis More pointed out (1965, p.48), Astley gave graphic

descriptions of the ghastly revenge taken by convicts on each other when they were thought to have peached, and, indeed, of gross betrayals and cruelties perpetrated for no reason in particular, Palmer invested 'community' with an unusual meaning, as did Ian Turner in claiming in the Introduction to his 1960 collection of 'Price Warung' stories, Convict Days, that Astley had revealed a 'sense of fraternity' which 'undoubtedly provided an impetus to, if not a base for, the "mateship" of back-country life in the nineteenth century, a form of social relationship since revered in song and story'. Astley's account of the taking of the oath and of its sequel followed the traditional pattern of 'three thieves' stories found as early as the Pardoner's Tale, but no medieval historians have taken Chaucer as evidence for fraternity, mateship, or community in the fourteenth century.

Astley, born like Clarke and so many of those who wrote of Australian convictism in England, although he was only four when his family emigrated, was ever willing to give advice on current discontents, as well as to exhibit his literary chamber of horrors. His advice, such as the contained in a long open letter to Edmund Barton after the first Federal Convention, might have been held in higher esteem if his personal reputation for financial honesty and plain dealing had been better, and had he not been a drug addict suffering from tertiary syphilis. Astley became active in the labour movement after quarrelling with Archibald, but his personal weaknesses reduced his effectiveness as an organiser and agitator, just as earlier they lessened the force of his moral and political injunctions.

The significance of convictism

A strong ambivalence towards the convict past can be perceived in Australian thought at the end of the century. On the one hand in novels and

drama convictism loomed large: novels so far unmentioned in which convictism was a central motif included the 1855 Botany Bay and the 1859 The Forger's Wife of John Lang (no relation to John Dunmore Lang), James Hepplethwaite's Castle Hill, and E.W. Hornung's 1896 The Rogue's March; popular convict melodramas, such as those of George Darrell as well adaptations of His Natural Life were frequently performed by the companies run by Alfred Dampier and Dan Barry. In addition many other popular works had convicts encounters or episodes, such as Henry Kingsley's 1865 The Hillyars and the Burtons, Mary Vidal's 1860 Bengala; or Some Time Ago, Eliza Winstaley's Twenty Straws, Charles de Boos's 1867 Fifty Years Ago, Hume Nisbet's 1889 Dr Bernard St. Vincent, and Carlton Dawe's 1891 The Golden Lake. Furthermore, as noted above, the Bulletin used convict stories as a means of building up republican and anti-British sentiments.

On the other hand most historians after John West, such as G.B. Barton, David Blair, William Howitt, Thomas McCombie, George William Rusden and William Westgarth increasingly played down the importance of convictism in early colonial society. In polite society, too, and in political debate references to the convict past were increasingly avoided, to prevent personal embarrassment and indignity to colony or nation. When Lord Beauchamp arrived in Sydney in May 1899 to take up his appointment as Governor of New South Wales, he thought it would be a suitable tribute to adapt for the occasion the stanza Kipling had devoted to Sydney in his 1892 'Song of the English'. The original quatrain ran,

> Greeting! My birth stain have I turned to good;
> Forcing strong wills perverse to steadfastness;
> The first flush of the topics in my blood,
> And at my feet Success!.

Beauchamp's revised version was,

Greeting - Your birthstain have you turned to good,
Forcing strong wills perverse to steadfastness.
The first flush of the tropics in your blood,
And at your feet success - Beauchamp.

Unfortunately the leading citizens had not been impressed by Kipling's original lines, and showed some further resentment at their resuscitation. Beauchamp later became a benefactor of Henry Lawson and helped him to travel to London, but the hostile reception of the new Governor's well-intended poetical offering was evidence of the reluctance of the people of New South Wales at the end of the century do endorse any close continuity from the convict past. Very few other than the most radical would have nodded assent to Mary Gilmour's 1918 stanzas,

I was the convict
  Sent to hell
To make in the desert
  The living well;

I split the rock;
  I felled the tree;
The nation was -
  Because of me.

The pioneering past

As a much more significant and attractive historical heritage than convictism, many late nineteenth century Australians looked to the memory of early free immigrants, honoured increasingly by the epithet of the pioneers. This conception associated in many minds in New South Wales first and foremost with William Charles Wentworth, as one of the pioneers of the route across the Blue Mountains, as poet and essayist of the colony's early progress and as pioneer native-born political leader. Although Wentworth, as a leading squatter and opponent of levelling democracy, became a bete-noire for many liberals and radicals during the 1850s, he was restored

to heroic status in the work of Henry Kendall and in the centenary celebrations of 1888. Early novels which relied for much of their excitement on the adventures of pioneer settlers faced with flood, drought and fire, Aborigines and bushrangers included Charles Rowland's 1843 Tales of the Colonies, which was set in Van Diemen's Land. The first to gain genuine celebrity was Henry Kingsley's 1859 The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn.

Henry Kingsley and pioneer squatters

Henry Kingsley, the younger brother of Charles, emigrated in 1853 after failing to graduate from Oxford. He travelled widely for some time in both Victoria and New South Wales, in the goldfields and the cities, as well as on the Langi Willi station near Skipton, where he conceived the idea of his first and most important novel. Although Kingsley had been only such a short time in Australia, his 1859 The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn is a novel of evocation of a lost age of content and heroism, a celebration of masculine accomplishments in pastoral society 'before the Gold'. It was for many years central to Australian literature, being admired by both Marcus Clarke and 'Rolf Boldrewood' as the best novel written in Australia, but regarded by Joseph Furphy as 'exceedingly trashy and misleading', a judgement echoed by many the Bulletin school which saw Kingsley as the embodiment of English condescension and superficiality, a bird-of-passage rather than a settler.

Geoffry Hamlyn combines the daring and adventure of pioneer life with the re-creation of (1859, 2, p.159) 'an old well-ordered society, the ordinances of religion, the various given-and-take relations between rank and rank, which make up the sum of English life', a way of life which,

Kingsley feared, the English of good family had usually to sacrifice in exchange for 'independence, godlessness, and rum!'. The world of Kingsley's Australian novels is James Macarthur's concept of Camden writ large and superior to hostile political forces. The romantic vision contains everything which infuriated Furphy: the English immigrant gentry, as well as being utterly decent chaps, are strong, handsome, fine horsemen, hunters and sportsmen, against whom bushrangers, Aborigines and cads stand little chance; the women are beautiful, graceful and charming. The landscape, despite the natural hazards which have to be overcome from time to time, is idyllic, a pastoral Eden, and on the virgin soil the Buckleys and the Brentwoods establish replicas of the stately homes of England. After exciting adventures in the bush, the heroes can take their ease in the civilized surroundings of Baroona or Garoopna; the best of both worlds is achieved.

There are grounds for Furphy's complaint that Geoffry Hamlyn, quite apart from an excess of contrivance and co-incidence in its plot, treats those outside the charmed circle of English emigrants of good family with condescension: the principal young colonial is 'one of those long-legged, slab-sided, lean, sunburnt, cabbage-tree-hatted lads', who are, to be sure, the salt of the earth but need men of breeding and education to give them leadership and a sense of purpose. In his The Hillyars and the Burtons, serialized between 1863 and 1865 before publication as a book in 1865, the Australian scenes are mainly set in Victoria after the gold-rush. Kingsley was then dealing with his own time in the colonies, so that there is far less nobility and heroism than in the imagined pioneering past when the country was being opened up by the colonists. In the new situation the virtues of the English gentleman are at a discount: it is former London

blacksmiths such as the Burton family who are best able to win through in the greasy pole of democratic and radical politics, not the scions of the aristocracy or the gentry. One sentiment which Kingsley had in common with poets, novelists and short story writers later in the century was regret for a better past that has been lost; although the dating of the lost golden age was subject to frequent change, it was usually placed just before the birth of the writer. In this sense the pioneer legend often stood in opposition to the convict myth of an utterly brutal and oppressive past from which immense and beneficial progress has been made.

Ambiquities about pioneers

The first ambiquity about pioneers was that of definition, the main candidates being those who were first in a colony and those who opened up its outback. In Victoria and South Australia the term covered all the earliest immigrants, rather than those who had opened up new lands or gained a living directly from the land. In Victoria (Hirst, 1979, p.317) the Old Colonists Association formed in 1869 admitted to membership only colonists who had arrived there before 1 July 1851, but was later extended in 1877 to include all who had been resident for twenty years or more. The special appellaton of 'pioneer' was limited, however, to colonists who had arrived before 23 November 1855, when Victoria's constitution had first come into effect, and their male descendants. In South Australia attempts were made to confine the term to families which had arrived in 1836. Increasingly, however, and particularly during the 1890s (Hirst, 1979, p.318), 'pioneers' came to signify those who had battled with the bush and had pushed back the barriers to settlement and to civilization.

There was also ambivalence about the evaluation of the historical role

of those defined as pioneers in either of the two ways noted above. It was not yet fashionable in late nineteenth century Australia to brand either the first colonists or those who had subsequently colonized hinterlands and the interior as invaders, robbers, imperialists and genocidal killers, but the status of both squatters and of selectors was disputed strongly in the 1890s. In Geoffry Hamlyn squatters appear as enlightened pioneers by whose efforts national prosperity had been made possible; in radical politics and literature they were selfish at best, and at worst villains who had locked up the land and defied the will of the people. Selectors were looked back on by some as pioneering achievers, but by others as foolhardy and as deluded both by themselves and by those who exploited their labour or their votes.

A different sort of ambivalence in evaluation arose from the rival claims of pioneering and nativism. Organizations such as the Australian Natives Association were loath to accord greater merit to those who had migrated from the United Kingdom (or elsewhere), rather than to the colonially-born. A similar consideration reduced subsequent nativist enthusiasm for the diggers of the 1850s, a largely immigrant body. This ambivalence lessened decade by decade towards the end of the century, as the original immigrant pioneers died out: dead pioneers were not rivals for priority of status as they had been in life.

'Banjo' Paterson and benign pioneering

At the time of his debut as a writer Andrew Barton Paterson, although from a prosperous country family from western New South Wales which had provided him with secondary education in Sydney and entry into a legal career, expressed radical criticisms of contemporary rural life. In his

1888 'Australia for the Australians' he sorrowed over the 'vice and sins' of the poverty-stricken city and yearned for the 'vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended'. In his 1890 'On Kiley's Run' he lamented the new predominance of Greed on Chandos Park Estate, a station owned by an English absentee, run by an underpaid overseer, and worked by even more exploited boundary-riders and shearers. Yet even at this time Paterson looked back to a better age when, as Kiley's Run, the station had been a haven of mateship under a resident squatter who treated his men well and who welcomed drovers and swagmen. In the golden days of pioneering,

> The station-hands were friends, I wot,
> On Kiley's Run,
> A reckless, merry-hearted lot -
> All splendid riders, and they knew
> The boss was kindness through and through.
> Old Kiley always stood their friend
> And so they served him to the end
> On Kiley's Run.

Paterson's greatest celebration of the pioneering past was, however, the historical section of his 'Song of the Future', which was first published in book form in 1902. Paterson rejected the picture offered by Gordon and by Marcus Clarke of songless birds and scentless flowers; he took up the pioneering theme most recently struck in Kendall's 1880 'Blue Mountain Pioneers', but it is not individual explorers who are the heroes of 'Song of the Future', but the tamers of the wild as a whole,

> The mountains saw them marching by:
> They faced the all-consuming drought,
> They would not rest in settled land:
> But, taking each his life in hand,
> Their faces ever westward bent
> Beyond the farthest settlement,
> Responding to the challenge cry
> Of 'better country farther out'.

Against those who denigrated the pioneer achievement on the grounds that

'not much blood was spilt', Paterson described the ferocity of nature in Australia's 'strange capricious land', with its 'stricken, parching sod' or 'raging floods. He proclaimed with confidence,

That nothing in the ages yet
On Grecian urn or Roman arch,
Though it should ring with clash of steel,
Could braver histories unfold
Than this bush story, yet untold -
The story of the westward march.

The radicalism of 'On Kiley's Run' did not last long and Paterson's bush-ballads, such as 'The Man from Snowy River', 'Rio Grande's last Race', 'Saltbush Bill J.P.', 'Clancy of the Overflow'. 'The Man from Ironbark' and the rest gave an arcadian glow to the bush of his own time, just as rosy as that of those good times when Kiley had been in his prime. The paintings of the Heidelberg School and the novels of Boldrewood, Ethel Turner and Jeannie Gunn all contributed, but Paterson did most to project the national or historical image of the laconic and sardonic, stalwart and seasoned, Australian bushman.

Paterson defended the intrinsic worthwhileness of bush life, as well as extolling its contribution to national prosperity, in the Bulletin debate of 1892 which started as a rather contrived exchange in verse between him and Henry Lawson, but in which many others joined, including Joseph Furphy, John Le Gay Brereton, A.G. Stephens, James Brunton Stephens, Francis Kenna and Edward Dyson. Paterson's basically sanguine and optimistic view of Australia's past and present did not win the approval of historians and social critics a century later whose interest lay in conflicts which might lead blood to flow on the wattle, but the majority of contemporary readers seem to have been persuaded by Paterson rather than by Lawson.

Paterson was able to celebrate the Australian past effectively, not only because he knew both its outback and its city life well, but because he was well versed in much besides. The breadth of his early reading helped him stylistically, while he was often able to call on Shakespeare, Dickens, Carlyle, Tennyson, Swift, or Kipling from within the English tradition, and on Horace or Goethe from outside it. Paterson certainly did not parade learning, as Furphy is often, however misleadingly, accused of doing, but his reading helped him to avoid the narrowness of vision which limited some balladeers.

Paterson did not always avoid crude stereotypes, such as the Scottish squatter Macpherson in 'The Cast-Iron Canvasser' or new chum Jocelyn de Greene in 'The History of a Jackeroo', but with the English and Scots his stereotyping was merely used for humourous effect. The English and the Scots were a central and inescapable part of Australian pioneering, and Paterson was generally fair to them, just as he succeeded in achieving even-handedness as a war correspondent in South Africa and in the First World War. For the Chinese no admission to the honoured status of pioneer was possible in Paterson's eyes. A typical Paterson reference is to 'the cheap and nasty Chow' in the Northern Territory, where 'the hordes of aliens that have accumulated are a menace to the rest of Australia', (in 'The cycloon, Paddy Cahill, and the G.R.'). In his view the Chinese and other Asians were and must remain strangers to, and probably enemies of, those features of the pioneering past he most valued, Paterson was entirely characteristic of late nineteenth century Australian thought as a whole.

Summary

It was inevitable that convictism should have been an important ingredient in late nineteenth century Australian conceptions of what was significant in earlier Australian experience. In South Australia, which had never been a penal colony, there was a willingness to emphasise the importance of convictism elsewhere in order to underline its own unique status. In Tasmania the most important early historical writing, that of Henry Melville and John West, had antagonism to convictism as a central motif.

Late nineteenth century convict novels and short stories usually gave special importance to the centres of secondary correction rather than to convict conditions as a whole and to Tasmania rather than to New South Wales, although this was not true of Catherine Leakey, or of Henry Savery and James Tucker before her. Marcus Clarke and, even more markedly William Astley and the Bulletin, systematically portrayed the most extreme harshness and brutality of the treatment of convicts as though they were describing the typical. It would have been impossible for their readers to imagine that the Bigge Commission had condemned the pre-1822 system for its undue leniency and its inadequacy as a deterrent to crime in the United Kingdom, or that in subsequent decades large numbers of erstwhile hardened criminals had succeeded in civil society after the expiry of their sentences. The wider historical and political concepts of Marcus Clarke were considered in this chapter, because of their importance in shaping his attitudes to the convict past and for their under relevance to the general question of significance in the past addressed by the thesis.

By the 1880s most opinion in the former penal colonies sought to

downplay the importance of convictism in their past, although the spiritually alienated, such as Marcus Clarke, and the politically hostile, such as William Astley and J.F. Archibald, tried to keep it at the centre of national consciousness as the first set of oppressions by British Governments upon victimized Australians. The large majority, including those who read Marcus Clarke or William Astley with some admiration, preferred to view pioneering by free immigrants, backed by the diggers of the gold rushes, as the foundation on which White Australia had been established.

The first widely stories of pioneer life, written even more for British than for Australian readers, emphasised the romance and glamour of life in the bush. Dangers abounded on their pages: floods, droughts, fires, snakes and attacks by Aborigines or bushrangers, but the novels of which Henry Kingsley's Geoffry Hamlyn was the first leading example, and in which 'Rolf Boldrewood' also excelled, contained little which was sordid or mean. This spirit was essentially continued, although with much greater realism and authenticity by 'Banjo' Paterson. The young Paterson criticized of contemporary greed and overseas ownership of land, but he expressed admiration for the pioneering past. After the waning of his early radical strain, Paterson, while giving what he considered due weight to the negative features of the bush life of his own day, extolled it as one of the best ways men or women, not that the latter were prominent in his verse or stories, could spend their days. Despite the strong resistance of the young Henry Lawson, whose work and influence is considered in more detail in the next chapter, Paterson's conception of rural life in Australia in the mid-nineteenth century was the one which prevailed with most of his contemporaries, whilst his portrayal of his own times was one which the next two generations accepted as authentic and as a basis for national pride and self-image.

Chapter Fifteen

Henry Lawson

Background

Like his mother Louisa, Henry Lawson was not always consistent in his claims about specific events in his youth, but it is at least certain that little in it was easy, that his father, originally Niels Larsen, was different from the average Australian because he was Norwegian, and his mother, originally Louisa Albury, because of her radical feminism. Lawson's further isolation from his school fellows on account of his deafness may have strengthened his search for 'mateship'.

Lawson's schooling was indifferent and was often criticized by him, especially in regard to its neglect of Australian history and literature, and its reliance on the Irish National System Readers. Of English history for that matter he wrote that, 'Until I was seventeen andn went for a few months to a night school in Sydney, I knew of no monarch of England other than Queen Victoria - except for a very vague idea of a King William the Fourth.' In an 1888 article in the Republican, 'A Neglected History', Lawson complained, with characteristic exaggeration,

> It is a matter of public shame that while we have now commemmorated our hundredth anniversary, not one in every ten children attending public schools throughout the colonies is acquainted with a single historical fact about Australia. The children are taught more of the meanest state in Europe than of the country they wre born and bred in, despite the singularity of its characteristics, the interest of its early history, the rapidity of its advance, and the stupendous promise of its future...Select almost any Australian schoolboy from one of the higher classes and you will find that he can glibly recite the names of the English sovereigns from the Conqueror to Victoria, with the dates of their accession...But if you ask him what town in Australia was formerly called Bendigo, or where Port Phillip

settlement was, he becomes bashfully silent...

Some of his schooling was at a Catholic School in Mudgee, not because his mother liked Catholicism, but, according to Lawson, 'because she had become disguested with our own churchmen as they were then'. One teacher at least, John Tierney, strengthened the affection for literature which Louisa Lawson's reading had implanted in Henry. Louisa 'used to recite Gordon from the Australian Journal', while at the School of Art at Mudgee Henry started on Dickens, whom he read 'over and over again and can read him at any time'. His 1904 'With Dickens' is excellent testimony to Lawson's detailed knowledge of Dickens, as to a lesser extent is his 1908 'The Gentlemen of Dickens', but many stories contain apt Dickensian references. Other early reading included Marryat's Jacob Faithful and Peter Simple, Bret Harte, Cervantes and Robbery Under Arms and For the Term of His Natural Life. He was also taken by his father to see a performance of The Pirates of Penzance by a touring company.

As Louisa Lawson became more and more involved in journalism and radical feminism, Henry, although perhaps suffering from some neglect as well, had the opportunity to read a lot of pamphlet literature and to sit in on political and literary discussions. A.G. Stephens claimed (Bulletin, 5 Jan 1895), 'It cannot be doubted that her dreams and aspirations have largely influenced her eldest son', and repeated the point ten years later (Bulletin, 21 Dec. 1905). 'Without doubt Henry Lawson is temperamentally his mother's child'; 'Prometheus', the literary critic of the Brisbane Worker, which usually placed greater influence on environment than on heredity claimed (26 Jan. 1895), 'The principle of heredity is illustrated in Mr Lawson's character'. The reasons for the intense, almost

pathological, antagonism shown by Lawson towards Australian feminist movements to which his mother was so committed an adherent is an interesting question which cannot be tackled here. Lawson's attitude to women in history was, so far as one can tell, completely uninfluenced by Louisa's ideas and principles.

The question of which writers had been the greatest influence on the rapid emergence of the young Lawson was tackled by many of his reviewers and critics during the 1890s. Some, such as Fred J. Bloomfield (Sydney Elector, 22 Feb. 1896, cited in Roderick, 1972, p.20) suggested that, like Burns, Lawson 'was fortunate in that he escapted the curse of culture'; in a later review Bloomfield (Australian Workman, 24 Oct. 1896) suggested that Lawson's 'spieler' Steelman displayed the skills of a Napoleon or a Fagin. Burns was often proposed as an influence on Lawson, as by E.E. Morris in the Melbourne Review of Reviews (20 April, 1896); and by R. Stewart in Austral Light (June, 1896), who praised Lawson for following in the footsteps of Shelley and of Mrs Browning in exposing social abuses in his verse. That critic found in Lawson too 'the spirit of melancholy which Byron possessed, and which Gray would not exchange for the riches of the world'. Radical critics often rejoiced that Lawson had avoided the flunkeyism of writers such as Tennyson, Austin and Swinburne, all of whom were castigated by Henry E. Boote in the Brisbane Worker for being willing 'to degrade their genius to the service of an idle and corrupt aristocracy'. The populist strain in much of Lawson's writing naturally aroused comparisons with Kipling, with Bret Harte, and with Mark Twain; more unusually the anonymous critic of the Sydney Morning Herald (29 Aug. 1896) was reminded by Lawson's depiction of women in the bush of Zola's treatment of female peasants; even more strangley 'P.M.' in the Melbourne Champion (5 Sept. 1896) wrote that

Lawson's 'derelicts, all with a piteous past weighting their swags...pass before the mind of the reader like a procession of passionless spirits from the Purgatory of Dante. Walter Murdoch's lengthy review, 'The New School of Australian Poets' (Argus, 6 May, 1899) sought to demonstrate just how derivative in structure and in tone Lawson and other Bush Balladists were, with Kipling the decisive influence on all of them. A.G. Stephens countered Murdoch's claims, but his verse, if not his short stories, depended on extra-Australian traditions more than Lawson himself realised.

Both Stephens and Murdoch condemned chauvinistic 'blowing' and uncritical praise of local literature, whereas Lawson frequently claimed that 'Southern' writers were neglected because of metropolitan hegemony and of 'colonial cringe'. Neither Stephens nor Murdoch suggested that there was anything disgraceful in further developing forms conceived and shaped elsewhere; both of them drew attention to the precious metal among the dross even in Lawson's verse, let alone in his short stories. Lawson never emancipated himself from a demeaning railing against the critics. The 1910 poem 'The Old, Old Story and the New Order' was prefaced with the comment,

> The press of Australia and its unspeakable mediocrities have ever had a tendency to belittle its own writers, both as regards their genius and character. The dead have been spared less than the living.

He claimed that the press calumniated Australian writers by trying to prove 'We all led vicious lives' and by repeating 'The lies that blackened Byron's name/ And banished poor Bret Harte'. There was, unfortunately, no lack of ammunition for charges of drunkenness, neglect of wives and children, failure to repay debts, and the rest, in respect of Lawson, as well as so many of his predecessors among the leading lights of Australian letters.

Australia as a land of oppression

That 'not much blood was spilt' in earlier Australian history evoked a very different response from the young Henry Lawson than from Paterson. During his twenties Lawson believed that Australia's past had been one of oppression by the rich and misery for the poor. He wrote in the Republican in 1887 (1984, p.44) that 'poverty is but lightly felt in Australia, and therefore Australians sleep', but in the same year in 'Faces in the Street' he wrote more characteristically,

> They lie, the men who tell us in a loud decisive tone
> That want is here a stranger, and that misery's unknown;

Lawson's 1890 'The Australian Marseillaise' was subtitled 'A Song for the Sydney Poor', while the 1887 'Song of the Socialists' expressed 'our burning hate for men who rob us of ours by might,/ And drive to the slum and den, the poor from the sun and light', but, in his celebrated exchange with Paterson in 1892 and on many other occasions Lawson maintained that hardship in the bush was even greater than in the city. Part of the problem lay in nature, in

> .....Those burning wastes of barren soil and sand
> With their everlasting fences stretching out across the land!
> Desolation where the crow is! Desert where the eagle flies,
> Paddocks where the lusty bullock starts and stares with reddened eyes.

Social injustice was, to Lawson, at least equally to blame, however: the bushmen were 'slaving for the absentee'; the people of the land consisted of 'the drover who is driven and the shearer who is shorn'; the drover could only graze his bullocks 'Till a squatter's irate dummy cantered up to warn you off'. Lawson insisted in his 1892 'The City Bushman' that this social

evil had started in the earlies pioneering period,

> Do you think the bush was better in the 'good old driving days',
> When the squatter ruled supremely as the king of western ways,
> When you got a slip of paper for the little you could earn,
> But were forced to take provisions form the station in return?

In their struggles against the great pastoral interests, the mid-century Radicals in New South Wales and Victoria held that 'unlocking the land' would prove to be Australia's great leap forward from squatter domination, but Lawson's experience of life on an unsuccessful selection, combined with his ideological antagonism to individualism, led him to condemn the life of the small farmer as one of crudity, ignorance and narrowness, not of pioneering heroism. In any case, as Hirst pointed out (1979, p.329), neither Lawson nor Paterson gave any indication that they were aware of the political conflicts of that period in which the latter usually and the former occasionally placed that better time on the land which had been ended with the entry of Greed and Moneygrup from the city or from abroad. Wentworth was more likely to be recalled as an Australian hero by late nineteenth century radicals than was John Robertson or any opponent of squatter hegemony in Victoria such as Charles Gavan Duffy or James Macpherson Grant. More broadly, in the thinking of the young Lawson, the advent of State Socialism to the land, although in a form not clearly indicated, was needed to replace both the overlordship of the squatter and the petty wretchedness of the selector.

Eureka and the need for revolutionary violence

In the 1887 'Song of the Republic' Lawson scorned 'old-world errors and wrongs and lies' and the 'Old Dead Tree'. The old was mainly identified with Europe, but the pioneers had brought this old world with them and the

task of their successors was not to honour their heritage but to extirpate it. For Lawson at this stage in his life the main tragedy of Australian history was that the exploited, a mass by no means confined in his thinking to convicts or emancipists, had not risen in a bloody revolutionary struggle of the type he so frequently envisaged. A typical passage in 'The Australian Marseillaise' runs,

> Treat us like the beasts you'd make us,
> Pen us close in wretched sties,
> 'Til our patience shall forsake us,
> And like wolves we shall arise.
> Louder still for this shall rattle
> Rifle shots, and sword blades ring
> On the blood-wet fields of battle
> In the days of reckoning.

In the early Lawson and Bulletin vision of Australian history the diggers had precedence over the early explorers or pastoralists. Lawson wrote,

> Talk about the heroic struggles of early explorers in a hostile country; but for dogged determination and courage in the face of poverty, illness and distance, commend me to the old time digger - the truest soldier Hope ever had.

Eureka had been the brightest moment, although those who manned the stockade were for the most part new chums who had insufficient time to endure much colonial oppression or to absorb native Australian radicalism. His 1887 'Flag of the Southern Cross' urged 'Let us stand like the gallant Eureka men'. The 1889 'Eureka (A Fragment)' is full of revolutionary romanticism, with lines abounding such as 'For every pike upon a pole will find a tyrant's heart', 'And, rising to their feet, they swear, while rugged hearts beat high,/ To stand beside their leader and to conquer or to die', and 'but not in vain those diggers died. Their comrades may rejoice,/ For o'er the voice of tyranny is heard the people's voice;/ It says: "Reform your rotten

law, the diggers wrongs make right,/ Or else with them, our brothers now, we'll gather in the fight'. The last lines suggested that, in Victoria at least, the oppression against which the Rising was supposedly directed had been reduced and reform achieved, whereas most of Lawson's other writings of the period claimed that no relief had taken place in the sufferings of Australia's exploited masses. In 1890 Lawson took up the theme again in 'The Fight at Eureka Stockade', which offers a bizarre evaluation of comparative oppression and of the influence of convictism on Sir Charles Hotham and his advisers, and which defends in principle mob-rule and lynch-law which would have terrified and appalled Lawson had he experienced them personally,

> "The creed of our rulers was narrow - they ruled with a merciless hand,
> For the mark of the cursed arrow was deep in the heart of the land.
> They treated us worse than the negroes were treated in slavery's day -
> And justice was not for the diggers, as shown by the Bently affray.
>
> P'r'aps Bently was wrong. If he wasn't the bloodthirsty villain they said,
> He was one of the jackals that gather where the carcass of labour is laid.
> 'Twas b'lieved that he murdered a digger, and they let him off scot-free as well,
> And the beacon o' battle was lighted on the night that we burnt his hotel.

To his last Eureka poem, the 1910 'Australia's Forgotten Flag', Lawson attached the Preface,

> I think the grandest monument in Australia is that at Eureka with the four cannon on the base; and the grandest graveyard where the diggers and soldiers lie side by side. Why doesn't someone cinematograph Eureka? The story presents no difficulties - it is clear and plain and full of dramatic incident and national interest, and it runs without a hitch from start to finish.

Even about Eureka, however, Lawson seems always to have had some misgivings, at least about its outcome: he asked in 1895,

> And is it for this damned life (!) we praise the god-like spirit that died
> At Eureka Stockade in the Roaring Days with the days when the world was wide?

A sense of acute personal grievance was rarely far away in Lawson's denunciations of past evil in Australia, as in the 1899 'Second Class Wait Here',

> Ah! a man must feel revengeful for a boyhood such as mine.
> God! I hate the very houses near the workshop on the line;
> And the smell of railway stations, and the roar of running gear,
> And the scornful-seeming signboards, saying 'Second class wait here.'

In the 1891 in 'Spread the Truth' Lawson proclaimed it as his main personal task to

> Write of wrongs that you are hating with a grand old burning hate!
> For the lonely digger reads it when the western sun is late,
> For he marks it in the paper he is sending to his mate.

Lawson's hatred for the rich was also expressed in the 1888 'The Army of the Rear',

> I looked upon the nobles, with their lineage of old;
> I looked upon their mansions, on their acres and their gold,
> I saw their women radiant in jewelled robes appear,
> And then I joined the army of the outcasts in the rear.

Doubts about the revolutionary people

Lawson's affection or respect for the outcasts or the victims became increasingly suspect. The 1891 'The Triumph of the People' spoke of 'the darkened eyes of man,/ And the willing slave of Error - he is senseless as a clod'. In an 1893 Bulletin article, 'Some Popular Australian Mistakes', Lawson declared that 'the real native out-back bushman is narow-minded, densely ignorant, involnerably thick-headed. How could he be otherwise?'.

In the same year in the Worker in 'Our Countrymen' Lawson told his readers,

> the average Australian bushman is too selfish, narrow-minded, and fond of the booze to liberate his country. The average shearere thinks that he is the only wronged individual and that the squatter is the only tyrant on the face of the earth. Also, the shearer is too often a god-almighty in his own estimation; and it would be good for him to know that Australia might worry along if there wasn't a sheep in all the land...The average Australian intelligence...doesn't know the name of Gordon or Kendall from that of Adam...it tolerates mobs of animals called "pushes" in the cities, and a gang of spielers in every township; and it expects a few foreigners to liberate the country or keep it from absolute slavery..

The last point was nonsensical, of course, since few Australians considered that the country needed to be liberated or that it was in relative slavery, but the passage well ilustrated one of Lawson's basic contradictions: that the wondrous 'people' who would carry out a great revolution, were also the uncultivated mob. John Le Gay Brereton noted (Hermes, 20 Nov. 1894, cited in Roderick 1972, p.1), 'He worships an abstraction which he knows by the name of THE PEOPLE. The sight of misery fills him with savage indignation...Bloody Revolutions will clear the stagnant air'. Yet within a few years Brereton reported Lawson as telling him (Phillips, 1970, p.88), 'You know, I can't write all I think. My living depends on what I'm writing the The Worker. You can take it from me, Jack, the Australian worker is a brute, and nothing else'.

His countrymen received more praise from Lawson when he was thousands of miles away from them and more immediately pre-occupied with the faults of the English, as in the 1900 'From the Bush' when they were told (a double-edged message, since immigrants in Australia could use it against the native-born),

Hold up your head in England,

Tread firm on London streets;
We come from where the strong heart
Of all Australia beats!

Hold up your head in England
However poor you roam!
For no men are your betters
Who never sailed from home!

It had been more common for the younger Lawson, as in the 1888 'United Division', to allege that Australians in general were 'contemptible toadies', as was 'amply proved by the recent visits of British big bugs to our shores.'

Even apparent supporters were suspected by Lawson: in the 1892 'Modern Parasites' he attacked the 'Labour Parasite',

> While grieving for the Toilers he gets fatter all the while,
> (His kindly smile, I notice, is a greasy kind of smile;)
> There's little that for Labour's cause he wouldn't sacrifice,
> (But, all the same, his residence is furnished very nice;)

The failure of the Worker and of other revolutionary journals to provide Lawson with secure employment, together with the inadequate recognition he considered his talents had received, perhaps helped to reduce Lawson's early revolutionary fervour. In 'The Dying Anarchist', which appeared in the Worker in 1894, Lawson put in the anarchist's mouth sentiments which by then were very much his own,

> "God! I hate them all - the blind, selfish, ignorant fools who live in idleness and lust, and the blind, selfish, ignorant brutes who slave and starve...I dreamed once of reformation. Reformation! Oh, the fools! The same things over and over again - and worse for a while...Fellowmen! Poor curs who would bite you if you tried to stop their masters from kicking them.

Lawson knew from his own childhood that the mass mind can be very hostile to sensitive spirits; he recalled (1984, p.30) that he had been 'suspected of

being the Sunday school sort, and therefore I was tormented by...larrikins'. An older, if not wiser, Lawson expressed in his 1908 'A Song of General Sick-and-Tiredness' an almost total disillusion with all the causes he had once exposed,

> I'm tired of raving at wrong things which must still to the end endure,
> I'm sick and tired of the selfish rich, and I'm tired of the selfish poor.
> Of the Awful Wrongs of the Social Plan (both sides and in between),
> I'm tired of the Bulletin's own Fat Man, and I'm also tired of the Lean.

National war as a cleansing force

As his confidence in the likelihood, let alone in the success, of a great Australian revolution waned, Lawson turned from anthems of insurrection, such as the 1892 'The Old Rebel Flag in the Rear', to more general appeals for a national war to cure social degeneracy. His 1895 'The Star of Australasia' starts,

> We boast no more of our bloodless lag that rose from a nation's slime;
> Better a shred of a deep-dyed rag from the storms of the olden time.

In a vein somewhat similar to that of Tennyson in 'Locksley Hall' before the start of the Crimean War, or, indeed of the 1878 'We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do', Lawson claimed, 'For ever the nations rose in storm, to rot in a deadly peace./ There'll come a point that we will not yield, no matter if right or wrong', and 'The nations rise in a war, to rot in a peace that lasts too long'. War is, he thought, the harbinger of national unity,

> There are boys to-day in the city slum and the home of wealth and pride
> Who'll have one home when the storm is come, and fight for it side by side.

Lawson thrilled to think of the day of battle,

But, oh! if the cavalry charge again as they did when the world was wide,
'Twill be grand in the ranks of a thousand men in that glorious race to ride.

Lawson was strongly hostile to the support given by the New South Wales Corps to Britain's 1885 campaign against the Mahdi, and was strongly sympathetic to the Boers in 1899, but he was perhaps only semi-ironical when he opened his 1899 'The Blessings of War' with,

I'm in favour of the war, and of half-a-dozen more;
And I think we should have had oen long before -
There is nothing to deplore; I'm in favour of the war
Independent of all statements made by Briton or by Boer.

'Tis a healthy stirring up of the dregs of sorrow's cup;
'Tis a joyful think, as I have always held,
For it bring us something new. And I'm looking forward to
The festive time when Sydney shall be shelled.

Virtues in the pioneering past

The phrase 'as they did when the world was wide' indicated that in some moods Lawson was capable of looking at the pioneering past as a heroic time. Even in his most revolutionary and past-hating period he could end 'The Roaring Days' with the nostalgic,

Oh, they were lion-hearted
   Who gave our country birth!
Stout sons, of stoutest fathers born,
   From all the lands on earth!

The golden days are vanished,
   And altered is the scene;
The diggings are deserted,
   The camping grounds are green'
The flaunting flag of progress
   Is in the west unfurled,
The mighty Bush with iron rails
   Is tethered to the world.

Similarly in the 1891 'Freedom on the Wallaby', a subsequent favourite with Australian revolutionaries waiting for the blood to stain the wattle,

Lawson, after some of his rare references to convict pioneers, suggested that there had been an age of promise, if not a golden age, before 'Old Greed' had entered or re-entered Eden. The most relevant stanza is,

> Our parents toil'd to make a home -
> Hard grubbin' twas an' clearin' -
> They wasn't crowded much with lords
> When they was pioneering.
> But now that we have made the land
> A garden full of promise,
> Old Greed must crook 'is dirty hand
> And come ter take it from us.

Several squatters, such as Black who employed Joe Wilson, Baldy Thompson, Job Falconer and Jimmy's boss, are presented favourably in Lawson's short stories. All of these, as Hirst noted (1979, p.324), were resident proprietors of long standing, not absentees, and even the harsh, exploitative squatter Wall had once been a better man: 'Men remembered Wall as a grand boss and a good fellow, but that was in the days before rabbits and banks, and syndicates and "pastoralists", or pastoral companies instead of good squatters'. In specific and detailed portraits Lawson frequently undercut his ideological generalizations about Australia's past and present; the generalizations were usually made in verse or in political articles, the undercutting descriptions in short stories.

During the 1890s exploration and pioneering came to exert an increasing attraction on Lawson. In the 1897 'Foreign Lands' he lamented,

> For the Early Days are over,
> And no more the white-winged rover
> Sinks the gale-worn coast of England bound for bays in foreign lands.

Even more emphatically in 'In the Days When the World Was Wide' Lawson expressed nostalgia for a time when,

They tried to live a freeman should - they wre happier men than we,
In the glorious days of wine and blood, when Liberty crossed the sea;

By 1899 Lawson had adopted an even more admiring and sympathetic attitude towards the pioneering tradition, as his 'How the Land Was Won' demonstrated. In an Homeric nod J.B. Hirst (1979, p.321) placed this poem in 1889, but it almost inconceivable that in that year Lawson could have written such stanzas as,

The future was dark and the past was dead
As they gazed on the sea once more -
But a nation was born when the immigrants said
"Good-bye!" as they stepped ashore!
In their loneliness they were parted thus
Because of the work to do,
A wild wide land to be won for us
By hearts and hands so few.

With God, or a dog, to watch, they slept
By the camp-fires' ghastly glow,
Where the scrubs were dark as the blacks that crept
With "nulla" and spear held low;
Death was hideen amongst the trees,
And bare on the glaring sand
They fought and perished by twos and threes -
And that's how they won the land!

Lawson oscillated between despair at the bleakness and hopelessness of outback life and affection for its positive aspects, especially those of the mateship between battlers, relationships which he very rarely trivialized or merely sentimentalized. In his earliest revolutionary fervour he often sounded like a Tom Paine, or even a Jacobin, whose aim was to annihilate an entire unjust and oppressive social system, but there always lurked beneath the surface the spirit of a Cobbett, which, far from unequivocally welcoming major change, political and social as well as economic, combined fiery radical rhetoric with a nostalgic longing for a past age when the world was wider. This is all the more remarkable in the light of the unromantic and

acutely realistic portrayals of bush life in most of Lawson's stories. This deep ambivalence towards the past is a feature of many twentieth century movements, including much of labour socialism, green environmental movements and organic forms of conservatism, as well as earlier ones. Lawson was a born loser so far as commercial society was concerned, not so much because publishers or anyone else exploited him, but because of his own weaknesses of temperament. He would have hated the structures of socialist societies even more, and fallen far more foul of the authorities.

Although a would-be apostle of collectivism, Lawson never really fitted into any community. It was a strange paradox that it was not Paterson, whose verse often invested the bush with a rosy and romantic glow, but Lawson, who so often exposed its hardships and its capacity to blunt sensibility and whose intentions were entirely contrary to such a result, that made nineteenth century bush life so poignant and central an element in Australian sense of a significant past. In that picture the vast and almost featureless bush itself predominates, with a solitary bushman, or perhaps two mates, far distant from any of the comforts of civilization. The focus was on male experience, although in stories such as 'The Drover's Wife' Lawson powerfully shaped later conceptions of the life led by bush women in his time, just as George Essex Evans offered a more touching variant, and Barbara Baynton a much more sordid and terrifying one.

Lawson, Chinese and Aborigines

A basic contradiction afflicted Lawson's ideas of brotherhood, socialism, trades unionism and other such unifying concepts, since not all were eligible to take part. At the heart of his millenarian fervour in 1890 when he was in Western Australia, Lawson wrote an article under the title of

'The New Religion' for the Albany Observer, which argued,

> Trades unionism is a new and grand religion; it recognises no creed, sect, language or nationality; it is a universal religion - it spreads from the centres of European civilization to the youngest settlements on the most remote portions of the earth; it is open to all, and will include all - the Atheist, the Christian, the Agnostic, the Unitarian, the Socialist, the Conservative, the Royalist, the Republican, the black, and the white...There is something grand in the rise and progress of trades unionism; it is like a great vine growing steadily round the world and bearing fruit in all its branches.

Lawson added,

> Of course, we all know that there is one great flaw in the theory of universale brotherhood. it is where the Chinaman comes in...There will no difficulty in including the progressive 'Jap' in the scheme, and the American negro is already a man and brother. The American Indian, the African and South Sea savage, and the aboriginals of Australia will soon in the course of civilization become extinct, and so relieve the preachers of universal brotherhood of all anxiety on their account. The Chinaman remains to be dealth with. For my part I think a time is coming when the Chinaman will have to be either killed or cured - probably the former - but it would be advisable for the world to wait further (Chinese) developments before taking decisive action in the matter...I think the European nations should have left the Chinaman alone in the first place

Or, as put more pithily in the 1905 'Australia' Peril': 'Clear out the Calico Jimmy, the nigger, the Chow and his pals'.

A semi-facetious tone alternated with shrill hostility in Lawson's references to the part played by the Chinese in Australian history. In the 1887 'Flag of the Southern Cross' 'the yellow men next to her lust for her'; in 1892 he warned the Western Australians in 'The Mistakes of Other Colonies' against 'the reeking crowds of Chinamen and their wretched European women' in Sydney; in his 1895 militaristic 'Years After the War in Australia' the author reminds his mate of 'the night when the traps got me for stousing a bleeding Chow'.

Aborigines generally received more kindly treatment from Lawson, if only because he was convinced they were dying out. 'The Black Tracker' refuses to track down a man who once saved his life, thus gaining from Lawson the accolade, 'there beat a white man's heart/ Beneath his old black wrinkled hide'; 'Black Joe' is brought up with the white narrator who loves him dearly, although Joe's last words are 'I'd like a lilly drap o'rum, boss'. On several occasions, including 'The Old Bark School', Lawson expressed his resentment that the Irish National Readers used in one of the schools he attended claimed, 'the natives of New Holland were among the lowest and most degraded to be found on the surface of the earth'. In the 1899 'The Songs They Used To Sing', however, Lawson quotes without a qualm the verse from 'Sam Holt'.

> Oh, do you remember Black Alice, Sam Holt?
> Black Alice so dirty and dark -
> Who'd a nose on her face - I forget how it goes -
> And teeth like a Moreton Bay shark.

In the same story he uses the jingle, which misquotes the first line of the song as well as the second,

> Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
> No more Chinamen will enter New South Wales!

Lawson never claimed that his antagonism to the Chinese in Australia was based on any evidence he had of their misconduct. On some occasions as in the opening of the 1911 'Ah Soon: A Chinese-Australian Story' he made the opposite point,

> I am anti-Chinese as far as Australia is concerned; in fact, I am all for a White Australia. But one may dislike or even hate a nation, without hating or disliking an individual of that nation. I had a great deal of experience with the Chinese in the old years; and I never knew or heard of a Chinaman who neglected to pay his debts, who did a dishonest action, or who forgot a

kindness to him or his, or was not charitable when he had the opportunity.

Lawson, Ireland and Scotland

In 'The Roaring Days' Lawson was fleetingly, perhaps appropriately for the son of a Norwegian father, a prophet of Australian multiculturalism, when he wrote of 'stout sons, of stoutest fathers born,/ From all the lands of earth!'. He knew that all lands were not evenly represented, however, and wished that the Chinese were not represented at all. Since the bulk of the population was derived from the United Kingdom and since he tried his luck in London as well as in New Zealand, it was natural that Lawson devoted much attention to the British linkage. Ireland always received sympathetic treatment from Lawson, especially in articles he wrote for the Freeman's Journal. The 1887 'Only a Sod' old Biddy brings out to Australia some of the soil of Ireland: 'It's only a sod, but it's parcel and part/ Of strugglin', sufferin' Erin'. 'The 1889 'To the Irish Delegates' called on a visiting group of Irish Nationalists to,

> Tell Ireland - tell her in her desolation
> That hearts within the south for her have bled -
> That scalding tears of helpless indignation
> By eyes that read her cruel wrongs are shed.
>
> Helpless no more! but strong to act hereafter,
> For silence are the "loyal subjects'" sneers -
> Too long have Ireland's wrongs been words of laughter -
> Arch-mockery to tickle British ears.

In a conventional 'Ireland Shall Rebel' for the Freeman's Journal, 'the tyrant's rod' is deplored and rebellion prophesied. In the same journal in 1891 in 'When the irish Flag Went By', Lawson tried to link the green with the red. After a reference to the Eight-Hour Day, a thought congenial to the pious is introduced: 'I thought of ruined Ireland/ While crystals from the sky/ Fell like tears by angels shed,/ As the Irish flag went by.' The

'wrongs of Ireland' rarely surfaced in Lawson's work after the early 1890s, when Oliver Cromwell became one of his historical heroes.

Lawson's tributes to Scotland were largely confined to the person of Burns, ever a hero to radicals, especially to those who, like Lawson, liked a wee dram themselves. The 1905 'Robbie's Statue' ironically urged readers to,

> Praise the Scottish nation,
> Who made him spy and let him die
> Heart-broken in privation.

A couplet in his 1889 'Laughing and Sneering' surprises with, 'I'd sooner laugh with Bobbie Burns/ Than sneer with titl'd Byron', since it was common in progressive circles to forgive Byron his title in view of his services to Greek Independence and his denunications of his native land and its moral codes. In a 1900 story, Diogenes, Sir Walter Scott was admonished for lack of historical accuracy in his novels by the poetic historian of the Eureka Stockade. In a first World War poem, 'Scots of the Riverina', Lawson treated sentimentally but sympathetically the harsh morality of a Scottish father whose son is finally killed in battle, but by 1917 Lawson rarely made radical-nationalist attacks on the British, to the regret of many of his later admirers. Lawson respected the Scots as farmers, second only in application to the Germans, but he found too many of the 'uncoo' gude' among them to feel any affection for their contribution to Australian life.

Lawson and England

It was with the English share in the making of Australia that Lawson had greatest difficulty in coming to terms. In 1888 he wrote 'I looked o'er London's miles of slums - I saw the horrors here,/ And swore to die a

soldier of the Army of the Rear'. In the same year in 'United Division', an article in the Republican, he argued (1984, p.51),

> Why on earth do we want closer connection with England? We have little in common with English people except our language. We are fast becoming an entirely different people. We are more liberal, and, considering our age, more progresive than England is...The loyal talk of Patriotism, Old England, Mother Land, etc. Patriotism? after Egypt, Burmah, Soudan, etc. Bah! it sickens one. Go and read "His Natural Life", and other natural lives, by Marcus Clarke, and then talk of the dear old Mother Land that gave us birth.

There was some irony in his use here of the Englishman Marcus Clarke: a Satan to cast out Beelzebub?

1892 saw a sustained burst of fire by Lawson in Truth against Queen Victoria and her family. In 'Wales the First', the Prince of Wales was described as 'a bloated prince of parasites - a libel on the past'; then in 'When the Duke of Clarence Died' Lawson declared, 'Thrones of earth and earthly rulers soon shall be swept aside,/ And 'twere better for his comfort that the Duke of Clarence died'. The main act was 'The English Queen: A Birthday Ode' in which Victoria was lampooned as 'that dull old woman...that cold and selfish woman...that dull and brainless woman...that fat and selfish person...that pure and selfish person...the dull, yet gilded dummy...that selfish, callous woman'. Truth also had the benefit in 1892 of 'Cruise of the "Crow": A "Recruiting" Yarn', which purported to describe a British naval reprisal against Kanakas and which concluded,

> So a warship was sent for the sake of the "honour" that must be upheld,
> And the sailors had sport with the blacks who escaped when the village was shell'd
> And we fancy the tribe is extinct, for a sailor was heard to declare
> That the captain bombarded the huts, while the women and children were there.
> But a national crime was avenged to the full, as our children shall

know,
And the fields of the south shall be red for the crimes of the cruise of the Crow.

...we knew by the bayonet, red with blood of the "children of Ham",
By the toady who crawled in the slime of typocrisy, falsehood and sham -
When we knew by a people's decay - when we knew by the national blare -
When we knew - by the drivel o'er all - that the Flag of the English "was there"!

There were not many states in the 1890s, nor are there more a century later, in which such vicious attacks could be made with impunity, either legal or physical. The strange thing was that Lawson expected those who deeply resented such calumny and vilification to buy his books, pat him on the back and sing his praises. Within months of these diatribes Lawson was whining in 'A Song of Southern Writers' that 'Talent goes for little here. To be aided, to be known,/ You must fly to Northern critics who are juster than our own' and that 'Southern men of letters, seeking kinder fields across the wave,/ Tell a shameful tale entitled "Deniehy's Forgotten Grave"'.

Lawson was strongly pro-Boer in 1899; in his 1905 'Australia's peril' he wrote of Australia's coming punishment for helping 'England, the hated of nations, whose existence depends on the sea': 'We must suffer, husband and father, we must suffer, daughter and son,/ For the wrong we have taken part in and the wrong that we have done'. In 1910 in 'When Kitchener Shed Tears' Lawson combined an attack on a bete-noire with a sneer at Australia's capacity for defence, the third experience to bring tears to Kitchener's eyes being the sight of an Australian fort.

Most unsurprisingly England proved as unworthy as Australia of Lawson

when he went there in 1900 to try his fortune (1984, pp.801;803;794): 'Englishmen know nothing beyond their onw little selfish and paltry little commercial world'; 'English women strike me as being, in nature and appearance, hard, unsympathetic, selfish and ungraceful'. Even St. Paul's was paltry in Lawson's eyes: 'Most of the statuary in St. Pauls's is crude and - no, not theatrical - it doesn't even deserve that term. Reversing time, I would say that it belongs to the concert hall, living-picture shcool'. Yet Lawson could no more escape from the influence of England than could any other Australian.

Lawson had the same difficulty that many have to-day in finding a noun to distinguish the large majority of the Australian people from hypenated Australians. He wrote in 1890 in 'Nationality in Colonisation', after discussing the farming methods of German-Australians, 'By English I mean, of course, the English, the Irish and their descendants in Australia, and for the sake of convenience I shall refer to them as Australians.' Indeed (if the Scots and Welsh were included, as Lawson presumably intended), unhypenated Australians were for the most part simply dissolved Britons and Irish, so that for any self-proclaimed Australian patriot some limit on attacks on the largest dissolved group, the English, was prudent. It was not until after 1914 that Lawson began to refer to Australians as 'The youngest and strongest of England's brood' ('Song of the Dardanelles', 1915) or to 'The spirit of a single race,/ From London round to Bourke' (England's Work', 1919), but even in Lawson's most anti-British years he found it hard to express racial nationalism without paying some tribute to the lands from which the race he extolled was derived. In the 1889 poem 'The "Seabolt's" Volunteers', the volunteers who stay on board the ship and drown so that the women and children can find room in the lifeboat are an Englishman, a

Frenchman, a Scot and an Irishman. In the bellicose 'Years After the War in Australia even the New Chum was given honourable mention,

> You bushmen sneer in the old bush way at the new-chum jackeroo,
> But "cuffs-'n'-collars" were out that day, and they stuck to their posts like glue;'

As Lawson grew somewhat milder, the 1896 'New Chum Jackeroo' was even more favourable. Bushmen were reminded that,

> He crossed wide deserts, hot and bare,
> From barren, hungry shores -
> Grim wastes that you would scarcely dare
> With all your tanks and bores.
>
> He fought a way through stubborn hills
> Towards the setting sun -
> Our fathers all, and Burke and Wills,
> Were new chums, every one.
>
> When England fought with all the world
> In those brave days gone by,
> And felt its strength against her hurled,
> They held her honour high.
>
> By southern palm and northern pine -
> Where'er was life to lose -
> They held her own - the thin red line
> Of new-chum jackeroos.

It took a world war, however, before a Lawson very different from the contributor to Truth, the Republican or the Freeman's Journal could write in 1915 'A New John Bull',

> A silent English gentleman -
> Though sometimes he says "Haw".
> But should a monkey in its cage
> Appeal to British Law
> For justice on some bullying ape,
> He'd listen most polite,
> And do his very best to set
> The monkey's grievance right.
>
> A thoroughbred whose ancestry
> Goes back to ages dim,
> No labourer on his wide estates

Need fear to speak to him.
Although he never showed a sign
Of aught save sympathy,
He was the only gentleman
That shamed the lout in me.

The opening of the 1917 'England Yet' would have seemed equally strange to the author of 'Cruise of the "Crow"',

She's England yet! The nations never knew her,
Or, if they knew, were ready to forget.
She made new worlds that paid no homage to her,
Because she called for none as a debt.
The bullying power that deemed all nations craven,
And thought her star of destiny had set,
Was sure that she would seek a coward's haven -
And tempted her, and found her England yet!

The later Lawson was anxious to identify English women among the pioneers who deserved greatest honour, as in a typical stanza in 'Black Bonnet',

She came out in the Early Days,
(Green seas, and blue - and grey) -
The village fair, and English ways,
Seemed worlds and worlds away.
She fought the haunting loneliness
Where brooding gum-trees stood;
And won through sickness and distress
As English-women could.

Lawson's interests in specific aspects of English history cast light on his political aims. He never showed any interest in the origins of parliamentary institutions or of the Common Law, just as he was indifferent at best to the representative and legal institutions of New South Wales and of Australia. His poems on medieval themes in 1908-9 were conventional and limited to crusading, betrayals, courageous old Dame Ruths, and redeemed outlaws. The one figure in early English history in whom he showed more than token interest was Alfred the Great, who was advanced in his 1911 'England: A Coronation Ode' as the ancestor the new monarchs ought most to

emulate, partly because he, above all others, saved 'the Saxon tongue', the English language, and partly because 'He fought with arm and heart and brain./ And fought and fought and fought again'.

Lawson was indifferent to the issues concerning constitutional and individual rights in the seventeenth century which were of such importance to most liberals and radicals. He had some sympathy with the drinking men he thought the Cavaliers to have been; in his 1911 'The Song of the Heathen' he wrote that if 'religious mania' were on the agenda,

> If this be the goal of the Commonwealth,
> I go with the Cavaliers;
> I go with the drinking fighters,
> With laughing rakes and carls -
> If this be the work of Cromwell,
> Ride hard! Ride hard for King Charles!

Cromwell, however, became a historical figure Lawson came to admire, perhaps above all others. Cromwell was a soldier and a revolutionary who had never worn a crown. In the 19190 'Cromwell' Lawson rejoiced that Cromwell 'thrashed her enemies at home/ And crushed her foes abroad'. With the help of Robert Blake, another hero of the later Lawson, Cromwell 'soon lowered the Dutchman's tone', rescued 'each captured Englishman' from 'pirate ports in Africa', used his military power to secure toleration for 'the Protestants of Southern lands'. In sum: 'Englishmen were Englishmen,/ While Cromwell carved the roast'. In the 1919 'England's Work' Lawson in seven stanzas evoked the events and people he thought of most significance in the English past: national resistance under Boadicea; Romans, Saxons, Normans and Danes successfully absorbed; the ghost of Harold and the shade of Elizabeth guarding the coast; but most prominent of all, Cromwell,

> ...he made England clean at home,

The English safe abroad.
And once again the king of Spain,
In sorrow and in tears,
Could curse each Englishman he'd caught
And sold into Algiers.

In his most explicit expression of totalitarian populism, in 'The King of Our Republic' Lawson called for an Australian Cromwell,

If you find him stern, unyielding, where his living task is set,
I have told you that a tyrant should uplift the nation yet;
He will place his country's welfare over all and everything,
Shall the King of our Republic, and the man that we call King.

Had Lawson lived long enough, it seems very probable that, like his contemporary socialist and critic of British institutions Bernard Shaw, he would have found virtues first in Mussolini and then Stalin. Lawson might repay further attention in studies of the subordination of individual rights to party and state in early twentieth century radical ideologies.

Other nations

In his period of republican fervour Lawson was strangely ambivalent towards the United States of America. It was not until 1909, when his republicanism was weaker, that he wrote 'The Man Who Raised Charlestown', suggested by Shaw's 'The Devil's Disciple, a ballad celebrating the American rebels of 1776. The American provided an institutional republican model, but Lawson resented what he considered to be the patronizing attitude of many American visitors to Australia. In the 1893 'A Word to Texas Jack' he derided American pretensions to superior horsemanship and bush skills. In Lawson's view anything the Americans had done, the Australians had done better,

But I won't see this land crowded by each Yank and British cuss,
Who takes it in his head to come a-civilisin' us.

.....
I will admit your countrymen is busted big, an' free,
An' great on akal rites of men and great on liberty:
I will admit your fathers punched the gory tyrant's head-
But then we've got our heroes, too, the diggers that is dead,
The plucky men of Ballarat, who toed the scratch so well,
And broke the nose of Tyranny and made his peepers swell,
.....
so when it comes to ridin' mokes, or hoistin' out the Chou,
Or stickin' up for labour's rights, we don't want showin'how.

During the 1898 War Lawson's sympathies were divided. 'Dons of Spain' included a back-handed tribute to the Americans,

Their Yankee foes may be kin to us (we are English heart and soul),
And proud of their national righteousness, and proud of the lands they stole;

Yet it was the Spanish tradition, as he conceived it, which appealed more to Lawson,

For, as in the days when the buccaneer was abroad on the Spanish Main,
The national honour's the thing most dear to the heart of the Dons of Spain.

She had slaughtered thousands with fire and sword, as the Christian worl doth know;
We murder millions - but, thank the Lord! we only starve 'em slow.
The times have changed since the days of old, but the same old rules obtain;
We fight for Freedom, and God, and Gold, and the Spaniards fight for Spain.
.....
For the sake of the past, if you're doomed, say I, may your end be a grand one, Spain!
.....
And here's a cheer for the flag unfurled in a hopeless cause again,
For the sake of the days when the Christian world was saved by the Dons of Spain.

As late as 1905 Lawson was still expressing, in 'The Tracks That Lie by India', a desire 'To see the land of chivalry and bide awhile in Spain', a strange wish perhaps for the bard of the man of foot as against the man on a horse.

Lawson had a high opinion of the ability of Germans as farmers; indeed, Lawson made few complaints about the Germans in history, until 1914. Even after he became a prominent advocate of conscription and when anti-German feelings were most bitter, Lawson was comparatively mild, partly perhaps because of his underlying belief that the ultimate enemy lay in the East and not in Europe at all, even though Japan and China were currently allies of the British Empire, as well as because of his earlier admiration for German-Australians. In his 1890 'Nationality and Colonisation' he praised the German farmers of New South Wales as,

> invariably the most successful...Put him (an Australian) on a farm, and ten to one he will fail where a German would make a fortune...The German farmer studies agriculture, even its technical language, and he knows what he is doing when he puts in a crop...At farming the Australians are beaten by that same rugged, methodical persistence that drove the French army back in disgraceful rout and captured Paris...the very fact that we cannot compete with the Germans at farming proves that the country has everything to gain, and nothing to lose, by their presence...a great many trades unionist regard German mechanics with the eye of distrust because it is asserted that Germans are willing to work long hours and take low wages rather than go idle for any length of time...The Germans who immigrate are just as democratic as the Australians, and as ready to stand up for the rights of labour...Why not offer encouragement to desirable colonists such as the Germans? Germans are just as true to their adopted lands as men of any other nationality.

France was the land most evoked by radicals dissatisfied by the lack of revolutionary impetus in recent British history. In Lawson's early work references were frequent to the Marseillaise and to likely repetitions of 1789 in London or Sydney. Some of this persisted into the new century, as in the 1903 'The Drums of Ages' in which 'Peasants starved on fields of plenty, workmen rotted in the slums,/ till the drummers came to paris and the nations heard the drums'. St. Helena, in the 1911 'The Road to St. Helena', based on a Kipling poem, became the symbol of the fate to which all

men must come, and in the 1914 'Antwerp' became the anticipated final resting place of William II as well as of Napoleon.

Of the four European nations which received most radical and progressive sympathy in the 1850s, two had dropped out of favour by Lawson's youth. Italian unification had been achieved, but without the glorious results anticipated by Mazzini, Garibaldi and their admirers, while the Hungarians had established a Magyar ascendancy over the other nationalities of the Kingdom of Hungary more severe than anything they had ever endured at the hands of the Hapsburgs. Ireland and Poland remained. Lawson frequently paid tribute to 'the fair land of Poland', although not as frequently as he expressed sympathy with the sufferings of Ireland. In his 1899 '"Pursuing Literature" in Australia', Lawson included Poland in the progressive pantheon of his youth: 'I heard Tommy Walker, and Collins, and the rest of 'em, and, of course, a host of Yankee free-thought and socialistic lecturers, I word the green in fancy, gathered at the rising of the moon, charged for the fair land of Poland, and dreamed of dying on the barricades to the roar of the "Marseillaise" - for the Young Australian Republic'.

Just as Ireland was displaced by Cromwell in Lawson's affections, so was Poland ousted by Russia. Lawson's concern for Russia after 1904 was partly the result of the operation of the principle of the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Lawson feared the yellow peril above all, so that 'Ivan' became important as a bulwark of the white races: 'Every hour he holds Port Arthur/ May postpone the White Man's doom' ('Skaal', 1904). In 'The Vanguard (I)' in 1905 Lawson's 'hope's in IVAN yet', 'across the path from Asia run the Russian trenches still' and 'the vanguard of the White Man is the vanguard of the Russ!'. In historical retrospects Lawson condemned

Britain for supporting the Turks in 1854 and 1878 against the Czar, and praised Russia for refusing to 'take advantage' while Britain was tied up in the South African War. Searching farther back in to the Russian past Lawson found in the 1916 'A Few Remarks Concerning a Bear' that Peter the Great had heroic qualities, similar to those of Cromwell. Peter had arrived on the scene 'when Russia was pent and helpless,/ And barred by every State...the Turk was mighty, and Sweden/ Held the way to the sea'. The methods were harsh perhaps, but no others were possible' the successful result was the essence of the matter for Lawson. Given his Scandinavian ancestry, it might have been supposed that Russia's victory over Sweden might have been a matter of regret rather than of satisfaction; contemporary Scandinavians were generally praised, however, as in the 1912 'Too Old to Rat' in which '(Where'er, on a wreck titanic, in a scene of wild despair,/ The officers call for assistance, a Swede, or a Norse is there)'.

Many of Lawson's historical references were highly unreliable: in the 1904 'The Crucifixion' 'the flaunting harlots' taunt Christ on the cross; in the 1908 'Mateship in Shakespeare's Rome', he sought to correct Shakespeare's errors in Scottish history, but his own version of the historical Duncan and Macbeth was also mistaken; in the 1910 'The Song of Broken English' he wrote of 'Dutchmen, as lean as coolies, fighting for Liberty', a most bizarre comparison; in the 1914 'Parley Voo' he showed that he believed that St. Pierre rather than St. Denis was the patron saint of France; in the 1916 'The Portugee' he suggested that 'Wellington knew, in his hour of need, the worth of the Portuguese!', which suggests he knew nothing of the Duke's opinions on that question.

Lawson and religion

Contemporary Jews rarely came into Lawson's writing, but the tone was anti-semitic when they did. Lawson blamed Jews even more than the British government for the Boer War, writing in the 1903 'Drums of Ages', 'Still the dirty Jewish talons reached from palaces and slums/ Till a hundred thousand died to stop the farmers' drums', and in the 1905 'Australia's Peril', 'With the Jews we belied the farmers; with the cowardly Jingoes we yelped'. Lawson returned to the theme in his 1912 'A Song of Brave Men', which describes the dead of the South African War as 'Fighting for "Home" and "Country", of "Glory" or what you choose,/ Sacrificed for the Syndicates, and a monarch "in" with the Jews'. In the nationalistic poem 'Australian Engineers' Lawson wrote in 1904,

> Born to be builders of vessels in the Harbours of Waste and Loss,
> That shall carry our goods to the nations, flying the Southern Cross;
> And fleets that shall guard our seaboard - while the East is backed by the Jews -
> Under Australian captains, and manned by Australian crews.

His Old Testament references were few and far between, with the Patriarch Joseph particularly displeasing to him. In his 1893 'The English Ne'er-do-well' Lawson complained,

> The bards are soft on villains; but the weakness isn't new,
> For the ancient poet had it in the days of Joe the Jew
> (Who flashed a coloured square-cut while his brothers were at graft,
> And loafed around and bossed 'em till they put him in a shaft).

This idea was fully fleshed out in the 1904 'Joseph's Dreams and Reuben's Brethren', which is one of Lawson' most successful humourous ballads and which has much in common with Dixon's paraphrase of Moses' dispute with Pharaoh in Furphy's Rigby's Romance. Their popularity was evidence, too, that the Old Testament stories of the Patriarchs were well known, as least

in outline, in turn-of-the-century Australia. Lawson's sense of fair play was also offended by the Parable of the Prodigal Son, in which his sympathies lay with the brother who 'did the grubbing and the fencing of the farm'. It was perhaps strange that Lawson, who had need for forgiveness and compassion as much as most of us, should have adopted the stance of stern retributive justice on this occasion. More typically he wrote of the Good Samaritan as a Lawson -like exemplar of mateship, who 'was rather glum at home', 'knew Levite well, and priest', and who 'shares his tucker on the track'.

Lawson's standard references to religion and to the clergy were to their alleged hypocrisy, indifference to the sufferings of the poor, and toadying with the rich: in 'One-Hundred-And-Three' a condemned man is allowed to die, while 'The High Church service swells and swells where the tinted Christs look down'. Jesus attracted him for his sympathy with the sinner. On the other hand, even if in jest, he spoke favourable of St. Peter, whose treachery was gross but was forgiven and who, since 'he did a lot of trampin'/ Long ago in Palestine' and was 'an ancient agitator', would deal kindly with him once he knew 'That I carried swag for years'. The Jesus who forgave Peter was esteemed by the young Lawson for his sympathy with the underdog and the outcast, but his faults were judged grievous, too, particularly his pacificism. In an 1893 Worker article, 'A Leader of the Future', with which Tom Paine, an examplar for this aspect of his thought would surely have been disappointed, he wrote of Jesus,

> He was a naturally intelligent carpenter and a Socialist. There were greater men in his time and before him; and there have been since; but he was an honest man and original. He preached peace and good will and brotherhood, and the people hanged him - or at least they crucified him, which amounts to the same thing.

Summary

It was the past of White Australia, then that of Britain, which concerned Lawson most, although, apart from an apparent indifference to the ancient world (other than via Shakespeare), his historical interests were reasonably wide. He did not share the Bulletin's obsession with convictism, but his depiction of the pioneer past had a powerful effect on Australian thought; his representations of his own experiences influenced contemporary and subsequent conceptions of Australian life even more. Lawson's conscious purpose was to oppose the romanticism of bush life of which he accused Paterson, but his own images of the lone bushman, with or without his mate, possesesed a pathos and an attraction more powerful than that of any prettification.

The young Lawson was filled with revolutionary rhetoric, but his hatred of the squatter and the fatman in general was often undercut by realistic portrayals of 'White spots' on individual members of classes attacked, and as well as by showing the 'people' warts and all, rather than in heroic terms. As he became disillusioned with radicalism, labourism and unionism, it was to national rather than class war that he looked for social regeneration, and his search for historical antecedents took a differnt turn.

Aborigines were an object of amused contempt, in so far as they were significant in Lawson's concerns, but the Cinese represented an abiding fear, even though as individuals Lawson conceded important virtues to them. Fear of the yellow peril led Lawson to realign his historical categories: military power and national unity, backed by social reforms to end pauperism

and mass poverty, became for him the needs of the day of White Australia and of other white countries, rather than the safeguarding of individual rights. Cromwell and Peter the Great, rather than constitutional reformers or pioneers for civil liberties, became his historical heroes. The Czar and his loyal peasant Ivans, rather than red revolutionaries, became the logical allies of the Australian bushman. Lambing Flat rather than the Eureka Stockade became logically the episode of violence in nineteenth century Australia with most relevance to Lawson's later perspective; although he stayed loyal to Eureka, it was increasingly as a symbol of the Australian capacity for armed struggle, rather than of resistance to authority, that it retained its saliency.

The anti-libertarian thrust in compulsory unionism, and in violence against scabs or Chinese, might have taken a fascist turn in Lawson's thought, even had Japan not advanced so rapidly in military power and intensified his fear of the yellow peril. Contemporaries of Lawson who finally espoused the totalitarianism of the right rather than of the left which they had embraced earlier included Mussolini, Gregor Strasser, Pierre Laval, Marcel Deat and Jacques Doriot. Georges Sorel was an advocate of the cleansing power of revolutionary violence of a more formidable character than Lawson, whose influence was strong on both left and right critics of liberal capitalism. Shaw, as noted above, lived to flirt first with Mussolini and then with Stalin, but in Britain and in other Anglomorph societies, to use Frank Knopfelmacher's term, supporters of fascist or Leninist insurrection were few and far between.

Lawson's mild contempt (it was far from hatred) for parliamentary institutions and for the rule of law, together with his belief that sharp

surgical methods were best for social maladies, made him vulnerable to political folly and rendered him indifferent to the historical origins of the constitutional forces which gave Australia stability and balance. Despite its convict origins and some surface violence, Lawson's Australia had a strong commitment to the rule of law; despite a lack of dignity in much of its parliamentary life, it was strongly rooted in traditions of representative government. The strengths in his society which he undervalued may well have helped to prevent Lawson from making even more serious lapses of judgement than he managed to perpetrate. Perhaps, too, his faults, especially his drinking and his well-known tendency to polemical excess, as well as his virtues as writer and as a man, ensured that others did not take his political prescriptions too seriously, and prevented him from taking them to logical and more dangerous conclusions.

Chapter Sixteen

Joseph Furphy

Furphy's Background

Joseph Furphy was born in 1843 and spent his early years at Yaring Station and then in Kineton in rural Victoria, as the Port Phillip District became known during his youth. His parents, both of whom had been educated in Ireland, were his teachers. His mother's brother had been a schoolteacher and one of her uncles had written hymns, so that the Furphys were more literary than the typical rural family of mid-century Australia. Furphy's mother taught him to read with such success that by the age of seven he was able to read, learn and recite pages from the Bible and from Shakespeare, his main readers, without difficulty. Such Is Life (henceforth SIL) and all Furphy's work testify to the effectiveness of this early reading.

Furphy was exceptional in his reading, as was indicated in the pleasure he expressed on meeting the young school mistress Kate Baker when he was in his forties. Furphy wrote with delight to his friend William Cathels that at long last he had met a person 'who knew who Belisarius was' and could use the word 'laconic'correctly in ordinary conversation. Although few dwellers in the Riverina could identify Belisarius or use laconic in normal speech, Such is Life suggests that the average stockman and bullocky was able to recognise and to respond to much of Tom Collins' allusiveness.

Furphy's passion for history and literature was revealed in a letter

to his mother (Franklin, 1944, p.112),

> ...my ignorance is so vast and voracious as to swallow at least 12 or 14 lbs of literature per month - without any feeling of repletion of satisfaction - indeed, the above allowance serves merely as a whet. For instance, to-night I ought to be investigating the character of Pope Gregory VII (1020-1085) with a view to settling the question whether that gentleman was an enemy or benefactor of mankind. And that is only one question among 10,000 which are clamoring for solution ...
>
> Though I have learned something of the history of the human race, I am only on the fringe of knowledge. Beyond Rome lies in rotation Palestine, Greece, Babylon, Assyria, with Egypt, India and China, all to be inquired into...

And again,

> This being the right time of year for good resolutions, I have made up my mind to be punctual in correspondence for the future. During the day, I am always zealous of good works in that line; but when night comes on, I find there is something I ought to know and don't. For instance, whether it was Pharoah-Necho or Pharaoh-Hophra that was so badly walloped by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish. And I must satisfy myself on that point. Or else there is some scientific or ethical problem clamoring for investigation.
>
> Fact, is, Art is so long and Life so short, that the scanty leisure of evenings alone is eaten up with lamentably poor results. If a man started at, say 7, and wasted no time, he might begin to know something at 78.

In Such Is Life (p. 337) Collins admits to 'a mild and inoffensive pedantry', while in The Buln Buln and the Brolga (henceforth BB) he claims (p. 65) that he acquired early in life a 'chief ambition' which was 'to emulate, or even excel Macauley's erudite "schoolboy"'. In the 'Rigby and the Authoress' section excised from the original Such Is Life Rigby says of Mrs. Pritchard, wife to the untruthful Fred, the 'Buln-Buln', and 'an authoress by aspiration' (BB, p. 109),

> the fatality of the State School teacher is upon her, so that, modest and assuming as she may appear, she thinks she knows evrything. And she imagines that this omniscience endues her with the power of projecting herself, by a kind of discretionary metempsychosis, into any era of history or any stage of

civilization...

Such too, of course, is the tendency of Rigby in Rigby's Romance (henceforth RR) and of Collins in Such Is Life. Poor Mrs. Pritchard is perhaps a deformed version of Kate Baker, for whose erudition Furphy had such unstinted admiration, but Miss Baker at least did not write pseudo-historical novels about twelfth century Red Cross Knights, emigrant nobles of the French Revolution, Egyptian priestesses of Isis or fancied Aboriginal kings of a bygone age (BB, p.110) Furphy's satire here might have arisen from a recollection of Charles Harpur's The Witch of Hebron as well as from his detestation of untalented female imitators of Scott's historical novels. It cannot be denied, however, that Furphy's work carries a greater weight of historical and literacy allusion than that of any other Australian writer and can only be surpassed in this respect by perhaps Sterne, Rabelais or James Joyce. This characteristic makes his work of particular value for this enquiry.

Furphy, the Bible and Christianity

Much of Furphy's purpose as a novelist and short-story writer was didactic and propagandist for what he termed 'State Socialism' and he particularly valued most in his own work the musings of Collins' meerschum pipe and the secular sermons of Rigby. Given his upbringing, it is not surprising that Furphy knew his Bible well or that, like many other political reformers with an intensely Christian background, he should claim that his programme was not only compatible with Christianity but was the only political system with genuine pretensions to be based on Christian. In all Furphy's works Biblical allusions abound. K.A. McKenizie (1966) calculated that Furphy drew on 26 of the 39 books of the Old Testment, and

22 of the 27 in the New. The most favoured Old Testament books on his counting were Genesis (49), Psalms (32), Isaiah (26), Eccleciastes (23) and Exodus and Job (20 each).

The Books of Samuel and Kings were also often cited by Furphy, together with the Psalms attributed to David and the Proverbs to Solomon. A homily by Rigby on the follies of hereditary monarchy is illustrated by a reminder (RR, p. 113) that after the relative mildness of David by Solomon chastised the Jews with whips and Rehoboam with scorpions. Collins (SIL, p. 133) recalls Samuels's warning against making Saul a King and (SIL, p. 154) likens the relationship between the squatters and the bullockies to that between Goliath and David. It is David, however, who is the object of a particularly bitter attack, reminiscent of Tom Paine's denunciation, by Rigby, who describes him (BB, p. 120) as 'a brutal ingrate; a seducer and assassin of the kingliest type; negligent in administration, and addicted to surrounding himself with alien mercenaries'. In a more facetious mood Collins seeks to differentiate (BB, p. 33) between Davids who might be confused with each other - 'the half-naked minstrel of Bethlehem, I mean - not the French artist, nor the Melbourne newspaper man'. One of Rigby's goals is to distinguish between the 'real' and the 'pseudo' in people, a distinction intended to expose corruptions induced by unjust social structures: David is offered as a prime example of this distinction. The hierarchical arrangement of eating and sleeping at Runnymede Station is elaborately compared by Collins to the Inner and Outer Courts and the Sanctum Sanctorum of Solomon's Temple. Solomon is also cited by Collins (SIL, p. 94) for his very low estimate of women, which is contrasted with that of Shakespeare; the sartorial tastes of the Aboriginal Jacky (SIL, p.142) remind Collins of the contrasted glories of Solomon and of the

lilies of the field. In The Discovery of Christmas Reef (BB, p. 199) Molly Summers' 'pictured face', to Sam at least, 'seemed marked with a price beyond rubies (as Solomon puts it)'; Proverbs is used in self-justification by the sadistic Thompson senior, who (BB, p. 10) 'was in the habit of putting a disagreeably literal construction on Prov. XIII. 24:- "He that spareth his rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chastiseth him betimes'.

The earthy realism of the tales of the Patriarchs and other sections of the Old Testament attracted nineteenth century Australian readers as well as earlier generations. Fred the Buln-Buln replies to the young Collins' claim to be a specialist in 'the blaggard places in Shakespeare' (BB, pp. 88-9) that there is 'lots o' blaggardism in the Bible'. Collins senior is said (BB. p. 10) to have placed strong emphasis 'on that terrible warning contained in the story of Eli, whose sons wrought evil in the sight of the Lord, and he restrained them not'. Rigby notes sternly (RR. p. 187) that 'the moral equal of Lot...is saying very little indeed', but it is to be feared that some readers found other than pious reflections in the promiscuity of the sons of Eli or the incest of the daughters of Lot.

The Five Books of Moses often enter Furphy's text. His companions in the bush are described as sons of Belial (SIL, p. 64), as Levites (SIL, p. 277) and as Ismaelites (SIL, p. 51); the Scottish boundary rider, Terribly Tommy, has (SIL, p. 199), 'the very spirit of Leviticus in his tone'; the abundance of rough feed in the Mia-Mia Paddock makes possible (SIL, p. 207) 'a protracted Feast of Tabernacles'. Collins offers as his version of the prayer of Jacob (BB, p. 9), 'Lord, get me out of this scrape, and I'll guard against detection in the future'. Comparisons between Genesis and

contemporary scientific hypotheses are made too, as when (RR, pp. 116) Rigby finds encouragement in 'that toilsome ascent which leads upwards from palaeolithic savagery to the sixty-fifth chapter of isaiah, or the Fourth Eclogue of Virgil', but also declares 'I refer neither to the gardener of Eden nor to the pithecoid gentleman of science', so as not to cause unnecessary contention. Dan O'Halloran's ancestors have, according to Collins (SIL, p. 78) been in Ireland 'since the time of Japhet'.

Furphy's most extensive treatment of a Biblical source is the ribald Dixon's version of Exodus (RR, pp. 37 ff.). Dixon has just got hold of a Bible in a book swop with 'one o'Ouidar's' and frequently enquires whether what he has been reading is just a good yarn or the literal truth. A striking feature of Dixon's response to Exodus is that it confirms his dislike for Jews, whereas the standard Christian reaction was to reverence their status as the Chosen People. Dixon comments (RR, p. 45),

> Fact, I got no pity for anybody that crawls after Jews. Bad eggs, the Jews. When them temporisers was commanded to do anythin' good they used to forgit, or buck, or dodge out of it some (adj.) road; but when they was commanded to stone anybody - whoop! they was there quick an' lively. My (adj.) oath.

Dixon also remarks (RR, p. 82), "Gosh! I could a said prayers to that piece, like a Jew to a graven image, only I wouldn't demean my (adj.) self', but he remains unaware that praying to 'graven images' had been common among many nations, whereas its condemnation was much more rare.

Anti-semitic sentiments are common in Furphy's work. When Rigby relates the troubled romance of the German couple, Mina and Fritz, he remarks (RR, p. 117) that 'a Jewish lawyer had found an informality in Isaacstein's will', thus dispossessing Mina. Collins, whose role in

Rigby's Romance is that of reactionary strawman rather than of the radical sceptic of Such is Life, relates a yarn with an ani-Semitic thrust (RR, p. 228),

> I am in the habit of relating a pretty stiff lie about Rothschild and a Socialist. One of the Rothchilds, travelling by rail in France, encountered an interested agitator, and the two fell into discussion. Finally Shylock took out his tablets and made a calculation: "My fortune is so many million francs; this, amongst so many millions of population, comes to so many francs, so many sous, per head. There is your share, mon ami; take it and hold your tongue. My custom is to assume that this neat little fib sizes up the whole question; but, between ourselves, it does nothing of the kind. It only sizes up the man Rothschild. The points unintentionally illustrated in the parable are - this fatman's sordidness of soul, and his unwarrantable judgement of an ideal altogether beyond his apprehension.

Such anti-semitism was strong among fin-de-siecle radical and socialist circles, largely because of the prominence of Jews in high finance and in commercial speculation; the equal prominence of Jews in radical and socialist movements did little to dispel populist anti-semitism. The foreign property in Canton My Uncle's Treasure (BB, p. 165) is described as 'Anglo-Judaic'.

References to Exodus are common in Furphy's writing. Steve Thompson, when musing on how to get rid of wives in High Art (BB, p. 134), suggests that a 'feller could easy give her a writin' of divorcement, as Moses commanded'. Collins in conversation with Kate Vanderdecken compares Rigby with both John Knox and Moses (RR, p. 13),

> ...I have piously looked forward to the privilege of gracing him with the Earl of Morton's tribute to John Knox: "There lies one who never feared the face of man"...He'll probably see me out. I fancy he'll be like Moses at one hundred and twenty, his eye not dim, nor his natural force abated.

Rigby compares the backsliding of contemporary Australians, who are alas

blind to the message of Socialism, to that of the Chosen People. Rigby declares (RR, p. 110),

> Isn't history full of relapses? How often has the ripe fruit of threescore years been blasted in a day? Wasn't the Promised Land in sight eighteen centureis ago, and weren't our forefathers, from age to age, forbidden to enter in, because of their dense unbelief, and their lack of moral enterprise...

Thompson's knowledge of scripture may be deficient, so that (RR, p. 69 he describes himself as 'like that character in the Bible - I forget who he was - always going to and fro on the earth and walking up and down in it. I've got the satisfaction of knowing that I deserve it all'. Thompson blames himself too much, but probably would not have compared himself with Satan. Furphy was not only able to place texts accurately but was so well versed in the higher criticism as to be able to argue that the last verse of Job is a late interpolation which reverses the point of the whole story. (SIL, pp.117-8). The patience of Job is summoned up by Collins, too, when he has to contend with a spirited horse (SIL,p.12). Furphy gently satirises himself when the squatter Mr. B --, is able to tempt the reluctant Collins to change his plans and visit the squatter's station, which he does with bizarre results, with the promise of a yarn with a man who had just returned from travels which included a visit to Jerusalem (SIL,p.120).

Furphy's references to the Old Testament and to the Epistles of St. Paul are usually comic or ironical in purpose and in Such Is Life (p. 98) he gently mocks Rory O'Halloran's mindless parrotting of disconnected Biblical information. Furphy however, who attended Church of Christ services as an adult in Shepperton and later in Western Australia, is never openly disrespectful of the Gospels. Collins, like St. Paul, must 'speak

as a man' (SIL, p. 258) when the relative interests of the sexes in personal hygiene are considered; Collins is willing too to compare hismelf with the Good Samaritan, ironically since the help he gives to the swagman Andy Glover proves disastrous (SIL, p. 119). Jesus though is treated with the reverence due to a pioneer of social reform and of socialism. Collins describes Jesus (SIL, p. 112) as 'the Nazarene Artisan' whose 'sunshiny Sermon on the Mount' has considerable contemporary political relevance. Collins holds (SIL, p. 205) that 'Christianity postulates initial equality, and recognises no gradation but in usefulness'. Rigby elaborates on this theme, maintaining (RR, p. 214) that 'the Gospels are the purest Socialistic literature we have. No man ever made out a case against the system of Christian grounds...Socialism represents the secular side of Christianity'.

Rigby does not argue for socialism on the grounds that capitalism is unplanned or displays 'the anarchy of the market'. Instead Rigby dismisses (RR, p. 154) 'the altogether alien idea of accumulation' as incompatable with Christianity; in like vein he 'can't express [his] contempt for the idea of believing in God, and at the same time taking the precautions against His providence'. Poverty is not only blessed but a precondition for spiritual leadership, Rigby maintains (RR, pp. 158-9), offering Buddha, Christ, Mahomet, Elijah, St. Paul, Zeno and Epictetus among his examples. One of Rigby's adversaries, Binney, is permitted to suggest that this stern doctrine would have 'shut out such men as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea', but the Good Samaritan might have been a harder case for Rigby to refute, since some accumulation was presumably needed before he could pay the bills of the man set upon by thieves.

Furphy detested hierarchy, but he loathed profit-making as an even more potent solvent of equality. Samuel Smiles was a target for especial vituperation. Smiles (RR, pp. 166-7) is 'a barely perceptible insect on the fly-wheel of the mill which grinds exceeding small', but his 'pig-philosophy' required specific refutation. In general Furphy was less hostile to the authoritarianism he associated with the Roman Catholic Church than to forms of Protestantism. Although John Wesley is praised for the sentiment (RR, p. 158) 'If I die worth ten pounds, let posterity pronounce John Wesley a hypocrite and an impostor', Wesleyans in general receive sharp criticism. The most that Rigby is willing to concede to such disciples of Individualism is (RR, p. 185) that their error 'arises more often from a warped conscientiousness than from a deliberate perversity'. Rigby goes on to berate 'the various branches of the Wesleyan cult, where the pathetic effort to serve God and Mammon is reduced to a system fortified, by the accumulated sanction of millions of holy and money-making men...'

Collins believes that (SIL, p. 110),

> No eschatology, but that of High Calvinism anticipates anything resembling the injustice of a civilisation which, of set purpose, excludes from the only redemption flesh and blood can inherit, that sad rearguard whose besetting sin is poverty.

In this vein Furphy follows Cobbett rather than Paine, and also anticipates the connection perceived by Max Weber between Protestantism, especially Calvinism, and capitalism. The pipe, through Collins, pours scorn on 'your Christian civilisation' which heaps 'beatitude on successful greed' and had adopted 'the unspeakable insolence of a Gospel of Thrift, preached by the order of the rich man to Lazarus at his gate'

(SIL,pp.110-1). Bunyan, who urged flight from the City of Destruction rather than investment in it, is twice referred to (SIL,pp.37;87), although not as a counter-example to the sins of Calvinism. Sir Thomas Browne and the poets Cowper and Crabbe are cited by Collins' pipe as examples of the 'gentleman's religion', which consists of 'loathesome servility toward nobility and royalty', which thinks 'poverty, industry and piety a beautiful combination for the wearer of the smock frock' and which accepts 'the sanctified lie of social inequality' (SIL,p.113). Fortunately along had come Burns and Paine, who 'flashed their own strong, healthy personalities on the community', since when 'the Apology of Humanity acquires ever-increasing momentum'.

Particularly odious to Furphy was Orangeism, which, he argues, was deliberately introduced into Ireland with the aim of disrupting the radical and nationalist movements by sectarian discord, and was an ever greater 'criminal folly' than introducing into Australia 'sorrel, cockspur, Scotch thistle etc.' or 'foxes, rabbits, sparrows, etc.', and was comparable only with the deliberately introduction of hydrophobia or glanders (SIL,p71). In The Jeweller's Shop (BB, p. 139) Collins regrets that he once 'still believed in No. 309 as an Orangeman believes in the Number of the Beast'. July 12th, the anniversary of the Boyne, is always inauspicious in Furphy's thoughts, as in My Uncle's Treasure (BB, p. 167). Such sentiments are urged at considerable length by Collins as part of a Cobbett-like potted history of the Reformation. Collins argues that 'there is a greater difference between the Presbyterian and Episcopalian creeds than between the latter and the Catholic'., that 'the prejudice of the Irish Protestant against the Irish Catholic has the basest origin of all', that the 'so-called Anglo-saxons' are 'a people unpleasantly apt in drawing a

limitline to aggression on its pocket', and were 'the most contumacious brood at that time in Western Europe'. No fears of Rome were justified during the eighteenth century, claims Collins, following Lecky, since 'probably at no period since the days of Constantine ... was Catholicism so free from domineering and aggressive tendencies as during the Pontificates of Benedict XIV and his three successors' (SIL,p.73). Yet 'Divide and Rule' was the message of 'the foulest breath ever blown from the lips of God', the creed of the Orangemen, who were too ignorant, Collins maintains, to understand that 'England's original title to the over-rule of Ireland - and a perfectly valid one, as times went then - was the momentous bull of Pope Adrian IV issued to Henry II in 1155'. Collins deals gently with Rory O'Halloran's belief that the Garden of Eden had been emplanted by the Lake of Killarney (SIL,p.97) and is reasonable and balanced in discussing the characteristics of the Celts and of those they displaced in the British Isles (SIL,p.90), but British policies in Ireland arouse his deepest anger.

Furphy and Shakespeare

Furphy's general antagonism to the institutions and policies of England co-existed uneasily, with a deep affection for English literature, and in particular for Shakespeare. It is rare that there are three consecutive pages of Such is Life without a reference to the Bard. Collins has 'three note-books filled with valuable memoranda for a series of Shakespeare studies' (SIL,p.257), and gives his copy of Shakespeare to Rory O'Halloran as a keepsake (SIL,p.78). On K.A. McKenzie's calculations (1966) the Shakespeare plays referred to most frequently by Furphy in the three novels are: Hamle (72); Macbeth and As You Like It (each 19); Henry IV, Part I (17), and Othello (16). One of the central themes of Such Is

Life, that of 'the controlling alternative', is based on Cassius' words in Julius Caesar that there is 'a time in the tides of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune', etc. Instances of moments of decision after which Fate inexorably controls future events are provided from Hamlet: the instruction to the Players to enact the Murder of Gonzago, from Othello and from Macbeth (SIL,pp. 85 ff.). When Warrigal Alf Morris seeks Collins' advice about cases of jealousy he has known, including, unknown to the unobservant Collins, Alf's own marriage, Collins insists on regaling him with extensive examples of jealousy from Shakespeare, such as those of Othello, Troilus, Leontes in The Winter's Tale and Postumus in Cymbeline (SIL, pp.187-8).

Furphy's mother must have been particularly fond of the great tragedies as reading books for young Joseph. The station store-keeper Moriaty and Collins pass the time of day discussing the madness of Hamlet, Collins combines the Bard and Gray's Elegy to pun about 'where in each cell for ever laid, the rude forefathers of the Hamlet sleep' (SIL, p.293); in similar vein Collins suggests that Warrigal Alf is 'only mad enough to know the difference between an eagle-hawk and a saw' (SIL, p.289) Collins lapses into 'Hamlet-moods' (SIL, p. 163; RR, p. 9; BB, p. 63), while, as for monarchs and the mighty as much as for women, 'let them paint an inch thick, to this favour will they come at last' (SIL,p.142). A fall from a frisky horse evokes from Collins, 'Good night, sweet prince' (SIL,p.352), while he greets a swagman with, 'How fares our cousin Hamlet', and with a subsequent reproof, 'and why should the spirit of mortals be proud' (SIL,p.352). Hamlet's tombside declaration of love for Ophelia prouds the epigraph to chapter IV of Rigby's Romance. Rigby (RR, p. 123) quotes 'To this favor she has come' when he hears of the death of a once vivacious and

mercurial woman. When Barefooted Bob ridicules a performance of Hamlet he had seen on a visit to Melbourne, Furphy must have felt more discomfort than from Dixon's parody of Exodus.

Julius Caesar and Antony and Cleopatra are frequently quoted. Collins' bete-noires, English self-styled, gentlemen, pretend to 'bestride this narrow world like a colossus' (SIL,p.42); new chum Willoughby finds among the bullockies 'none so poor to do him reverence' (SIL,p.39); Collins' miscalculations about which bank of the Murray he is on lead him to exclaim 'O Julius Caesar! thou art mighty yet' (SIL,p.124). Collins consoles himself for his poor sense of direction with the thought, 'In Physical Science and in Pure Ethics - whoop - I am Antony yet'. (SIL,p.259); when he casts pearls of oratory in vain before the stolid Sollicker, Collins reflects, 'No one has dealt better since Antony harangued the Sollickers of his day on dead Caesar's behalf', although Antony had obtained more response than Collins got. When Warrigal Alf fails to understand a Collins allusion, as well he and we might, Collins replies, 'I spoke but by a metaphor. As with Antony, 'tis one of those odd tricks that sorrow shoots out of the mind'. Pondering on the fact that Mrs. Beaudesert, who has amorous designs on him, has already buried three husbands, Collins immediately recalls 'Come away, come away, death' from Twelfth Night, and 'No appearance, your worship. Call for Enobarbus; he will not hear thee, or, from Caesar's camp, say, "I am none of thine"' (SIL,p.165). Collins' stallion is called Cleopatra, although this does not imply that Collins thinks the great Queen was sexually ambivalent. Collins compares Rigby to Cleopatra (RR, p. 119) as being another of a lordly disposition able 'to be commanded by such poor passion as the maid that milks and does the meanest chares', but the comparison is especially inept since Rigby forgets his

beloved through absorbtion in his own voice and arguments.

Other Shakespearean tragedies stalk Furphy's pages. King Lear is offered by Collins (SIL, p. 118) together with Job and Oedipus at Colonnus, as the supreme masterpiece of tragedy. Life is compared at least twice (RR, p. xviii, p. 262) to 'this great stage of fools', the naked Collins is reminded (SIL, p.137) of 'unaccommodated man...a poor, bare, forked animal' in the highly uncomic storm in Lear; the misfortunes of Fritz remind Rigby (RR, p. 116) of Edgar's warning that 'the worst is never come while we can say "this is the worst"', and in another melancholy mood Rigby quotes (RR, p. 156) 'Gloster's lament that "As flies to wanton boys are we to the Gods, They kill us for their sport"'. In less solemn vein Collins quips (SIL, p. 118) when a roguish drover appears, 'And pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy'. References to Macbeth include 'the last syllable of recorded time (SIL, p. 260), 'sore labour's bath (SIL, p. 47), 'she would have died hereafter' (RR, p. 123) and 'Lay on, MacDuff' (RR, p. 218). Such is Life ends with a parody on the words of the defeated Macbeth, 'a tale told by a uulgarian, full of slang and blanky, signifying - nothing', an ending which has led critics such as Wallace-Crabbe (1961) and Mares (1962) to consider the novel to be ultimately nihilistic. The way in which the strongest self-control can finally be broken down by provocation is illustrated (SIL, p. 299) by Tybalt's enraging of Romeo, while Rigby finds (RR, p. 262) like Romeo that 'Philosophy could not make a Juliet'. Othello provides the epigraphs to chapters XXI and XLIV of Rigby's Romance. Collins makes the interesting claim that Desdemona loved Othello more as a narrator of heroic deeds than as a hero, so that in time she would have become bored with his stories and with him, whereas Fred the Buln-Buln, a latter-day Falstaff in his mendacity, who never accomplished any heroic deeds, will

prove an endless source of inspiration to his wife (BB, p. 103).

With the exception of the Falstaffian plays, Furphy refers less to the Shakespearian histories and comedies than to the tragedies. Epigraphs to chapters in Rigby's Romance are provided by Richard II (ch. VI), Coriolanus (ch. XX), King Henry VIII (ch. XIII), Comedy of Errors (ch. VII), Troilus and Cressida (ch. XVI). In discussing poverty Rigby is reminded (RR, p. 167) of Richard III's horseless plight at Bosworth and in relating Fritz'd problems (RR, p. 130) of King John begging for cold comfort.

Collins gives Kate Vanderdecken the unwelcome opinion (RR, p. 14) that he has always compared Rigby 'with the earlier Benedict-one woman was fair, yet he was well; another was virtuous, and he was well' and so on. Collins paraphrases Beatrice too (RR, p. 162) in replying to Rigby, 'I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedict; nobody marks you'. Collins notes too in the Buln-Buln (p. 33) that 'Sir Benedict the married man' must wear his rue differently. References to As You Like It include a discussion of the Seven Ages of Man (RR, p. 13), mention of Touchstone (SIL, p. 147) and Rosalind (SIL, p. 107), and (SIL, p.138) Collins finding tongues in the mosquitoes, books in patches of cutting-grass and sermons in stones. Twelfth Night is remembered in punning misquotation from Sir Toby (RR, p. 79) and from Malvolio (SIL, p. 293) and in the ironical use of 'Come away death'. Effective non-ironical use is made of the scene in which the Princess learns of her father's death in what Furphy terms (BB, pp. 15-16) 'that brighest of comedies, Loves Labour's Lost'.

Falstaff often lurks in Furphy's pages. Collins' tales to Warrigal Alf of jealousy are (SIL, p. 85) 'like Falstaff's story worth the telling';

Collins advises Thompson (SIL, p. 15) that unlike the villanous Mosey Prince, they should, like Falstaff, 'live cleanly, as noblemen should'; when new-chum Willoughby is thrown from a horse, Collins quips (SIL, p. 53), 'God help thee Jack, thou hast a bitter breakfast on't'; when caught trespassing by the squatter Stewart Collins defends himself with Falstaff's words, (SIL, p. 210) 'And if Adam fell in the days of innocency, what shall poor Tom Collins do in the days of villainy'. In Rigby's Romance Kate Vanderdecken (p. 30) is 'taking her ease in her inn - the only way in which she resembles Sir John'; Collins reminds his friends (RR, p. 50) that 'as Falstaff says, young men must live'; long experience of monotonous church services has given Collins (RR, p. 87) 'Falstaff's faculty of hearing without marking'; Rigby holds of mankind in general (RR, p. 116) that 'Like Falstaff's boy, he hath a good angel in him but the devil outbids him'; Collins claims, (RR, p. 168) that Rigby's 'good wit', like Falstaff's, turned evrything to commodity', but Rigby rarely remembers Fallstaff's advice about brevity. The epigraph to chapter XIII of Rigby's Romance is Falstaff's admission, 'How subject the old men are to this vice of lying'. We are soon reminded by Collins in the Buln-Buln too (p. 6) that 'Sir John also remarked how this world was given to lying'; Collins mutters 'involuntarily' (BB, p. 45) when he finds what company Bob, the native companion is in, 'God send the companion a better prince', Collins asks Fred the Buln-Buln (BB, p. 81) whether the large body of men he faced single-handed were 'in buckram'; when the young Thompson and Collins got into trouble trying to make bullets with stolen metal (BB, p. 92) 'like Sir John, we paid nothing for it neither, but were paid for our learning'. The capers and dances of Master Fenton (BB, p. 33), 'Hotspur on his crop-eared roan' (SIL, p. 275), and 'I would whip thy simplicity with my fine until thou went crestfallen as a dried pear', (SIL. p.165), a paraphrase of a

passage from The Merry Wives of Windsor are among the many referendes connected with Falstaff.

Furphy's attitude to Shakespeare had its pecularities. Collins makes a special point that 'William Shakespeare of Stratford' knew 'little of book-lore' (SIL p.40). Yet Collins himself is no enemy of book-lore and, more oddly, Furphy was a Baconian. He refers to the 'so-called Shakespeare Plays' (SIL p.187) and wrote in a letter to William Cathels (Franklin, 1944, p.126),

> Why, I used to have a copy of the vile old imposter as a frontispiece to my album, whilst holding a sort of foggy idea that Bacon had something to do with the invention of gunpowder a spectacles as well as being the greatest, wisest, etc.

Whoever Furphy thought wrote the Shakespearian corpus, his writing is suffused with allusions to it. Yet, apart from claiming Shakespeare as the exemplar of a high regard for women, Collins avoids commenting on any social or political implications in his plays. Perhaps Shakespeare stood too high in Furphy's esteem to be included in strictures such as those on Crabbe, Cowper and Browne, although acceptance and support of 'degree' or hierarchy is as great in Shakespeare as in them.

Furphy's Literary Canon

In Rigby's Romance Thompson reminds Collins (p. 53) of 'the ten masterpieces of poetry that nobody on earth, except yourself, had ever read clean through, or ever would'. The tone is jesting, doubly so since Thompson gave up the effort to read the masterpieces and instead donated all the volumes to a public library, but the list seems to represent Furphy's serious and considered judgement. Two works are in translation:

Goethe's Faust and Dante's Divine Comedy, although no classical works are included. Seven English poets are in Collins' recommended list: Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained ('counting the two as one poem'), Spenser's Faerie Queene, Thomson's Seasons, Young's Night Thoughts, Cowper's Task, Tennyson's In Memoriam and, the most unexpected selection to our contemporary judgements, Edwin Arnold's Light of Asia, which perhaps appealed to Furphy for its interest in beliefs outside narrowly western traditions.

Milton appealed to Furphy as a political revolutionary as well as for his poetry, but the main value derived by Thompson from Milton and Dante was to provide him (RR, p. 61) in Hell and the Inferno respectively with examples of suffering like those of his own courtship. Thompson must have read more widely in Milton however, since he is capable of expounding (RR, p. 121) how 'cynosure' is used in Comus, a feat which forces the clergymen Lushington to murmur, 'It takes my breath away...I've been strangely misinformed respecting the erudition of bullock drivers'. Lushington had already been surprised by the facility of Dixon with Latin tags, acquired from new-chum Willoughby during their partnership as bullockies.

Rigby (RR, p. 156) cites Goethe 'that we never hear of a crime that we might not have committed', but Faust does not appear to be quoted in Furphy's novels; nor do the Faerie Queene, the Light of Asia or Night Thoughts. The Seasons does not seem to be quoted either, but Thomson's Castle of Indolence provides the epigraph to chapters XXVI and XLVIII of Rigby's Romance. Cowper's The Task provides the epigraph to chapter VIII of Rigby's Romance and his poems Progress of Error, Truth and The Modern Patriot to its chapters XXXII, XVII and XXXVIII respectively. Cowper is,

however, together with Crabbe and Sir Thomas Browne, castigated by Collins (SIL, p. 113) for 'loathesome servility to nobility and royalty'. Crabbe is also used nonetheless for the epigraphs to the 'Proem' and to Chapter XI of Rigby's Romance.

Rigby (RR, p. 18) cites Tennyson, together with Byron, as an authority on men who have loved too well. Such Is Life opens with a burlesque of In Memoriam's 'Far-off divine event' and similarly uses (SIL, p. 166) 'men may rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things'. The short story My Uncle's Treasure ends (BB, p. 172) with a dreadful pun on 'A thousand types are gone, I care for nothing; all shall go', the point being that stolen treasure contains not gold and silver but printer's type. Collins manages an incongruous comparison betwen himself and Enoch Arden (SIL, p. 129).

Completing the ten works recommended by Collins to Thomspon was 'any poem of Walt Whitman's', whose Leaves of Green is quoted in Rigby and the Authoress (BB, p. 121), but other American poets are quoted at least as frequently. Emerson is quoted (RR, p. 99), Oliver Wendell Holmes provides epigraphs for chapters 111, XXV and XLVII of Rigby's Romance and James Russell Lowell to its chapters XVIII and XXXIX and Longfellow for its chapters V, XIV, XXVIII and XL, while a more extended reference to Hiawatha (BB, p. 16) suggests that poem had caught Furphy's imagination. Rigby's Romance ends with (p.264) with verses of Whittier which are, for once, movingly appropriate to their context, the fate of those, like Rigby and Kate Vanderdecken, 'who vainly the dreams of youth recall'.

Furphy's heroes among the poets are usually associated with radical

causes. Blake and Shelley surprisingly do not seem to be quoted, although Mary Godwin Shelly is, but Byron, Burns and Tom Moore figure prominently. Byron provides the epigraphs for Chapters XXll, XXXVl, XLl and XLlll of Rigby's Romance and Collins jokingly misquotes (SIL, p.120) 'Jordan's banks where the Arab Campbells stray and (SIL, p.209) to the Assyrian coming down, although not like a wolf on the fold. Byron's version of Eve's curse on Cain is credited (SIL, p.57) as coming from 'a fine drama', but as unable to compare as cursing with the habitual repertoire of Dixon.

Burns is praised (SIL, p.113) for being, with Tom Paine, a challenger to 'the sanctified lie of social inequality', and by Rigby (RR, p.161-2) as 'the poet and spokesman of human nature' who 'left the world incalcubly his debtor - an obligation which the world acknowledged twenty five years ago by giving him the greatest centenary in history'. Burns 'had bad times - thanks to the criminal blindness of his forefathers... and his honest protest has made times better for us, just as our protest should make times better for our successors'. Molly Cooper is fond of the songs of Burns and Moore (SIL, p.372) and discusses Burns' relationship with Jean Armour, showing sympathy for both wife and husband. Burns and Moore are also taken by Collins (RR, pp.10-11) to illustrate in their poems'two widely-divergent views of woman ... the former points the inherent sex-charm of Creation's fairest type; the latter pictures her attained sex-value'. Collins also compares Rigby with some reverence to Azim in Moore's Lalla Rookh as both 'voluntarily abiding under the limitations of chronic poverty'.

Given Furphy's passion for Shakespeare, there are relatively few references in the novels to the Bard's contemporaries. Dixon follows Willoughby in citing Ben Jonson (RR, p.37) that 'classical quotation is the

Masonic grip of cultivated minds', Jonson is also quoted by Rigby (RR, p.171) that 'the saving of a soul ... only serves the purpose of salt, to prevent decay of the body'. Beaumont and Fletcher (RR, p.112) are adduced as evidence for the late survival in England of the ius primae noctis

Less progressive poets usually receive little praise from Furphy, but Dr. Johnson twice gains approval for being a good hater (RR, p.196, SIL, p.213) and for his aversion from excessive washing. The reactionary Lushington is nearly allowed to win a debating point when (RR, p.157) he cites in favour of the inevitability of decline Johnson's couplets,

> From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
> And Swift expires a driveller and show.

Collins immediately caps him, however, with 'Which proves ... that the race is not to be swift nor the battle to the strategist'. Politically unenlightened poets in Pope, for chapters XII and XXXIV, and William Collins, for chapter XIX, are quarried for epigraphs in Rigby's Romance. Southey's After Blenheim is cited (RR, p.168) for its comment on the false glories of war. Other poets cited include Lady Anne Lindsay, Thomas Hood the Elder and the hymn-writers Watts, Heber and Henry Kirk White.

Novelists seem to have shaped Furphy's thought and language less than poets, but among these quoted are Steele, Fielding and Sterne among the English, and Cervantes, the Elder Dumas and Zola among the rest. Several recent or contemporary writers are sharply criticized or mocked by Furphy. Haggard, Stevenson and Kipling are jointly accused (SIL, p.207) of holding cheap the life of common men, Macauley of shallowness (SIL, p.300) in

claiming the 'Bengalee is characterized by absolete subserviency and the settled incapacity for resistance on the eve of the Indian Mutiny', and Thackeray (RR, p.123) of 'revelling in that purposeless cynicism which is his leading characteristic. Rigby (RR, p.186) declares, 'Becky Sharp's notion - so prevalent in the world - that it is easy to be good on #5,000 a year, argues a moral imbecility not worth criticism'. Ouida is frequently denounced as a writer of trash who is inexplicably popular even in the Australian Bush (SIL, pp. 79, 163, 208, RR, p.137). Charlotte Bronte is blamed by Dixon (RR, p.80) for misleading him into following Rochester's masterful ways with women, which in his case has led to disaster in courtship, not to conquests. Nineteenth century American novelists to whom reference is made do not fare well either. Dixon has tried Nathanial Hawthorne, but found him (RR, p.36) ''a (adj) fool; too slow to catch grubs'.

Several contemporary or recent writers with whom Furphy was very familiar make little or no appearance in his novels. In 1897 he followed Gilbert in writing to Cathels of his 'attachment a la Plato' to Kate Baker and noted of the original version of Such is Life (Franklin, 1944, p.50),

> There are 1125 pages in this MS and, if my calculations be correct, it would require 1435 of the same to hold Pickwick and 1403 to hold Romola.

References to Gilbert, to Dickens or to George Eliot in Furphy's novels are hard to find, however. Furphy's literacy judgements showed a strange contradiction. He wrote to Cathels in 1894 (Franklin, 1944, p.48), 'What a rotten world it was before Paine preached and Burns sang and Byron scoffed and Carlyle snarled'. Yet, once the world became less rotten the writers worthy of his praise seemed to have disappeared.

Furphy bete-noire was Henry Kingsley, especially Geoffry Hamlyn,

> Those whose knowledge of the pastoral regions is drawn from a course of novels of the Geoffrey Hamlyn class, cannot fail to hold a most erroneous notion of the suatter .... My diary might, just as likely as not, have compelled me to introduce ... a few of the remaining nine-hundred and ninety-five types - any type conceivable, in fact, except the slender-witted, virgin-souled, overgrown schoolboys who fill Henry Kingsley's exceedingly trashy and misleading novel with their insufferable twaddle (SIL, pp. 204-5).

One example of remantic distortion in novels of the Geoffry Hamlyn type alleged by Collins is their treatment of the skilful horsemanship of English new chums. Collins, after considering (SIL, p. 347) the problem of 'exercising a seasoned colt, thoroughly spoiled beforehand', declares,

> Your novelist, availing himself of his prerogative, fancifully assigns this office to the well-educated, well-nutured, and, above all, well-born, colonial-experiencer, fresh from the English rectory. But I am a mere annalist, and a blunt, stolid, unimaginative one at that; therefore not entirely lost to all sense of the fitness of things.

Furphy wrote to Cathels about Henry Kingsley, 'I hate that beggar' (Franklin, 1944, p.227) and this dislike was so strong that he made the odious Mrs. Beaudesert the daughter of 'Hungry Buckley of Baroona'. Kingsley was for Furphy only the worst, however, of a very bad lot so far as the colonial novel was concerned (SIL, p.339),

> ...I pondered on the quantity and quality of Australian-novel lore which had found utterance there. The outlawed bush-rangers; the lurking black-fellows; the squatter's lovely Diana-like daughter, awaiting and well-bred greenhorn ....And yet they were quite as reasonable as the discovery of the rich reef by the soft-handed, fastidious young gentleman-digger.

Collins is deeply offended too by (SIL, p.41),

> the three-penny braggadocio of class which makes the languid

> Captain Vernon de Vere (or words to that effect) an overmath for half-a-dozen hard-muscled white savates, any one of whom would take his lordship by the amkles, and wipe the battlefield with his patrician vision.

As with Biblical, Shakespearian and other literary lore, Furphy's classical knowledge is applied for humorous effect for the most part. In Such is Life Willoughy on the Riverina as an exile from England is like 'that most capricious poet, honest Ovid, among the Goths (SIL, p.5); the former wife of Warrigal Alf is fancied by Collins to resemble Circe (SIL. p.189); Mrs. Beaudesert is likened to Dionysius the Younger, who after the loss of his throne became a schoolmaster as an act of revenge so as to spread as much misery as possible (SIL, p.262); dirt and virtue are associated and vice with cleanliness, with Diogenes (together with Porson and Dr. Johnson) and the Sybarites as examples (SIL, p. 274).

In Rigby's Romance Fritz's financial disaster is compared to the lost legions of Varus (RR, p. 126); Rigby's protege Sam illustrates force maiore (RR, p. 256) with a quip of Pompey's: 'Why prate you of privileges to men with swords in their hands?' and can cite Plato's Republic with ease; Collins and his mates are so determined to organise a trip to Hay and Goolumbulla successfully (RR, pxxii) that 'if we could not command success, we could do more, Sempronius, we would deserve it'. Reminiscing from the Greek, Rigby reminds his friends (RR, p. 74) that as a means of seduction, 'Gathering flowers is good, but hackneyed....it dates from the abduction of Persephone'; the unsuccessful meeting of Fritz and Mina before their final parting is compared (RR, p. 118) to the fate of Orpheus and Eurydice. In the Buln Buln Mrs. Falkland holds (BB, p. 54) that if Napoleon III had borne in mind Alexander the Great he would have placed her young husband in charge of the entire French army in 1870; 'the dangers of asking too many

questions, whether by children or their elders', are underlined by thoughts on the fate of Socrates (BB, p. 50); the paradox of Cretan liars is well presented (BB, p. 6); Freddy's figurative drawing of the long-bow is compared (BB, p. 6) with the more literal feats of Teucer as well as of Locksley and William Tell; Barefooted Bob accepts the claims of phrenology, which, he claims (BB, p. 94) follows in the path of Greek wisdom: "know thyself", says the Hellenic sage; an' sixty generations have endorsed the impossible wisdom of the precept'; and Thompson questions Collins in (BB, p. 88) 'the tone which Xemocrates might have used in addressing Plato.'

Some of Furphy's classical allusions are less facetious. The opening discussion in Such Is Life (SIL, p. 1) considers the operation of Free Will and Determinism 'from the fall of captured Troy'; Collins hopes (SIL, p. 109) with Plato that 'no soul misses truth willingly'; Solon's warning to Croesus about the vanity of wealth is cited sombrely; the ruin of Molly Cooper's beauty is likened to the fall of Pygmalion's statue (SIL, p. 304). Furphy had an unhappy marriage, so that Collins' theory (BB, p. 30) 'that women do not love their husbands' is not merely flippant. Collins argues that the Greeks held Cupid (love) to be born of Venus (Desire) and in due time to be wedded to Psyche (the Soul) - Psyche alas cannot leave well alone, nor could Artemis leave the sleeping Endymion in peace,and, Collins argues, women come to despise their husbands through familiarity even more than servants do their masters. John Wesley, Dr.Johnson, Belisarius and Ruskin are offered (SIL, p. 32) as examples of men disvalued by the women who know them best, but Collins makes the point against himself, since Mrs.Falkland adores Fred more and more with greater acquaintance with him, even through her knowledge is entirely spurious.

Collins usually has a good word for the Stoics, whose theory, (BB, p. 5) 'will sturdily survive all chimerical and convenient hypotheses of heredity and atavism'. Collins admiringly describes Rigby (RR, p. 14) as a disciple of Epictetus 'endowing him with a form of selfishness that puts other people's generosity to shame'. In an optimistic moment Rigby asks Thompson (RR, p. 177) to 'promise to carefully read the Encheiridion of Epictetus if I give you the book tomorrow'. Thompson declines this kind offer, but Furphy regretted throughout his life that he lacked a more thorough grounding in the classics. Furphy wrote to Cathels (Barnes, 1981, p. 417),

> It makes me wild to think that if my enslaved forefathers had stood up for their citizen rights instead of shouting "To Gehenna with the Pope' I would have been able to speak as familiarly of Polybius and Herodotus and Xenophon and Strabo and such like as girls of thirteen do of puppy dogs.

The claim that his Ulster Protestant forebears were 'enslaved' is typical Furphian hyperbole, but it is at least possible that a more systematic education would have enabled him to make more profound use of the wide knowledge he acquired. Against this it can be argued that those who received such an education rarely made very constructive use of it and, more tellingly, perhaps, that Furphy made only superficial use of much of the work he read in his mother tongue. This point may be considered in the light of Furphy's attitude towards the medieval.

Furphy was almost as steeped in Scott as in Shakespeare and the Bible; his first poem , written at twenty-four about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, was in the style of Marmion and The Lady of the Lake. The Lady of the Lake is quoted in Rigby's Romance (p. XIX), while Dixon is described (RR, p. 235) as 'the Australian Cuddie Headrig'. In general, however,

there is little trace in Furphy of the admiration for medieval values and culture which so powerfully influenced so much nineteenth century British thought from Scott, through Carlyle and Tennyson, to William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites. Rigby (RR, p. 112) even accuses 'the Tory Scott' of referring 'pleasantly' to the ius primae noctis in Ravenswood. Chaucer is mentioned only because Jack the Shellback tells a lewd tale (SIL, p. 341) 'which Chaucer or Boccaccio would have rejected with horror'.

When the oppressed skivvy Ida claims in an argument, 'I can prove it on the Bible', Collins' responds, 'you rightly belong to the Middle Ages' - a remark which Ida misconstrues as a reflection on her own age (SIL, p.276). The medieval baron is seen by Collins as a ruthless predator: 'it was a large part of the religion which guided his rascally life-to wolf his half-raw pork in fellowship with his rouse-abouts; hence he could bash the latter about at pleasure' (SIL, p.255). Humorous references are made to the personal dirtiness of Peter of Picardy, the Crusader, and of Otto the Great, to Lady Godiva on the subject of nakedness (SIL, p.125), and to Hengist as the ancestor of the bovine Sollicker (SIL, p.171). The strictly hierarchical station is called Runnymede, suggesting that that site was associated in Furphy's mind more with class oppression than with constitutional liberty. References are made to Bayard, the type of chivalry, and to an aphorism of Pandulf, but Furphy rarely finds relevance in medieval experience to any permanent and thus contemporary problems.

Yet Rigby (RR, p. 95) follows Cobbett in claiming that

> we know that the English peasant in Chaucer's time was much better off than his descendant in Cowper's time, though four centuries of material and intellectual progress lay between.

These medieval peasants were in their turn, Rigby holds, worse off than

'their ancestors, the Anglo-Saxon invaders'! Rigby argues (RR, p. 96),

> My own remote ancestor, the free Saxon barbarian, who voted his chosen leader to the chieftainship, was represented at the time of Ivanhoe by a descendant wearing a brass collar inscribed: 'Gurth, the son of Beowulf is the born thrall of Cedric'.

Rigby opposes the historians of the school of Freeman, who contrasted Pre-Conquest liberty with Norman oppression, and holds that degeneration had already taken place before 1006,

> What did it matter to Gurth whether Saxon earl or Norman baron kept him making bricks without straw?

Furphy and the British

Furphy's attitude to things English was curiously ambivalent. Little good is said about any past or present aspects of English life in Such Is Life. The Wentworth St. John Frenches (SIL, p.193), the supercillious Folkestone, visiting the squatter Montgomery, the inept squatter Smythe, the amiable but feckless Willoughby and the slow-moving Sollicker, thick in body and mind, are the main representatives of the English in the novel. In a discussion on 'the secret of England's greatness', the principle of the division of labour advanced by Adam Smith is held by Willoughby to be less important than 'her dependencies'. The text implies that this is so, but only because imperial power is gained at the expense of colonies such as Australia (SIL, p.5). English law is mocked as a mere cover for the privileges of property: (SIL, p.339),

> regarding the article as treasure trove within the meaning of the Act, I formally took possession under 6 Hen. III, c.17, sec.34; holding myself prepared to surrender the property to anyone clever enough to sneak it, and cunning enough to keep it.

Lushington's Burkean claim (RR, p. 95) that, 'and yet our British freedom

has broadened down from precedent to precedent' is simply the occasion for Rigby to maintain that on the contrary, 'the freedom to oppress is the only growth of socio-political organisation which, in any race, or any times or under any form of government, has of its own accord broadened down from precedent to precedent.'

As for battles long ago, (SIL, pp.132-3),

> we perceive that the bloodiest battle ever fought by our badly-bushed forefathers on British soil - and that only one of a series of twelve, in which fathers, sons, brothers and kinsmen, and fellow slaves exterminated each other - was fought to decide whether a drivelling imbecile or a shameless lecher should bring our forefathers under the operation of I Samuel, viii.

It is no surprise that the last sentence of Such Is Life is a parody of 'a tale, Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing.'

The Scots, despite their high profile in the expansion of the British Empire, are dealt with gently by Furthy. Dr. Johnson's remark about the attractions to Scots of the road leading from Scotland into England is contested by the squatter Stewart, (SIL, p.213) while great play is made of Collins' pretence to be a Scot from Ecclefechan, birthplace of Carlyle, in order to get around Terrible Tommy (SIL, p.195ff).

Furphy and the Irish

As for the Irish, Collins, as noted above, expresses at length his loathing of Orangeism and expresses sympathy with the native Catholics, whom he sees simply as victims of Anglo-Saxon aggression. Collins refers with disgust (BB, p. 28) to the life annuity of 100 pounds, chargeable on an Irish estate, gained by Fred Falkland for no services to the Irish

people. This sympathy does not lead to positive respect however. Collins notes (BB, p. 6) that 'the Orangeman, of the present day called the Roman liars, just as the Romans of old did the Greeks, and the Cretans each other'. Collins does not suggest that contemporary Catholics thought Orangemen any more truthful. The disputes on Irish history between the Catholic Moriaty and the Orangeman Martin - 'there was just one man within a hundred miles who knew less of Irish History than Martin, and that man was Moriaty' (SIL, p.277), are inaccurate and grossly prejudiced on both sides. When it is remarked that the O'Grady brothers 'were careless and intemperate, great lovers of racehorses, and d--d extravagant all round', Collins comments, 'Familiar faults with people named O'Grady' (SIL, p.215). Moriaty has seriously compromised himself with wild gambling and hopes to recover by even wilder bets (SIL, p.280). Collins has considerable fondness for Rory O'Halloran (nicknamed Dan O'Connell), and the death of his daughter Mary, a child lost in the bush, is an important component of the novel, but Rory is so naive, superstitous and incompetent that the reader feels some sympathy for his embittered Protestant wife as well as for him. There is little in Irish history which Collins finds likely to be of much value to Australia, to compensate for the sectarian disputes it has contributed. The young Collins tells the young Thompson (BB, p. 19) to call him 'Terry and says he will 'speak with a slight Irish accent', to give greater conviction to their impersonation of bush rangers. They threaten Fred with (BB, p. 22) 'Shling ye'r revolver afther id, an' the cush o' Crammel an ye'. Similarly references are made to Irish improvidence. In High Art (BB, p.131) a Mrs. Maguire is 'confined, every three or four months, on an average', according to the young Thompson's gynaecological knowledge.

Furphy and other peoples

Furphy's references to the histories of other peoples are usually humorous, but frequently aim too to expose the evils of war and of nationalism. Collins on entering a pub (SIL, p. 142) is reminded by his need for corks of Napoleon's words on the eve of signing his first abdication: 'If I only had a hundred thousand men!' Willoughby's inability 'to take a man's place among rough-and -ready workers' (SIL, p. 4) reminds Collins of 'the inability of the wives of Napoleon's generals to learn to walk on a carpet'. Poor Thompson sees his own life (RR, p. 52) as 'just composed of retreats from Moscow', an analogy he also uses (RR, p. 68) specifically about his misfortunes with a wagon just outside Barmah. The difference between the reach of the sound of thunder and that of artillery fire is debated by Collins and Barefooted Bob (BB, p. 47) with examples taken from Jena and Waterloo. The follies of war are registered by quotations from Southey's Old Caspar and from General Napier after the storming of Badajos (BB, p. 168-9). The Franco-Prussian War is treated more elaborately because it provides the context (BB, pp. 92 ff.) of some of Fred Falkland-Pritchard's imagined heroics. 'Apres moi le deluge' is an almost inevitable comment (SIL, p. 14) from one of the bullockies short of water, but St. Just, a leading representative of the deluge, is mentioned kindly (RR, p. 117) in the context of 'no rest for revolutionists but in the grave'. A respectful mention is made by Rigby (RR, p. 121) of Rousseau's 'moral being', while Proudhon's text 'Property is robbery' is also (RR, p. 1320) quoted reverently by Rigby. Columbus is (RR, p. 35) only 'a man with a fad', but Galileo (RR, p. 230) is a more authentic precursor of Rigby's advanced thought. Francis Xavier is favourably mentioned (BB, p. 47) for weaving 'his whole life into the first great Oriental mission', one which had no commercial objective. Germans and

Dutchmen provide additional comic relief in the Riverina, like the Dutchman who (SIL, p. 223) has a name which would 'have strock der yolly fear of Gott into der Spaniar' und der English'.

If one takes into account that Rigby's Romance centres on the relationship between two Americans, that Furphy's first published work was a poem on the assassination of Lincoln, a deed for which Furphy, curiously, had some sympathy, and that the United States was in many ways the type of republic which he wished Australia to be, it is surprising that there are not more references to the United States in his work. Collins is reminded of Marching Through Georgia when first riding the skittish Cleopatra (SIL, p.11), and Rory O'Halloran can comment on 'the character of each President from Washington to Van Buren' because one of the few books he owns contains this information (SIL, p.67), but there is very little more.

Furphy and Australian History

In his discussion of a century of White Australia Collins is clearer about his dislikes than his likes. Indignation is expressed about the dogmatising on 'the Coming Australian' indulged in by Marcus Clarke, Trollope, Froud and Francis Adams, but, after disclaiming any special authority himself on the subject, Collins considers the matter at some length (SIL, p.180). The bush is for Collins the authentic Australia (SIL, p.81),

> It is not in our cities or townships, it is not in our agricultural or mining areas, that the Australian attains full consciousness of his own nationality; it is in places like this, and as clearly here as at the heart of the continent.

The true laconic Australian has been formed by a real man's life in the

bush (SIL, p.207),

> No young fellow in that great rendezvous dared to embellish his narrative in the slightest degree, on pain of being posted as a double-adjective blatherskite; for his audience was sure to include a couple of critical, iron-grey cyclopaedias of everything Australian - everything at least untainted by the spurious and blue-moulded civilisation of the littoral.

A theme which fascinated Furphy was the effect of life in Australia on the original stocks from the British Isles. Collins tackles the question of degeneration in typically facetious vein, but with a bite behind the humour. Warrigal Alf was (SIL, p.202),

> a decidedly noble-looking man, of the so-called Anglo-Saxon type, modified by sixty or eightly years of Australian deterioration. His grandfather has probably been something like Sollicker; and the apprehension of that discomfortable cousin were being fulfilled only too ruthlessly. The climate had played Old Gooseberry with the fine primordial stock. Physically the Suffolk had degenerated into the steeplechaser; psychologically, the chasm between the stolid English peasant and the saturnine, sensitive Australian had been spanned with that facilis which marks the descensus Averni.

The opinion expressed by Sollicker earlier was (SIL, p.179),

> 'Climate plays ole Goozeb'ry wi'heverythink hout 'ere. C'lonians bea n't got noo chest, n' mo'n a greyhound'

Sollicker expresses the view that his own son will similarly degenerate, but since, unbeknown to him, the boy has been fathered by the Scottish squatter for whom Sollicker works, there is no way in which his theory can be tested.

One odd belief which Furphy seems to have had is that exposure to Australian conditions had increased masculine tendencies in women. Jemima (Jim) is an androgenous figure, while both Mrs. Sollicker and Molly Cooper

are described as having strong growths on their upper lips.

Collins strongly opposes any notion that the coming of the white man has injured the flora and fauna of Australia (SIL, p.83),

> I have reason to remember that I quoted Sturt's account of the Old Man Plain as a desert solitude of the most hopeless and forbidding character. But, as I pointed out, settlement had crept over that inhospitable tract, and the Old Man Plain had become a pastoral paradise, with a possible future which no man could conjecture. Then I was going on to cite instances, within my own knowledge and memory, of permanent lakes formed in Northern Victoria, and a climate altered for the better, by mere settlement of a soil antecedently desiccated and disintegrated by idle exposure to the seasons.

Collins' references in Such Is Life to Aborigines and to Chinese, the two other groups in contention for the land in late nineteenth century Australia, are contemptuous or hostile. The process of evolution, seen as a form of progress politically as well as genetically, will bring about the replacement of "Jacky XLVIII'; 'the Evolution of Intelligence has stripped him of former prerogotives' (SIL, p. 142). The Blacks are conceded certain qualities. After the failure to find the lost child in time to save her life, Thompson remarks (SIL, p.241) 'You see, we were nowhere beside Bob, and Bob nowhere beside the old lubra', whose aid had not been sought.

In a disquisition on heredity and environment, Rigby seeks to deny Lushington's claim (RR, p. 132) that 'dipsomania is a transmitted weakness, or, at least, that heredity is a very powerful factor here' by asserting that 'Noah's unfortunate propensity [was] latent for-let's see-take Ussher's chronology - latent for, say a hundred and thirty generations', before reappearing in the Australian Aborigines, 'a race as susceptible to the temptation of drink as any on earth'. James Thorpe, Junior, in the

short story of that name is proved by his ineptitudes (BB, p. 176) to have the same knowledge 'as a black fellow has of the Higher Criticism'.

The two fullest treatment of Aborigines by Furphy are very different from each other: the first is in the short story A Vignette of Port Phillip and the second the discussion between Barefooted Bob, the Brolga or Native Companion, and Mrs. Falkland-Pritchard. The Vignette includes both a sympathetic description of the Aboriginal past and the Upper Yarra and profound pessimism for the Aboriginal future. Characteristic passages include (BB, pp.179 ff.)

> If the heaven of the hedonist be found (as some think) is idyllic conditions of life, the aborigines of the Upper Yarra bade fair to enter into that illusory paradise. For countless ages stationary as to population, disturbed by no aspirations, and governed by tradition alone, they hld undisputed possession of a tribal heritage unsurpassed in all resources that conduce to physical welfare.
>
> In accordance with such external conditions the moral temperament of the tribe was genial, generous and magnamimous. Physically they were a race of athletes incredibly expert in bushcraft; and the women were comely, as aboriginals to.
>
> From the first contact of black and white races on the yarra a mutual good-feeling prevailed. one underlying cause may be noticed. Only three years before the settlement of Port Phillip negro slavery had been abolished by legal enactment throughout the British dependencies. The movement had been of slow growth, definitely affecting popular thought in the direction of sympathy with dark-skinned races in general. Hence he moral atmosphere at that time was tinged by a theoretical recognition of common manhood, irrespective of colour. his was manifested in the attitude of the Port Phillip squatters and their employes toward the local blacks, as well as in strongly worded official charges from the Colonial Office. Owing to this wave of popular sentiment, the blacks were not only better treated than defenceless natives usually are, but were better understood. Happily, no rash act of hostility on either side precipitated a collision; and the cordial relations of the two races remained unbroken to the last.
>
> And the last days were already in sight. No benevolence could have preserved the indigenous race. Born into a narrow horizon of life, their fatal contentment had paralysed initiative so

> effectually that all individual potencies of innovation-never lacking where man is found-died with each brain so endowed. Therefore, apart from social disposition, their idea of personal excellence implied nothing beyond a superior dexterity in the construction and use of their anomalous weapons; whilst the supernatural element-also inseparable from human nature-found exercise in a far-reaching cult of sorcery.

The exchanges between Mrs. Falkland-Pritchard and Barefooted Bob are of a very different character. Mrs. Pritchard is a true precursor of twentieth century progressivism, so different from that of Furphy and his circle. She has a deep reverence for Aboriginal place names, arguing (BB, p. 52) 'in spite of the paramount significance of local designations - or, perhaps because of it - the map of this young land is already defaced by ugly and incongruous names, transplanted from the other side of the world'.

White deeds have been worse than white names in Mrs.Pritchard's view. She asks Bob (BB, p. 66) 'aren't the poor creatures often treated cruelly by new settlers' and suggest (BB, p. 67) that 'we boast of our civilisation but the trail of the serpent is over it all'. Bob's blunt opinion is (BB, p. 66) that 'it don't do blackfellers any good to civilize 'em'. Mrs. Pritchard finds a 'strange interest' (BB, p. 87) in 'the possession of the boomerang and the lack of the bow', which 'seems to separate the indigenous Australian from every other race'. This interest is not shared by Bob however, who claims (BB, p. 96),

> I never studied blackfellers. In fact, missus, to tell you the truth, they don't bother much about manners and customs, so there ain't much to study. Anyway, they're dyin' out by degrees, so the time ain't fur off when it won't matter suxpence what their manners and customs was like.

When invited by Mrs. Pritchard for further details, however, Bob replies,

> they smoke when they can git tobacker; an' they booze when they can git grog; an' they got no shame in regard o' cadgin, an' very little shame any other way.

The only Furphian link between Aborigines and Chinese, the two main groups competing with the British and Irish for the land, is made in a yarn by Barefooted Bob (BB, p. 78): an Aboriginal group he and 'two other blokes' had caught up with were 'jist finishing' off a Chow, only three weeks before; an' another Chow with his legs broke, keepin' fresh for when he was wanted? The Chinese are depicted as cunning but treacherous, as when Chinese boundary riders ambush the bullockies In Such Is Life.

Furphy never suggested that any Asian political or cultural traditions had present or potential value for Australia. On the contrary he saw Asian labour as an enemy to liberty, since the Chinese and the rest had no experience of free institutions or of personal independence and seemed incapable of acquiring those virtues. Furphy expressed some sympathy with Chinese subjected to British invasion (BB, p. 163 ff.) and he did not deny that they were industrious in Australia: the family in A Spec. that Failed (BB, p. 154) work 'such hours as no decent Chow would tolerate'. These attributes did not endear the Chinese to the bushmen, however. When Thompson recalls his uncertain reputation with his would-be parents-in-law, he remarks (RR, p. 56), 'Sometimes, I seemed a fine promising young chap, and other times I seemed about on a level with a Chinaman'. Collins argues (SIL, p. 256) during a discussion on the refusal of the typical bushman to submit to the squatters,

> Either the anachronistic tradition (of squatter control) must make suicidal concessions, or the better-class people must drown all plebeian Australian males in infancy, and fill the vacancy with Asiatics.

The squatters M'Gregor and Smythe employ a large number of Chinese on their station. Smythe is 'condemned by his social equals; hated by his inferiors, and popularly known as the Marquis of Canton...his appreciation of the cheap and reliable Asiatic was passively recognised by a station staff of Joss-devotees' (SIL, p.192). Furphy's strong pro-Boer feelings arose as much from his White Australianism as from his antagonism to Great Britain.

Several elements in Australian life have little prominence in Furphy's novels. Collins recalls (SIL, p.256) that squatters could once dominate their convict servants by physical force, but the convict past has cast few shadows on Furphy's Riverina. Rigby (RR,p.109) claims with indifferent historical accuracy that Australia's first white immigrants 'were hanged wholesale for stealing lambs', while his young disciple Sam tells the tale (RR, p.193) of his innocent transported grandfather as follows,

> Sposen there's a man in a place called Sussex, in England, an' this man shakes a bushel o' wheat for his missis to boil for the kids to keep 'em from starvin' - does God give that man seven years' laggin', and then set him adrift, with his ankles wore to the bone with the irons, and his shoulders like a soojee bag with floggin'? Well, that was my gran'father - an' as descent a man as ever your gran'father knowed how to be. Is that God's style o' punishin' people with the Criminal Law? Don't talk rubbage.

These are debating points, however, rather than living grievances. Bushrangers were played down too by Furphy, who gave no publicity to the myths already accumulating around Ned Kelly and denounced (SIL p.339) novel writers' exaggerations of bushranging. Collins pays tribute (SIL, p.194) to a 'frankhearted old Eureka rebel'; Rigby suggests (RR, p.97) that 'between Senlac and Eureka' was a period during which 'human rights didn't

broaden down by any process of easy evolution into your present citizen rights'; he also attacks (RR, p.199) 'Governor Hotham and his wire-pullers and satellites'. Yet such references are relatively sparse. Perhaps the Diggers at Eureka and their successors showed too much of that Individualism and desire for personal advancement which Furphy, especially through the voice of Rigby, found such an obstacle to the building of a Socialist Commonwealth.

References are made to Adam Lindsay Gordon (SIL, p.12) whose verses are used as the epigraph to chapter XV of Rigby's Romance, as are Lawson's to chapter X and Kendall's to chapter XXXIII. Non-literary references are made to 'Bligh like impartiality' (SIL, p.333) and to the unsuitability of Burke to head any expedition. Burke is lambasted at length (SIL, pp.32-4), despite Willoughby's pleas to recall 'de mortuis nil nisi bonum'. The qualities of Sturt and Eyre as explorers are discussed with approval by Collins and Rory, but only to expose Rory's unthinking parrotting of unconnected information (SIL, p.83).

Furphy's Ideology

There were some basic contradictions in Furphy's thinking about the past. One was the contradiction between his genuine delight in knowledge about the particularity of human life in all its varied guises and his conviction that such knowledge is in the end useless. This rejection of the value of the past is stated at some length through the pipe (SIL, p.112-3),

> Inconceivably long and cruel has the bondage been, hideous beyond measure the degradation of the disinherited; but I think the cycle of soul-slaying loyalty to error draws near its close.....with few exceptions indeed, the prevailing and conspicuous element in all

> publications of more than a century ago is a tacit acceptance of irresponsible lordship and abject inferiority as Divine ordinances.

If that were anything like the total value of knowledge of the Dark Ages which preceded Paine and Burns, it is hard to see why Furphy should have worried whether the names of Belisarius and the rest of the mighty dead were remembered or not. In practice, fortunately, Furphy's love of so much of the past prevailed over his dogma and transcended his naive millenarianism. Indeed one of his great virtues was his ability to question his own most prized beliefs, particularly in Rigby's Romance, in which Rigby himself is often held to gentle mockery as he adumbrates doctrines near to Furphy's heart.

Another contradiction was between Furphy's overt and explicit rejection of the political structures and traditions derived from Britain, particularly from England, and his admiration not only for the literature and cultural values so closely linked to those structures, but also for the political virtues of liberty and equality which, however imperfectly represented in English life, were more fully developed there than anywhere else. At the heart of White Australian radicalism was a tension between the need to define a distinctive national ethos with 'temper democratic; bias offensively Australian', by emphasising the differences between Australia and England, and the desire to develop political institutions which were essentially an extension of English political traditions and not a repudiation of them. Furphy did not find in any contemporary states models to follow which were superior to the radical strand inherent in the English tradition.

Furphy was very much a Utopian Socialist in the pejorative sense in

which Marx and Engels used that term. Despite his detailed knowledge of the land and of the organisation of industry, he failed to make any adequate linkage between political ideas and material conditions of life. Furphy, through Rigby, follows Marx in denouncing 'wage-slavery', but, unlike Marx, he shows little understanding of the achievements of capitalism in developing human productivity and in knocking down 'Chinese walls'. Rigby's attacks on slavery and serfdom lose much of their force if what has replaced them is no better. Rigby denounces (RR, p.98) 'the present social system of pastoral Australia as 'a patriarchal despotism, tempered by Bryant and May', while (RR, p.205) all peoples are similarly oppressed by 'the ravenous hounds of monopoly, capitalism, and competition, which are gaining upon us with every step of civilisation, and already snapping the weary and heavy-laden by tens of thousands'. The deep confusion at the heart of Furphy's conception of progress is well revealed in Rigby's admiration (RR, p.202) for Spartan society : although he holds 'no brief for the Spartans as a community', his praise is won because there 'the accumulation of wealth was made impossible'.

Rigby almost anticipates Pol Pot, let alone Lenin, when he argues (RR, p.111),

> ...the Spirit of Freedom demands absolute self-surrender of certain individuals, as the price of light and warmth to others. And where history shows periods of that national declension, that all-round fitness for wiping-out, which inevitably follows on class-degradation.....

Rigby places equality, of a sort, well before liberty, and glady endorses the right of a new Moses, in the name of the new God and his Commandments, to crush the mutineers. Since he believes (RR, p.207) that 'crude human nature may be educated to any form of government, without involving the

slightest outrage on inherent moral constitution', Rigby sees no reason 'for drawing the line at the merging of private interests in public welfare which Socialism demands'.

Summary

Furphy considered Rigby's Romance to be his best work and hoped that its political message would exert a powerful influence. Few readers agreed with his judgement and even fewer were swayed by the opinions put in Rigby's mouth. It is melancholy, although instructive, to ponder how an admirer of Falstaff could turn into Malvolio, how the celebrator of the free-and-easy relationships of the bullockies could become the advocate of totalitarian control, how the critic of the lack of full human enfranchisement in the English political tradition could become so contemptuous of those freedoms it had succeeded in embodying. To re-read Rigby's Romance is to be reminded, despite its abundant humour, of the fragility of liberal democracy in the twentieth century.

Despite this authoritarian strain in Furphy, one found much more widely in Lawson, Archibald, Lane and in other representatives of Australian radicalism in the late nineteenth century, the virtues of Such Is Life transcend Furphy's faults. The didactic and the doctrinaire in Furphy are often unconsciously and sometimes, surely, deliberately undercut by verbal and contextual irony; the wealth of literary and historical allusion, at first reading a sign of the pedantry of the self-taught bush scholar, brings an enormous range of human culture to bear on the detailed and pithy presentation of bullocky and station life on the Riverina. Paterson and Lawson were essentially parochial, as was A.G. Stephens, despite his parading of his interests in French and German literature;

Brennan, together with most of the literary critics and academic historians, had only a superficial knowledge of the life of the mass of the Australian people. Furphy succeeded in relating a rich selection of significant historical and literary lore to specific conditions and problems of contemporary life. The aridity of his political doctrines was overcome by his ability to create a convincing range of characters in whom there was very little stereotyping. His steeping in the Bible and in English literature, especially in Shakespeare, ensured that the virtues of the traditions which he criticized for their shortcomings and errors were also conveyed to his readers. His implicit delight in so much of the detail of the human past contradicted his explicit message that we must burn our barns and build anew.

Chapter Seventeen

Archibald, Stephens and the Bulletin

Archibald and identity

In her 'The Archibald Paradox' (1983, p.ix) Sylvia Lawson claimed, 'The Archibald paradox is simply the paradox of being colonial'. She backed this opinion with the argument,

> Metropolis, the centre of language, of the dominant culture and its judgements, lies away in the great Elsewhere; but the tasks of living, communicating, teaching, acting-out and changing the culture must be carried out now Elsewhere but Here. To know enough of the metropolitan world, colonials must, in limited ways at least, move and think internationally; to resist it strongly enough for the colony to cease to be colonial and become its own place, they must become nationalists.

Is there evidence of any correlation between personal or artistic autonomy and the adoption of Australian nationalism? Much post-Mazzini nationalism was at least as imitative of a pre-formed cultural model as was the 'non-nationalism' which Archibald and Syliva Lawson derided. The real Archibald paradoxes were, firstly, that he combined Australian nationalistic rhetoric with a desperate attempt to provide himself with a new and false identity as little like that of his countrymen as possible, and, secondly, that he sought to combine a virulent chauvinism and racism with a cosmopolitan or universalistic aesthetic.

John Feltham Archibald was born in 1856 near Geelong of pious Catholic parents, his father being a well-respected police sergeant and his ancestors either Irish or Scottish. His father's occupation gave Archibald no special sympathy with the forces of law enforcement. He became a militant abolitionist after covering an execution as a cub journalist; if other

sentiments might change, Archibald's detestation of capital punishment never varied, although at times he showed an even more intense interest than at others in the mechanism of hanging and in the emotions of the condemned.

Archibald's first interest in securing a different identity from that with which he was born perhaps arose from childhood acquaintance with the family of Ricciotto Garibaldi, a son of the great Giuseppe who had himself received a sword of honour for gallantry in service with the French army in 1870. When a young clerk in the Victorian Education Department, Archibald found other cosmopolitan role models, such as Francois Morel, a colleague of French and African origins who was an accomplished linguist, and a French merchant family with cultivated musical tastes. Instead of French and African, Archibald chose French and Jewish as his preferred origins and Jules Francois as his name. This surprised his father, who had worked hard to educate his son well, sending him after some years at the local Catholic school in Warnambool, where he was then stationed, to Henry Kemmis's Grammar School, which provided John Feltham with Latin as well as a sound prose technique in English. Since John Feltham also seemed devoted to the memory of his mother, who had died in childbirth when he was a small boy, his actions puzzled his family.

Archibald was sufficiently successful in his transformation to be frequently referred to in later life as a Jew of mysterious origins. Perhaps it was partly to further his new image that he married Rosa Frankenstein, a Jewess whose father was a coffee merchant in the East End of London. They met in London in 1884 during Archibald's visit, married in Sydney, had a child who died soon after birth, and soon became deeply alienated from each other. By that time Archibald's true spouse was the

Bulletin. Given the confusion in Archibald's mind about his own identity and antecedents, it is hardly surprising that his conceptions of Australia's origins and national character were highly unreliable.

Archibald's hatreds

As noted earlier in connection with its boycott of the 1888 centenary and its denunciations of ongoing British guilt, not of the convicts but of those who sentenced them and guarded them, the early Bulletin was not merely republican and in favour of the immediate end of any constitutional connection between the Australian colonies and Great Britain, but virulently antagonistic to British, particularly to English, cultural influence. In the perception of the Bulletin no progress worth celebrating had been made over the first century of the creation of the White Australia it was so vital to preserve. There was some consistency in the attitude of William Lane, who left for South America once he convinced himself of the worthlessness of centennial Australia, but Archibald was not a potential emigrant. The Bulletin centennial issue of 21 January 1888 conceded some superficial appearance of Australian progress, but held this to be illusory,

> Australia shows many signs of advancement, and the records of them are writ large on the documents filed in the office of the English money-lender. English capital is "imported" every day to "develop the resources" of the new land...every improvement which the country boasts pays toll to a greater or less extent to England, and Australia is eaten up by the payment of eternal interest.

Had no more English investment been made in Australia, the counter accusation of holding the country to ransom was available. Although living standards were on average higher in the Australian colonies than in the United Kindoma, and although the Bulletin often lauded the sturdy

independence of the average Australian, who was, it held, a real contrast from the effete Englishman, it argued: 'A century of grovel has almost abolished the virtue of self-reliance, and Australia has learned to put her trust in pawnbrokers until she has little that she can really call her own'. The tirade concluded: 'And it is in honour of these things that Australia rises to celebrate the great day when her ancestors were lagged. Another such century and it will be time for us to be transported to Patagonia.'

The Bulletin operated on the principle that the enemy of my enemy is my friend, finding the Mahdi's followers to be 'a brave and devoted people' resisting 'invasion and subjugation' in 1885, and the Afrikaners similarly praiseworthy in 1899. Archibald made an important personal contribution to the promotion of anti-British sentiments. During his visit to London in 1883-4 Archibald took all the worst examples of poverty provided by Andrew Mearns' pamphlet 'The Bitter Cry of Outcast London' and presented them as typical of the life of the working classes of London as a whole. The indifference of the rich lost nothing in the telling either (Bulletin, 29 Dec. 1883),

> We hear the clamour of recrimination, and the frothy declarations that 'something' must be done. And we know with all the assurance of experience that nothing effectual will be done - that at the first voicing of practical counsel the privileged and propertied classes will shut their hearts again with a snap, and rend the air with angry shrieks that the throne, the constitution, true religion, the rum interest, the rights of property, vested interests, the structure of society, are assailed and in peril...

Archibald certainly did not lack assurance, but he was not a reliable prophet in his constantly repeated warnings of the imminence of bloody revolution: 'the Bitter City will turn to such a fierce one as has not been heard since it rose in the streets of Paris in 1789'. Had his sociological

analyses dwelt less on the extremes of rich and poor and more on the elaborate differentiations of British society, his confidence in the imminence of revolution might have been less assured.

Archibald described London in another report to the Bulletin (Lawson, 1983, p.104-5), as follows,

> I was appalled in London at the unspeakable, incredible callousneses of the rich towards the poor; at the denying of meals to the wan and hungry by the fat and fashionably dressed; at the brutal struggle for the cast-off cigar-butt in the street...I can never forget the procession of poor, shivering sandwich men I saw tramping one bitter winter's morning through the London slush, with broken boots, to advertise the fatted publisher, Barabbas, who was exploiting - what? Let me tell you: M. Tissot's 'SPLENDIDLY ILLUSTRATED LIFE OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHIRST.

Archibald was a master of Morton's Fork and there was no way in which any of the rich could avoid his charges. Indeed, the considerable concern among the upper and middle classes about the depths of poverty was used by Archibald as another prong with which to attack them (Bulletin, 17 May, 1884),

> Everyone now in London 'goes sluming'. Dukes and bishops poke their noses into unspeakably horrible holes, and wonder that heaven doesn't send a judgement on 'the abject poor' for being so miserable and dirty. But really the discovery of how the poor live is very useful. It is so very hard for the aristocracy to find anything novel and interesting. They lead a cruelly hard life. Noon after noon they rise from bed...and suffer unutterably in the effort to find some thing worth their weary, well-bred attention.

Whether or not the starving masses of the British Isles rose in arms against their government was of less importance to Archibald than the threat he thought was posed by a multi-racial British Empire, whose non-white subjects might be infiltrated into Australia. With the support of James

Edmond, whose racial hatreds even exceeded his own, Archibald's most cherished slogan was 'Australia for the Australians'. During the course of its campaign against closer imperial ties with Britain, the Bulletin asked (2 July, 1887),

> What similarity of race or aspiration exists between Australians, Burmese, Hindoos, Chinese, Maltese, and the hundred or so distinct peoples which combine to make up the heterogenous Empire known as the British? If England cannot convince Ireland that the two countries have an identity of interests, how much less can she convince us that the centre of political gravity is London?

The same point was made in the Bulletin three years later (29 Nov. 1890),

> There is no bond of sympathy between the Australian farmer and the rankrenting Irish landlord, or between the gold digger of Charters Towers or Bendigo and the Leper of Hong Kong. The citizens of Sydney respectfully but firmly declines to be a brother by Act of Parliament to the Hindoo, or to become related to the Hottentot and the Egyptian merely out of regard for the murderous traditions of England, for under a system of Imperial Federation some 270,000,000 cheap Indians and innumerable myriads of still cheaper Chinese would have the run of this Continent...

The Bulletin answered questions about nationality, loyalty and citizenship with the claim that peoples of cultures racially or ideologically different from the Australian could never become Australian, but that all English-speaking Whites who possessed the correct radical, republican and racial values, were in a sense half way to being Australian already,

> By the term Australian we mean not those who have been merely born in Australia. All white men who come to these shores - with a clean record - and who leave behind them the memory of the class-distinctions and the religious differences of the old world; all men who place the happiness, the prosperity, the advancement of their adopted country before the interests of Imperialism, are Australian. In this regard all men who leave the tyrant-lands of Europe for freedom of speech and right of personal liberty are Australian before they set foot on the ship which brings them hither. Those who fly from an odious military

> conscription; those who leave their fatherland because they cannot swallow the worm-eaten lie of the divine right of kings to murder peasants, are Australians by instinct - Australian and Republican are synonomous.

The 'unpersonning' or exclusion from the ranks of the 'people' of undesirables and the ideologically mistaken has been taken during the twentieth century to lengths beyond the conceptions of Archibald and Edmond, but they were true precursors.

For several years the Bulletin's anti-British sentiments formed part of a general anti-imperialism and 'Little-Australianism'. As an 1890 editorial put it (29 Nov.), 'The Australian refuses to surrender his own liberty, or to crush out that of any other nation. And, in addition, he declines to take over any share in England's enemies, who are numerous...'. The desire that the rest of the world should simply leave Australia alone was expressed in 1899 (25 Nov.) in the Bulletin even more sharply: 'For hundreds of years to come Australia's prayer to the world must be merely that of DIOGENES to ALEXANDER: Stand out of my sunshine!'. Archibald was strongly pro-Boer, or at any rate strongly anti-British, in South Africa; he told the San Francisco Examiner (13 July, 1900, cited in Lawson, 1983, p.212): 'The Boers are fighting for their rights, the same as the thirteen colonies did during the American revolution. It is monstrous that Australia should send soldiers to South Africa to help Britain wage this unholy war'. The dangers which the Bulletin perceived in the determination of Asian peoples to enter Australia led it later, however, to demand a more forward British policy in the Pacific and in South-East Asia.

The Chinese, already in Australia in considerable numbers, were the heart of the yellow peril of the 1880s in the Bulletin's view. There was no

subterfuge or concealment: the stated 'Platform' of the journal included 'Australia for the Australians - the cheap Chinaman, the cheap Nigger, and the cheap European pauper to be absolutely excluded'. Again Morton's Fork was active. An 1880 article (1 May), 'The Chinese Question', argued, 'the Chinese bring no women with them, and foster immorality wherever they settle' and that 'the races should not be allowed to mix', which they were doing 'to an appreciable extent in the lowest quarters of the large cities'. On the other hand the solution of bringing in Chinese women in something like equal numbers was opposed as the direst way in which to intensify the problem. The most virulent anti-Chinese campaign by Archibald and his colleagues was launched on 21 August, 1886. A double-page cartoon showed 'The Mongolian Octopus - His Grip on Australia'; the tentacles of the creature were labelled Immorality, Smallpox and Typhoid, Opium, Briber, Fantan, Pak-Ah-Pu, Customs Robbery and Cheap Labour. The text of the main supporting article began with,

> Disease, defilement, deravity, misery, and crime - these are the indispensable adjuncts which make Chinese camps and quarters loathsom to the senses and faculties of civilised nations. Whatever neighbourhood the Chinese choose for the curse of their presence forthwith begins to reek with the abominations which are ever associated with their vile habitations.

The conclusion was that,

> until the leopard changes his spots, and the Ethiop his colour, the Mongols will continue to be an ulcer in the fair bosom of Australia. Expulsion, and expulsion alone, can meet the necessities of the case.

A fortnight later (4 Sept. 1886), after an attack on Henry Parkes for being insufficiently anti-Chinese, the Bulletin offered an historical explanation for the vice and perversion of the average Chinaman,

> He is the product of a peculiar national system. The oppression of long centuries of pauperism has enfeebled his sinews, as the

> sensual indulgence of many generations of ancestors has wasted his brain. Enslaved by the traditions of the remote past, and the writings of their sages of 20 centuries ago, the Chinese are unique among nations in that they have not advanced in thought or method as they increased in number and density of population...Poverty naturally settled down upon the nation, and deterioration of force and character was the sure result. Thus the lowest class of Chinese especially - the classes which, speaking generally, infest Australia - are the living witnesses of the degrading influence of the basest of all conservative systems.

In the 27 April 1889 Bulletin leader some of the journal's other enemies were implicated in the succour of 'the opium-sodden leper - the hereditary enemy of our country and our race'. These were the 'sweater', the 'pious warehouseman' and 'the Anglican parson'. It was conceivable, although it was not demonstrated, that some employers preferred Chinese labour, but inconceivable that any preferred leper labour; since few Chinese in Australia converted to Anglicanism, the precise sordid motive activating the anti-White Anglican clergy remained an even greater mystery.

In respect of Aborigines the policy of Archibald and his colleagues was to kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand they had contempt for Aborigines. The first major statement came in the 19 June 1880 issue,

> The Australian aborigine is a doomed man. Heaven help him! his gaiety has no parallel save the ghastly jokes of Dickens' dying clown and the mad laughter one hears in a lunatic asylum. The 'civilized black' as we of New South Wales know him, is a wretched creature. He is madly fond of drink. His future was blasted before his birth by the vices of the white man. The poor inebriated wretch...

On the other hand the Bulletin attacked colonial governments to which it was hostile with massively exaggerated atrocity stories. In a crudely simplified account of white occupation of the Palmer goldfield, stage one was the entry of the white men who gave Aborigines bread; in stage two

Aborigines speared horses; and in stage three white men gave them lead instead of bread. It went on,

> Since then there has been open war between the races, and there is hardly a man in North Queensland whose motto is not 'see a nigger and "pot" him'. The blacks have been murdered by thousands...the white settlers' policy has been one of extermination...This is not fiction, but is the statement of one who not three years ago saw in a Queensland scrub the unburied corpses of men, women and children who had been murdered by the officers of "justice" and left for the crows...And what is happening in Queensland once happened every day in New South Wales'.

The officers of justice in question included Black Troopers, who, even if the accusations against them had been true, could hardly have sought the extermination of all the Queensland Aborigines, of whom they formed part; if the White Australians had aimed at extermination, their level of efficiency was very poor compared with that of other peoples who were indisputably genocidal. The most hypocritical aspect of the article was its conclusion that 'It is too late to talk of preserving the aboriginal race. It is and always was Utopian to try and Christianise it. Rum and European clothes have ruined the people who half a century ago were temperate and naked'. If the reason for the decline in the Aborigine population was a policy of extermination, there were indeed steps which governments could immediately take to change that policy, even were it beyond their powers to prevent frontier violence completely. Archibald and the Bulletin cannot be credited with much concern with historical accuracy or with any genuine wish to change contemporary policies.

The positive Archibald

In opposition to the effete but ubiquitous English, the diseased but fertile Chinese, and the drunken Aborigines, fallen irretrievably from their

primitive nobility, Archibald and his colleagues offered a form of Australian nationalism. The Bulletin was certainly consistent in its attachment to its first leader of 1881, written by William Henry Traill,

> It is about time that Young Australia commenced to assume the management of his own affairs. His state of tutelage has lasted more than long enough. He has to many uncles, too many self-constituted trustees...

The little Boy from Manly was one of the most popular Bulletin symbols of a 'young' nation faced with Fat Men, Imperialists and a Yellow Peril.

Archibald's populism extended to hoping that most, or at least much, of the Bulletin's content would consist of contributions from readers, although the motives for this policy may also have included cost-cutting and a belief that it would boost circulation. Archibald rarely, however, showed much confidence in the mass of the Australian people. There was a genuine dilemma for him to face. If a century of British colonialism had been as bad as he painted it, how could it have produced a capable, energetic and patriotic population? In The Bulletin's Centennial Oration (21 Jan. 1888) was the discouraging message,

> The spirit of LALOR and LANG is the spirit that we long for in our public men, but it is the spirit that seems to have taken flight with the men who gave it birth...In Australia of yesterday, pioneers, diggers, Democrats. In Australia of to-day, toadies, grovellers, lick-spittles.

On that basis the Australian colonies had better men after half-a-century of gubernatorial rule than after half-a-century of internal self-government, but before or after Eureka there was little good the organ of Australian nationalism could find in the national past of Australia. The Bulletin's attack on the celebrations of 'The Day We Were Lagged' or 'the meanest

event' of the 'short history' of 'the nation which was built on the triple foundation of cat, gallows and rum' concluded that 'Leaving the rum, the cat and the gallow, however, there is little cause for exuberance'. The Bulletin found no improvement by the time the Commonwealth of Australia was established, holding (28 Sept. 1901), 'The bastard flag is a true symbol of the bastard state of Australian opinion, still in large part biased by British traditions British customs, still lacking many years to the sufficiency of manhood!'.

A similar problem faced the Bulletin's support for the Bush against the City, where it was produced and where its proprietors preferred to live. On the one hand the life of the city was depicted as dreadful, as in the adaptations for Sydney by Henry Lawson and Francis Adams of English critiques of 'Outcast London', but, in addition, as Archibald told an unsuccessful contributor (Bulletin, 26 Feb. 1898), 'Wattle never blooms in the BULLETIN'. Archibald never shifted from his baleful indictment of the society of which he claimed to be a defender. In his later articles on 'The Genesis of the Bulletin' (Lone Hand, I, 4, 1907, p.432) he wrote of the Sydney of the 1880s and 1890s,

> There was no health in the public spirit. Socially, politically, all was a mean subservience to a spirit of snobbery and dependency. What was most Australian in spirit had been lost in the secession first of Victoria and then of Queensland. Sydney, socially, limped in apish imitation after London ideas, habits, and manners. Politically and industrially it was the same. And over all brooded in law courts, press, and Parliaments the desolating cruelty inherited from 'The System'.

It is difficult to find any aspect of the Australian past, other than Eureka, which was used only as a stick with which to beat the enemy, or of the human past as a whole, which had much positive significance for

Archibald. His affectation of French and Jewish origins led to no genuine affection for anything French or Jewish. When A.G. Stephens visited him in Callan Park Asylum for the Insane in 1907, Archibald's ravings included (Stephens, 1978, pp.424-5), 'I feel so strong. I never strangle a man. I take him by the neck and hurl him through the door. That's the way I'll serve MacLeod (his partner)'. Stephens' comment on this, and much more like it, was 'The singular thing is that his point of insanity should be the very point on which he was inclined to excess even in his sane years'.

A.G. Stephens: background

Arthur George Stephens was born in Queensland in 1865 of parents who had very recently immigrated from England. His father prospered, becoming among other things part-owner of the Darling Downs Gazette, and A.G.S., as he was best known during the height of his powers as literary editor of the Bulletin, was decently educated at Toowoomba Grammar School before being apprenticed in the printing trade. He had early journalistic experience as editor of The Gympie Miner, as sub-editor of William Lane's The Boomerang and the Cairns Argus, as well as journalistic experience in London with The Daily Chronicle before in 1894 he accepted Archibald's invitation to work on the Bulletin.

The three Australian papers on which Stephens worked before joining the Bulletin all went bankrupt, but in no case does this seem to have been his fault. During those years he showed lively intellectual interests, lecturing to the Gympie Literary Circle, for example, on Thackeray, Gordon, Sheridan, Moliere, Marlowe and Seeley's Expansion of England. He was also an active member of the local Secular Association, in whose journal he wrote articles debunking Christian beliefs and practices. In early millenarian

vein he wrote in The Apostle (Palmer, 1941, p.5),

> Christianity says that man has fallen: Secularism teaches that man has risen, is rising still, and will continue to rise as he learns more and more of his own wonderful capacities...

Stephens and the history of Australia

Stephens recognized (Bulletin, 9 Dec. 1899) that 'in Australia, we have no temples, no ashes worth the name. We have still to make the history and create the legendary association which are such a binding force in national life'. His judgements on the first century of White Australia were inconsistent, but on the whole they were less adverse than those of Archibald and of the general editorial line of the Bulletin. At the most negative he could write of the impact of white colonization (Bulletin, 27 Oct. 1900),

> Then were heard in the land the rattle of chains, the sound of the lash, the death-cries of aborigines, and the mad laughter of the lucky digger - memories which make us think that perhaps, after all, civilisation is only a wild beast pretending to be tame in a semi-detached villa.

Stephens appreciated, however, that to portray the early history of White Australia as simply a catalogue of crimes would not serve to inspire national pride among his readers. Using the ambiguity noted by Lawson about the noun Australian, and extending the Bulletin's ideological definition of what constituted being an Australian, Stephens developed a useful distinction between being British and being Australian which was frequently brought into service during later decades. The simple trick was to call people British when they were doing things of which you disapproved, but Australian when their conduct was more conformable to your tastes. Early colonial criticism of the Aborigine was (Bulletin, 6 Aug. 1900), 'based on two grounds: in the first place, he was black; in the second place, he was

not British'. It was 'British vice and disease' which had 'destroyed more than half of the aboriginal race'.

Stephens often wrote in the noble savage vein of pre-contact Aboriginal societies. In a review in 1906 (Bulletin, 29 March) of 'The Euhalayi Tribe' by Mrs Langloh Parker, who had been influenced by Andrew Lang, 'whose ignorant speculations about the aborigines are very tiresome', Stephens wrote,

> The fact is, of course, that before the English came, Australia was, for the black men, something very like a white man's idea of Paradise. The race was healthy, strong, and happy. The land gave food so bountifully that the labour of securing it was little more than a sport; and life was a scarcely interrupted holiday...The Australian aborigine had attained without agriculture and metals a state of material civilization which northern races reached only by continuous labour. Civilization is essentially the state, not the ways of reaching the state. The individuals of civilized nation toil hard - to what end? Simply to gain the power to ease toil. But Australian aborigines were already at the goal.

Some of his comparisons between the blissful life of the Aborigines and the squalor of civilization may have been so extreme as to be counter-productive. In what he supposed to be a defence of the traditional Aborigine Stephens wrote (Bulletin, 6 Aug. 1900),

> He was a cannibal when the corpse was succulent; since, like everything else, cannibalism is a matter of taste...When a good man died, the primitive Australian... ate him in order to assimilate his good qualities. It was one way of reverencing virtue. If the corpse belonged to an enemy to eat was a compliment as well as a sacred mystery of tran-substantiation...He was not a monstrous cannibal, like the British industrial system, devouring the flesh and blood of a hundred thousand victims.

Stephens and influences on Australian Literature

Stephens was a literary critic and editor, not a historian, and one of

his main concerns was to emancipate Australian literature from what he conceived to be excessive English influence. He objected (Bulletin, 25 June. 1898) to,

> the calm assumption that English literature is to be our chief, our only source of inspiration...sprung as we are from the English stock, our literature must be an offshoot of English literature, but that it should be a devout imitation on a Jingo basis is neither necessary or desirable...To fetter Australian ideas through English modes alone would be the depth of fallacy. We have the right and the duty - if we are developing a literature - to found it on the broadest basis, the world-wide basis. We are heirs not only to the English literature but to every other literature as well.

Which were the main non-English sources which Stephens thought might best nurture Australian literature? It was not to Aboriginal myth and legend, however much he might express admiration for the Eden-like life of pre-contact centuries. Nor was it to Chinese literature: although he engaged in less 'yellow peril' warnings than did other prominent figures on the Bulletin, Stephens never suggested that any Asian literature had relevance or significance for Australians. Although Stephens liked his description by Victor Daley in 1899 as 'The Red Page Rhadamanthus', he warned against excessive reliance on the European classical tradition. In his own Bookfellow (3 Jan. 1907) he took issue with Professor Tucker of Melbourne University on the place of the classical languages in education. Stephens denied that dead languages such as Ancient Greek and Latin had any contemporary relevance, and argued that any worthwhile ideas they contained were now 'easily attainable in vernacular translations', unlike the situation faced by the men of the Renaissance'. Stephens offered the highly undemocratic argument that 'For statesmen, for scholars, Greek and Latin and liberal education of the universities - by all means. But not for the ruck of workers...'. How on that basis a worker could become a statesman,

Stephens did not explain.

Stephens included classical references in his own verse: in his 'Babylon' Prometheus is invoked; in 'Of the Seat of Love', Diana, Venus, Helen and Nicaean barquantines have ironic employment in a comic ode to the liver. In his amusing 'Poetelepath', the poetry-producing machine which is at the centre of the story can churn out allusions to Selene, Endymion, Sappho, Phaeon, Laura, Catullus and Apollo, as well as to Lancelot and Guinevere. Yet Stephens had deep reservations about the value of classical literature even in translation. The human mind had, he believed, made great progress, so that (Bulletin, 7 Jan. 1899),

> the plain emotions, the simple scenes, which may be presumed to have intoxicated the Greeks of 2,700 years ago, are not the highest poetical boon which modern readers can desire. Nor, in spite of tragic passion and picturesque phrasing, are the imaginative vagaries of Dante most sufficing. According to present lights, the Dante and Homer of tradition are twenty-five per cent genuine poetry and seventy-five per cent academic humbug...

Most passages in Dante's Inferno would not, in Stephens' opinion be judged of sufficient quality to find space in the Queenslander, let alone in the Red Page of the Bulletin. When lamenting the death of Stephen Crane, the gifted young American author of The Red Badge of Courage, Stephens wrote (Bulletin, 11 Aug. 1900). 'The figures of Homer and Shakespeare are, for the most part, mere puppets beside those which Crane drew.' Stephens went on to indicate some ways in which Crane was not their superior, but these qualifications were hardly adequate.

Thus, although Stephens once conceded that 'We all stand on the shoulders of the Past', he was entirely on the side of the moderns against

the ancients and seems to have valued highly very little from the past. What of the modern French, in whose honour his editor had changed his given names? Stephens sometimes praised French authors, particularly when contrasting them with their English contemporaries. He claimed (Bulletin, 23 Jan. 1897) that 'Verhaeren and Verlaine have far more poetical significance than the rabbits of the English warren like Kipling and Watson' and from time to time he compared Australian and French writers: Brennan with Mallarme, and Lawson and Alec Montgomery with de Maupassant. In an article on 'The Short Story' (Bulletin, 21 March, 1896), Stephens cited as outstanding short story writers, in addition to English and American writers, Balzac, Maupassant, Gautier, Mendes, Bourget, Merimee and Richepin. Yet these allusions were miniscule compared with the space he devoted to writers in English. In his longest Bulletin article on French literature, on 'Symbolist Poetry' (19 May, 1900), Stephens concluded by expressing concern that symbolism was suffused by fashionable forms of mysticism, which, he held, 'appeal to weak and feminine minds' and were 'associated with individual decay or racial decadence'. Furthermore, Stephens implied that Brennan, for whom he lacked sympathy, had been unpatriotic in allowing himself to be influenced by Mallarme and French symbolism, even in a search for technique rather than for content.

When directly considering recent and contemporary English writers, Stephens rarely showed much relish for their work. He held (Bulletin, 16 Dec. 1899) that the concluding Christmas chapter of On Our Selection 'may challenge comparison with Dickens' Christmas Carol for fun, and swing, and spirit...to Australians, at least, it is far more real and convincing'. Ruskin wrote 'imaginative gibberish' and his 'head was always in the clouds, like his writings'. Although Stephens expressed sympathy for the Bronte

sisters, on the grounds that their father had 'insane tendencies' and 'was nothing short of a murderer' in his treatment of his wife and daughters, he thought Wuthering Heights 'crude, without proportion, yet not without power. There is a great deal of dramatic talent, but small literary talent'. The Tenant of Wildfell Hall was dismissed by Stephens 'as dull as most stories with a purpose' and the poetry of Charlotte and Anne as 'hardly more than schoolgirl verse'. The Professor, Villette and Shirley were all preferred by Stephens to Jane Eyre. George Eliot, so admired by Catherine Helen Spence, was mocked by Stephens for her propensity to kill off her characters by inconvincing drownings. In his 'Poor Mary Ann' he has her say,

> I know 'Deronda's' far too long
> And far too ponderously written;
> I know that it is very wrong
> To drown a hero like a kitten;

Burns was usually well regarded by Australian radicals, but Stephens held that 'he had not a first-rate poetic brain; he was perhaps not sufficiently cultured or sufficiently meditative for a poet'; Burns was 'of the Shakespeare type - the type of extense, no intense energy'; 'most of Burns' verses are rhymed commonplace'. The best of Burns, including 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'My love is like a red, red rose,' was, Stephens argued, not written by him but lifted with very little alteration from traditional folk song and story. That article (Bulletin, 23 (Oct. 1897) elicited more letters from Australians of Scottish birth or descent than anything which has ever appeared in print in Australia.

Stephens was glad that, like microbes, literary influences weakened with time, so that Australian writers could (Bulletin, 7 Jan, 1899),

> defy the microbes of Tupper and Bailey. The microbe of Pope

> finds us, on the whole, an unsuitable culture-medium. And the microbe of Tennyson is not half as dangerous as it was fifty years ago, when it came down like a dingo on the unvaccinated flock.

Stephens found it difficult to decide whether the past was a straitjacket or a springboard. In 1907 (Bulletin, 14 Feb.) he objected that it was 'the fashion to declare the Renaissance a period of wonderful inspiration', arguing that 'it was much more a period of wholesale thievery. The live bees robbed the ancient hives and made their own hives glorious'. He did not explain why, for example, Shakespeare might have written better plays had he chosen only contemporary situations rather than inter alia well-known incidents in the Trojan Wars or the last years of the Roman Republic. Stephens made the strange claim that Australians could not borrow from the past in the way in which the Renaissance had borrowed from the Ancient World, 'unless somebody discovers a buried civilisation at Easter Island, or an antique literature in the Marquesas. Our fathers, the glorious Elizabethans and the rest, stole the whole visible stock of brooms...The Melbourne Catullus cannot pen two lines before the ghost of the Roman one arises to say "That's mine"'. One is reminded of John Stuart Mill's fear that all the best tunes must already have been written.

Stephens had a sounder point when he argued that,

> The very thing which detracts most from Tennyson's claim to the highest poetic rank is the very thing which seemed to the men of his generation the chief support of his claim. Beyond all other verse writers he embodied the spirit of his time. But his time has gone, and the spirit of his time has gone, and the chief cause of his temporary success is the seed of his (by comparison) permanent failure.

Where Stephens conspicuously failed as a critic was in his inability to add to the commonplace thought that writers reflect their time some serious

consideration of how value and relevance of a more universal character are achieved and recognised. The only step which Stephens was able to take beyond a trivial unconditional relativism was to offer a crude empirical quantification, as in the Bulletin of 17 February 1900,

> This standard of force is the ultimate standard. Tastes differ with individuals, countries, and areas, but three and two are five, twice five are ten, everywhere in the universe...Uncle Tom's Cabin impressed many, and much; but for how long? Catullus writes better literature than Mrs Beecher Stowe - because people of 'taste', people of 'culture', people of 'learning', prefer Catullus. Her work dies; his lives through the ages. His mind's 'effective manifestation' surpasses hers.

Not only was the argument circular and question-begging, but it accorded badly too with his rejection of the significance with which people of taste, culture and learning continued to invest Homer and Dante.

Stephens and Australian literature

When dealing directly with great writers of the classical, European or English past, Stephens had some difficulty in acknowledging greatness, a major weakness in a leading critic who was seeking to expand literary enthusiasm among a very broad readership. Ironically, it was when he was engaged in trying to place Australian writers that Stephens was most often just to others.

Stephens sought to limit hubris among Australians about their literary achievement. In a lengthy essay in the Commonwealth in 1901 (Stephens, 1978, p.77), Stephens was dismissive of early Australian literature,

> I impeach the past, and the writers of the past. Where is the achievement that should have been Deniehy's? How little of their promise was fulfilled by Kendall and Clarke! We make excuses for them and the excuses hold whiskey but they will not hold water.

He commented that 'Times have changed since Kendall praised Harpur over Harpur's grave, and Harpur counts no longer; he is as rough as Heney, but Heney is a poet...'. Times had changed in the greater number of Australian poets and, in Stephens's view, in their higher quality. Yet his claim was the limited (Review of Reviews, 15 Oct. 1899, p.504) that 'We have begotten or bred several poetic minds whose best utterances rank with anything that is being written in the domain of minor verse to-day'. Out of the forty poets he thought worthy of mention in nineteenth century Australia thirty-two were men and eight women, while twenty-four were born in the colonies and sixteen were 'alien-born', all in the United Kingdom.

Stephens subsequently wrote of Kendall (Bookfellow, 15 Dec. 1919) that Donald McLean was right in describing him as 'a skylark singing in his country's dawn'. Stephens regretted that Kendall was so receptive to the influence of other writers, to Poe, Tennyson, Swinburne, Patmore and Christine Rossetti, and even Milton, but it was Kendall's lack of control over his own life, rather than his excessive reading of other poets that Stephens blamed for his failure to achieve more.

Stephens also paid attention to literary influences on Gordon, 'the poor baffled idealist', picking out (Bookfellow, 15 March, 1920) Scott, Aytoun, Lockhart, Byron, Macaulay, Swinburne, Tennyson, Whyte-Melville and the Brownings: 'From the adored Byron of his boyhood to the beloved Swinburne of his manhood, Gordon's verse is imitative. He is a translated classic, a Bohn for bushmen.' Stephens denied (Bulletin, 26 Oct. 1895) that Gordon deserved to be described as a bush balladist, since he 'had too much "culture", too many of the rhymester's airs and graces, ever to be natural - and a "ballad" which does not spring spontaneously from the soul has not

right to the title'. Stephens considered, 'Though often crossed with an original warp, commonplace wisdom is the typical woof of much of his poetry'. Yet, as he noted (Bookfellow, 15 Aug. 1921), it was the poetic expression of common sentiments that many Australians most admired in Gordon; Stephens had just met an Australian in London who 'dropped large, splashing tears on the page' as he read the stanza 'Life is mostly froth and bubble'.

Stephens judged Henry Kingsley kindly, although he was less an Australian novelist influenced by English models than an Englishman writing novels about Australia. Stephens noted of Geoffry Hamlyn (Bulletin, 28 Sept. 1895), that 'The point of view is English; the characters are all English: Australians are only introduced as stupid leggy youths like the spitting Hawbucks; and the story ends with a triumphal return to England where Sam, it is to hoped, makes a suitable Swallow, and Alice duly disperses old gowns to the village clothing club'. His conclusion, however, was that, although Kingsley 'just prattled on...and the story comes less from his head than his heart', 'he is simple, manly, unaffected; and his John Bull prejudices...are the natural prejudices of his day and generation, birth and breeding'.

Stephens was also fair to T.A. Browne ('Rolf Boldrewood'), whose conservative ideas were as repugnant to him as those of Kingsley. Stephens recognized (Bookfellow, 15 April, 1920), that Browne had 'a remarkable knowledge of the Australian life and character of his epoch' and that it did him no harm at all that 'he followed Sir Walter Scott's advice to observe and copy the fact'. Stephens' view that none of Browne's many other works compared in quality with Robbery Under Arms has stood the test of time so

far, as has his judgement that its strength lay in 'the bush boys and girls, and particularly the old father, Ben Marston'.

Stephens held (Bookfellow, 15 Jan. 1920) that Marcus Clarke, although an English migrant, had been 'Rightly named the brightest star in the Australian literary firmament of his epoch'. He could not avoid noting that Marcus Clarke was a borrower, since he had been accused more than once of downright plagiarism. Stephens considered the chief influences on Clarke to have been Balzac and Hugo's Les Miserables, as well as Disraeli, Dickens and, most of all, Thackeray. Stephens greatly admired His Natural Life, the best parts of which, it may reasonably be argued, were not only borrowed from the documents, but whose use as evidence for the prosecution was the main objective of the novel. The passages which Stephens picked out as his favourites were chiefly ones which Clarke had invented himself, however, such as the suicide of Tommy and Billy, which had wrung many hearts and aroused much protest against the infamies of the convict system.

If Gordon had been too mannered to be a genuine bush balladist, Paterson was categorized by Stephens (Bulletin, 26 Oct. 1895) as a mere bush balladist and nothing else,

> 'The Banjo' is just the ordinary bush bard sublimated - raised to the nth power, as it were. He is not akin to the bush 'poet' for his work is not, and does not profess to be, all poetry, though he is sometimes highly poetic, when (as in 'Kiley's Run) the subject suggest pathos...though his horse poems, such as the splendid 'Old Pardon', may please most readers, he is perhaps at his best when, without too obvious labour, he touches the humorous or sentimental side of some commonplace bush sccene or incident...

Stephens offered more critical advice to Henry Lawson than to any other Australian writer, but whether it was of much help is open to question. In one of his earliest analyses of Lawson (Bulletin, 29 Aug. 1896), Stephens

suggested in somewhat puzzling fashion that Lawson was both too naive and too derivative: 'The charm of Lawson's prose is essentially that of his poetry. Art he has none; his artifices are of the feeblest...Yet his impressionable mind often reflects the colour of the medium through which it has been flowing last. There are hints of Bret Harte and Dickens in his earlier work; of Mark Twain and Bulletin humourists in his later. And the work is none the better for them'. Had Lawson sought to avoid the prong of derivativeness, he was open to that of parochialism. In 1899 (Bookfellow, 18 Feb.) Stephens commented on Lawson's verses and sketches,

> ...their value is largely an Australian value. We are moved by them so much because we breathe their atmosphere, are familiar with their persons and scenes...Lawson's pre-eminent Australian appeal lessens the force of his universal appeal. He is splendidly parochial. That increases his claim upon his country, but decreases his claim upon literature.

Stephens saw no reason to alter this judgement, writing much later (Bookfellow, 1 Feb. 1922)': 'Lawson's work is not a city of world-literature; it is a bush township of literature in Australia.

Stephens insisted that young writers in Australia were no worse off so far as publishing opportunities were concerned, and in many ways better off, than their peers in England. Lawson's reception by Australian critics might have been too warm for his own good, in Stephens opinion, since 'enthusiastic praise has convinced Lawson of his merits, but he has hardly begun to be conscious of his defects'. These defects had been itemized by Stephens (Bulletin, 15 Feb. 1896) as,

> His mental scope is too narrow; he is comparatively uncultured; he reiterates the same notes, and rarely improves his thought by elaboration; he wants harmony and variety of metre, his work is burdened by many weak lines and careless tags.

Stephens considered, but Lawson by no means agreed with him, that these criticisms were more than balanced by his praise,

> But how graphic he is, how natural, how true, how strong! How he feels, and makes his readers feel, in poems like 'Out Back', when phrase by phrase is painted an imperishable bush picture. Lawson's shortcomings are obvious; but, for Australians, they are as nothing beside his merits.

Stephens' obituary review of Lawson remains of particular interest (Art in Australia, November, 1922, in Stephens, 1978, pp.255ff.). After all his emphasis on Lawson as essentially Australian and 'gloriously parochial', Stephens finally saw him as,

> like Henry Parkes typically an English peasant, an Australian example of what is, physically and mentally, one of the strongest breeds in the world...The Peasant character, the village attitude, were Lawson's English inheritance; they coloured his life in Australia; he saw Australia through an English glass, darkly. His English personality was at odds with this strange exotic environment. For much of his mind he was with us but not of us.

Stephens was right in seeing in Lawson powerful evidence of past English folk ways and of English radicalism, but this did not make Australia strange to Lawson any more than it was to Stephens, in whom the mixture of the English and the Australian was very similar, or to the majority of late nineteenth century Australians. It was deeply ironical, in view of the conscious hostility to English influence shown by both Stephens and Lawson, that Australia's leading literary critic should finally perceive that the most typical Australianness was itself inexplicable without reference to English traditions and attitudes.

Among writers whom Stephens declined to 'blow', despite his desire to advance Australian literature was his namesake, James Brunton Stephens.

Brunton Stephens received very high praise from several academic reviewers, including Henry Gyles Turner and Alexander Sutherland who, in their 1898 The Development of Australian Literature, described Brunton Stephens' 1871 Convict Once as 'the most highly finished piece of work that has been accomplished in Australia' and one in which 'in a hundred pages there is scarcely a line that could be improved'. A.G.S. demonstrated decisively the error in bracketing Brunton Stephens with Tennyson, Browning or Matthew Arnold. With the benefit of hindsight what is difficult to understand is that A.G.S., while showing the weakness in Brunton Stephens' serious verse, could praise his humourous work, such as The Power of Science, a parody on Darwinianism which concludes,

> And thou the bone of all the fierce contention -
> The direful spring of broken-nosed dissension,
> A Helen in the nigger apprehension?
>
> While yet thou wear'st the crown of morning graces,
> While yet the touch of dawn upon thy face is -
> Back, little nigger, to the night's embraces!

Barbara Baynton was not 'blown' either, although Stephens gave 'uncompromising commendation' to Bush Studies, particularly to 'Bush Church' and three other sketches which 'are in all essentials perfect as far as they go'. Stephens, however, prefaced these comments on Baynton with (Bulletin, 14 Feb. 1903) an attempt to differentiate between three planes of realism. The first was 'the statement of the thing seen', the second 'the statement of the thing seen so that it becomes a type of its class, and the third 'the statement of the type so that it is seen in relation to all things, all types'. Baynton was admitted, perhaps somewhat harshly, to only the first of these planes. Stephens was right to try to propound a more general model for the valuation of realism, or of any other literary form, but his suggestions betray a liking for the highly general over the specific. An

example of his failure to differentiate between high sounding generality and the universality which arises from the most acute portrayal of the particular was his praise for Victor James Daley.

Stephens wrote of Daley (Bulletin, 11 June 1898) that 'he is our classic, our dexterous master of poetical arts...Considered in their full extent, Victor Daley's verses represent the most substantial poetical performance yet completed in this country.' Stephens claimed that 'one does not depreciate our prized bush-balladists in saying that the publication of Daley's book will be the most memorable Australian literary event since the publication of Kendall and Brunton Stephens', but this was, surely, depreciation of Paterson and Lawson. Even Stephens' reservations about Daley became compliments: 'he misses the strength of simplicity: when he is simple it is usually an artificial simplicity caught from Heine'; Thomas Moore and Daley 'both lacked depth and passion to be great poets'. If Stephens own empirical criterion of durability is applied, Moore's lyrics are still popular, but Daley's are forgotten after a shorter period; the analogy with Heine raised rather lowered Daley's status too.

Arguably the two finest Australian poets living at the end of the nineteenth century, John Shaw Neilson and Christopher Brennan, received contrasting treatment from Stephens. Stephens responded warmly to Neilson, like Lawson and himself a first-generation Australian but from a Scottish family. Stephens wrote (Bookfellow, 1 Oct. 1912) that Neilson's 'verses embody genuine poetical emotion...we say that we see no poet now writing who approaches so nearly as Neilson to the quality of Blake'. It might have been expected, in the light of Stephens' proclaimed attempts to broaden the inspirational basis of Australian literature that he would have been as

generous to Brennan as to Neilson. It must be conceded that the general critical response to Brennan was much harsher than Stephens', sometimes for political reasons such as resentment at Brennan's hostility to Britain's part in the South African War and at his denunciations of Christianity, sometimes simply because his verse was, in both content and structure, so very different from the bush-ballad or the light romantic lyric. On the other hand, given Stephens' claims to be in touch with advanced French and German literature, his response to Brennan was at root one of inadequate understanding of his aims or methods. Even after nearly two decades of familiarity with Brennan's work, on Stephens' reading the XXI Poems (or 'Towards the Source') were,

> chiefly decorative and spectacular...the personals rarely escape into universals...nearly all Mr Brennan's lines are harsh: he has not the faculty of combining words in musical felicity...sections in trappings and labels which doubtless mean something to the author, but little or nothing to us. The book is, in fact encumbered with unnecessary paraphernalia. Lilith is heavily handled...

Stephens' judgements did not lack all sense or justification, but he seemed unable to make the leap from criticizing verse whose meaning was clear or just beneath the surface to that, of which Eliot became the leading representative in English, in which the reader has to work hard to find meaning.

Although Stephens was usually very willing to point out their faults even to authors he thought he was taking under his wing and encouraging, such as Lawson, Paterson and Furphy, he was very protective of them against other critics. Indeed, he seems almost to have thought of himself as having a monopoly in the field. He defended Lawson very energetically (Bulletin, 23 May 1896) against criticisms by Professor Edward Ellis Morris in the

Review of Reviews. He made a devasting reposte (Bulletin, 10 June 1899) to Walter Murdoch's criticism in the Argus (6 May 1899) of Paterson, Lawson, Dyson, Boake, Daley, Ogilvie, Quinn and Brady as derivative, particularly of Kipling, rather than original.

Overall the most striking aspect of Stephens' work, especially that in his Bulletin years between 1894 and 1906 was that its detail and essence were in conflict with his own stated aims and with those of his editors. Stephens asked in the Bulletin in January 1896, 'who could pass an examination in Huysmans, Maeterlinck, or Verhaeren?' The number of Bulletin readers who could have passed such an examination in 1907 was no greater than that a decade earlier. Archibald beat a crudely chauvinistic drum, but Stephens, for all his anti-English rhetoric, revealed with fair consistency the organic links between Australian literature and English models, offering constructive suggestions as to which were of value and which not. Stephens' sympathies were quite narrow: the classical, the medieval and the renaissance seemed to him for the most part to have little abiding relevance, while, despite his posturings about European literature, he found little value in the sources from which Brennan gained his inspiration. Given the influence he was able to exert on how Australians regarded past Australian literature, in the narrowest sense of that term, it must be conceded that his contribution was highly constructive and helpful to almost all the writers he reviewed or published. On the broader front of world literature, it can at least be said that few, if any, literary editors in popular Australian journals or newspapers have equalled him in their enlargement of their readers' knowledge and understanding.

Summary

Archibald developed early in life a detestation of the social and political order developed in Britain and transplanted to Australia. He did not derive this antagonism from his Irish-Australian family, from whom in early manhood he distanced himself by adopting new given names and by pretending to French and Jewish origins. Archibald had general contempt for the mass of the people he successfully persuaded to read the Bulletin and to regard it as the banner-bearer of Australian identity. This identity was to a large extent negative in its structure: it rejected any affinity with Aborigines; it rejected any links with the Crown of England or with the British Empire; most of all it rejected any notions that Chinese, or any other non-Whites had a legitimate place in Australian society or could ever share the traditions and ways of life of White Australia, particularly of a radical-democratic or socialist Australia. Archibald's positive sentiments were much weaker: his interest in French and Jewish culture was superficial, despite his affectation; he often claimed that the city and the bush had each in its way reduced Australians to lackeys and grovellers. Almost despite himself, however, Archibald presided over a journal which published a wide range of vigorous writers who celebrated, in ways in which he only reluctantly shared.

The literary pages of the Bulletin were more liberal and far less chauvinistic than its general political line, even before A.G. Stephens joined it in 1894. Their were many gaps in Stephens' literary sympathies, with classical literature and culture generally outside the range of his interest, as well as virtually the whole religious component in western thought, whether theological or devotional. Stephens affected a Noble Savage position in relationship to pre-Contact Aborigine life, but he had no

interest in any Aboriginal myths or legends, any more than he had in the literatures of Asia. Stephens urged Australian writers to be an independent of all overseas influences as possible, but to avoid parochialism - a difficult directive to follow. He advocated that Australian writers should particularly beware the danger of following English models too closely, suggesting that continental Europeans such as Verhaeren and Verlaine should act as a counterpoise to Kipling, Swinburne or Tennyson, but the one Australian writer of distinction who pursued this path, Christopher Brennan, failed to enlist his sympathies.

In direct criticism of English writers, including the Brontes, George Eliot and even the adored bard of all Scots in exile, Burns, Stephens was usually harsh in his judgements. His admiration for them was most often shown in the course of regrets that they had influenced Australian writers too much. Stephens did not indulge in easy praise of Australian writers. He considered that there had been a mighty advance since the time of Kendall and Gordon, 'that poor baffled idealist', but he rarely 'blew' Australians of the 1890s either. Paterson he described as a 'mere bush balladist', James Brunton Stephens was, with good reason, exposed by him as shallow and over-valued, Brennan he found, with much less justification, confused and inadequate. He saw Barbara Baynton's merits, but placed her only on the first of three planes of excellence in literary realism. Two of his few real enthusiasms were for John Shaw Neilson, which subsequent critical judgement has upheld, and for Victor Daley, whose reputation declined very rapidly after his death.

Just as Stephens was more likely to praise English poets or novelists when considering Australian writers, so he was more supportive of Australian

writers when other critics, especially academics, passed unfavourable judgements on them. some of his highest praise for Henry Lawson came in the course of repelling attacks by Walter Murdoch and by Professor E.E. Morris of Melbourne University. More usually Lawson was the victim of a Morton's Fork in Stephens' criticisms. Stephens argued that Lawson's 'value was largely an Australian value', that he was 'splendidly parochial' and 'comparatively uncultured' and that his work was 'not a city of world-literature' but a 'bush-township of literature in Australia'. When Lawson did read more widely and when the influence of Kipling, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, or others showed in his work, he was duly admonished by Stephens for being too derivative. When Lawson died, Stephens, who had always emphasised his Australianess, drew attention to his Englishness, declaring that Lawson was 'typically an English peasant'. Stephens finally understood that Australianness and Englishness had an organic connection of a character he had not adequately perceived during most of life as a literary critic.

Chapter Eighteen

The Concept of Progress in Colonial Australia

Concepts of Progress in Britain and Australia

It is almost a truism that one of the main intellectual characteristics of the Victorian Age in Britain was a confidence that societies in general could be expected to progress, both mentally and materially, and that British society provided an outstanding model of progress and improvement. This is not to accuse British Victorians as a whole of Pecksniffian complacency and self-satisfaction, since a belief in the possibility, indeed in the normality, of significant progress in each generation, led many to take highly critical attitudes towards what had been achieved, rather than to bask in smugness.

In Australia the old conflict between the Ancients and the Moderns emerged even in the pre-Victorian period in a new form, as fears of regression and degeneration jostled with hopes for even more rapid progress than that achieved in the emcumbered and over-crowded Mother Country. Towards the end of the century A.G. Stephens was so far from admitting any superiority of past masters of the literary canon over contemporary Australian writers that he claimed (Bulletin, 7 Jan. 1899) that, so far as Dante, for example, was concerned, 'Ever so much verse that in intrinsically far more poetical is being produced year by year - and forgotten', and that the Inferno would not be good enough to find space in the Queenslander. On the other hand the general political line of the Bulletin was that, thanks largely to ongoing British tutelage and to a failure of Australians to emancipate themselves fully from a subservient mentality born of convictism,

virtually no progress of note had taken place in the first century of White Australia.

The internal contradictions within the Bulletin's lines of argument suggest that disagreements about progress were not structured along obvious ideological lines. The later conservative Wentworth, who wished stare super antiquas vias and who was deeply suspicious of radical democracy, still maintained the view he had expressed in Australasia that a better as well as a new Britannia could emerge in New South Wales. Whether the emphasis was, as with Wentworth or James Macarthur, on adapting the old, or as with Robert Lowe and Charles Harpur, on creating the new, most of the politically active immigrants and the native-born had, even in times of acute economic depression, considerable confidence in the colonies' capacity for progress. An alternative tradition, strong in clerics from Johnson to Ullathrone, frequently expressed in communications from Exeter Hall, and reaching its peak in the findings of the Molesworth Committee, stressed the viciousness and degradation of a criminally-tainted society. The gold rush sharpened differences between optimists and pessimists, since most of the deadly sins were plainly visible in the gold fields, but a basis was laid for greater prosperity in the colonies as a whole. The conventions of civilization, so quickly abandoned in the Californian diggings, were better retained in New South Wales and in Victoria, which became the vanguard of Australian radicalism, democratic sentiment and confidence in progress as the normal social condition. The general acceptance of the tenets of liberalism and of progressivism throughout the Australian colonies posed, as noted earlier, acute dilemmas for Australian Catholics once the doctrinal pronouncements of Pius IX, especially the Syllabus of Errors, were made, and for revolutionaries, since a revolution was only needed if the existing order

precluded progress.

Even before the gold rush and the achievement of internal self-government, liberal and radical optimism was expressed in the Atlas as follows (7 Dec. 1844),

> The law of the institutions in a new country is, not stability, but progress...they are mere anticipation, mere premonitions of what is to come; framed for a state of society that is not only transient, but is hoped and expected to be so. We deal not here with the past, but with the future, and therefore, in this land, the stoutest Tory cannot be Conservative.

During the 1850s Charles Gavan Duffy concluded that a colonial conservative was aman who accepted only four of the six points of the People's Charter.

Progess and Education: John Woolley

A major motif in nineteenth century liberal and radical thought was that an intimate connection existed between education on the one hand and virtue and progress on the other. There were powerful dissentients, such as John Henry Newman, but even he, although denying that the wider dissemination of knowledge had any intrinsic capacity to advance individuals or societies morally or spiritually, regarded the process as a good in its own right. A reciprocal relationship was often postulated between material progress and education: that lengthier education improved productivity, whilst greater industrial efficiency enabled working hours to be reduced and made it both more feasible and more imperative to provide fuller education. During the period after the Napoleonic wars, there was great interest in Britain in the role of education in the cultivation of minds as well as in the advancement of commerce and industry: prominent figures included Lord Brougham, James Mill, Jeremy Bentham and other Utilitarians, and social

reformers such as Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth and George Coombe. Their disciples in Australia included the first Principal of Sydney University, the Rev. Dr. John Woolley.

Woolley argued that the nineteenth century was remarkable in the annals of progress, not only for great advances in man's control over nature, in wealth and in expectation of life, but for a new potentiality for extending to the many knowledge hitherto only available to the few. Woolley believed that the absence, or at least the weakness, in Australia of inherited social stratifications, and of doctrinal and sectarian conflicts, made it more potentially fertile than Britain for the dissemination of knowledge. Sectarian strife proved somewhat stronger than Woolley anticipated, but convictions such as his were a powerful force behind the movement for free, universal and secular education. The appeal of ideas such as Woolley's was enhanced in Australia as compared with England because of the virtual absence in the former of that grinding poverty which constituted the great 'Condition of the People' question. On the other hand the lack of any formal education among so many of the new rich in Australia, such as Sidney Kidman and James Tyson, operated against Woolley's thesis; the prestige of a university education was in general probably lower in the Australian colonies during the late nineteenth century than in Britain.

By the middle of the century extended educational provision had a wide political appeal: many radicals hoped that education would disabuse young people of the superstitions and exploded fallacies of the past; conservative thinkers, such as George Kenyon Holden, in this respect as in several others a disciple of Kay-Shuttleworth, argued that education would enable the young to see through the panaceas offered by demagogues and levellers. The

convergence of viewpoint was well shown when Henry Parkes, still an ardent radical, had five hundred copies of Holden's lecture on 'The Moral and Intellectual Culture of the People' printed for free distribution at the Sydney School of Arts.

For many who considered themselves advanced thinkers, the past seemed a straitjacket or an incubus. Henry Carmichael, for example, adopted an increasingly positivistic position after his quarrel with John Dunmore Lang and departure from the Australian College. As early as 1836 (Australian, 14 June) Carmichael argued, 'all my past experience and thought on the subject leads me to hold, that it is the communication of knowledge, not the inculcation of opinions at all, which constitutes the basis of education...My constant aim...is to facilitate, to the utmost of my power, the process enabling each mind to form, on all subjects (and on the subject of religion among the rest) opinions for itself'. For Carmichael not only were religious doctrines inescapably matters of opinion rather than of knowledge, but much which was taught as history referred only or mainly to differences of opinion on matters the truth of which could never be ascertained and were therefore of very dubious value. On the other hand, Carmichael considere that the human mind had naturally a deep interest in religious questions, which had been answered in various forms in different creeds and ethical systems. Carmichael was thus undecided whether the better course was to avoid all forms of doctrinal speculation, since none could be shown to be true, or to embrace as many as possible, since wisdom and understanding could be garnered from many sources. A related problem was that, if it is impossible to establish the truth of a matter, how does the educator determine whether the amount of ignorance about it has been decreased? The dilemma extended, of course, far beyond specifically

religious questions, since the undogmatic mind sought simultaneously to insist that there were no sure or fixed answers to any significant social or political questions, but that increased education would enable those non-existent truths to be apprehended. Edward Maitland's 1858 The Meaning of the Age was one of several efforts to combine these two incompatible tendencies.

Leading churchmen, such as Broughton, Polding and Lang, whatever their other differences, were very concerned to show that new scientific knowledge did not and could not affect the truths of revealed religion, but within the mainstream of Protestantism the challenges of Lyell, Darwin and the rest were perhaps more difficult to withstand in Australia than in Britain, where institutions had had more generations to take root and where the Established Church gained prestige from its legal and constitutional position. As Roman Catholicism countered modernism by issuing new, or by redefining old, dogma on Papal Infallibility, on the Immaculate Conception and on Errors vitiating contemporary thought, and as many Protestants retreated behind a drawbridge of Biblical fundamentalism, a new clerisy emerged. John Woolley in his 1862 Lectures Delivered in Australia contrasted the nineteenth century with the sixteenth, the latter being characterized by faith in God and the former by belief in Man. The New Man, fully worthy of being believed in by men and women, had also been envisaged by many of the leading figures of the Enlightenment, as Woolley recognized, but apparently the relative backwardness in the sciences a century earlier delayed his emergence. History and poetry, however, were also necessary ingredients for the great leap forward; Woolley did not believe that mechanical inventions and scientific knowledge alone could suffice, or even that they were the areas of highest priority: poetry was the best route towards an understanding of

those lofty feelings where are at the heart of true religion, while history demonstrated the oneness and sameness of human nature. Earlier colonists who had read Hume had worried after their encounters with Australian Aborigines whether it could be true that in all essentials human purposes and satisfactions remained constant from place to place and from age to age, but Woolley, who did not meet with Aborigines in his university, was less troubled than them in his uniformitarianism. Woolley, perhaps a precursor of the caring professionals, clerical and lay, of our own time, rather than a successor to Voltaire or Montesquieu, declared (1862, p.330),

> O! my brethren of the clergy; if ye would indeed become the ministers of God's salvation..close those idle tomes of mystical metaphysic and impossible ethic, leave your baseless speculations and silly quarrels about matters neither comprehensible nor profitable if comprehended, and preach after the example of your Master, the true Gospel of the poor.

The Rev. Barzillai Quaife, who was first a Congregationalist Minister and then associated with Lang in his breadaway Presbyterian Synod, considered, unlike Woolley, that doctrinal truths could be established, but he agreed (1872, 11, pp.91, 93) that the study of religion and history enabled even more confident political judgements to be made (such as that aristocracy is 'essentially immoral', although the British system of government, despite its aristocratic element, was the best yet devised, that democracies are likely to finish up as slave states, as the experience of Athens and the United States showed, and that 'all government is instituted for the good of the governed. Even the Government of God is no exception to this rule'). Woolley and Quaife anticipated that the study of history would solve more questions than it raised, and that discussions about how to solve poverty or injustice would be more easily resolved than those about how to define or to avoid sin or heresy.

Progress and Women: Catherine Helen Spence

In her 1910 Autobiography Catherine Helen Spence wrote (1987, p.413,), 'I must go back to Scotland for the roots of my character and ideals', but, although her life and thought could not be adequately understood independently of her Scottish roots, these roots do not themselves account for her development. Spence was born near Abbotsford, saw Scott's funeral procession as a girl, and knew intimately every local reference in The Lay of the Last Minstrel, The Monastery, and The Abbot. She was born into a professional family of lawyers and physicians who were strongly Whig and opposed to Scott's Scottish Toryism, but his broad sympathies may have helped her emancipation, as she saw it, from the narrow predestinarianism of Scottish Calvinism, although she never mentioned Scott in such a context. Catherine Helen wrote in 1887 a memorial verse for her mother, who died in Adelaide at the age of 96,

> Half a long life 'mid Scotlands heaths and pines,
> And half among our South Australian pines.
> Though loving reverence bound her to the past,
> Eager for truth and progress to the last.

A sound Scottish education gave Catherine Helen a good start in life and the basis of extensive reading. She mastered French, with Racine and Moliere as valued texts, but her early moral training gave her a deep distaste for those French authors from Balzac to Zola who explored the seamier sides of human existence without seeking to derive improving morals from them, and Jane Austen became the novelist on whom she sought to model herself.

On a return visit to Scotland in 1865 Spence wrote (1987, p.436) that

her Scottish relatives 'grieved that I had been banished from the romantic associations, and the high civilization of Melrose to rough it in the wilds, while my heart was full of thankfulness that I had moved to the wider spaces and the more varied activities of a new progressive colony'. It was difficult for her to write at any length without her pride in colonial progress showing forth.

It was in many ways easy for Scots, just as for the English, to migrate to Australia, since the language, the institutions and the way of life, other than aspects related to climate and soil, were those they had always known. Catherine Helen's 'damnosa hereditas' from Scotland was 'its gloomy religion, which made me doubt of my own salvation and despair of the salvation of any but a very small proportion of the people in the world... there was no getting away from the feeling that the world was under a curse ever since that unlucky apple-eating in the garden of Eden'. Spence wrote (1987, p.424) that she 'might have accepted (offers of marriage) if it had not been for the Calvinistic creed that made me shrink from the possibility of bringing children into the world with so little chance of eternal salvation'. Since Edinburgh, Geneva and Amsterdam continued to be populated, Spence's fears cannot have been general amors Calvinists; perhaps a century later she might have been afraid instead of bearing children who might have to face nuclear destruction or the collapse of the ozone layer.

Spence's conversion from the Calvinism of Scottish Presbyterianism to Unitarianism removed an important barrier to her full acceptance of the concept of progress: 'the cloud was lifted from the universe'. Spence was delighted to find that so many savants in the United States were Unitarians, including Mrs. Garrison, Holmes, Longfellow, Emerson, Hawthorn, Bryant,

Lowell and Whitman. In Adelaide, too, where Spence became a regular Unitarian preacher, the great and the good were well represented in their ranks. In the first sermon she preached in Adelaide in 1878 Spence suggested that, although they could well be divided into three distinctive groups, Unitarians had much in common with each other. The three groups were Unitarian Christians, for whom it is 'through the words and works of Jesus Christ, through obedience to his precepts and the inspiration of his example that they draw near to God', Unitarian Theists, who 'from the All-Father Himself...look for ever-present grace and help', and Unitarian Secularists, whose 'conception of the Infinite fills the soul with the sense of inexorable law, shutting out prayer and scarcely admitting of worship'. What they had in common, Spence claimed, was that,

> Our faith is not in ancient records, but in the relations of the human soul to the Infinite God - and these are closer and stronger now than they ever were. In those who, like Kepler, devoutly think God's thoughts after Him as they trace the mechanisms of the Heavens; to those who patiently observe the laws of Nature so as to make obedience to them beneficent to all mankind, to them who labout among the poor, the sick, the sorrowful, and the sinful, to help and to heal, God is as near as - yea far nearer than when he was supposed to go before the Israelites in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

In England in 1865 Spence was gratified at the opportunity to meet Bishop Colenso of Natal, who showed her 'the photo of the enquiring Zulu which made him doubt the literal truth of the early books of the Bible'. Far above the old absurd beliefs of the Israelites, Calvin or John Bunyan, and more advanced even than Bishop Colenso, were Spence and her friends. Yet there was much cloud in their negatively defined creed, which showed a capacity for fission at least as great as those of other religious and quasi-religions. In her first sermon Spence went out of her way to repudiate the attempt of Auguste Comte (made also, as noted above, by Alfred Deakin) to build 'a fantastic sort of Pantheon of heroes and saints for the

worship of Humanity', since 'it is only the Infinite we can worship'. Yet the conceptualization of an abstract Infinite as an object of worship is not a pursuit congenial to most men and women; in her search for a more democratic religion Spence found one suited only for an intellectual elite, en route from Christianity to atheism.

Interesting facets of the concept of progress emerge from the title and content of Spence's 1884 An Agnostic's Progress from the Known to the Unknown. She was impressed (1987, p.454) with 'the very different difficulties the soul of man has to encounter nowadays from those so triumphantly overcome by Christian': contemporary man,

> cannot, like Hopeful, pluck from his bosom the Key of Promise which opens every lock in doubting Castle....The Interpreter's House in the old allegory dealt only with things found in the Bible, the only channel of revelation to John Bunyan. To the modern pilgrim God reveals Himself in Nature, in art, in literature and in history...Vanity Fair is not a place through which all pilgrims must pass as quickly as possible, shutting their eyes and stopping their ears so that they should neither see nor hear the wicked things that are done and said there. Vanity Fair is the world in which we all have to live and do our work well, or neglect it. Pope and Pagan are no the old giants who used to devour pilgrims, but who can only gnash their teeth at them in impotent rage. They are live forces, quite active, and with agents and supporters alert to capture souls.

The doctrine of original sin, or, as Spence termed it, 'the doctrine of innate human depravity', was dismissed by her (1987, p.455) as 'one of the most paralysing dogmas that human fear invented or priestcraft encouraged', yet she understood that the doctrine of original sin was not merely a consequence of a literal belief in Genesis, and that St. Augustine and Luther, as well as Calvin, were among Christians who held that only divine grace and the merits of Christ, not the good deeds of men, let alone nature,

art, literature or history, could redeem the soul from sin. She must also have realised that, even if Bunyan's dualism was of almost manichaean depth, he and his readers over the generations were well aware of and consciously rejected arguments that we must make the best we can of Vanity City (and of the City of Destruction).

Spence objected strongly, too, to secularized forms of predestination: she held (1987, p.531) that 'no Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation is more cruel and hopeless that the doctrine of heredity as laid down by Zola and Ibsen'. Spence did not live in an ivory tower and had some knowledge of human depravity, but she was convinced that bad conditions and inadequate social and political structures accounted for most, if not all, of it. Social reform, and most of all education, could prove original sin a metaphysical error. It must be said for Spence, Woolley, Quaife, Carmichael and others like them that they lived at a time and in places in which doctrines of the perfectability of man were perhaps more plausible than during any other periods before or since. The achievements of Victorian Britain in the reduction not only of human misery but of many forms of vice and cruelty gave increased hope that this was but the start of an unending process of material and moral improvement. The transformation of the Australian continent in only a century or so made that hope even more powerful in the colonies than in Britain. Spence frequently expressed her conviction that education had the power to ensure the onward march of progress, as when she wrote (1987, p.479),

> As time goes on the effect of education must tell, and the generations that are to come will be more enlightened and more altruistic, and the tendency of the world will be more and more, even as it is now, towards higher and nobler conceptions of human happiness. I have lived through a glorious age of progress. Born in 'the wonderful century', I have watched the growth of the

> movement for the uplifting of the masses, from the Reform Bill of 1832 to the demands for adult suffrage. As a member of a church which gives women the right to speak in the pulpit, a citizen of a state which gives women a vote for the Assembly, a citizen of a Commonwealth which full enfranchises me for both Senate and Representatives, and a member of a community which was foremost in conferring university degrees on women, I have benefited from the advancement of the educational and political status for which the Victorian era will probably stand unrivalled in the annals of the world's history.

Spence's direct contribution to the historical studies of children in South Australia is discussed below.

Spence had pleasant memories of the early years of the white settlement of South Australia, and strongly defended its conception and development (1987, p.420)

> In the land laws and the immigration laws it struck out a new path, and sought to found a new community where the sexes should be equal, and where land, labour and capital should work harmoniously together...in spite of hardships and poverty and struggle, the early colonial life was interesting, and perhaps no city of its size at the time contained as large a proportion of intelligent and educated people as Adelaide.

Elsewhere (1987, p.534) whe wrote, 'We derive so much advantage in every way 'form the progress of the colony - from good roads and gas supply, and postal and telegraph facilities, and railway trains and fast steamers, and fine gardens, and abundant books'. She was conscious of the importance of material changes, listing as (1987, p.431) 'the three great steps taken in the development of Australia', 'the first when Macarthur introduced the merino sheep; the second when Hargreaves and others discovered gold; and the latest when cold-storage was introduced to make perishable products available for the Eureopean markets'.

Despite her concern for the improvement of the masses, Spence had a

lively apprehension of mob-rule, noting with satisfaction that 'law and order were kept on the goldfields of Mount Alexander, Bendigo, and Ballarat by means of a strong body of police, and the high licence fees for claims paid for their services, so that nothing like the scenes recorded of the Californian diggings could be permiteed.' Far from celebrating the Eureka Stockade, Spence ignored it. Spence considered tha the representation of Australians in literature was generally unbalanced, particularly in placing too much emphasis on conflict and hardship. She commented in her 1902 essay 'The Australian in Literature' (1987, p.493), 'No one would think in reading the poems and sketches which are said to be characteristic of Australia that the prevalent note of Australia is good humour and common sense'.

In her first and most celebrated novel, the 1854 Clara Morison: A Tale of South Australia During the Gold Fever, which was praised by Frederick Sinnett in 1856 as 'decidedly the best Australian novel we have met with', Spence tried to offer 'a faithful transcript of life in the Colony, rather than stereotypes about (1910, p.97),

> the 'deadbeat' - the remittance man, the gaunt shepherd with his starving flocks and herds, the free selector on an arid patch, the drink shanty where the rouseabouts and shearers knock down their cheques, the race meeting.

Clare Morison is a portrait of manners in Adelaide and the country, and of conflicting loyalties and values. In particular it examines problems facing women who wish to retain independence, problems which are no less when most of the men disappear from the scene, as in response to discovery of gold in Victoria, than when they are present. Spence showed herself to be a true disciple of Wakefield's anti-dispersion theories in her implication that civilization cannot thrive on squatting runs. Equally, she suggested, the

roughness of the goldfields and the brashness of Melbourne, the boom-town of the nouveaux-riches, were inimical to the growth of a cultivated society. Yet stagnation was to be avoided as much as instability. Urbanity and civilization in general, like educated young female emigrants, were highly vulnerable to ignorance and vulgarity or to the insolence of new-found wealth and power, but Spence as novelist, as well as social critic, was sanguine about the chances of overcoming these obstacles to progress.

Spence described the 'intelligent middle class' of which she was a member as (1987, p.562) 'the very hope and strength of our English nation and colonies', the main carrier of progress and civilization during the last century and more. She noted that 'it is not an uncommon thing for educated people to give the title of the dangerous class to the discontented poor - to the proletariat who has no stake in the country, who has nothing to lose', but argued that 'it is mere conventionalism to restrict the term dangerous classes to the poor and the numerous'. Spence listed among earlier dangerous classes 'the despotic sovereign, the idle and luxurious nobles' in pre-revolutionary France, 'the army and the general of the army' under Napoleon, 'the despotic and superstitious abettors of the retrograde movement' after the Bourbon Restoration, and the 'self-indulgent rich' under Louis Napoleon. In France the middle class, too, had been dangerous at times: 'for the sake of peace or place or emolument' strengthening the hands of unwise governments' under Louis Philippe, and often 'careless about the miseries of the poor and the freedom of the press', or thinking 'of their own private interests and not of their public duties'. Even the English and colonial middle class might be 'dangerous to the safety of the state if it holds in its hands the supreme power and uses it for selfish or for class interests'. Thus all groups and classes were capable of folly and

of endangering society, but Spence was convinced that in the lands of her birth and her adoption greater progress had been made than elsewhere towards reducing the danger any class offered to the sort of society she held to be self-evidently fair and advantageous to all. The German Empire was ahead in old age pensions, but (1987, p.565) 'if the German press could freely condemn or laugh at Prince Bismarck he and his supporters would not be the dangerous class there, with the probability that suppressed public opinion may ere long turn the tables and give birth to a strong and very dangerous class in the Fatherland of the Future.' The United States had made great progress, but Spence wrote after visits there and to Britain in 1894 (1987, p.463),

> Socially I liked the atmosphere of America better than that of England, but politically England was infinitely more advanced. Steadily and surely a safer democracy seems to be evolving in the old country than in the Transatlantic Republic.

Spence was on the whole confident that in Australia the proletariat would sensibly co-operate with the intelligent middle class. She noted with pleasure (1987, p.474) 'the growing power and strength of the Labour Party. I rejoiced that a new star had arisen in the political firmament. I looked upon it as a party that would support every cause that tended towards righteousness'. The new party disappointed her by failing to take up the political cause second nearest to her heart: 'effective voting' (Proportional Representation), but she remained sanguine that it would not make the Australian proletariat a dangerous class.

The cause dearest of all to Spence, even above Unitarianism and effective voting, was that of women's rights. Two of her aunts had shown her in her girlhood (1987, p.417) that 'women were fit to share in the work

of this world, and that to make the world pleasant for men was not their only mission'. The most significant events in history for her were those which marked the advance fo women to equality in sphere after sphere. Mary Wollstonecraft's 'grand vindication of the rights of the sex' was dear to her, and she had enormous admiration for George Eliot, for John Stuart Mill and especially for his wife Harriet, two of whose brothers, Arthur and Alfred Hardy, had migrated to Adelaide. Spence deplored the way in which 'law and custom have put a bridle on the tongue of women'; since Scripture, especially Proverbs and the Epistles of St. Paul, had played a part in this oppression, she was particularly pleased to be a pioneer women in the pulpit and to undo some of the damage.

Spence was very conscious of recent progress in the position of women, noting in 1878 (1987, p.499) that, 'in taking up an old-fashioned novel - one of Richardson's, for example - and reading it in the light of modern ideas, nothing strikes the reader more forcibly than its exaggerated view of marital and parental rights as over and against the rights of wives and children'. Her historical analysis was careful: although very ready to point to examples of the application of double standards to husbands and wives, Spence sounds like Cobbett when she writes, 'There can be no doubt that adultery is a greater offence in a wife than in a husband', her concern being with morality and not legality. She considered that the double standard was at times of advantage to the status and dignity of women, noting that 'it was no disgrace to Squire Western to live as he lived and to talk as he talked, but an English girl would be disgraced if she imitated him'. Her discussion on the likely effects of flogging and imprisonment of brutal husands on their families was also judicious and balanced. Her analysis of the positive and negative effects on women of industrialization,

of modern division of labour and of the redundancy of many of activities which once took up so much of women's time and energy was profound and discriminating. Spence's last novel, Handfasted, written in 1879 but never published, which deals with the aspirations of a politically advanced heroine for a more equal sort of marriage, displayed much more utopian tendencies.

Summary

To the extent that the Australian colonies possessed a self-conscious clerisy, in Coleridge's sense, or an Intelligentsia, Woolley, Quaife, Carmichael and Spence were among its members, as were Pearson, Duffy and Deakin among the politicians considered earlier. Sons and daughters of the clergy, or of the cloth themselves were a very prominent among the publicists who advanced the confident and optimistic view that progress was the normal condition of human societies, and that Australia during the nineteenth century was a remarkable example of progress in moral and intellectual, as well as in material, terms. Aboriginal Australians had made no progress, so far as could be established, during however many centuries they had occupied the continent, while the fragility of their mores and social structures when confronted by European civilization limited any interest that Catherine Helen Spence and other apostles of progress might have had in their way of life. The status of women in Aboriginal groups was particularly distressing to Spence and other Australian pioneer feminists.

The main dissentients from an attachment to some version or another of the gospel of progress were at opposite ends of the ideological spectrum. Roman Catholics who accepted in toto the doctrinal teachings of Pius IX

rejected as spurious the claims of nineteenth century liberalism, especially its conceptions of what progress consisted in; but most Australian Catholics, including many of impeccable faith, wanted even more of some at least of the manifestations of political and social progress which the Syllabus of Errors rejected as heretical delusions. Similarly, typical readers of the Bulletin continued to believe that Australia, whether in its cities or in the bush, had made remarkable progress in which they could legitimately take pride. To be sure industrial progress was uneven and unemployment, while distress were a reality for many and a constant threat to many more; yet over the decades real wages had risen, working hours reduced and conditions improved, and the power of the working man (and more recently of the working woman) in political life had advanced in leaps and bounds, with Australia and New Zealand world leaders in many democratic reforms. If the Yellow Peril could be kept at bay. Most Australians seemed confident that, provided the Yellow Peril could be kept at bay, economic depressions would prove only a temporary halt on the long march to greater prosperity and more extended political rights.

Secularists such as A.G. Stephens saw progress in what they took to be convincing evidence of the declining influence of religion in Australia; influential Christians such as Woolley and Carmichael were gratified by what they conceived to be a changing emphasis in many churches from fruitless wrangling about theological questions which could never be resolved to a greater concern for 'social justice'. Dean Cowper praised God as he looked back and thought of the greater piety prevailing among the people of Australia, apart from among the Aborigines, compared with the times of his father and of Samuel Marsden, although much wickedness and sin remained to be sure. Patrick Francis Moran saw even greater evidence of a benign

Providence at work when he looked back at the progress of the Roman Catholic Church in nineteenth century Australia, despite the denunciation by the Syllabus of Errors of so many characteristic features of the time. One can be confident that the large majority of Australians towards the end of the nineteenth century would have agreed with Catherine Helen Spence when she expressed her confidence that 'the tendency of the world will be more and more, even as it is now, towards higher and nobler conceptions of human happiness', that they had 'lived through a glorious age of progress', and that they had been 'born in "the wonderful century"'.

Chapter Nineteen

History for Australians

Marcus Clarke wrote in his preface to the 1876 edition of Gordon's Sea Spray and Smoke Drift,

> In historic Europe, where every rood of ground is hallowed in legend and in song, the least imaginative can find food for sad and sweet reflection. When strolling at noon down an English country lane, lounging at sunset by some ruined chapel on the margin of an Irish lake, or watching the mists of morning unveil Ben Lomond, we feel all the charm which springs from association with the past. Soothed, saddened, and cheered by turns, we partake of the varied moods which belong not so much to ourselves as to the dead men who, in old days, sung, suffered, or conquered in the scenes which we survey. But this our native or adopted land has no past, no story. No poet speaks to us.

Clarke exaggerated, since, although the Aboriginal past had even less interest to most Australians in the 1870s, other than anthropologists, than half a century earlier, poets had spoken and the history of British Australia became longer each year. James Anthony Froude commented after his visit to Australia (1886, p.194) that in the colonies 'heroes are not wanted and would have no work cut out for them. Happy, it is often said, the country which has no history'. Froude, of course, would have been as distressed personally as well as professionally had England been a land 'without a history'. His claim too was an exaggeration, even in respect of the history of the Australian colonies, without taking into account that many colonists had by no means detached themselves from the past of their ancestors.

The Bulletin school was as ambivalent about history for Australians as about most other questions other than those of race and a republic. The

first number of the Bulletin asked in 1881,

> What to young Australia is the significance of the Orange and Green? William of Orange didn't emancipate Australians. The Pope of Rome hasn't oppressed them. Australia has no bitter memories of alternating cruel domination, no savage traditions of ineffaceable wrongs.

On the other hand Joseph Furphy, in one sense a typical Bulletin contributor, was likely at the drop of a hat to launch into disquisition on the Orange and the Green, or on a multiplicity of questions whose origin was far from contemporary Australia in place and time. Furthermore, A.J. Stephens at least, although the outstanding nationalist literary critic of his time, had deep misgivings about the adequacy of Australian history as the core of historical knowledge for Australians. Stephens wrote (9 Dec. 1899),

> here in Australia, we have no temples, no ashes worth the name. We have still to make the history and create the legendary associations which are such a powerful binding force in national life. The Murray to Australians is still only a geographical label, but think what the Thames means to an Englishman! Think of Westminster Abbey: of how his sailors were nerved by the signal 'England expects...'! What a mass of record and tradition, of song and story, of memorable life and love and death, presses behind that England! 'Australia' is meaningless by comparison, lacking the inspiration of the past.

Stephens was comforted by the thought: 'Is it not possible to catch meaning and inspiration from the future? Is it not better to be of those who make St. Crispin's day worthy remembrance than of those who look back to remember it? This country has still for us few hallowed memories; but if we choose it may have them for our children. If we are not History's legatees, it is because we have the chance to be History's founders and establishers'. Yet none can remember the future; the problem of what constituted the most significant past for Australia's children remained, irrespective of what

dreams they might be encouraged to dream about the future.

The topics in Australian history of greatest interest by the late nineteenth century were, as was to be expected, the voyages of discovery, convictism, the inland exploration of Australia and 'pioneering', the governors, bushranging, and the gold rushes. Much of the work on these subjects was written, however, by immigrants from Britain, whose natural bent was to place Australian experiences in a British context: the author of the most famous bush-ranging saga, Thomas Alexander Browne, went to Scott's Marmion for his nom-de-plume of Rolf Boldrewood. Late nineteenth century Australian conceptions of the significance of convictism and of 'pioneering' have already been considered.

Apart from the shortness of the history of White Australia and the inaccessibility and apparent irrelevance of the preceding Aboriginal past, another obstacle to the introduction of Australian history into schools, let alone into higher education, lay in the lack of suitable texts and materials. This obstacle was to a large extent overcome during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The emergence of professional history

The earliest contributors to historical writing about Australia were those who were mainly recording their own experiences. This was clearly the case with Tench, Collins and other military officers and civilian officials, as well as with early commentators such as Cunningham and Harris. Explorers such as Mitchell, Sturt, Eyre and Stuart told mainly their own stories. Wentworth, James Macarthur and Lang claimed to be offering general and objective surveys of his history of New South Wales, as well as about its

social and political structure, but they naturally enough easily became particular and subjective, especially Lang, whose first version of his Historical and Statistical Account of New South Wales was described in the Westminster Review as 'A History of Dr Lang, to which is added a History of New South Wales'. Protagonist as historian accounts by Roger Therry, Duffy and Parkes have already been noted. Others of comparable interest were written by W.B. Coote in Queensland and by Boyle Travers Finniss in South Australia.

The first historians of Tasmania have been considered in connection with retrospective images of convictism. The first histories of Victoria were as optimistic in character as those of Tasmania had been chronicles of tyranny and wickedness. Scottish-born William Westgarth, the first president of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, a founder in 1869 of the Colonial Institute, and later of the Imperial Federation League of 1884 wrote the first of these in 1848 as part of a political campaign to obtain the separation of the Port Phillip District. Westgarth revised this and issued it under a new title, Victoria: Late Australia Felix, in 1853 with the objective of increasing still further the attractions to Britons of the gold-rush colony, the 'second California, perhaps even more productive than the first and already assuming the position...of the first of the British colonies.' In four later histories and personal reminiscences Westgarth celebrated the continuing expansion of wealth, population, political liberty and public enlightenment in Victoria. Westgarth, who spent more years in Britain than in Australia, saw himself as 'an independent British Australian' and he quoted with enthusiasm in the introduction to his 1888 Half-a-Century of Australasian Progress some words of the Prince of Wales, 'We regard the colonies as integral parts of the empire and our warmest

sympathies are with our brethren beyond the seas'. Westgarth had been a part-time writer, although a prolific one, not a historian. He was followed in Victoria by men who were writers by profession, but equally not professional historians, such as David Blair, James Smith, Garnet Walch, Mortimer Franklyn, and the Sutherland brothers, Alexander and George. Marcus Clarke can be numbered in this group, although it was his novel rather than his school history book which powerfully affected conceptions of Australia's significant past. Despite differences between them, all this group, with the exception of Clarke, combined a euphoric attitude towards Victoria's progress with a view that that progress was only intelligible within the context of British and imperial history.

The first virtually professional historians in the Australian colonies were George William Rusden and James Bonwick, both of whom had been civil servants for many years with access to the records later used in their writings. Rusden had been clerk to the Legislative Council of Victoria before his retirement in 1881. He has been criticized for both his liberalism and his conservatism: Fogarty (1957, 1, p.154) wrote that 'the influence of liberalism on Wilkins and Rusden was strong'; Roe (p.131) described his work as a historian as 'disagreeable to radicals' and commented that 'it is easy enough to dismiss Rusden's achievement, or present him as a thoughtless conservative', while Ward (p.207) described his 1883 three volume History of Australia as 'strongly prejudiced in favour of the conservative side'. Rusden, although a strong supporter of a national system of education rather than of competing denominational schools, was, indeed, highly sceptical of many of the claims of progress advanced for Victoria and for the Australian colonies as a whole. He deplored what he saw as the contempt for the public law of Victoria by the gold miners at

Eureka and as the demagogy of Lang, Duffy and Higinbotham. His position is well revealed in the following passage (1883, III, pp.85-6),

> It may be doubted whether, taken man for man, there was any community possessed of more intelligence than that of Victoria. But there was a lack of combination of the general intelligence for the general good. The restlessness of gold seekers; the lawlessness of thousands who had formally expiated crime by imprisonment, but who were not purged of it in their hearts; the evils which had culminated in the insurrection which it had been found necessary to put down by force of arms; the election of former agitators by the gold field constituencies - all these were clouds of danger.

This judgement was contrary to the popular view of the matter, which, indeed, Rusden was seeking to combat, but he was followed, in his 1904 History of the Colony of Victoria by Henry Gyles Turner, who had been manager of the Commercial Bank of Australia at the time of the financial crisis of 1889. It should be noted that the conservatism of Rusden and Turner was by no means of a jingoistic character. When Sir James Service in 1885 welcomed Dalley's offer to send troops to the Soudan, Turner commented (Serle, 1971, pp.199-200) that 'to claim patriotic virtue for the men who are willing to shoot Arabs, negroes, Abyssinians or Egyptians indifferently at 5s. a day is a miserable prostitution of terms', although he was willing to support Britain if genuine danger threatened.'

An Official History of New South Wales was first published in 1883. In 1887 Henry Parkes ordered that this should be expanded into a much fuller Official History of New South Wales from the Records; James Bonwick was appointed to make transcripts of the relevant London archives, which he did for the next fifteen years, while G.B. Barton was appointed as official historian. The first volume of the Official History was completed in 1889, but it was impossible for him to keep to the projected time-table of a

volume every six months. Barton was replaced in 1891 by Alexander Britton, a journalist with experience on first the Melbourne Argus and then the Sydney Morning Herald, who saw the second volume through, with the help of a Supervising Board which decided that a parallel series should be published as Historical Records of New South Wales, the first volume of which appeared in 1892. Britton died with volume three of the History and volume two of the Records incomplete. George Arnold Wood, the recently appointed inaugural Challis Professor of History in the University of Sydney, who was a member of the Supervising Board, offered to take over the task (Crawford, 1975, pp.122-3), but his offer was declined. In the event work on the History stopped, although the Records continued fitfully to appear, finally covering the settlement of New South Wales up to 1811.

The Universities and the Significant Past

No chair in history was established when the University of Sydney began to operate in 1852. The Challis Bequest of 1889 enabled seven new chairs to be created, but that in Modern History was allocated a lower salary than any of the others. Scholars with adequate prestige for most of the appointments were only to be found outside Australia, mainly in the United Kingdom, where there were no authorities in Australian history, even if that had been what Australian universities most sought, which it was not.

When the first four professional appointments were made to the newly chartered University of Melbourne in 1855, only a short time after Victoria became a separate colony and, indeed, very quickly after the first substantial white settlement, one of them was to a chair in Modern History and Literature, Political Economy and Logic. The liberal mind required to satisfy all the requirements of these disciplines was supplied by William

Edward Hearn, who had formerly been Professor of Classics in Queen's College, Galway. When one of the other four foundation professors died before he could take up his appointment, Hearn covered his duties as well. In addition Hearn also took to the law as one of his main areas of study, and later taught Jurisprudence, Constitutional Law, International Law and Roman Law. Subjects for Hearn's lectures in the classics included the Iliad, Xenophon's Anabasis, Plato, Herodotus and Thucydides, as well as Virgil, Horace and Tacitus. Furthermore, his main work in political economy, Plutology, or the Theory of the Efforts to Satisfy Human Wants included a wide range of classical as well as modern examples and allusions. Other major publications of Hearn's included The Government of England, The Aryan Household: Its Structure and Its Development, and Legal Duties and Rights. Ernest Scott (1936, p.25) testified to the wide reading (including closely annotated copies of Memoirs of Lord Hervey, those of Horace Walpole and those of Wraxall, the Duke of Buckingham's ten volume Courts and Cabinets, and the Grenville Correspondence, for his lectures on eighteenth century constitutional developments) which Hearn brought to his teaching. Hearn, like Charles Henry Pearson, who was for a short time Lecturer in History in the University of Melbourne, as noted earlier, was not only a polymath and a fine linguist but played a very active part, far too active so far as their academic employers were concerned, in public life. Hearn was attacked by the Age (13 Jan. 1859) for contesting a seat in the Victorian Legislative Assembly in the following terms,

> His mind is essentially scholastic and pedantic, capable of dealing only with details and incapable of taking a broad view of human affairs. His mind is very sharp but very small.

When Arnold Wood arrived in Sydney in 1891 he found (Crawford, 1975, p.127) that,

> The most prominent Senators confess to me they opposed the foundation of the Chair with tooth and nail. They only differ as to whether History is terribly dangerous or utterly useless.

In his inaugural lecture Wood revealed his approach to history and his concept of historical significance. The key value of studying history, he urged, was that 'its sympathetic spirit will teach what is perhaps still more important for the happiness of (the student) himself and of the world - to feel strongly, and to feel rightly...the great end of education was not the training of learned students, but the making of good men and good citizens'. Wood was not equally sympathetic to all men and women of the past, of course, since many of them failed to measure up to his concept of the good man or the good citizen. Wood was the embodiment of the whig concept of history: the Petition of Right, Milton, Cromwell and Bunyan, the Bill of Rights and the Glorious Revolution represented the tradition to which good men and good citizens looked back with pride. Thomas More was admitted to the circle of 'Saints and Heroes', on whom Wood gave public lectures on behalf of the University Extension Board, since, although a persecutor of Protestants earlier in life, he had been willing to die rather than betray his own conscience. In 'the great Victorian age' reformers of all sorts, of factories, schools and franchise, represented 'the human spirit in its noblest manifestations'. Wood greatly admired those Victorians who had concerned themselves most with the problems of 'the two nations' and of 'the condition of the people': in literature Carlyle, Ruskin, George Eliot, Mrs Gaskell, Disraeli, Kingsley, Tennyson, Browning, Newman, Clough and the Arnolds; in political thought Mill, Bright and Cobden, Gladstone, and Morley. Such great ideals were by no means confined in Wood's view to the British: from the ethical prophets of the Old Testament, from St. Francis and St. Joan, inspiration was also to be

obtained, but, so far as political institutions were concerned, the broadening from precedent to precedent as opponents of the crown and supporters of the just rights of the people enlarged the basis of the British Constitution was the central example of progress towards noble ends. The English ideal was superior for all practical purposes to pure Christianity (Crawford, 1975, p.138): it was 'akin to it in its appreciation of spiritual things, in its power of worshipping what is good. But it is unlike it in the value it places on the things of this world'.

As well as heroes and saints there had to be villains and persecutors. Charles I and Laud appeared as persecutors but not, like More, as martyrs. Just as the noble Puritans of the seventeenth century had their successors two centuries later in the leaders of Victorian Liberalism, so had the tyrant and proud prelate been succeeded by reactionary industrialists. Wood examined their evil ways in lectures he gave in 1906 at the Trades Hall in Sydney on 'Industry in England from 1770 to 1875',

> It is, I think, impossible to avoid the conclusion that the main responsibility for the existence of this appalling destitution in the midst of unprecedented wealth, rests with the Factory Owners. It is impossible, I think, to speak on the subject without making it clear that their guilt as class was very great.

Wood regretted that Cobden, Dickens, Mrs Gaskell and Lord Shaftesbury were among those who had opposed the strengthening of the trades unions which had been, Wood told an audience very willing to accept the point, the main instrument by which exploitation and abominable conditions of work had been alleviated. Disraeli's governments had been more energetic in factory reform than those of Gladstone, but his early sympathy for aristocratic leadership and, even worse, his later imperialism and failure to show complete openness in foreign policy made it difficult for Wood to admit him

even to the outer courts of the great and good. After reading J. Holland Rose's Europe 1870-1900 in 1914 Wood wrote (Crawford, 1975, p.291) that he,

> got the impression that all statesmen are (in foreign affairs) scoundrels unspeakable. There's only one Christian gentleman in the whole story - Gladstone! Disraeli was about the most unspeakable of the lot.

Wood might have engaged more deeply in the study of Australian history during the 1890s had his offer to work on the Official History of New South Wales been accepted, but in later years he made important contributions, especially in the field of early exploration, his 1922 The Discovery of Australia being the major work. Well before the First World War he had supplemented basic courses in English and European Political History with others on the Discovery and Conquest of the Americas, and on the Industrial Revolution, most of which he had to teach himself unaided. Even more dramatically than Hearn in Melbourne, Wood became a well-known public figure, as a result of his opposition to the South African War, which is noted later.

It is hard to conceive that expatriate Britons and Irishmen such as Wood and Hearn could have done any more than they did to stimulate the study of history in their universities or among the population at large. Hearn's ideas were mainly of a conservative character and it was the liberal Age which opposed his entry into politics (which he finally achieved with distinction as a virtually non-party amateur parliamentarian), whereas the conservative Argus attacked Pearson when he took the same path, although in more partisan fashion, and the conservative Sydney Morning Herald challenged Wood's right as a university professor to criticize the government of the

day on a matter of national importance. What is clear is that, although Wood played no significant part in stimulating the study of Australian history in the University of Sydney or in the schools of New South Wales, the sort of history he taught and the articles which he wrote in no way represented a defence of the status quo or of any sort of imperial chauvinism. There was virtually not an English monarch between Alfred and Victoria who met with Wood's full approval; it was the opponents of the established order who were almost invariabaly on the side of the angels in the conception of history with which he sought to enthuse his students and readers.

History in the Schools

Sectarian disputes, together with uncertainties as to what should be taught even if such disputes were absent, helped to limit the teaching of history in government schools in colonial Australia. The government schools were mainly staffed by men and women who were unlikely to have had a secondary, let alone a university, education, so that whatever initiatives a Hearn or a Pearson or a Wood might take were unlikely to have any direct effect on them, although teachers of many varieties formed an important part of University Extension classes. History was usually taught in the few corporate collegiate schools which catered for a range of middle class families: those of a commercial bent frequently offered some English history, while those with a classical curriculum often taught some Ancient History as well.

As sectarian disputes dwindled in fervour in the government schools, mainly because the overwhelming majority of Roman Catholic children came to receive their education separately, the key problem in history teaching

became the balance between the 'two patriotisms', between the history of the mother country and that of the colony, or, after federation, the new Australia. Before federation large numbers of Australians had very little interest in the history of colonies other than their own; indeed, even in terms of travel people in South Australia or Western Australia were much more likely to have spent time in the United Kingdom than in another Australian colony. Here will be examined something of the history teaching in the schools of three of the colonies: New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.

The schools of New South Wales

English History was one of the subjects available in the Junior and Senior Public Examinations established by the University of Sydney in 1867, firstly to regulate entrance into the university itself and later to provide schools with an objective external mode of assessment for students not intending to enter university. The history examination questions set in early years give the impression, confirmed by some later reminiscences, that much instruction was by rote memorisation. Typical questions in the Senior Public Examination on the early Tudors were these from the 1871 paper,

> a. Whom did Henry VII marry, and what political objects were attained by the marriage?
> b. By what means did Henry VII amass a large amount of treasure?
> c. Why may the period during which Henry VII reigned be regarded as an era in the history of Europe?

It should not simply be assumed, however, that the teaching was always turgid, or that such questions as whether Elizabeth of York would have married Henry Tudor had she believed him to be the murderer of her brothers, the Princes in the Tower, or whether the targets of the original Morton's

Fork had any means of escape from its prongs, had little or no interest to students.

Arnold Wood had a significant influence on history in the N.S.W. collegiate schools from the 1890s onwards, through setting and marking the history papers in the Junior and Senior Public Examinations. He supplemented the general survey with the detailed study of a special period; he also, in common with the best practice in Britain, emphasised the literary aspects of the special period and the importance of maps, so that links were established with English and with Geography. As could be anticipated from the discussion above, Wood placed great importance in his papers on key developments in political liberty and individual rights in English history. By 1907 there were 61 candidates in the N.S.W. Senior Public Examination in English and European History, together with 59 in Ancient History, which when combined made history the seventh most popular subject (Barcan, 1977, p.40).

When State elementary schools were established in New South Wales in 1848 history was not prescribed as a subject, mainly because it was thought too controversial (Barcan, 1958, pp.96-7). The 1854 Commission on Education in New South Wales investigated 202 schools, (164 denominational and 38 national), of which only thirteen taught history as such, compared with 159 teaching geography (Lee, 1920, pp.118-20), while in the Wesleyan schools, history was not taught at all. However, since the Bible was often used as a reader in government schools and read more intensively in Wesleyan and other non-government schools, some passing knowledge of Jewish and early Christian history might also be imparted. Children might also acquire historical knowledge from their reading books which, like the school system itself in

New South Wales, were mainly imported from Ireland, where they had been produced by the Irish National Board for the Irish National System.

William Wilkins, an influential figure in public education in New South Wales after as well as during his time as Under Secretary for Public Instruction, doubted, given the problems involved in explaining historical events and the small time given in the Irish Readers to history, or avilable within the school week, whether much profit would be derived by many children from that brief acquaintance. Wilkins explained to the Legislative Assembly in 1874 (O'Donnell, 1968, pp.291-2).

> From the mere list of reigns, or events of any kind, little comparatively would be gained. An instructor is required. The connection of cause and consequence has to be pointed out...How can this be effectively done with mere children, with boys and girls, of the average degree of intellect, aged ten or twelve. In both the Supplement to the Faith and in the Fifth Book of Lessons compiled under the direction of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland...history is included, and it occupies in the Fifth Book, for example no less than 125 pages. Of these the first fifty-four are devoted to ancient history, from the Creation to the birth of Jesus Christ, the whole referring throughout to, and being compiled in connection with, the Bible narrative. The residue comprises, what is termed there 'modern' history, commencing with the Christian era, and ending with the fall of Napoleon. It is less a history of the British Empire than of Europe at large: and is so meagre that the thirteenth and three succeeding centuries are compressed into three pages and a half. But it nevertheless, in a certain dull and chronological way, gives the outline of some of the more remarkable events affecting that Empire.

Wilkins was especially troubled that so little of the content of the Irish Readers concerned the history of the British Empire, that much of their material concerned Ireland, and, to a lesser extent, other parts of the British Isles. Later editions substituted Australian material for some of that relating to the United Kingdom, but Henry Lawson, who was at school from 1876 to 1881, recalled in 'The Old Bush School',

> And Ireland! that was known from the coastline to Athlone,
> We got little information re the land that gave us birth,
> Save that Captain Cook was killed (and was very likely grilled)
> And the natives of New Holland are the lowest race on earth.

When the Public Instruction Act of 1880 ended state financial aid to denominational schools, Henry Parkes was fearful that even the small amount of history in the curriculum might prove contentious. Parkes' old ally David Buchanan claimed in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly in September 1873 that (O'Donnell, 1968, p.290) 'the non-teaching of history in the public schools was a defect calculated to impair their usefulness and efficiency' and was the result of subservience to the pressure of the Roman Catholic clergy who feared the enlightening effects of more widespread knowledge of historical facts. Parkes replied that,

> the object of their Public School system was to afford unsectarian primary instruction to children of all denominations...The exclusion of history...was almost imperative through the difficulty of arriving at a common ground of agreement as to what really was history.

The Sydney Morning Herald argued (7 Feb. 1876) that no history had yet been written which had the assent of all parties. The Maitland Mercury feared in March, 1889 (Barcan, 1977, p.39) that 'it will not be easy, for example, to satisfy everybody with respect to the character of Oliver Cromwell'. Professor Smith of Sydney University repeated Parkes' arguments in the Legislative Council (17 March 1880) when he claimed that history, as a controversial subject, was unsuitable for immature minds, and was in any case unnecessary for children of the poorer classes who 'had to be prepared to go into the world in order to earn their living. A knowledge of history was about the least important thing those children could have'. Many of Wilkins's Inspectors of Schools, such as Inspectors Huffer, Dwyer, Fleming,

Jones and Bradley, objected to the inclusion of history in the curriculum of the schools because of its propensity to fire sectarian disputes. One of their colleagues, Inspector O'Byrne was of the opinion that provided 'a suitable text-book could be obtained, one which besides other qualities would be remarkable for its impartiality, I believe that English history might be studied in the schools without offending the religious feeling of any class.' His proviso, like those concerning Bible readings and related teaching in the arguments of the proponents of 'common Christian' syllabuses, was one which his colleagues thought incapable of implementation.

In spite of these objections, Section 7 of the Public Instruction Act of 1880 provided that,

> In all schools under this Act the teaching shall be strictly non-sectarian but the words 'secular instruction' shall be held to include general religious teaching as distinguished from dogmatical or polemical theology and lessons in the history of England and in the history of Australia shall form part of the course of secular instruction.

The precedence given to English history was common in all the Australian colonies, but the teaching of history was not implemented in New South Wales for several years. In 1883 David Buchanan moved in the Legislative Assembly (30 Jan.) that the law should be enforced 'by introducing into all our public schools the teaching of a system of history, particularly the history of England'. Buchanan once more alleged that sectarian disputes often ensured that 'all history was completely kept back from children attending the public schools'. During the following debate it was obvious that the omission of history from the curriculum of the schools had substantial support: points made included the

abstruseness of constitutional history, the impropriety of the private lives of many wearers of the Crown of England, the tyranny and oppression inflicted on their subjects by crowned heads throughout history, and the impossibility of producing history textbooks which treated religious and political disputes fairly. The teaching of the existing syllabus was held both to indoctrinate into monarchist sympathies and to breed contempt for the law, the constitution and the monarchy through undue familiarity. At least equal problems seemed to loom in teaching the early history of New South Wales and Tasmania. Sir John Hay asserted in the Legislative Council (17 March 1880), 'However much they might be interested in the history of Australia, yet no one would think that the history of Australia was a thing likely to afford any particular improvement of the mind'.

Despite these objections history kept its formal place in the curriculum, but its teaching continued to receive little encouragement. William Wilkins, who was still complaining in 1886 (p.28),

> History is one of the subjects which has been introduced into the school curriculum from political motives. In its true form there is, perhaps, no other subject which is so little fitted to benefit children. Its biographies may interest, and its roll of kings and columns of dates may easily be committed to memory. The latter, however, are but the dry bones of history. History is a study for maturer years.

Wilkins was able to cite in his favour the judgements of influential faculty psychologists, particularly Alexander Bain who maintained (1879, p.225-7),

> Of all the departments of early teaching none is so unmanageable as History...What is intelligible only to the maturest minds renders it especially troublesome in early teaching...There can be no systematic teaching of History in School Years.

Between 1884 and 1905 the curriculum of public schools in New South

Wales was based on Standards of Proficiency related to prescribed bodies of fact or types of skill (see Barcan, 1958, pp.100-2). History was again introduced during the 3rd Class (mainly children 8-9). The set texts were Nelson's History for Junior Classes for English History and Sutherlands's History of Australia. English history from Julius Caesar to Queen Victoria was covered in the 3rd and 4th classes, together with Australian history up to 1850. The emphasis in the textbooks was on dates, rulers, battles and political events. Each chapter was followed by a series of factual questions, which were to be answered by the particular words used in the text. The following is a typical example,

Text

> The Britons, who had lived in peace under Roman protection, were in wretched plight when left to themselves. The Picts and the Scots, breaking through the unguarded walls, pillaged the northern country. The Vikings of the North Sea coasts, who had hardly been kept in check by the Roman fleets, descending on the east and south, sailed up the rivers in their light flat-bottomed skiffs, burning and slaying without mercy. Vortigern, a British prince, is said to have asked the aid of the Vikings against the Picts. The men he invited were Jutes, or people of Jutland, men of great size, with blue eyes, ruddy complexion, and yellow hair, practised in war, using the axe, the sword, the spear, and the mace.

Questions

> In what state were the Britons after the departure of the Romans?
> Who harassed them in the north?
> Who, in the east and the south?
> Whose aid did they ask?
> What were their characters?

It cannot be argued that knowledge of the dangers which may follow invitations to others to defend you against third parties is an untenable or irrelevant lesson to be derived from history. Nor was the material in the

texts in itself notably indoctrinative, although the choice of English and, secondly, of Australian history, gave children a clear enough idea as to what sort of knowledge of the past was deemed most significant for young Australians. The preface to C. Ransome's 1893 An Advanced History of England, which became used in many schools in New South Wales before the end of the century, suggested (Muller, 1978, p.15) that 'Probably the greatest event in modern history is the development of the British colonial empire', while the New South Wales Education Gazette of 1 April 1897 asserted that 'Race-pride is not a vice when it tends to produce patriotism'. The texts themselves were on the whole, however, much less triumphalist than such comments would indicate.

Later critics claimed that the Nelson and Sutherland readers were deadly dull, but not all children were put off. D. Sinclair wrote in Schooling (1925, Nov., cited in Barcan, 1958, p.103) of his schoolfellows in the late nineteenth century,

> many can recall the fine word pictures of the Battle of Hastings, the incidents of Crecy, Nelson's last victory at Trafalgar, and 'Up Guards and at 'em' at Waterloo. The reason is obvious. Something greater than coercion was functioning when we first met these graphic accounts in the old 'Royal History'.

Sinclair's list consists only of English (or British) victories, but the successful invasions from the Romans to the Normans were given their weight, as well as defeats by Bruce or by Joan of Arc.

In 1891 the revised Standards of Proficiency gave New South Wales public schools a slightly wider choice of history textbook: the Outline of English History of the distinguished historian of the seventeenth century, S.R. Gardiner, was added to the Nelson series for English history, while no

prescription was made for the Australian history course. Gardiner's textbook included a liberal helping of the most famous stories in English history and was the work satirized in Yeats and Sellman's 1066 and All That. Gardiner tried to combine the memorable anecdote with the telling moral, as when he related of the start of the War of Jenkins' Ear (cited in Barcan, 1958, p.107),

> Walpole believed that this was unjust, but he weakly consented to do what he was asked to do. When war was declared, the bells rang loudly for joy. 'They are ringing the bells now', said the Prime Minister. 'They will be wringing their hands soon'.

The 1891 Instructions to Teachers issued by the New South Wales Education Department declared it to be,

> the duty of all teachers to impress on the minds of their pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, and patriotism; to teach them to avoid idleness, profanity, and falsehood; to instruct them in the principles of a free Government; and to train them up to a true comprehension of the rights, duties and dignity of citizenship.

It could hardly be said, however, that the fit between such aims and the history syllabus was very close.

In a further revision of the Standards of Proficiency in 1898, history was introduced in the Third and Fourth Classes, in which the teaching was to be oral, with a textbook for use in the Fifth Class. The syllabus consisted in the Third and Fourth Classes of 'now fewer than twelve simple stories or biographies', and in the Fifth Class of a more thorough treatment, as follows:

Third Class:
i. From the Roman to the Norman Conquest.
ii. From William I to Richard I.
iii. From John to Richard II.
iv. From Henry IV to Elizabeth.

History of Australia to 1808.

Fourth Class: i. From James I to Anne.
History of Australia from 1808 to 1837.

ii. From George III to the present time.
History of Australia from 1837 to 1855.

Fifth Class: i. William III to George II inclusive, as treated in any ordinary text book, such as Ransome's.
History of Australia from 1855 to 1872.

ii. George III to the present time.
History of Australia since 1872.

In the first period of the Third Class, for example, the twelve simple stories or biographies given orally concerned the Ancient Britons, the Roman Conquest, the introduction of Christianity, the Danish and Saxon settlements, Alfred the Great, Canute, and Harold. Joseph Finney, a lecturer in the Teacher Training School, described the recommended mode of teaching history as follows in 1897 (Educational Gazette, 1 Dec, cited in Barcan, 1958, p.110),

> In the third classes the 'personal' element was mainly used, the history being made to centre round Caesar, Agricola, Boudicca, Ethelbert, Edwin, Egbert, Alfred, Dunstan, Canute, Godwin, the Conqueror, de Montfort, &. In the fourth and fifth classes attempt was made at cause and effect and the treatment of 'movements'.

The 1893 version of the Standards of Proficiency no longer specified particular textbooks in history teaching and schools soon had a wider choice, with Australian produced accounts of English history, such as Stephen Henry Smith's 1899 English History Stories for the Fourth Class, becoming available, as well as new Australian histories, such as Joseph Finney's 1901 History of the Australian colonies, which treated each colony separately, giving over half of the space to the history of New South Wales.

Smith, who later became Director of Education in New South Wales, was,

if anything, more reverential to the English past than were people writing in England itself. In an introductory section, entitled 'Why you Learn English History', to his 1899 English History Stories for the Third Class Smith explained that it was important that they should know 'how the English-speaking races have gradually come to hold such an important position in the world'. Furthermore, these people 'are called civilised', in contrast with 'tribes of blacks' living 'a very wretched kind of life' who 'are called uncivilised'. 'What a difference there is between them and the race to which Australian boys and girls belong!', Smith informed his young readers, who, he suggested 'read the story and studied it because you felt curious to know something of the great men of our race. As you read on you felt proud, no doubt, to think of the noble progress that the race made.' (Barcan, 1958, p.120) In his English History Stories for Fourth Class Smith suggested in a section headed 'On the Value of Historical Study' that from learning 'the story of the progress of a great nation', the pupils would acquire moral sense, too, and would be prepared for full citizenship 'under the freest form of government the world has yet known'. The 'useful and valuable' lessons which had this potentiality for ethical and political education ran for Fourth Class children from the Gunpowder Plot, through Cromwell, Milton, Marlborough, Walpole, Clive and Nelson, to 'Queen Victoria's Reign (Since 1837)', which had been 'the longest and by far the most glorious' in English history' witnessing an increase of 'Wealth, progress, and prosperity...to an extent unequalled in the history of human progress'.

Smith's array of heroes included major figures in the whig-liberal pantheon of opponents of absolutism and personal rule, as well as of military leaders. His account of nineteenth century Britain paid attention

to the lives, among others, of Carlyle, Ruskin, Dickens, Kingsley, Browning, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, and of social reformers such as Shaftesbury, Peel, Cross and Florence Nightingale. All the passages cited in the previous paragraph are taken from Firth (1970, pp.123-59), whose purpose was to expose to the ridicule of the modern mind the iniquities of a system in which (p.132),

> The public school pupil was to be presented with the assumptions of particular kind of colonial patriotism, politically conservative and socially respectable, which remained public school orthodoxy until Warld War I. Despite Federation, public school children continued to be taught loyalty to England and to Australia.

The last sentence is very true for all the Australian states, not only for New South Wales. It represented, too, what the overwhelming majority of parents wanted their children to be taught. Yet it was hardly 'politically conservative' in any narrow sense of that term, since it was as acceptable to Andrew Fisher, Arnold Wood and John Christian Watson as to Henry Parkes or to Alfred Deakin. Much of it was acceptable, too, to Edward William Sullivan and the large majority of Roman Catholics in Australia. They did not know of the lands, which Firth implied that Stephen Henry Smith had ignored or suppressed, where there were greater freedoms, or where the rate of social progress, the constructive exposure of social problems, and the accumulation of wealth had been as great as, let alone greater, than in Victorian Britain, with the possible exception of the United States of America, which was classed in the same racial and political family.

The schools of Victoria

In Victorian state schools history was not taught as a separate subject until 1886, although stories of English history were included in school

readers. As in New South Wales, there were considerable worries in Victoria about the divisive effects of history teaching in schools. The Senior Inspector of the Board of Education, A.B. Orlebar, argued in 1864 (Trethewey, 1968, p.266) that, although 'English history is particularly important to our youth', he was 'obliged to report against its introduction into our schools as an infringement of the hours of secular instruction...I have examined school histories of England, and I do not know one to which either the Roman Catholic or the Episcopalian or the Presbyterian parent could not justly object'. Marcus Clarke, in one of his 'Noah's Ark' dialogues (Australasian, 18 May 1872), wittily warned of attempts to avoid controversy in history teaching, 'unless we can invent a New Religion, we must forbear to teach history in our secular schools', since not only 'Henry VIII, Bloody Queen Mary, Mary of Scotland, and the Virgin Elizabeth' aroused controversy, but the discovery of printing and much else besides. Clarke was rarely in agreement with James Moorhouse, but the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne, told the 1884 Royal Commission on Education that he feared history was 'a far more difficult subject than the teaching of the Bible', an issue which had already created more dissension than any other problem connected with education. The mass exodus of Roman Catholic children from government schools after the 1872 Education Act in Victoria had, somewhat ironically the effect of reducing sectarian disputes about what sort, if any, history to teach to the children remaining in those schools.

The introduction of history as a distinct subject with considerable Australian content in Victoria, owed much to J.S. Elkington and to Charles Pearson. Elkington had been an Inspector of Schools for ten years before appointment in 1876 as Professor of History and Political Economy in the University of Melbourne. In 1867 in his first report as an inspector

Elkington stressed (Trethewey, 1968, p.266) the civic rather than the patriotic argument for history in schools when he expressed the wish that 'a foundation of elementary political knowledge could be laid in the 'minds of thousands of those who, in a few years, will become invested with great political privileges whether they are fit to exercise them or not'. Pearson's part in shaping school history in Victoria has been considered above.

An 1884 conference of Victorian inspectors of schools recommended the inclusion of history as a distinct subject, in order to 'familiarize the scholars with the prominent facts of British and Australian history, give them an intelligent conception of the constitution under which they live and foster a wholesome taste for reading'. Other arguments for the inclusion of history in the Victorian school curriculum included (Trethewey, 1968, pp.268-9) Inspector Carmichael's plea in 1887 that children should know 'in detail an account of the errors and crimes and self-sacrifices to which we owe our personal liberty and prosperity and civilization' (sic). Inspector Robertson, soon afterwards forced to resign after a series of root-and-branch criticisms of Victoria's state educational system, urged when discussing syllabus content in 1889, that 'the criterion of what is valuable in this subject is the knowledge required for an active and intelligent member of the community' - an unexceptionable principle, but, unfortunately, an entirely formal one.

When history classes were introduced for the Fourth and Fifth Classes, the last years for most children of compulsory schooling, the textbooks used in the Australian history course were Marcus Clarke's History of the Continent of Australia and the Island of Tasmania and A. and G. Sutherland's

The History of Australia, both published in 1877. Clarke's text, written in a hurry, was a tedious year-by-year chronicle of colonization, but the Sutherlands produced an attractive book, which used the best authorities (Westgarth, Bonwick and M'combie for Victoria itself, West for Tasmania, Lang and Flanagan for New South Wales, and Howitt for discoveries) to advantage.

Marcus Clarke had given some thought to what sort of history was most relevant to everyman and his children. In an article 'The Working Man from his own Point of View' he had written (Australasian, 26 March, 1870),

> It's no use preaching at him and patronising him, because he won't stand it, and it's no use giving him learned lectures about Syria and Palestine and the Crusades. He don't even know where Palestine is, and before you can make him interested in the Crusades, you must make him understand the dress and the manners, and the society and the people, and you don't do that. I've heard your lectures on the Crusades, and all I know now is that there was a big chap named Godfrey de Boulli - which was the stuff we had on board the emigrant ship I came out in...we don't patronise you with our bricks and mortar and boots and shoes, and you needn't patronise us with your Crusades and Magna Chartas

This in its own way was highly patronizing too and it was by no means certain from the popularity of Scott and of many other popular historical novelists that the average adult or child was more interested in what people in the past had worn or eaten than in deeds of a very different character.

In a discussion on education for the classes rather than for the masses, arising from the inauguration of modern languages in Melbourne University, Clarke wrote (Age, 23 March, 1880),

> ...if anything is essential to a man of the modern world it is a correct and intelligent familiarity with the literature of his time. France and Germany have led the van of intellectual liberalism for some years now...To be unable to easily read in

> the original text the writings of Voltaire, Comte, Renan, Schopenhauer, Haeckel and Dollinger is a much greater calamity to a man of the present day than to be ill acquainted with the fables of Aesop, the sportive indelicacies of Petronius, or even the mordant satire of Aristophanes. Indeed, so far as the study of the classics influences the policy and polity of modern life, it might as well be abandoned...No that we would for a moment recommend the disuse of classical teaching. A knowledge of the dead languages is indispensable to the philogist, and almost necessary to any one who would rightly learn foreign tongues or accurately understand his own...But we do not bring up all our sons to be poets or men of letters...if the time which is now devoted to what was once perhaps too vigorously termed 'the safe and elegant imbecility of classical learning' was spent upon the consideration of the vital questions of the day...the majority of youths would rapidly rid their minds of 'Conservative' fallacies. A youth who abandoned his researches into the amours of Jupiter, the pranks of Ascyltos and the state of Roman society during the reign of Claudius I, to inform himself upon the recent changes in the boundaries of nations, the effects of the discoveries of science upon religious belief...would leave the University...with his eyes much more widely opened to the true interests of his native country than would be relished by 'Conservative' patriots'

Clarke's radical populism in 1880 was a far cry from his parading of his own classical knowledge when he arrived in Victoria in 1863, but his new positions lacked balance as much as his old. It was not surprising that his text-book for the children of the masses was not among his better productions.

British history was at first taught after 1884 through a section entitled 'The Outlines of British History' of the Royal Readers already used in Victorian schools. A text book devoted only to history, The Empire - a History of Britain and the British People, was introduced in 1889. In spirit it was very much like the textbooks written by Stephen Henry Smith for the schools of New South Wales. By the end of the century so far as Australian history was concerned, material in the Victorian School Reader or the School Paper (and equivalents such as The Children's Hour and The Adelaide Reader in south Australia, The Queensland School Reader or The

Tasmanian Readers), had perhaps as much impact as any specially designed history book. The Fifth Grade Victorian School Reader, for example, included Frank Hudson's 1908 poem 'Pioneers', which called on children to remember 'the old world people' who came out: 'we fought with the black and we blazed the track,/ That ye might inherit the land'.

The schools of South Australia

The first text book for south Australian schools which included some historical content was written by E.W. Wickes, the Secretary of the Central Board of Education in 1856, under the title of Rudiments of Knowledge; or the Australian Mothers' Catechism. In answer to the question, 'What portions of history are most necessary to be known?', Wickes replied (1857, p.51) 'First, sacred history, the history of one's own country, and then the histories of Greece and Rome'. 'Country' had earlier been defined (1857, p.45) as 'an extent of land generally bound by the sea, rivers, or mountains, and mostly inhabited by a people of the sam race or nation, and having the same government, language and usages', but it was far from clear that South Australia was a country in this sense, and it seems likely that Wickes had Britain in mind, rather than South Australia or the Australian colonies taken as a whole.

As in New South Wales and in Victoria, such local productions were at first in the main supplements to imported materials, of which the Readers used in the Irish National system were for long the most popular. As the annual report of the South Australian Central Board of Education for 1870 put it,

> although some of the lessons contained in them are not altogether suitable for children living in a country different in some of

> its physical features, climate, and productions from Great Britain and Ireland, yet it would be no easy matter to find, upon the whole, a more useful series.

John Anderson Hartley, as Chairman of the Central Board, then President of the Council of Education, and then Inspector-General of Education, exerted enormous influence over education in South Australia during the 1870s and 1880s. He determined that the geography taught in South Australian schools should be of a concentric pattern, starting with the immediate environment and expanding outwards. The 1874 Regulations of the Board, however, only stipulated for history 'The succession of kings and queens of England' and 'The outlines of English history'. Two years later was introduced 'History of the industrial progress of the nineteenth century', based mainly on Collier's History of the Nineteenth Century which was concerned chiefly with developments in Britain, although among other topics it treated briefly explorations in Australia.

Depressing reports about the poor teaching of and/or reception by schoolchildren of their English History lessons led Hartley to consider the same policy for history as for geography. An adviser, Inspector Burgan, told him in 1881 (Kwan, 1981, p.24) of 'the ludicrousness and indefiniteness' of the children's replies to questions, and reported seven years later (Ibid) that 'it is, perhaps, because we are so far removed from England that but little interest is taken in events that have not affected us personally'. In 1881 Hartley gained approval for new regulations which replaced the existing history syllabus with a course based on Catherine Helen Spence's The Laws we Live Under, which had been published in 1880 and which was an introduction to the political and economic structure of the colony rather than a conventional history book. Spence's book had been

written on the understanding that it would be used in schools. The original idea for the commission had been that of a prominent Member of Parliament, David Bower, who was also Mayor of Port Adelaide and Chairman of the Port Adelaide School Board of Advice, and, like Spence, an active Unitarian.

Spence's book seems to have been poorly received by the teachers; later in 1881 Alexander Clark, an influential Headmaster, told a Select Committee into education (Kwan, 1981, p.27) that 'the book "The Laws we Live Under" is very loosely constructed', while Hartley failed to defend it against such criticisms, stating in his evidence that, while it was 'exceedingly easy to read', it was defective in logical method and not really a good school book. It is unlikely, however, that it was any technical weakness in Spence's work which led to its speedy demise from the schools. Not only were there reservations about the overall thrust of Spence's book, but, more fundamentally, Hartley reverted to his earlier belief that it was the history of Britain and its Empire as a whole, rather than the minutiae of colonial experience which was most valuable to South Australia's children. He wrote in 1885 (Kwan, 1081, p.28),

> The demand is sometimes made that we should teach specially Australian history, because we live in Australia. To me this seems to be a mistake, for two reasons. In the first place our adopted country is very largely in the happy position of 'having no history'; and further it would be a great pity that we should lose our association with the glorious past of England. After all, we are citizens of the Greater Britain, and the memories of the defeat of the Armada, or the taking of Quebec, should stir our pulses much more than the gallant deeds of the defeners of the Ballarat Stockade. I do not forget that the records of Australian exploration are bright with stories of patient endurance and self-sacrifice, but these would find an appropriate place in connection with the geography of the country.

Hartley was well aware that the Australian colonies already had historians, such as William Rusden, John West, James Bonwick, H.G. Turner

and the Sutherlands, but the experiences of the other colonies were not, in general, of major importance to most South Australians, who, in the case of the former penal colonies, wished to distance themselves from those experiences rather than to make them their own significant past. South Australians, such as Thomas Gill and John Langdon Bonython, with the greatest interest in the half century in which their colony had been in existence, were concerned particularly with its constitutional origins and its bibliographical or genealogical records, none of which were deemed suitable content for school history. In the preface of his 1886 Bibliography of South Australia Gill described South Australia as (1976, p.3),

> A colony which, fifty years ago, was a terra incognita...a land not obtained by battles, but a history of conquests of wild and uncultivated regions by indomitable British pluck - a simple, peaceful history of the steady progress of British settlement.

To Gill and most other South Australians, even those with the greatest interest in the colony's own history, it was far more important that children should find out how their ancestors had become so plucky and adventurous and so capable of taming the wild and uncultivated regions of the world, than to concentrate their minds on progress in any one of those regions, even the one in which they lived. Charles Kingston was a radical in terms of South Australian politics, but he upheld the concept of dual patriotism as much as any colonial conservative, telling the annual conference of the teachers' union in 1899 (Education Gazette, Oct. 1899, p.139), 'If there is one thing I would like more encouraged in our State schools it is the growth of patriotism (cheers)...Our Patriotism need not be confined to our State; it should improve on relations with the dear old motherland - (cheers) - with the Empire, and with that Australia about to be

called into existence in the coming year'.

For general classroom reading the Irish Readers were replaced by the Royal Reader series in 1878, but these, too, until 1888, included virtually no Australian content. In 1889 Hartley founded a monthly school newspaper, the Children's Hour, which he edited until his death in 1896. It included local material from writers such as Catherine Spence and J.C.F. Johnson, but had an international perspective, with Britain and the Empire as the focus but by no means the whole picture. Its central message was unambiguous, however: that the children of South Australia should have 'pride in their membership of the greatest race the world has ever seen' and should also love their 'homeland of South Australia' (Children's Hour, July, 1897, p.103).

The Comparative Mildness of Historical Indoctrination

It is easy for those of us who flourish in late twentieth century Australia to find the amount of patriotic fervour in its schools a century ago disagreeably conspicuous, whether the patria be Britain, the British Empire, Australia, a particular Australian colony, or any combination thereof. Yet, in comparison with the ideological intensity of the schools in most countries then or now, the amount of patriotic or nationalistic sentiment instilled into Australian children was very small and our typical responses may simply indicate parochialism of time and place. The intention here is not to demonstrate the truth of the contention that there was comparatively only a very thin veneer of indoctrination in Australian schools a century ago, but to assume this was the case and to consider why.

The first point is that the English, much more so than any other member

of the United Kingdom, and, for different reasons, more so than the Australian colonies, had a very weak sense of national identity of a self-consciously political character. In France, in Germany, in Italy and in the United States, for example, the creation of the national state or its political transformation led to intensive efforts to make the schools instruments of national integration, but the English were very used to being English and to being undisturbed in their Englishness. Patriotic references to Agincourt, the Armada or Trafalgar did not remind the English that the fatherland was in danger, as great historical events reminded the politically-conscious in virtually every national state in Europe, to say nothing of the recently aroused nationalisms of the many peoples still, as they saw it, deprived of national identity.

Large armies were not needed for the protection of a country protected by the wooden walls of a navy floating on seas over which they exercised something approaching ascendancy, so that the military spirit burnt relatively low at most times, although jingoism could be aroused for short periods, as at the start of the Crimean War, by reports of atrocities during the Indian Mutiny, or during the early sieges of the South African War. Even at such times there was comparatively a remarkably high level of tolerance for dissenters and for critics of even the most popular politicians and military leaders.

There was also comparatively considerable tolerance of other races and creeds, not because the English were more virtuous than others but because they felt far less threatened than others. There was no shortage of anti-Jewish, anti-Irish or anti-X jokes, or even of feelings of dislike, but minorities had a greater legal and effective freedom in Britain than

elsewhere. Most important of all perhaps, the English thought of themselves very much as individuals. Their lack of concern for national or civic ends was a source of great annoyance to the great and good who compared their lack of a corporate spirit very unfavourably at the end of the century with that of the Germans or the Japanese. English Marxists regretted that 'opportunism' and other forms of political backwardness seemed to prevent the English workers from achieving class solidarity and from organising more actively to advance their interests as a class. G.K. Chesterton had many predecessors in his regrets that 'the English people had not spoken yet' - the English did not speak as one and were reluctant to allow anyone to speak on their behalf. In so far as their individualism was transcended into group loyalties, the usual effect was great resistance to being subjected at public expense to the ideological preferences of other gorups, rather than a desire to press their preferences on others.

Self-conscious national sentiments were much stronger among the Welsh, the Scots and in particular the Irish than among the English. For many Scots, even nearly two centuries after the Act of Union of 1707, memories of the English as 'the auld enemy' were still alive, but the English had no reciprocal concern about old border wars or any battles in Scotland of the first two Edwards or the first two Georges. Irish historical memories have already been considered in some detail. The relative weakness of specifically English national consciousness is abundantly demonstrated by the experience of English emigration. Within a generation English migrants to Virginia were Virginians, to Rhode Island Rhode Islanders, to the United States Americans, to South Australia South Australians, to New Zealand New Zealanders, etc., in all cases without hyphens. The Welsh and the Scots usually retained separate identity longer, while many of the Irish remained

permanently hyphenated, whether in the United States, Australia or other English-speaking countries. It was, of course, very easy for each new generation of English immigrants to be fully assimilated into Australian life, since the basic conditions of life and the cultural mould remained very similar. In 1900 (or in the 1980s) it was easier in everything except distance for an English family to migrate from Bristol to Perth or from London to Sydney, than from Dover to Calais or from Harwich to Rotterdam. Similarly it was easier for Australians to go back to the United Kingdom than to move to Java, Thailand, Vietnam, or Japan.

In the Australian colonies were repeated the conditions of security from foreign invasion that pre-1914 Britain had long experienced. In addition the racial balance in respect of the groups comprising the United Kingdom was not significantly different from one colony to another, so that in language and customs the decades before federation did not lead to any tensions which made one colony fearful of another. The Aborigines were sufficiently different to give some sort of cement to the colonists, but, apart from some frontier districts for relatively short periods, did not appear as a threat to their physical security.

The big difference was, of course, that in China and elsewhere in the Asian landmass and in the Pacific Islands, lay a vast population, large numbers of whom were attracted to Australia, once it had been transformed from its pre-1788 condition. The fear of the 'Yellow Peril' in Australia was similar to the xenophobia common to most peoples at most times, but from which the English had so long been shielded. It was a fear which, as has been noted earlier, affected Protestant and Catholic, English and Scots or Irish, alike.

There was, as has been noted, considerable resistance to the introduction of history as a school subject on the grounds that there was no consensus as to what was most important in the past or how events and movements should be evaluated. In most other countries which developed compulsory school systems during the nineteenth century there was even less consensus than in the Australian colonies, but governmental response elsewhere to the same brute facts was usually not to remove history from the schools, but to ensure than the version favoured by the ruling dynasty or party should prevail in them, and should be propagated with intense fervour. Salutations of the flag, Empire Day and Australia Day celebrations, and the patriotic and ideological messages conveyed in the school books of Australia were remarkably mild in comparison to those prevailing in other parts of the world.

Summary

It took time before the time spent by the colonists in Australia became invested with sufficient interest to be made part of the formal schooling of their children. Some nationalists of the Bulletin school expressed doubts about the relevance to Australians of events in far-away places in distant times, but even among their ranks A.G. Stephens and, most of all, Furphy had an intense interest in the then and there.

The lack of a reliable and accessible historical record of British Australia of the sort available for the British Isles also initially held back courses in Australian history in schools and in higher education. This lack was to a considerable extent made good during the second half of the nineteenth century, at first mainly through the accounts of participants,

then through histories by authors who were not professional historians, and finally through histories by historians working independently, supplemented in New South Wales by official commissions.

The early Australian universities did not place history among the highest of their priorities either in teaching or in research; furthermore, the men appointed to chairs or lectureships were outsiders who came to them without any special knowledge of Australian history. Most of the early appointments were men of genuinely liberal culture, who introduced a generous selection of the history of western civilization to their students, and who played an active part in the intellectual and political life of the colonies. Hearn, Pearson and Wood were notable among this number. Although, until Wood became well versed in Australian history after 1910, little of Australian history was taught in the universities, it was far from the case that university students, or citizens who enrolled in university extension lectures, met with special pleadings in favour of the political status quo or of earlier established authorities. Pearson and Wood were strong advocates of the radical or adversarial traditions in the English past. Far from the schools of the Australian colonies being used as leading agencies for the implementation of an authorized view of the human past as a whole, of the history of England or of the colonization and development of British Australia, history, like religious instruction, was feared as a source of division and controversy. Even when history became part of the standard curriculum of government schools, the degree of indoctrination into the virtues of past or present English rulers, or, for that matter, of Australian ones, was extremely mild when compared with the presentation of the past in other societies with developed systems of formal schooling. It is true that the children of Australia were brought up to believe that the

historical development of England represented the most notable example of a successful combination of freedom and order which the human race had so far achieved, and that the Australian colonies had not only inherited its advantages to the full, but had extended them further than in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, radical critics of the British tradition could not find, except in the United States of America, an anglomorph society of the same type as the Australian colonies, any candidate for a fuller realisation of the political virtues which they propounded. A better society might be achieved in Lane's Paraguay, although few were convinced of this; none had been constructed which Australian voters, parents or teachers wished to put in the place of what they had inherited.

The children of the not insignificant minority of Roman Catholics of mainly Irish origin whose children attended Roman Catholic schools, received a very different picture of the human past from that offered in the government schools. That no attempts were made to prevent an account of the past being given which was highly hostile to the beliefs and sentiments of the majority was perhaps testimony to the openness and liberality of the historical traditions to which that majority, deeply or lightly, gave its adherence.

Chapter Twenty

An Overview

The Eighteenth Century British Background

In comparison with almost every earlier and contemporary state, eighteenth century Britain was a highly 'open' society in Popper's sense of the term. It was relatively open in social mobility, although degrees of differentiation were more often prized than disparaged; it was particularly open in that, despite the existence of an Established Church, a wide range of opinions existed about religious, as well as about moral and political, questions. Yet, despite the presence of Jews, Deists and Unitarians outside Christianity and the profusion of sects and parties within it in Britain, the traditional doctrines of the Creation, the Fall, the Flood and the Incarnation still held a grip on thought about the human past; the problem of how to reconcile these with new conceptions in geology and biology was a central intellectual concern throughout the period considered in this thesis, as was the relationship of Christian and classical world-pictures to those encountered in other societies, many of which came into the European orbit for the first time.

The eighteenth century bequeathed a lively interest in the relationship to each other, not only of species, but also of human societies. In sociological and historical discourse investigations into the 'Great Chain of Being' increasingly led to the adoption of stages theories of advanced by Adam Smith, David Hume and other leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment, as well as by Montesquieu in France and by Vico in Italy, before being taken up in their different ways by Comte and by Marx. The

adoption of such theories implied an acceptance of the case for the moderns against the ancients and an increased confidence that the human race, or at least its leading figures in the most advanced European states, had entered into intellectual realms never penetrated by the great minds of the classical or the Hebraic past. Confidence in the present and future did not lead in Britain to any general dismissal of the past. Tom Paine and Jeremy Bentham in their very different ways led important movements to start afresh in the light of reason, but antagonism to the ancien regime was never as fierce in Britain as in France, although even there hatred of the 'feudal' and the 'medieval' did not lead to a complete rejection of the human past, since several revolutionary groups, especially the Girondins, saw themselves as the heirs of the Roman Republic and perhaps of the Athenian one too. In the Britain, so far as the formal education of the upper and middle classes was concerned during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Biblical and the classical both had precedence over the national past; the 'respectable poor' had far more instruction in the early history of the Children of Israel than in that of their own forebears.

'Whig history' flourished in generations before Macaulay and his contemporaries who are usually cited as its main examplars, but Hume on the Tory side, despite the radicalism of his epistemology and ethics, and Cobbett on the anti-Protestant, anti-modernizing side, despite his political radicalism, were among the many opposing influences. Perhaps the most precious historiographical inheritance of the Australian colonists was an ongoing debate between those who favoured reformers, despite their follies, over unreformed institutions, and those who preferred established ways, despite their inadequacies, over most attempts to change them. The existence of an often constructive dialogue between the proponents of order

and stability and those of reform and change was an important part of Australia's ideological heritage. The meaning of the Reformation, the rights and wrongs of the Great Rebellion, the implications of the Glorious Revolution and its differences from the French Revolution, whether American Independence was inevitable or avoidable, were among the specific historical questions which frequently arose in Australian contexts, although Jacobitism was dead by the time the First Fleet sailed. The Irishman Edmund Burke continued to be one of the most cited eighteenth century thinkers in nineteenth century Australia, with his principal opponent of the 1790s, the Englishman Tom Paine, a powerful influence with radicals and freethinkers, and the Scot Adam Smith also an important and enduring influence.

The main exception to dialogue was Roman Catholicism. Although the French Revolutionary wars had the effect of making the Roman Catholic Church the enemy of England's principal enemy and thus of forging some form of tactical alliance between them, and although there was no repetition of the Gordon Riots, in England or in Australia, there remained deep suspicion of Rome for its supposed intolerance and superstition. Bunyan and Foxe remained powerful influences on the English Protestant mind, which increasingly associated Roman Catholicism with Irishness, with no increased esteem for either resulting from the association.

Religious toleration had developed in the early modern world mainly as an accidental consequence of the failure of the forces of the Reformation and the Counter Reformation to crush each other in several countries. The articulation of a conception of religious toleration as an intrinsic good followed on slowly behind grudging admissions of liberties and immunities to those deemed heretical. The precarious nature of toleration was shown in

France, where the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 demonstrated that the Huguenots owed their rights in France to their military power, and that once that was surrendered their gains three generations back could be rapidly obliterated and their religion made illegal once more. Similarly in England the acceptance of a party system and its unprecedented notion of an officially recognized opposition had not been the result of adherence to a theory of political pluralism, but a pragmatic response to the final inability of Cavalier and Roundhead, Tory and Whig, to crush each other. The fear that James II intended, both politically and religiously, to apply the principles underlying the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes to his Three Kingdoms brought about his fall in 1688-9 and gave even greater strength to Protestant fears that Roman Catholics would only accept parliamentary party politics for tactical purposes, but that, once in a position to do so, they would seek to impose an absolutist and intolerant regime in Britain of the type habitual in Roman Catholic Europe. This fear of Roman Catholicism spread far beyond people who were zealously Protestant in any specifically confessional sense, and was one of the main historical legacies of the British past to the Australian colonies. By the early nineteenth century religious toleration and political pluralism had become precious political principles rather than tactical necessities in the mainstream of British political life, but the problem of how far those suspected of harbouring the direst intolerance should be given operational freedom to impose their will remained.

One of the effects of modernization, if not of industrialization, in Britain was a vast increase in the population of London and disproportionally so in its habitually and occasionally criminal sub-cultures. To this problem, made worse by the loss of some of the

traditional penal settlements in North America with the American War of Independence, the colonization of Botany Bay was one solution, although there were other motives too for sending out the First Fleet. Despite the annoyance and worse created by urban crime, the considerable advantages offered by the English criminal law to the accused were not significantly reduced, nor, until thirty years after the foundation of New South Wales, were the powers of the police markedly strengthened, although punishments for those caught and found guilty were made much harsher.

The pace of industrialization in Britain was not sufficiently rapid to make too many inroads into its medieval and renaissance heritage, but sufficient to raise alarms that this was a real danger. With Scott began a reaction in favour of the medieval, the gothic and the romantic, which had relatively little impact on nineteenth century Australian thought, although Harpur, Kendall, Gordon, and even Lawson for a brief period, addressed medieval themes.

Early industrialization, combined with the Enclosure Movement, inflicted severe distress on some sections of the British peoples, although it was where there was no or little industrialization that conditions were harshest. Despite intermittent hardship and despite much radical political advice to the contrary, the large majority of the English in both town and country seem to have believed that in liberty, in equality before the law, and in material well-being, they were better off than other peoples and had advanced beyond their own ancestors. British criminals transported to New South Wales and to Van Diemen's Land seem to have had a considerable contempt for all peoples originating from outside the British Isles, while the English applied this disdain to the Irish as well. Irish Australians,

whether Catholic or Protestant, had a significantly different historical perspective from that of the English, but by and large were equally scornful of ways and traditions unconnected with Great Britain and Ireland.

The attitudes of most of the maritime peoples of Europe, perhaps of the British even more than the others, towards non-European societies was characterized by a double movement from the sixteenth century onwards. The general tendency was for increasingly negative images to be held of their past, present and future, but for new hopes of either ancient wisdom or of primitive virtue to be entertained each time a new society came into the European orbit. European conceptions of Asian, American and African societies had all displayed this pattern; in the case of the Pacific early enthusiasms for a new noble savagery, especially in Tahiti, flared brightly but were rapidly extinguished. On the basis of the earlier comments of Dampier, Cook and his contemporaries would have anticipated that little would attract them in the life of the Australian Aborigines, but European experiences in the intervening decades lowered their expectations still further.

Aboriginal Thought about the Past

In one sense traditional Aboriginal society was entirely embedded in a past which was, differently for each group, prescriptive and unalterable. The past events which held such deep significance for Aborigines were, however, mythical ones in the most radical sense, there being no ongoing questioning of what had happened or how, as was the case with myths of origins among the Jews, the Greeks, and among other peoples of whom the European tradition took cognizance. In most Aboriginal groups it was extremely important to classify accurately by generation and by totemic

ancestry, but legends or tales of human ancestors since the Dreamtime were virtually non-existent.

This absence among Aborigines of anything which corresponded to any sort of historical sense with which the British were familiar was an important factor in the general view they adopted that Aborigines had no coherent conception of a political structure which had developed over time, that no recognizable civil society existed among them, and that the doctrine of nullius terra could therefore properly be applied. Aboriginal indifference to their own pre-contact historical past can hardly be disputed, and has been cited by some anthropogists as an admirable feature of traditional Aboriginal thought, but it may also be seen as a grave conceptual weakness, which might be remedied, partly, at least, by an attempt to elucidate some of the possible historical referents of myths placed in the historical Dreamtime.

The Historical Significance of Aborigines in Australian Thought

There was no way in which the average non-Aborigine Australian during the nineteenth century could have found out very much about the pre-contact Aboriginal past. There is little doubt that most of the New Australians saw Aborigines as the lowest human link in the Great Chain of Being of the eighteenth century, and subsequently as the lowest evolutionary stage which claims to be part of homo sapiens. Except as trackers who might help explorers or lost children in the bush, there were few activities in which Aborigines engaged which won any respect among the whites. Inter-racial relationships were usually poor, since traditional Aboriginal ways of life were in many ways incompatible with those of the newcomers, whose vices and diseases, not the positive achievements of the western mind, were typically

assimilated by Aborigines in close or continuous cultural contact. Yet genuine attempts were made throughout the nineteenth century to find some accommodation, whether by sharing culture, law, education, and religion, with Aborigines, or, less frequently, by separation between Aborigines and whites, although neither met with much success. The decline in the Aboriginal population during the nineteenth century, which was widely but mistakenly thought on both sides to be irreversible, tended to reduce initiatives to incorporate Aborigines into the main structure of the new Australia.

The widespread acceptance in nineteenth century White Australia of a belief in the normality of progress in human affairs probably reduced such limited sympathies as might otherwise have been extended to Aborigines. The longer the Aboriginal occupation of the land was shown to have been, the greater the irritation that so little had been accomplished over so long a time, and that Aborigines should be apparently unwilling or unable to learn from peoples who had made progress over the centuries. Many white Australians deeply regretted that their entry into the land, which they saw as a benefit to the world as well as to themselves, should have been accompanied by dispossession of the Aborigines and their consequent desolation, yet no solution seemed available which would enable Aborigines to gain instead of to suffer from the of the new order. Very few white Australians could find any interest or significance in such aspects of the Aborigine past of which they had any knowledge. The most knowledgeable, the ethnologists and anthropologists, found much interest in what seemed to them to be the most primitive of family structures among homo sapiens, but little or no value for present or future societies. For Aborigines, and for people who shared Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry, the destructive changes

brought about by the white incursion deeply challenged the traditional ahistorical conception of Aboriginal societies unchanged and unchangeable since the Dreamtime, but no explicit adaptations or syntheses seem to have been developed by the end of the nineteenth century.

Early Colonial Legal and Political Thought

There was no suggestion among the convicts and emancipists who formed the large majority of the early white population of New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land that they sought to build a new or different sort of society from the one which they were familiar. No dissentients are known from the view that these should be regarded as unoccupied lands, so far as settled habitation was concerned, so that Blackstone's dictum operated that 'all the English laws then in being, which are the birthright of every English subject, are immediately in force'.

Where dispute did arise, it was in respect to Blackstone's reservation that 'such colonists carry with them only so much of English law as is applicable to their own situation and the conditions of an infant colony'. The chief disagreement was as to whether the jury system and some form of representative legislature able to check the executive power were applicable to penal colonies and, if so, at which stage of their development. Although the jury system could not immediately be implemented, convicts had most of the protection offered by the law of England: they could only be charged with crimes known to the law and upon indictment constrained by strict formulae. The military juries and the replacement of the Grand Jury for presentation of crimes by an extension of the powers of the Attorney-General were not grounded in the English past, but in general those who were affected by their operation seem to have thought that they worked fairly and

in harmony with the spirit of the Common Law.

Far from the situation being one in which the colonists sought to escape from the laws of England, but London sought to keep them within the bounds of precedent, Sir James Stephen, who as Under-Secretary for the Colonies exerted an important early influence on early legal and constitutional developments in Australia, urged that the colonists should be bold in innovations, provided that the laws retained 'the family resemblance', whereas colonial judges and lawyers were determined to stay as close as possible to English precedents. The Rum Rebellion and the overthrow of Bligh showed that the local and immediate balance between the military and the civil power was very different from that in the United Kingdom, but George Johnston and John Macarthur had no intention whatsoever of establishing a new rule of the Major-Generals, and a civil administration was re-established w8ithout too much difficulty. The military and naval backgrounds of early governors may have made some of them authoritarian in temperament, but subjects, whether military men, such as Tench in dispute with Phillip, or civilians, such as Marsden in conflict with Macquarie, were able to withstand gubernatorial pressures.

The large majority of the convicts seem to have considered that they had suffered no injustice, but had been merely the victims of 'a fair cop'. Many 'knew their rights' from many brushes with the forcces of law and order and could take full advantage of the protection the law offered them against physical punishment or excessive demands by the free colonists to whom they were assigned. Local and family disputes were often brought by convicts and by emancipist families to the magistrates. The main reason for the establishment of the Bigge Commission was not the horrors of transportation

or the oppressions of Botany Bay, but that the life of the typical convict and emancipist was sufficiently attractive for the deterrent value of transportation to have been severely reduced.

Many convicts and emancipists adopted one of the earliest myths of Australian national identity: that the colony had been settled on their behalf and thus that they were the true quintessential Australians, or, as James Macarthur put it, 'that the colony was theirs by right, and that the emigrant settlers were interlopers on the soil'. Emancipists, with William Charles Wentworth as their first public voice, were certainly unprepared for any lengthy exclusion from the rights and privileges of English subjects. Wentworth went back to the American War of Independence for warnings of what happened when British governments failed to grant its colonists the full rights to which their traditions of government entitled them, but he did not follow Jefferson or Henry in basing his demands on the abstractions of a social contract, but on English precedent, backed up by examples from Greek and Roman history of the disasters attended by a failure to grant equality of rights to colonists. In these themes Wentworth was supported strongly by John Dunmore Lang and by Sir John Jamison.

The most extreme exclusivist opposition to emancipist claims was articulated by James Mudie, who agreed that the rights of British subjects should normally be extended to all in settled colonies, including emancipated Black West Indians, but had been permanently forfeited by felons, who were entitled after sentence to freedom but not to respect or to full participation in legal and constitutional duties. The more moderate exclusives, of whom James Macarthur was typical, were less concerned about excluding emancipists from jury service or the franchise than about

preserving what they conceived to be traditional English values in a rough-and-ready frontier society, in which service to the community was of no account and the cash-nexus everything. This stand was weakened by the dubious origins of many of the leading exclusivist families, and by the division of the landed interest between agriculturalists, like the Macarthurs, despite their interests in sheep, and the squatter pastoralists, many of whom during the 1830s and 1840s looked upon New South Wales as temporary places of sojourn before they returned to Britain, while others lived as rough and uncultivated a life as their own shepherds. Deniehy's riposte of a 'bunyip aristocracy' was an effective rejoinder to exclusivist pretensions, which had such weak historical roots.

Another historical claim to true Australianness started to be advanced during the 1830s by some of the colonially-born. In 1837 a group which called itself with unconscious irony the 'United Australians' organized an Australia Day dinner which only the native born were eligible to attend. Nativist influence (and their proportion in the population) fell with the gold rushes of the 1850s, but the search for a dual identity of British-Australianism, or of 'Independent Australian Britons', with the emphasis as much on the Australian as the British, continued. The nativism embodied in organizations such as the Friendly Society of Victorian Natives, later the Australian Natives' Association (and in no way connected with Aboriginality) did not renounce any Britishness, but rather claimed to have extended its virtues in ways unrealized in the United Kingdom.

In the rapid progress from penal settlements (except in the case of South Australia) to colonies with virtually full internal self-government, there was never any serious challenge to the relevance of English legal and

constitutional precedents, or of their value. Dispute was about the extent of their applicability. Apart from interest in the United States, mainly as a debating point when demands were being made on Westminster, there was nowhere else in the world, least of all in the huge part of the globe within five thousand miles of any coastline of Australia, to which the early Australian colonists looked for historical inspiration and guidance.

Early Colonial Literature

Nothing in the the pre-Contact Aboriginal past provided a basis for early colonial literature. Apart from the accounts of their own experiences by marines, soldiers, civilian officials and settlers, some of which were of a high literary calibre, such as those of Collins, Tench, Watling, W.C. Wentworth, James Macarthur, Lang, Cunningham and Harris, there developed two very different modes of colonial literature, each with roots in eighteenth century England. The first was the Newgate novel, adapted to transportation and convict life in Australia; James Tucker's Ralph Rashleigh, Henry Savery's Quintus Servinton, and James Hardy Vaux's Memoirs were of this character and established literary continuity with the low-life of England. The second was the epic poem attempting to link the newly-founded and lowly penal colonies to the past glories of England, and, beyond, to those of Ancient Greece and Rome. The odes of Michael Massey Robinson and William Charles Wentworth's Australasia were the main examples of this genre.

The early colonial theatre was another important vehicle for the transmission of cultural traditions, as Phillip and his successors sought ways of bringing some sweetness and light into the vast open prison over which they presided. From the production of Farquhar's The Recruiting

Officer by convicts on the King's Birthday in 1789, less than two years after the foundation of New South Wales, links with the English theatre were maintained, with farce, melodrama and spectacle dominating, but with serious drama never totally submerged.

Apart from the early and mainly unsuccessful efforts of Charles Tompson, the first significant attempt in the Australian colonies to write lyrical and dramatic verse within the central traditions of English poetry and embracing Biblical and classical motifs was the work of Charles Harpur. Harpur, a steadfast critic of the British political legacy to Australia, used some contemporary nationalist ideas, such as those of Mazzini, but his weapons were taken mainly from the English radical tradition, especially from poets such as Milton, Blake, Byron and Shelley, together with Burns from Scottish radicalism. In this respect Harpur began a tendency which persisted throughout the nineteenth century: the leading opponents of the political structures derived from England found that the strongest arguments for its transformation in one way or another came from other strands of the English past, not from independent sources.

Colonial Anglican Thought

The Church of England's confortable status of establishment was not too severely shaken by the Wesleys and Methodism or by the new radicalism associated with the French Revolution or with concern about the consequences of industrialization. It was assumed that the Church of England, although not the Church of Scotland, which was also established, had carried its special status with it to New South Wales and to Van Diemen's Land, but evangelizing zeal was low among the early governors and even lower among the

convicts and the military. By the time that the Church and Schools Corporation was set up by Governor Darling in 1825 the Church of England in England itself faced far more serious challenges to its old privileges than those it had encountered in 1788. The Catholic Relief Act and the Repeal of the Test Act strengthened the determination of Catholics and non-Conformists in the Australian colonies to prevent any establishment from becoming effective. The foundation of South Australia specifically without any religious establishment encouraged opposition to Anglican claims in the older colonies.

Several of the Anglican clergy, especially William Grant Broughton and Francis Russell Nixon, worked hard to retain establishment or, at least, some special status, and in the course of their efforts they brought many historical precedents to bear on the matter, as did their opponents. Broughton, together with most of the Australian Anglican Hierarchy, but especially Charles Perry and William Tyrrell, came to the conclusion during the 1840s that the royal connection was a disadvantage in Australia and that erastianism of any sort ought to be repudiated. It was by no means easy to make the transition from establishment to sect, but the contrast with past dignity within England was at least no more painful for Anglicans to contemplate than for Roman Catholics.

All the great issues concerning the relationship between the Bible and Christianity on the one hand and new scientific, particularly biological and geological, knowledge on the other, were vigorously debated in Australia, with leading Anglican divines, including Broughton and Perry playing leading parts. The doctrinal questions connected with the Oxford Movement and the Gorham Judgement led to similar sorts of historical citation and disputation

among Australian Anglicans as in England.

Starting with the unlikely figure of Samuel Marsden as first apostle to the Maoris, many of the Anglicans of Australia, with Broughton again pointing a way ahead, saw the main historical significance of the British colonization of Australia as the opening up of the whole Pacific to Christian evangelism. The most relevant episodes of church history became no longer those related to disputes between Church and State, but the work of missioners to the heathen, to St. Augustine of Canterbury and St. Boniface.

John Dunmore Lang

John Dunmore Lang's first major impact on Australian thought was as the leading Presbyterian critic of Anglican claims to establishment or to any special status in New South Wales. His initial objection to Anglican establishment was on the grounds of the equal claims of the Church of Scotland, but he became a voluntarist opposed to any claims based on vested interest or historical precedent. From the Bible, especially from Samuel I, he deduced that republics were ordained by God, a belief confirmed by his visits to the United States. The 1840s and 1850s saw the peak of Australian interest in the American past, with republicans, and particularly Lang himself, most prominent in drawing historical parallels. The granting of internal self-government by Westminster to the Australian colonies during the 1850s, coupled with the negative impact of the American Civil War, reduced interest in American precedents considerably, although they continued to be made from time to time.

Lang was never able to find any virtue in the past or present of the

Roman Catholic Church and thereby cut himself off from a vast amount of the Christian tradition, but his sectariansim, which was equalled often enough in other branches of Australian Christianity, may ironically have caused only limited offence because he castigated so many groups as erroneous: not only Roman Catholics and Anglicans, but his Presbyterian brethren as well. The severe limitations on Lang's sympathies with other forms of Christian belief from his own stood in strange contrast to the wide range of interest he showed in societies very different from his own, whether the city states of Ancient Greece or the Polynesians and their folk-wanderings. The range of his historical allusion compensated in part at least for the sharpness with which he condemned a multitude of errors.

Roman Catholic and Irish Thought

Despite the occasional irruption of other disputes, such as those about the legal rights which ought to be accorded to emancipists, those concerning the re-introduction of transportation, those arising from the gold rush and the claims of the miners, and those about the squatters' rights over the lands their flocks occupied, the main single source of turbulence in the first century and more of the Australian colonies was the divergence in traditions and values of Irish Catholics and of the rest, mainly Protestant, although including many indifferent or hostile to religion but more fearful of Rome than of any other religious force. Inherited antagonism was periodically inflamed by events and pronouncements outside Australia, such as the 1798 and 1848 Risings in Ireland, the conflict between the Vatican and Italian Nationalism, or the doctrinal programme of Pius IX. The Great Irish Famine did not immediately exacerbate religious dispute in Australia, but when the view propounded by John Mitchel in 1860 that 'God sent the Blight, but the English made the Famine' became Fenian doctrine, it was

naturally enough taken up in Australia, where Mitchel had briefly been a political exile after the 1848 Rising, in organs such as the Freeman's Journal.

Irish nationalism usually became milder among the Catholic laity after a few years in Australia, but the clergy, most of them born in Ireland, worked hard to maintain Irish cultural consciousness and often to enusre remembrance of the wrongs of Ireland. Many Irish families in Australia were proud of their own achievements and those of their countrymen, but they were often prepared to accept versions of the Australian past which magnified injustices done to them, while there was often a natural enough resentment that the dominant or official culture was not theirs, but that of the people with whom they contrasted themselves.

A great effort was made by John Bede Polding, with some early support from William Ullathorne and later bakcing from Roger Bede Vaughan, to make the Benedictine tradition, which had been so important in re-establishing a high civilization after the barbarian invasions of western Europe, a major force in Australian Catholic life. In the face of Irish antagonism to English prelates and to traditions which had played very little part in the religious life of Ireland, Benedictinism struck no deep roots, although New Norcia under the leadership of the Spanish Benedictine Rosano Salvado was perhaps the most notable of all Christian missions to the Aborigines. Polding's mainly Irish suffragans resolutely and successfully opposed his attempts to transcend other loyalties, principally Irish ones, into a new Australian loyalty.

Protestant opposition to the establishment of a Roman Catholic

territorial hierarchy in Australian was relatively subdued, while the inclusion of Roman Catholic schools in government grants to education also suggested that ancient animosities might be waning. After 1850, however, the 1848 Irish Rising, accusations that the British Government exacerbated the Irish Famine, disputes concerning the Temporal Power, the Syllabus of Errors and the Bulls on the Immaculate Conception and on Papal Infallibility, together with the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh, all exacerbated the old sectarian disputes. No compromise was found on the funding of Catholic schools, so that Roman Catholics became increasingly separated from their neighbours, continued to acquire a different conception of history from them, and felt increasingly burdened by disadvantage compared with them.

The great weakness in controversy from which Australian Roman Catholics laboured was an inability to point to any Catholic states, present or past, in which non-Catholics had as much liberty or equality as they possessed in Australia. Their claims were linked with conceptions of political liberalism which had developed most strongly in Protestant states, particularly in Great Britain and the United States, and which had been specifically held up to obloquy in the Syllabus of Errors. Another problem was that critiques of the English political tradition by Irish Catholics came in two conflicting and to some extent self-cancelling forms. The Hierarchy, with their eyes on Rome, criticized British governments and their supporters in Australia for excessive support for liberalism and nationalism in Italy, and to a lesser degree in Spain and Portugal; the more militant of the laity blamed the British for the opposite fault in Ireland of failing to accept the implications of liberalism and nationalism in their totality. By a strange irony each side in disputes within Australian Catholicism found

occasion to bless the British and the colonial governments for protecting them against the policies urged by the other. Both Polding and the Irish Bishops expressed a genuine gratitude that they lived under a government and a dynasty which, although not Catholic, allowed the Church far more freedom and scope than it enjoyed in many nominally Catholic states; Deniehy and the leading lights of the Freeman's Journal found satisfaction in the limits placed by English law on any actions which the Hierarchy could take against them.

Relief from the isolation from the mainstream of Australian thought was offered to Roman Catholics by the social doctrines associated with Pope Leo XIII, especially in the encyclical De rerum novarum. Under the skilled leadership of Francis Joseph Moran, Australian Catholics found, especially in trades unions and the Australian Labor Party, modes of co-operation with non-Catholics in which Catholics were for the most part the dominant or best-organised force.

Australian Catholics in Public Life

After internal self-government during the 1850s in the Australian colonies, there was not very much difference in relationship to population between the number of Protestants and Catholics playing a prominent part in parliamentary politics or in the law. To be of Irish Catholic origin meant that some attitudes towards the past were much more to be expected than were others, but stereotypes break down on closer examination.

Two of the first Irish Catholics to gain advantage from the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 were Roger Therry and John Hubert Plunkett, both of whom were members of old Irish Catholic landowning families, not all of which had

been utterly expropriated and degraded under British rule. Both Roger Therry and John Hubert Plunkett were of Daniel O'Connell's way of thinking and sought to co-operate with the more whiggish and liberal elements in the English governing classes in order to gain significant steps towards full constitutional equality for Ireland and full religious equality for Catholics. Both Therry and Plunkett were deeply critical of earlier English policies in Ireland, but both believed that the law and constitution of England offered the best umbrella under which Irish Catholics could progress and flourish. Both believed, too, that the Act of Union had great value in enabling the Irish to share qually in imperial colonization.

Daniel Deniehy enjoyed early success and fame as an orator and political leader, as well as a writer and literary critic. Deniehy did not share Therry's or Plunkett's sympathies with English legal or constitutional traditions, becoming instead one of the leading advocates in New South Wales of separation under an Australian republic. Like Charles Harpur, Deniehy was steeped in English literature and found in the English radical tradition his key arguments for a radical breach with England. Deniehy was very much out of sympathy with either the Benedictinism of Polding or the claims to ecclesiastical guidance on non-doctrinal questions advanced by the Catholic Hierarchy as a whole. His weaknesses of character, as well as his vehemence, reduced the effectiveness of Deniehy's contribution to the causes he most valued. More clever and cultivated than Edward O'Sullivan and, unlike Charles Gavan Duffy, born (and to die) in Australia, Deniehy's wit and cultivation, his sympathy with the Irish Catholic past and with English literary and cultural traditions, might have been applied to developing, together with nativist Australian experience, a constructive synthesis.

Charles Gavan Duffy, with some competition from Robert Lowe, was perhaps the most distinguished of the men who played an important part in public life in the United Kingdom and in Australia. Duffy, like Deniehy, antagonized both protestants and Catholics, but fewer of each, mainly fierce sectarians on the Protestant side and Archbishop Goold and his inner circle on the other. Duffy had come under the censure of the Irish Catholic Hierarchy for his attacks on the policies of O'Connell and then for his part in the 1848 Rising. When he came to Victoria his attempts to conciliate Goold were construed by militant Protestants as subservience to the priesthood. Ironically his main political rival in Victoria was to be its first Roman Catholic Premier, John O'Shanassy. Duffy himself became Premier of Victoria, and, although his achievements were smaller than he had hoped for, fewer men of wider historical and literary culture have ever held such as office in this country. His own example helped to raise Irish stocks among Australians as a whole, and to stimulate a greater interest in Irish literature and history among Irissh Catholics.

Edward William O'Sullivan lacked Duffy's great gifts, but he also lacked his sensitivity to criticism. An ability to work amicably with a wide range of people and to compartmentalize his own mind wi8thout any loss of sleep were among O'Sullivan's assets. As a journalist, editor or politician he was able, for example, to sympathize with the sorrows of Pius IX, yet to advocate the type of political programme which was denounced in the Syllabus of Errors and in other papal pronouncements. O'Sullivan's father had been a soldier; whether as a consequence or not, O'Sullivan had more interest in the military past than most Australian radicals of his time, as well as supporting military training. He became convinced by experience rather than expediency that his early republicanism was a

mistake, offering instead historical arguments for a constitutional monarchy with two legislative chambers. O'Sullivan sympathized with state intervention to combat poverty or to stimulate trade and industry, but he was also conscious from his studies of the past as well as from his own reflections that powerful governments can soon become a menace to those they claim to protect. O'Sullivan adopted a Cobbett-like attitude to medieval social order, seeing it as organic and embodying social solidarity. The encyclicals of Leo XIII, especially De rerum novarum, were seen by O'Sullivan as a constructive basis for a Catholic social policy in Australia.

O'Sullivan's most important conception was that of 'Anglo-Celticism'. It was not highly original - indeed, John Hubert Plunkett in Australia had supported a version of this idea, which the Great Liberator had often toyed, especially during his alliance with the Whigs in the late 1830s. O'Sullivan was highly conscious of the value of the British Empire to the Irish, and very proud of the part played by the Irish in its creation. Given Home Rule for Ireland, not too little and not too late, and a further development of Catholic and Protestant co-operation in unions and in political pasties, the prospects at the turn of the century for O'Sullivan's common-sensical rather than ideologically subtle Anglo-Celticism seemed good.

James Martin is not usually though of as an Irish-Catholic Australian. Indeed, he was a lapsed Catholic and he favoured English over Irish national traditions. Although he was sometimes attacked as an apostate, there is little doubt that Martin made a conscious choice of cultural identity on intrinsic grounds rather than through any political opportunism. The comparative ease with which Martin could absorb the dominant culture of

Australian and become an epitome of Anglo-Australianism is itself an interesting reflection of the openness of nineteenth century Australian society and on the non-coercive nature of historical traditions or cultural identity in such a society.

Fathers of Federation: Parkes; Pearson; Deakin

Although Deakin was born in Victoria, he was, like the English-born Parkes and Pearson, very much an Anglo-Australian. Although Parkes was the only one of this trio chosen as representative of Anglo-Australian Protestantism whose career was significantly influenced by sectarian politics, all three were typically Protestant in the negative sense of regarding the Roman Catholic Church as the main contemporary embodiment of old, intolerant, reactionary and superstitious ways. Most of the forces which the Syllabus of Erros picked out as the essential evils which recent changes, labelled progress and the victory of liberalism, had enthroned in modern societies, were precisely those to whose further success Parkes, Pearson and Deakin were all politically and personally committed. Each of them had some sympathy with the past sufferings of Irish Catholics and admired moderate and cultivated Catholics of the stamp of Charles Gavan Duffy, but they sought the complete separation of church from state, and an entirely secularized political system.

None of them was a Protestant in any very definite sense: Parkes was largely indifferent to questions of religious doctrine; Pearson, a son of the clergy, was an active critic of the faith of his fathers; Deakin, even more radically dissatisfied with all the churches, steeped himself in mysticism and transcendental thought, when not engaged in mundane political and administrative chores. They looked on Dissent or Non-Conformity as

likely allies on most political questions, especially educational ones, but this did not imply that thhe shared their substantive beliefs. Calvin, Luther, or the seventeenth century English Puritans, may have been the progressive forces of their time, but the nature of progress, as Parkes, Pearson and Deakin all saw it, was that what was once the new and the better would itself be superseded in time.

Parkes discarded his earlier republicanism and as his radicalism came to be of a compromising character, so his 'Englishmanism', as his sometime ally Daniel Deniehy put it, became stronger. Parkes fervently denied that there was any basic conflict between the interests of the Australian colonies and those of Britain and the Empire. If there were temporary and local differences, this was, in his view, not because Westminster was too imperialistic, but insufficiently so, especially in resistance to the intrusion of other European powers into South East Asia, into the Archipelago, and into the South West Pacific. During the 1870s Pearson was more radical and anti-imperialist than Parkes had been during the 1850s, but his growing fears of, not Britain's European rivals, but the Yellow Peril of, first, Chinese numbers and then Japanese military power, led him to seek closer ties between the Australian colonies and Britain and between the Australian colonies themselves. Although Pearson had died before Australian Federation was accomplished, the powerful effect of his National Life and Character was important in stimulating Parkes and Deakin, among others, to action.

In the face of what he saw as new threats of an unprecedented kind, Pearson changed fairly rapidly from criticism of the political tradition for its imperfections to protective care for it, as the best form of government

yet evolved. Deakin's intellectual history was, if anything, even more fascinating. His mind seems to have been compartmentalized between a long-term eclectic search in the human past for deeper meaning of the purpose of life, a search which took him into many forms of eastern religion and mystic philosophy, and a short-term determination that the political institutions of Australia and its cultural heritage from Britain should be zealously protected against any undermining. Parkes, Pearson and Deakin were all parliamentarians who knew from personal experience, as well as from solid historical reading, particularly in English history, that men are seldom attractive in their attempts to get to the top of the greasy pole in their search for power and prestige. They knew that party strife was often trivial, backbiting and ignoble; they also believed, with complete conviction, that the form of representative government Australia enjoyed was, despite faults which were perhaps endemic to the human condition, the best that was available, not so much in its substantive detail as in its capacity for infinite adjustment, and one immeasurably superior to any regime in Asia or elsewhere which might one day be presented as an alternative way of life.

Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall

Adam Lindsay Gordon became the quintessential Australian poet for many Australians during the two generations following his suicide in 1870. His greatest attraction to a popular readership lay in his evocation of the Australian bush and in his celebration of men with horses, but he also sought to forge links with the historical and literary past. Similarly Kendall, who more obviously than Gordon sought to become the Bard of Australia, and whose education seems at first sight a very limited one, was determined to make himself and his readers heirs to great traditions whose

origins lay far from Australia. Although Gordon was more reticent about his artistic aims, it may well be that disappointment with the quality of his work, or with the lack of response it had hitherto received, rather than his financial problems alone, led him to take his own life. Kendall openly expressed, particularly in 'The Muse of Australia', his sorrow that his art was not of the towering quality of the great poets, but, although he let his life disintegrate, he did not end it.

Gordon and Kendall both exploited Biblical and classical themes with fair success. Both were attracted by the accounts of Saul and David in Samuel I; Kendall's 'King Saul at Gilboa' has many fine qualities, although its reception was marred by his following Tennyson's 'Morte d'Arthur' too closely at a critical point in the poem. Kendall's 'The Voyage of Telegonus', his best classical poem, was influenced by Matthew Arnold's 'Sohrab and Rustum' as well as by Homer, but was handled in a distinctive way.

Unlike Kendall, Gordon shared the strong interest in balladry and in themes from medieval chivalry which many writers caught in the first place from Scott, but which never became very significant in Australian literature. Gordon's verse often links the England of his youth with the Australia of his manhood; Kendall often makes comparisons between the scenery of Australia and of an England which he did not know directly. Gordon, who entered the South Australian Parliament, avoided satire, but Kendall, to little advantage, was provoked into polemic in youth and gratuitously took the initiative later.

Kendall, although with very little success, tried hard to make

Aboriginal experience part of his early verse. Whether because of increasing impatience with the Aborigines he met, or because of a coarsening of his character, Kendall's late satirical verses on Aborigines express merely contempt.

Unlike Gordon, Kendall devoted much of his talent to epic and commemmorative verse, treating of emigrants, of explorers, of the lone settler attacked by Aborigines, and reaching its climax in the 1879 'The Sydney International Exhibiton' and the 1880 'Blue Mountain Pioneers.' Those works lack the freshness of Kendall's lyric poetry, but in his attempt to provide a wide Australian public with a dignified and exalted version of the events they thought had been critical in Australian history, and in his repetition of Robinson's and Wentworth's anticipations of Australia's future greatness, he provides a useful insight into the minds of many of his contemporaries. In most of Kendall's verse, as in Gordon's, there is a lack of parochial narrowness, a desire to draw on a wide variety of forms and images, themes and stories from the western tradition, with Kendall making unsuccessful forays into Aboriginal story as well. Critics such as A.A. Phillips have classified their attempt to root their work in the past in this way as a cultural cringe, but it might be more appropriate to consider it as a contribution to cultural continuity.

Convictism and Pioneering

Although convictism played no part in Kendall's commemmorative verse for anniversaries in New South Wales and in Victoria, the convict past loomed large in other conceptions of the early years of Australia. In Tasmania the first orthodox histories, those of Henry Melville and John West, had also been political esays attacking the old regime associated most

with Sir George Arthur, and/or opposing the continuation or restoration of transportation. It was novelists, however, rather than historians who most reminded Australians of the convict past. Marcus Clark and William Astley concentrated on secondary places of correction and wrote more aobut Tasmania than about New South Wales. Both systematically portrayed the worst extremes of harsh punishment and official brutality as typical of convict experience, unlike Catherine Leakey, whose The Broad Arrow gives a more reliable picture of convict life than does His Natural Life. Leakey was no mean writer, but Clarke surpassed her and it was his indictment on behalf of the prosecution, rather than any judicious or balanced account, which won (and has kept) a mass readership. Astley's hatred of English traditions and institutions was more narrowly political than that of Clarke, an antinominan apostle of a counterculture, whose sallies were fired in many different directions.

It is difficult to know to what extent Clarke's and Astley's readers accepted their novels or short stories as accurate renderings of the past. What is more certain is that, although the power of Britain and of its colonial agents was painted by both as malign and oppressive, most of the convicts in their stories were also presented as monsters of iniquity, so that their influence did not lead their readers to wish to emphasise and family links with the convict past they might possess. The Earl of Beauchamp very much started off his Governorship of New South Wales on the wrong foot in 1899, when he used Kipling's verses on their 'birthstain' they had made good as part of his first greeting to them.

Pioneering was a much more acceptable image of the early Australians than was convictism to their late nineteenth century heirs. The excitement,

the dangers, the achievements, the failures and deaths, of pioneers in the bush, were an important part of many children's stories and found expression in Henry Kingsley's Geoffry Hamlyn, which was for a long time regarded by many as the best novel written in Australia and which roused the wrath of those, like Joseph Furphy, who disliked the values which informed it. Kendall's celebrated pioneering, while Gordon's verses on stockmen added to an idealization of past life in the Outback or the Bush. Life in the bush was much more central in the work of Paterson and Lawson than in that of their predecessors. Even the most British in sentiment of Australians wanted there to be important elements in their culture which were independent of any British heritage. The flora and the fauna could be used to some extent; the Aborigines were unique, but a subject of deep ambivalence; the convict past was distinctive but to be forgotten rather than celebrated; the cities of Australia, especially Melbourne during its boom years were an object of pride to most Australians, but Britain, Europe and America had bigger cities. Pioneering and bush life, especially as portrayed by Paterson, became an important past of a developing national psyche.

Pioneering had its ambiguities: were the true pioneers those who had first arrived, but stayed by the coast; or those who, irrespective of when they arrived or had been born in the colonies, had forged further and further westwards, northwards, into the unknown, to White Australians, heart of the continent? Initially it was the first of these meanings which was most common, but by the end of the century the second had become dominant. One way or the other the late nineteenth century Australians generally expressed admiration for pioneers and for their predecessors generally. They had not yet learned to think of them as genocidal exxpropriators who

had destroyed a elicate and harmonious 40,000 years old balance between the Aborigines and their environment.

Henry Lawson

In his early years Lawson strongly dissented from the picture of a benign bush portrayed by Paterson. Like many late nineteenth century Australian nationalists of the Bulletin or Boonmerang schools, Lawson oscillated between extravagant praise for the sturdy Australian, who was twice the man of the effete Englishman and who ought to break free completely from the apron strings of Britain, the land of the Fatman, the exploiter of the colonial toilers, and contempt for the stupid and ignorant Australian, spiritually stinted as much by the barren Bush as by the city slum. For some years Lawson considered that a revolutionary insurrection was the best way in which the slumbering potentiality of the Australian could be awakened; as he became disillusioned with socialist editors and labour politicians as well as with those of different colours, Lawson turned to national war as the experience to unify and cleanse a putrifying people.

In common with most of his fellow radicals of the 1880s and 1890s, Lawson's vision of international solidarity was confined to White peoples. Lawson disclaimed any personal dislike for any individual Chinese, but the Yellow Peril was very real to him, as well as to his boss on the Boomerang William Lane and his boss on the Bulletin J.F. Archibald. The rise of Japan increased Lawson's anxieties and helped to transform many of his historical perspectives: Britain was less and less an ogre but instead the home of liberty; the sufferings of Ireland fell from the frame and were replaced by the image of Oliver Cromwell, the type of popular dictator the white nations might need in order to survive new dangers; the woes of Poland were

forgotten, as 'Ivan' became regarded by Lawson as the essential counterpoise to the teeming millions of Asiatics, and as Peter the Great's turbulent energies became the object of Lawson's admiration. The authoritarian tendencies latent in late nineteenth century socialism populism and nationalism became increasingly evident in Lawson's verse and stories towards 1900 and even more so after the defeat of Russia in 1904-5.

All the time that Lawson was agonizing on the fate of nations he continued to write generally indifferent verse and usually highly effective short stories, which gained their merit from understatement, laconic humour and an apparent willingness to look danger and disaster in the face without any panic. Lawson's ideological messages had little influence, to his own great chagrin, but his portrayals of lone battlers in the bush, or of mates roughing it, or of the bush woman in dangerous isolation with her children, had perhaps a greater impact on Australian images of national traditions and character than that of any other writer before or since. When dealing with the specific and the actual, Lawson usually forgot the general and the conceivable, to the great gain of his best prose works. The immature in Australia of all ages have continued to shed crocodile tears with the young Lawson that blood may have to stain the wattle before injustice is overturned in the land, but most of his readers gained from him impressions other than those he mainly sought to give. The chief of these was that the Australian Bush, although a tough and excating place, had developed the character of the pioneers so that they had become resilient and resourceful, reliable in a crisis, sardonic and laconic, the salt of the earth.

Archibald, Stephens and the Bulletin

Archibald wanted to edit a journal which would be popular and populist

in the most radical sense by embodying the main shared values of the mass of Australians, but the confusion in his own sense of personal identity was shown by his changing his given names to Jules Francois. Ragingly chauvinist on the one hand, he abused typical Australians on the other as 'toadies, grovellers and lickspittles'. He had a strong sense of White Australian solidarity which led the Bulletin to define Australian nationality as embracing all English-speaking Whites who supported its policies. Australianness on this account excluded many Whites who lived in Australia, but they could change their ways; it also excluded non-Whites of every description, especially the 'hereditary enemy of our race', the canker in the fair bosum of Australia', 'the Oriential Octopus', the Cinese.

Archibald and the Bulletin used a double strategy in respect of Aborigines: anti-Aborigine atrocities past and present were wildly exaggerated, but there was trenchant opposition to trying to do anything about them, since the Aborigines were a doomed race anyway. Stephens, who indulged in 'Noble Savage' ideas (such as that before 1788 Aborigine life was similar to white dreams of paradise), developed the useful technique in historical analysis of describing early colonists as English or British when they committed anti-Aborigine atrocities, or, indeed, did anything else with which Stephens disapproved, but as Australians when their behaviour was adequate in his eyes.

Archibald was consistent in his anti-British virulence. Whether it was war in the Soudan or in South Africa, or poverty in London, British policies were represented in the Bulletin as selfish, evila dn depraved. Most of all Australia's involvement in the British Empire meant that the danger was ever present that Indians, Malays, Africans and varieties of non-White without

number, might obtain admission into Australia through membership of that Empire. An immediate break with Britain and an Australian Republic which pursued a resolutely isolationaist policy was Archibald's demand for many years, until the rise of Japanese power led him to fear that an isolated Australia might be in some danger.

Stephens had a powerful influence on the way in which Australians viewed past as well as contemporary literature. His main thrust was that Australian writers should not depend too much, let alone exclusively, on English models. Which other models did he recommend? Not classical literature: Stephens thought the ideas in Homer dated and irrelevant, while he doubted whether Dante could get himself published in the Queenslander in the advanced era in which they now lived. Not Aboriginal literature, since the Noble Savage had been too content to require literature. Not the literatures of Asia, to which Stephens was entirely indifferent, although not rabidly hostile in the way in which Archibald was. Western literatures were commended by Stephens from time to time, with Verhaeren, Verlaine, Maeterlinck and Maupassant among contemporary writers he admired, but his references to them were not very substantial, while he was almost entirely unsympathetic to the aims and methods of the one Australian writer, Christopher Brennan, who was significantly in tune with Mallarme and with French Symbolism as a whole.

Stephens was usually harsh in his judgements on English writers when dealing directly with them. Women novelists rarely pleased him, with the Bronte sisters and George Eliot all receiving short shrift. Burns, too, usually admired in all radical circles, was the subject of a scathing attack by Stephens, to the fury of most of the Scots in Australia who had ever read

a poem in their lives. Implicit admiration for English writers was most often shown by Stephens whilst regretting that they had influenced Australian writers too much, especially Henry Kendall. Stephens considered that there had been a mighty advance from the time of Kendall and Gordon, 'that poor baffled idealist' to the 1890s, but he rarely 'blew' Australians of the 1890s either. Paterson he described as a 'mere bush balladist', James Brunton Stephens was, with good reason, exposed by him as shallow and over-valued, Brennan he found, with much less justification, confused and inadequate. He saw Barbara Baynton's merits, but placed her only on the first of three planes of excellence in literary realism. Two of his few real enthusiasms were for John Shaw Neilson, which subsequent critical judgement was upheld, and for Victor Daley, whose reputation declines very rapidly after his death.

Just as Stephens was more likely to praise English poets or novelists when considering Australian writers, so he was more supportive of Australian writers when other critics, especially academics, pased unfavourable judgements on them. Some of his highest praise for Henry Lawson came in the course of repelling attacks by Walter Murdoch and by Professor E.E. Morris of Melbourne University. More usually Lawson was the victim of a Morton's Fork in Stephens's criticisms. Stephens argued that Lawson's 'value was largely an Australian value', that he was 'splendidly parochial' and 'comparatively uncultured' and that his work was 'not a city of world-literature' but a 'bush-township of literature in Australia'. When Lawson did read more widely and when the influence of Kipling, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, or others showed in his work, he was duly admonished by Stephens for being too derivative. When Lawson died, Stephens, who had always emphasised his Australianness, drew attention to his Englishness, declaring

that Lawson was 'typically an English peasant'. Stephens finally understood that Australianness and Englishness had organic connections he had not adequately understood during most of his life as a literary critic.

Joseph Furphy

Furphy received from his parents a solid grounding in the Bible and in Shakespeare, but it was not from his schooling that he learned who Belisarius was or how to use 'laconic' correctly in conversation. Furphy's range of historical and literary reference was remarkably wide, worthy to rank with Rabelais, Sterne and Joyce. Although the Australian bush or city was not filled with comparable autodidacts, it seems likely that many bullockies discussed politics, religion, history and literature with Furphy and with each other, just as in Furphy's novels Thompson and company yarn with Tom Collins or with Rigby.

There was fortunately a wide gap between Furphy's often arid theories and his rich and fertile practice. For example, in his consciously articulate theory of historical significance, the thought and experience of generations before the eighteenth century Enlightenment, or before Tom Paine and Robert Burns, are valued only as examples of superstition and ignorance, yet he constantly found, not only in Shakespeare and in the Authorised Version of the Bible, but in an immense variety of histories and literatures, the basis for developed and elaborated arguments about contemporary life.

Furphy was taken by most of his early readers, including A.G. Stephens, as a realistic novelist, whose value lay essentially in his description of the landscapes of the Riverina and of its social structure, and whose

allusiveness was a distraction from the essentials of the plot and, perhaps, merely a pedantic parading of ill-digested knowledge. It has become clearer that Such Is Life is a novel of immense internal complexity and that it contains layer upon layer of irony, with Furphy often undercutting or ridiculing the arguments about human history and human nature which he puts in to the mouth of Collins in Such Is Life and that of Rigby in Rigby's Romance, and which he certainly held himself. Furphy and most of his early admirers thought of him as a political novelist in a straightforwardly didactic sense, but it was because his art transcended his politics and contradicted his doctrines and hypoheses that he achieved greatness.

In many of Rigby's pontifications are strains of the totalitarianism latent in many late nineteenth century versions of 'State Socialism', as Furphy termed his doctrine, but it does not seem at all likely from the actions and conversations of Furphy's bullockies that they would relish the sort of central authority which history and political science persuaded Rigby (and Furphy himself) was needed to uproot individual selfishness and to regulate the public good. Like other Australian critics of the hierarchical class system which England had exported to the colonies, Furphy looked for an alternative not only in the more democratic and egalitarian ways of the bushman and trade unionist, but in the English radical tradition. By and large, his favourite figures were not only individualistic, but semi-anarchistic, such as Paine, Burns, Godwin or Shelley, rather than men and women who would more obviously fit easily into the planned economy of a socialist state. It is not through any of his general ideas, however, that Furphy remains of considerable interest, but in the richness of incident and conversation in Such Is Life, and in the vigour and subtlety which which historical and literary allusion, taken from

Biblical, classical, and medieval as well as modern sources, illuminate or mock daily life and mundane routine.

The Concept of Progress

With very few exceptions, late nineteenth century Australians looked back on human history in general, and on the century of British colonization of Australia in particular, as evidence of signal progress, which it was reasonable to expect to continue. Apparent objectors were often only formal dissentients. Some Roman Catholics accepted the teaching of the Syllabus of Errors that most, if not all, of the modernity which was adduced as evidence of progress was, on the contrary, testimony to intellectual confusion and moral crisis, yet Patrick Francis Moran himself, let alone the great majority of his flock, looked back with enormous satisfaction at the growth in influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Australia, and anticipated that in the near future there would be further advances towards Irish Home Rule and that the vexed question of school funding would be re-negotiated in favour of the Catholics. Jules Francois Archibald did not behave as though he believed the claims he published in the Bulletin that Australia had merely stagnated under a century of British oppression.

It was not held that all had progressed. It was distressing to some and irritating to others that Aborigines by and large seemed to be incapable of grasping opportunities for progress and improvement which British colonization had opened up for them, but only caught western diseases and adopted western vices. Some of the greatest exponents of doctrines of progress, such as Frederick Engels and the leading Australian anthropologists whose work he followed with interest, or feminists such as Catherine Helen Spence, considered that Aborigine failure to adjust to new

circumstances doomed them to destruction. It was not only neo-Darwinists in some restricted definition who thought in this way.

Secularists saw evidence of progress in the falling influence of the various churches and in the rejection of traditional or fundamentalist approaches to religion in those who remained Christian. Many leading Christians, such as John Woolley, Barzillai Quaife and Henry Carmichael, had hailed as evidence of progress the advent of the higher criticism of the Bible and the growing articulation of a social gospel which would supplement the perhaps selfish individualist search for personal salvation. Many more traditional Christians of various sorts, such as the Dean of Sydney, the aged William Macquarie Cowper, whose life, together with that of his father, Archdeacon William Cowper, had covered almost the whole of the Anglican experience in Australia, blessed God that his Providencce had enabled Australia to become a base for a great Christian mission in the Pacific and a place, for all its sins and backslidings, of far greater piety than during its criminal origins. Liberals rejoiced in the extension of the franchise and of civil liberties; proto-feminists such as Catherine Helen Spence felt an enormous pride that Australia and New Zealand had led the world in women's suffrage and legal rights; imperialists found a deep satisfaction in the further expansion of the British Empire. None of these groups, many of them overlapping, considered that progress had been constant and even, but their overwhelming confidence was that it had been real enough, that, as Spence put it, they had been 'born in the "wonderful century"' and had 'lived through a glorious age of progess'.

Formal History

As late as 1876 Marcus Clarke wrote that Australia had as yet 'no past,

no story'; even in 1899 A.G. Stephens considered that Australia had still 'no temples, no ashes worth the name'. On the other hand the journal for which Stephens later worked, the Bulletin, urged in 1881 that the history of far-off lands, such as the story of the Orange and the Green, was irrelevant to Australia, while the Bulletin school repudiated any links with the non-European world.

Despite such rhetorical flourishes, the history of post-Settlement Australia was by no means unrecorded. Excellent accounts of early discovery and foundation had been provided by Cook, Banks and their contemporaries, and then by Collins, Watling, Tench and their successors. Narratives by participants were soon followed by the works of, first, interested amateurs, than of professional authors who were not historical scholars, and finally of professional historians. In the case of Tasmania the early histories were highly critical of those who had ruled in the colony; at the other end of the spectrum most of the historians of Victoria were celebrants of the triumphs of Britannia's most precocious daughter, although Bonwick, from a liberal, and Rusden, from a conservative perspective, were much less triumphalist. Significant government involvement with the writing of Australian history came only with the stuttering support given by administrationsn in New South Wales to its Official History from the Records and to the Historical Records of New South Wales. As was the case with the schools, the Australian universities were not seen by governments as vital instrumental instruments for the propagation of a national ideology.

The universities of Australia at first taught no Australian history, since none of the scholars they sought to attract, mainly from the United Kingdom, had much knowledge of Australian history before taking up

appointment. History in general was not given high priority by the somewhat utilitarian or instrumentalist founders, but many of the early professors and lecturers appointed, most notably William Edward Hearn, Charles Henry Pearson and George Arnold Wood, were men of broad interests as well as of penetrating intellect. They also played conspicuous parts in public life, Hearn in generally conservative interests and Pearson and Wood in generally liberal or radical ones. The early academic historians by and large sought to show their students and a wider public that much of the history of mankind had very real significance for Australians, that history for Australians was by no means only or mainly the history of Australia, but Wood, in particular, also made a contribution to the history of early exploration and settlement in Australia.

Government schools were more apprehensive than independent ones of the divisive effects of history teaching, since they contained children from families of many religious persuasions, whose opinions on historical questions might prove as disparate as those on the interpretation of the Bible. Many independent schools were connected with churches, so that agreement on historical as well as on doctrinal teaching was easier to reach. Leading educational administrators, such as William Wilkins in New South Wales and John Anderson Hartley in South Australia were fearful both that unproductive controversy might surround history teaching and that it lacked utility.

The Irish Readers of which Henry Lawson complained were succeeded by textbooks on English History which might be written in England or in Australia, and by textbooks on Australian history which were invariably written in Australia, usually in the particular colony, since ideas on just

which events were most important in Australian history differed radically from colony to colony. Earlier centuries of English history were treated very much from a political perspective, but social and economic history were much more prominent in the treatment of the nineteenth century. Particularly so in New South Wales, after George Arnold Wood began to influence the examination system, the emphasis in English history, whether political, or social and economic, was on the removal of abuses and the implementation of reforms, - in other words the overall perspective was that of 'whig history'. The story presented was, indeed, one of progress, but also one in which the vested interests and established institutions at any given moment were shown as defective and in need of reform. it cannot be assumed that such an approach fostered any blind or unthinking deferene to authority, although great emphasis was also placed on the idea of the rule of law. Attempts were made by Charles Pearson, when Minister of Education in Victoria, and by Catherine Helen Spence in South Australia, through her textbook The Laws we Live Under, commissioned by Hartley, to place more emphasis on civic understanding and on the duties of citizenship rather than on historical fact, but history courses generally held their own against education in citizenship.

In comparison with the government schools of late nineteenth century Europe and the United States, those of Australia and of England were very mild in the amount of nationalist and associated ideology with which they sought to inculcate children. England's long freedom from foreign invasion, its established national unity, and its low level of militarization, all contributed to an absence of the explicit and often strident striving for loyalty to the national state which then characterized most modern states. The relative weakness of explicit national feeling among the English made it

very easy for them to become transformed, in English-speaking countries, into unhyphenated Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians or Americans within a generation. The Australian colonies, too, had been free from threats of invasion, but increasing fears of the Yellow Peril made for some increase in the use of the schools as seedbeds of patriotism, but, for all the flag ceremonies, the Australian governments were very mildly indoctrinative in contemporary terms.

The Britishness of Australia

Claudio Veliz argued (1983, p.8),

> We were all born in a world made in England, and the world in which our grandchildren will mellow into venerable old age will be as English as the Hellenistic World was Greek, or better, Athenian.

However much this may have been true for the Chile in which Veliz was born or may be true in the future for his Australian-born grandchildren, it is much more certain that the various senses of 'made in England', including the sufferings which Irish-Australians associated with the past of Ireland and the ideas of political transformation held by radicals and republicans.

The late eighteenth century British view that British traditions and ways of life, which were routinely taken to embody much not British in origin at all, such as the Bible and Christianity, and clasical culture, offered a combination of order and liberty, legal obligation and individual rights, unequalled in the world. Three centuries of widening contacts with the non-European world had led to an intensification of the conviction that Western Europe, and particullarly the British Isles, had much more to teach the rest of the world than to learn from it. This sentiment was, if

anything, stronger in the Australian colonies at the end of the nineteenth century than in Britain then or at any earlier period. British interest in non-European cultures within the British Empire, particularly in India, was only faintly reflected in Australia, where fear of the Yellow Peril and the myriad hosts of Asia was widespread, especially among radical political groups.

The Australian colonies continued to be outposts of literature in English as a whole, rather than centres of a quite distinctive Australian literature. A.G. Stephens, although he constantly advised Australian authors to avoid excessive English literary influences, also feared parochialism, devoted a large part of his time to the criticism of English literature written outside Australia, and assured Henry Lawson and other querulous authors that their professional prospects as writers were just as good in Australia as in London.

Alternative sources of historical significance lay in the traditions of the American War of Independence and of the French Revolution. The American example was often invoked when colonial positions were making demands which London was slow to meet, but the relative ease with which the colonies gained those concessions which most colonists considered really important ensured that separatist and republican movements which looked to 1776 remained of minor importance. The chequered history of nineteenth century France, together with the general tendency to political and social reform in Britain, helped to confine admiration for 1789 to rhetorical references to the Marseillaise.

Not only free colonists but convicts and emancipists placed the securing of known and established rights under English law as their foremost political aims. Similarly, the main forces in opposition in some significant way with the colonial establishment found that their main arguments for redress came from within the British political tradition, not from some alternative source. Roman Catholics in Australia could not argue that their Church should be protected by the secular power because it was the Church Militant which witnessed, and which alone fully witnessed, to the truth. Instead, appeal had to be made to British traditions of toleration, and to liberal principles of separation of church and state and of the civil equality of all religions, which Pope Pius IX through the Syllabus of Errors declared to be anathema.

Australian radical movements imported their ideologies and sacred texts at least as much as did more conservative ones. Americans such as Henry George, whose 1879 Progress and Poverty gained radical admirers in Australia, and Edward Bellamy, mainly through his 1888 Looking Backward, were both influential among republicans and socialists, but imported radical literature from London, together with radical emigrants from the United Kingdom, had a deeper and more lasting effect.

Some aspects of the South African War at the very end of the period under review strongly confirm ongoing British influence, not only because in world affairs the Australian colonies still responded, positively or negatively, to British initiatives, but because the leading figures in two major controversies were both recent British immigrants. Harry 'Breaker' Morant, was the best-known of the Bush Veldt Carbineers executed after court

martial on charges of looting and rapine. The Australian left-wing press bitterly attacked Morant and his fellows, the Worker claiming in April 1902 (Crawford, 1975, p.205) that 'The Kelly Gang was surely a mild and merciful body of buccaneers compared with the Bush Veldt Carbineers'. Seven decades later the Australian left discovered that Morant was yet another victim of British perfidy.

Arnold Wood was at the centre of the greatest controversy about academic freedom Australia had seen. In his opposition to the British declaration of war on the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, to the conduct of the war, and to Australian support for the war, Wood invoked a concept of historical righteousness on which, he claimed, British power had been based in the past and without which it lost all legitimacy. He argued (Crawford, 1975, p.154),

> The opposition...has been essentially a religious opposition. It has been offered by those who believe that the greatness of the British Empire has been founded on principles of righteousness, and that an unjust war, though it may - and in the long run must be - immediately successful, cannot fail in the long run to bring disaster to the Empire.

For from accepting any accusations of lack of patriotism, Wood declared (Daily Telegraph (Sydney), 22 Nov. 1899),

> I believe that there are few persons in this colony who feel towards England a love stronger than I feel; few who value more highly the great work that England has done and is doing in the world, few who more ardently hope that the future of the Empire will be even more glorious than the past. And it is for that reason that I resent so bitterly the policy of those who, as it seems to me, have broken away from England's noblest traditions, andd have gone far to justify the worst assumptions of her enemies.

When criticized within Sydney University for his part in opposition to the war, Wood referred to British traditions of academic freedom as follows (Crawford, 1975, p.197),

> ...it became a habit of mind with me to imagine that a university teacher was free to criticise the policy of the British Government; and it was not likely to occur to me that such criticism would be taken as evidence of lack of patriotism, and 'anti-British sentiment' ...Living then in the free and liberal atmosphere of Oxford University, it was natural for me to imagine, when I received my appointment to the Chair I at present hold, that the Senate of Sydney University would, like the governing body of other British Universities, allow to its teachers all those privileges of British citizenship, which were not explicity excepted...

The significant thing is surely not that there were demands for Wood's dismissal because of his denunications of British and Australian military policies, but that such demands should have come nowhere near success. The strenth of the British traditions which Wood invoked was shown most markedly perhaps by the Sydney University Union when it resolved in May 1902, after bitter controversies about the war had raged for nearly three years, (Crawford, 1975, p.226),

> That this Union, while dissenting from Professor Wood's views on the South African War, is convinced of the sincerity of his patriotic feelings, and is of the opinion that he has acted within his rights in giving expression to such views. Amid strongly protests against the attempts made by a portion of the press and the public to deny his such rights, and against their call for his publishment by the University authorities as a serious menace to liberty of speech.

It would be hard to find a better example than Wood of the effective use in Australia of British traditions by people opposed to current policies. Yet it was commonplace rather than unusual in radical circles to look to the British past, real or imagined, for arguments for change, reform or

opposition to the status quo, just as the more conservative trapped the same sources in their attempts to defend existing institutions.

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