

## NEVILLE'S ORGANISATION OF CLARK'S SHORT HISTORY

For an Australian focus on 'Our Present and Philosophies in the [European and 'New World'] Age of Revolution and Nationalism (1774-1865): Neo-Classicism, Ideas of what is – America, Europe, Australasia, Asia-Pacific, and 'Middle-East', Sunday 14 April.

From Manning Clark. *A Short History of Australia*. New York : New American Library, 1963. Using the 2006 Penguin Books edition.

### INTRODUCTION FROM NEVILLE

The document here organises selected pages of writing from Manning Clark's *A Short History of Australia* into four views of the Age of Revolution and Nationalism for Australian history. In Clark's work these four views flow together, with one passage immediately following the other, not in the order that I present it. In this document the passages have been reorganised into my own labelled four sections of:

1. PAST REVOLUTION AS LAND, LABOUR, AND CLASS
2. PRESENT REVOLUTION AS BIG BELIEF, EDUCATION, AND CLASS
3. FLEETING REVOLUTION AS GOLD FEVER AND REBELLION
4. SUSTAINED REVOLUTION AS GRADUAL LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

These are four views of political revolution in Australia, where there many philosophical ideas from the time of the Age of Revolution (1789-1865). These ideas are not only political but are the cultural beliefs which form different versions of Australian nationalism.

Clark's writings refers to these belief but in largely inferences to the doctrinal statements from the philosophy, in other words Clark's writing is 'historical', applied philosophy, where the philosophic thought is indirectly conveyed in more empirical tones. Hence, in this introduction to the readings which follows, I intend to make the philosophical linkages clear.

#### *1. Past Revolution as Land, Labour, And Class*

In political theory, there are schools of thought that political revolutions are primarily economic revolutions. This is clearly understood in the theory of value from both Adam Smith and Karl Marx. Three economic elements are essential in these different approaches to the theory of value: property but primarily land, labour for production, and the classes within the society which own or are in their person, land (property) and labour or capital. In the Australian colonial period (1788-1900) land and labour was *the* economic issues, with further concern for capital and production. This is quite clear in Clark's history, and the weight to these ideas of land and labour is due to the increasing sections of large working

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classes which arose in 'the country', and who were demanding political rights as explained by:

*Utopian socialism* – Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), Charles Fourier (1772-1837) and Robert Owen (1771-1858);

*Scientific socialism or communism* – Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Frederick Engels (1820-1895);

and to note, later beyond 'the Age of Revolution' (1789-1865),

*Collectivism or Fabian socialism* – Henry George (1839-1897), William Morris (1834-1896), and Sidney (1859-1947) & Beatrice Webb (1858-1943).

An important insight is that these political and economic philosophies became infused with other philosophic ideas on society, culture, and education. Clark makes more references to the wider gambit of ideas later in the book, in discussing the rise of the working classes and the formation of the Australian union movements and of the Australian Labor Party. This economic-political side of the theory of economic theory looms much larger in Clark's work, but Clark has outlined the economic thought of those in the Australian colonies who were on Adam Smith's side of the economic and political debates. As we have seen in the previous session discussing the Scottish Enlightenment, in terms of ethical theory, Adam's economics had two opposing elements, 1) moral action to promote the flourishing of individual enterprise, thus benefiting the whole society through the collective effect of such individuals, and 2) a withdrawing of moral action by the same individuals to ensure a fair and just movement of the 'invisible hand' of the economic marketplace. In the latter case, Adams himself was advocating a modest view of social non-intervention, however, in the 19th century there developed a school of political and economic liberalism, which has been greatly debated by liberal theorists. It became known as:

*Classical liberalism* – Jean-Baptiste Say (1767-1832), Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1832), and David Ricardo (1772-1823); these theorists also look back to Adam Smith (1723-1790) and John Locke (1632-1704). This school of thought argued for hard neutrality or a hard non-intervention, not only by a required minimal government, but from individuals within society. From contemporary historians and ethicists, it is fair to say that this school of thought has been condemned as being un-charitable. However, the advocates (even today) deny charity as a good, and point to the negative consequences of charity.

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However, there was also a considerable large counter movement in liberalism, which opposed the deficiency of social value in the classical form, known as:

*Social liberalism –*

In Germany, Max Hirsch (1832-1905), Franz Duncker (1822-1888), Franz Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch (1808-1883), and in a later period, Lujo Brentano (1844-1931), and Gerhart von Schulze-Gävernitz (1864-1943);

In France, in a later period, Alfred Jules Émile Fouillée (1838-1912), Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), and Léon Bourgeois (1851-1925);

In the United States, in a later period, Richard T. Ely (1854-1943), John Bates Clark (1847-1938), and Henry Carter Adams (1851-1921);

In Britain, with leading liberal writers in a slightly later period, Charles Dickens (1812-1870), Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), and Matthew Arnold (1822-1888); and in a much later period, the English social liberal work was done by Thomas Hill Green (1836-1883), Leonard Hobhouse (1864-1929) and John A. Hobson (1858-1940), in a movement called 'New Liberalism'.

With the historical sequencing of thinking described above, it can be seen that the ideas of utopian socialism and classical liberalism would be very informative in colonial Australia during 'the Age of Revolution'. The way we, today, think of 'revolutionary', though, was shaped by theorists whose works were more influential after the European '1848 revolutions' and is influenced in the 'Marxist' or 'Fabian' socialism or social liberalism. Hence, in 'the Age of Revolution' there was a greater emphasis on 'land' and 'labour', with an accompanying but more emerging view to culture and education. The Age of Revolution was primarily a clash between utopian socialism and classical liberalism, to which 'Marxist' or 'Fabian' socialism and social liberalism was the subsequent outcome.

### *2. Present Revolution as Big Belief, Education, And Class*

During the previous sessions in The Philosophy Café we have examined many philosophical ideas of Protestantism, Catholicism, and the European Enlightenment of the 18th century. I refer you back to that material and will not repeat it here.

Clark's primary thesis is that Australian history has been shaped by those very broad schools of thought. They produced for Australian nationalism and myth three different visions of human nature and society. Again, much of that has been discussed in The Philosophy Café.

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The difference in reading Clark's history is to see the applied philosophy, the details of the history where Clark explains the impact of the Protestant, Catholic, and the 'European (secular) Enlightened' mindsets, in creating the different societies of the different Australian colonies. Note that Queensland barely gets mentioned, and this is because 1) the formation of the Queensland colony came at the very end of 'the Age of Revolution', and 2) it was a merely a rider to the liberal legislative changes that was a 'revolution' for the New South Wales colony.

The strength of Clark's argument is how well he ties together the various themes of society for the colonies – 'convictism' (ideas of crime, punishment, reform, and moral, genealogical and genetic stigma toward convicts), invasion, settlement, cultural destruction, genocide, racism, immigration, 'nativism' (a white imposed conception upon the 'indigenous', i.e. 'pioneers' as the new indigenous), xenophobia (i.e. fear of invasion from 'foreigners'), and so forth. These social themes are pieced together into the three different conceptions of human nature and society. Hence we have three ideas of Clark, three different models of the vision for an Australian society: Protestant Ascendancy, Irish Catholicism, and Human Brotherhood ('secular enlightened' view). The cultural power of the Protestant Ascendancy was focused in the state oligarchy (pre-liberal nominated colonial councils); that of the Irish Catholicism in the priests; and that of Human Brotherhood in the folklore of the Bushmen. Here Clark provides good measure of nuance in the argument. Each colony had greater numbers of one group than the others in particular locations of influence. South Australia was founded in its 'settlers' and constitution as a particular version of Protestantism, one those doctrines were of a social liberalism. In contrast, New South Wales were shaped by the power of merchants and land-owners who espoused more classical liberalism. The Catholic emancipists who came to what became the Queensland and Victoria colonies as pastoralists and agriculturists were rural communarians, reflecting tight and defensive practices of Irish custom and ideas of the land against Protestant aggression.

The emancipists or convicts who fled to the silence of the bush, or were forced into such isolation, the convict shepherds or herdsman, bushrangers, and the gold-diggers, developed the folklore which spoke of the loose-bonds of their brotherhood without the state or formal society. Unfortunately, much of Australian nationalist mythology, as would be expected, grew from the folklore. I say unfortunately because the folklore is anti-intellectual (failing to honestly recognise its own formal ideas when pressed by power); it is reactionary to any rigour of thought or empathy in the bonds of community. For all the talk of 'brotherhood', from its hatred of formal learning (education), it is extremely libertarian, to the point that the talk of 'mateship' tends to be egotistic (e.g. 'mate' as being mine, 'me-mate', and central concept of 'character' in the folklore), and appears clearly so once verbosity of the folklore is peeled back. Evidence of this hollow egotism is what comes from

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the critical gaze on the role of women in the folklore, and from the actual practice of Bushmen, bushrangers, and gold-diggers. A tough, rough, and narrowly-focused view of the masculine is always at the fore, with a defensive and aggressive self against the world.

Perhaps Clark can be accused of promoting the caricature from the folklore, which also affected his writing. It is true, as can be charged against most Australian male historians; there is much lack of representation of women and the feminine in Clark's histories. However, when Clark was writing there was honesty about the gender challenges from him which had not been seen before in Australian history-writing. There is at least, with Clark, honesty about male heterosexuality: the egotistic desire for its own satisfaction from the feminine and the social problems created from a disproportionate gendered population. There is also at least further consideration of women and the feminine, than seen at the time of publication, in a small number of women to which Clark addressed in the histories.

So, not only in the formal philosophies of big beliefs of religion and secularity does Clark open up understanding the 'national character'. There is here a great understanding of how gender and education played its role in the 'national culture'. It is important to understand the education debates of the colonial era, as those education developments not only shaped the culture, but the schools that emerged from the debates were the vehicles for propagating the national story.

### *3. Fleeting Revolution as Gold Fever And Rebellion*

The Eureka myth and the Eureka Rebellion (the actual history) in 1854 Ballarat is the vision of Australian political revolution. In true history it was a fleeting event that espoused the philosophic ideas of the Age of Revolution, but in a very shallow context, about the rights of the gold-diggers – a matter of mouthing the philosophy without substantive understanding (a localised political device). In the myth, Eureka was the symbolic-holder of later republican and democratic political fights for Australians.

There are a number of historical facts that the myth-mongers keep ignoring. The first fact is that there was genuine philosophical liberal view expressed in the Charter of Ballarat Reform League, but it was not a republican statement with any clarity, and the political demands were local. The second fact is that a much smaller number than those who rallied around the charter were prepared to do battle and die for the cause, on Sunday morning, 3 December 1854. The third fact is that although there were genuine 'rebels with cause', such as Raffaello Carboni, the main leader in the legend, Peter Lalor proved to be the most un-liberal agitator, as events after the short-lived rebellion showed. Lalor was never among

those tried for sedition (there were 13 such rebels among 120 detained), and in 1855 he was elected unopposed as the member for Ballarat. It was in this role that he made clear that he was not a liberal or a republican: "I would ask these gentlemen what they mean by the term 'democracy'. Do they mean Chartism or Republicanism? If so, I never was, I am not now, nor do I ever intend to be a democrat. But if a democrat means opposition to a tyrannical press, a tyrannical people, or a tyrannical government, then I have been, I am still, and will ever remain a democrat." However, there are still questions on how much the ideas of democracy play its part in the rebellion. In fact, Carboni, would write of the rebellion, "amongst the foreigners ... there was no democratic feeling, but merely a spirit of resistance to the licence fee".

Clark's description of the gold fever phenomenon also leads one to question to what degree was the gold-diggers at Eureka were high-minded, and the extent that the motivation was a desperate rallying cry to protect their local economic interests. There is little doubt that the gold diggers had genuine cause to feel that the price of the gold licence rose too high, as there was also the genuine need of the Victorian colony to raise money from the gold-digging when the gold fever phenomenon had initially set-back the economy. However, had the colonial government meet the grievance from the exorbitant fee of the gold licence before the rebellion, as they did eventually in the wake of the outcry over the stockade killing and the trial of the 13 gold-diggers, there would probably had been no call for democratic reform on the gold-fields. The Eureka Stockade was never going to become an Australian version of 'Bunker Hill'.

#### *4. Sustained Revolution as Gradual Legislative Change*

Slow parliamentary or legislative change to government is not imaginative enough for those addicts for entertainment. But the truth is that it is the real political revolution for Australia, and not the falsifying Hollywood version of 'Ned Kelly' and the 'Eureka Stockade', which in truth is the Australian masculine celebration of violence.

There are several reasons why it is not imaginative enough, apart from the lack of violence that entertains the empty and easily-bored mindset. First, the 'revolution' is a long set-out story that has to be untangled from complex power-fights from among multiple players. Clark, for the story of colonial Australia, does a fairly good job at setting out the description, but the general readers will find this hard-going. I as a historian, who is use to these challenging narratives, still find the passages here harder to read. There is simply too much in this one story of the gradual revolution for Australia democracy, even just for the early

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colonial period (the story gets more complex in the late 19th century and during the 20th century).

Secondly, the 'revolution' is so disappointing to our modern expectations: too piecemeal, too painfully slow, and too much like a game of 'snakes and ladders'. There are no great heroes, although the myths try to make people like John Macarthur and Henry Parkes into heroes. There are no mythical heroes, only complex fights between different 'informal parties' (there is no representative democracy until the later stages and it is still very limited in the vote, and hence these groups cannot be seen as formal political organisations, but existed as organisations of 'social association'): emancipists against exclusivists; Protestant emancipists against Catholic immigrants or Catholic convicts; Catholic convicts, emancipists, or immigrants against the Protestant Ascendancy; the Protestant dissenters against both Catholic and Anglican interests and on the education question in league with secularists; and 'the Bush brotherhood' against all urban on-comers. And in the midst of the growth of those 'social associations' which only much later become various or in-part (e.g. sometime as factions) political parties, there were the marginalised and generally powerless, the Aboriginal and those from different regions of China, Indian Ocean, and the Pacific.

The history of Australian democracy in this period of 'the Age of Revolution' was an evolution from colonial office appointments, and appointments by the colonial governor; to the oligarchy of a nominated council (well- propertied gentlemen or wealthy merchants) under the authority of the governor who was under the authority of the Secretary of the Colonies; to the first level of representative democracy where voters were males with land property of certain value (and politicians had to fund their campaign and parliamentary career from their own pocket), and where you still had a colonial parliament with very limited powers on what could be legislated and with colonial bills subject to the approval/enactment from the governor and the British monarch, with a large influence from the British parliament on such governmental passages in Australia.

Well beyond 'the Age of Revolution', the history of Australian democracy continued with the battle for federation, and then existing in dominion status until the Australian parliament decided to ratify the 'Statute of Westminster 1931' in 1942! Yes, Australia actually delayed its own passage to the status of sovereign nation (Statute of Westminster Adoption Act 1942). Even then, on matters not within Commonwealth power Britain could still legislate with effect in all or any of the Australian states, without the agreement of the Commonwealth although only to the extent of "the constitutional practice existing before

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the commencement” of the Statute. It was not until the ‘Australia Act 1986’ that all British power to legislate with effect in Australia ended.

It for this reason, of the predominance of conservative ideology in Australian politics, that Australian liberals and socialists alike have been disgusted with the pathetic nature of Australian political revolutions. The conservative advantage of caution did avoid the bloodshed seen the American civil war (unsolved questions of the original American political revolution), yes, but it also truly resulted in a very culturally un-independent Australia being economically exploited by the British empire for a century after ‘the Age of Revolution’, and it ended also in a truly egoistic mythology based in economic competition, racism, and xenophobia.

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## 1. PAST REVOLUTION AS LAND, LABOUR, AND CLASS

From Chapter Three, The Age of Macquarie 1810-1821, from page 49:

Observers from England noticed how the native-born were beginning to differ from the migrant both in appearance and speech. The currency lads, or native-born, were tall in person, slender of limb, and fair in complexion. They were capable of great feats of physical strength but were somewhat ungainly in their movements. By temperament they were quick to anger, though not vindictive towards those who provoked them. In speech most of them copied the flash or giddy language of their convict parents; in addition, they were developing a distinctive pronunciation of their own. Some of them believed that, since Australia was a convict colony whose wealth and civilization had been created by convict labour, it therefore belonged to the convicts and their descendants, and that settlers and immigrant free workers were all 'bloody foreigners'. This xenophobia of the native-born was the first of a long line of claims to exclusive possession, and the forerunner of later slogans such as Australia for the Australians', or 'Australia for the white man. It was fed by an ardent patriotism and nurtured later by a vision of what the native-born could achieve in a country that had not inherited the Old World evils of social class, war, and poverty. It was this tradition of xenophobia amongst the descendants of the convicts that later gave some distinctive twists to secular humanism in Australia.

From Chapter Four, The Transition 1821-1831, from page 67:

The colonial reformers in London, ignorant of the true causes of the anguish and material hardships of the early settlers, added insult to injury by attributing the failure to the stupidity of the men who had drafted the land laws. When the Colonial Office accepted this criticism and imposed a minimum price for crown land in all the Australian colonies, the proceeds to form a fund to pay the passages of immigrants to that colony, the sale of land almost ceased in Western Australia, and with it the emigration fund disappeared. Some settlers in Western Australia migrated to the eastern colonies, while those who remained suffered from a chronic shortage of labour. In 1846 the despairing settlers begged the British Government to make and declare this colony 'a penal settlement upon an extensive scale'. So another society that had been conceived on the grand scale of putting a part of Australia into a world setting, connecting it with the civilizations of Europe and Asia, was metamorphosed by a barren land and human contrivance into a society concerned with the more

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elementary problems of food and shelter and the dependence of workers on their employers. Once again the European discovered to his regret that to transplant a civilization it was necessary to use a slave or semi-slave labour force to lay its foundations.

By contrast the politics of the mother colony of New South Wales were disturbed and stormy as a consequence of the use of convict labour. The suspicions and ill-feeling between emancipists and immigrants had introduced a factiousness into its politics as misrepresentation and vilification set the tone of public life. Chaplain Samuel Marsden, who belonged to the immigrant faction, accused Dr Douglass, an emancipist sympathizer, of drunkenness and lifting the skirts of convict girls for most improper purposes. Governor Brisbane accused Marsden of the

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daily neglect of the spiritual concerns of his parish for the sake of attending to his own multitudinous temporal affairs. Sir John Jamison, a large settler on the Nepean, accused the Macarthurs of disturbing the peace of the colonies for thirty years and of diabolical and self-designing intrigues. To add to the confusion of observers searching for a pattern in the politics of the period, Jamison also accused Governor Brisbane, whose sympathies lay with the emancipists, of encouraging the prostitution of female convicts at Emu Plains. In January 1824 Brisbane accused the Judge of the Supreme Court, Barron Field, who had not visited

Government House for two years, of not succeeding in keeping his court free from the spirit of party.

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Shortly after his return to the colony he [Macarthur] presided at the dinner to commemorate the anniversary of the founding of the colony. His angry and aggressive voice converted the traditional conviviality into a call for action for the emancipist side in politics. To drunken shouts of approval, the poet of the emancipists, M. M. Robinson, recited the line 'That a birthright at home was an inheritance here!' With fervour they drank the toast 'The land, boys, we live in!' for the great emancipist dream was that the land belonged to them and their posterity, not the immigrants. At a public meeting called to draft an address to present

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to Brisbane, Wentworth, in that ruthless language that damaged both his own prestige and the reputation of the cause with which he was identified, described the exclusives as the 'yellow snakes of the Colony' who should be deprived of their venom and their fangs by the emancipists. He demanded the immediate establishment of the two fundamental principles of the British constitution, trial by jury and a house of assembly. The population was adequate: they excelled all other British societies in the great particular of good morals; Sydney was orderly; a free people was entitled to their ancient and free institutions.

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Only the 'yellow snakes', the colonists of rank and wealth, were inimical to the establishment in New South Wales of the British constitution.

In 1825 it looked within their grasp. The new Governor Darling was feeling his way. Young men of ability were serving the emancipist cause. There was R. Wardell, a lawyer and joint editor with Wentworth of the Australian. There was E. S. Hall, an ex-evangelist and, by 1826, editor of the Monitor. There was Robert Howe, the editor of the Sydney Gazette. The Australian and the Monitor by 1826 were propaganda sheets for the emancipist cause. The clergy had been commanded by the archdeacon not to take part in political life. So, in influencing opinion, the press and public meetings were on the emancipists' side, while the Protestant pulpit was neutral (the priests of the Catholic Church were under the threat of expulsion if they used their pulpits for political propaganda).

By the end of 1827 the emancipists had squandered the advantage they enjoyed. Political comment in the Monitor and the Australian became so slanderous and inflammatory that Darling became alarmed lest the Irish and the convicts be incited to the destruction of all law and order. Events came to a boil when Darling sentenced two soldiers, Sudds and Thompson, who had committed an offence to secure their discharge from military service, to seven years' hard labour. They were drummed out of the regiment in a ceremony wherein they wore neck collars and chains. Sudds died soon after. The Australian unjustly and irresponsibly attributed his death to wearing 'the instruments of torture'. Darling began to be exasperated by the use of the case for political purposes. In private Wentworth

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talked of his plan to impeach Darling for cruelty and tyranny. From all this Darling concluded that Wentworth was a vulgar, ill-bred fellow utterly unconcerned of the civilities due from one

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gentlemen to another; that he was a demagogue who was trying to lead the emancipists for his personal aggrandisement...

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In the up-country districts the Aborigines (known as 'the blacks') remained the most formidable enemy the settlers had to encounter. It was downright folly, the settlers argued, to talk of humanity and forbearance because the blacks never could be persuaded into good-fellowship, never could be conciliated, and never could be divested of their treacherous habits. Drop them, the settlers counselled, when they showed fight; strike terror into them, because they were irrational and brute-like. The blacks, they believed, must be treated as an open enemy because the progress of their hostile acts was marked with blood and murder and desolation for the white settlers. This policy, which was always ascendant, drove the Aborigines away from the settled districts and thinned their numbers, though not so catastrophically on the mainland, for the very vastness of the interior provided an opportunity to escape total annihilation.

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While the life of the elite at Government House in Sydney and Hobart Town was all pomp, stiffness, and formality, the life of the lower classes was all riot, revelry and drunkenness. Some observers attributed such behaviour to the discrepancy between the sexes, especially amongst the convicts. In New South Wales in 1828, in a total population of 36,598, 16,442 convicts were men and 1,544 were women. In Van Diemen's Land, in a total population of 20,265, 6,724 convicts were men and 725 were women. All colonial societies in their early history have developed something singular in the relations between the sexes. In the United States the mystery of 'bundling' was resorted to by couples who proposed marriage but for economic or social reasons were in no position to consummate it. In South Africa the Dutch settlers, faced with the problem of an excess of males and

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what they railed 'the first law of nature', intermarried with the native population. No such solution was open to the convicts. And the emancipists and their children were excluded from all social intercourse with the upper classes by that snobbishness and that policy of exclusion that provided the social cause for tension between immigrant and emancipist. In the early days there had been talk of importing women from the islands of the Pacific or even from China to produce a race of 'socially benevolent human beings' at Botany Bay.

The convicts and emancipists quickly found their own solution to the problem: they encouraged the convict women to be prostitutes, which had often caused their transportation in the first place. The clergy thundered against such wickedness, accused them of practising with each other the vices of the Cities of the Plain, or, in an attempt to interest them in marriage, reminded them that at the beginning of the world God had said, 'It is not

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good for man to be alone.' God's will, the clergy continued, was that man should be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. But in this as in so much else the convicts ignored advice and followed inclination rather than duty, so that in time the convicts, like the Aborigines, became almost a vanishing race. The colony had the benefit of their labour without handing on to future generations the problem of an underprivileged class. In 1831, however, even the days of the convict domination of society in New South Wales, and to a lesser extent in Van Diemen's Land, were numbered by a decision in London to assist free workers to emigrate to those colonies.

From Chapter Five, Immigrants and Squatters, 1831-1842, from page 90:

The backwardness in the older colonies had been caused by the use of semi-slave labour and the concentration of capital and enterprise on the progress of the pastoral industry. Equality in numbers between the sexes freed South Australia from the social evils of the convict colonies. The creation of a society of farmers, a high proportion of whom had a stake in the survival of the existing society, removed the fears that any extension of political privileges might be used by the propertyless against the propertied. The existence of a large group of dissenters, influenced by

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the teaching of the Voluntaries on the relation between the state and religion, prepared the way for the abolition of state aid to religion in 1851. So South Australia pioneered two great movements in the social history of Australia: how to appear radical and be conservative, and how to be a puritan without doctrines.

At the same time as the foundation of South Australia was being discussed in London, moves were afoot in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land to settle the Port Phillip area. As early as 1831 Hamilton Hume, who had walked with Hovell from Sydney to Port Phillip in 1824, was predicting that if the country at Bass Strait were thrown open to emigration it would prove in a short time to be the granary of the colony and one of the greatest sheep countries in Australia. In 1836 the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, Thomas Mitchell, reported that he had travelled from the Murray River to Portland on the coast to the west of Port Phillip, over land that for natural fertility and beauty could scarcely be surpassed, across streams of unfailing abundance and plains covered with the richest pasturage.

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Stately trees and majestic mountains adorned the ever-varying scenery of this region, the most southern of all Australia and the most fertile. In his enthusiasm he called the new country Australia Felix. Immediately the land seekers amongst the settlers in southern New South Wales began to go 'overland' in drays with their flocks and herds, following the major's line. New settlers arriving in Sydney were attracted by the reports and followed the crowd.

At the same time settlers and businessmen in Launceston (formerly Port Dalrymple) and Hobart were speculating on the possibilities of a settlement at Port Phillip. John Batman formed the Port Phillip Association and solemnly purchased one hundred thousand acres round Port Phillip from the Aborigines in consideration of twenty pairs of blankets, thirty knives, twelve tomahawks, ten looking-glasses, twelve pairs of scissors, fifty handkerchiefs, twelve red shirts, four flannel jackets, four suits of clothes, and fifty pounds of flour. John Pascoe Fawkner, the son of a convict, who as a child had seen the lieutenant-governor of Van Diemen's Land take snuff in handfuls while convicts were flogged before his eyes, looked to Port Phillip as

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the land of opportunity. In 1835 both Batman and Fawkner took up land on the Yarra at the northern head of Port Phillip Bay and began an unseemly brawl over who was the real pioneer of the new district.

By 1836 sufficient overlanders had moved into Australia Felix, or the Western District, and to Port Phillip, for the government of New South Wales to proclaim the country of Port Phillip as a district open to settlement and to appoint Captain William Lonsdale its administrator. In 1839 the surveyor Robert Hoddle drew up a plan for a city of rectangles within a square mile; the main thoroughfare ran due north, thus exposing all future inhabitants to the hot north winds in summer and the

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cold south winds in winter. The town, on which the future city was to be built, was named Melbourne after the Prime Minister in the United Kingdom. By 1840 there were 10,291 people in the district, and its history began to be caught up in those problems of immigration, land laws, transportation, education, and self-government. With sufficient sense of community, the settlers began to raise their voices in favour of the separation of Port Phillip from New South Wales.

In the meantime the way of life in New South Wales was being greatly influenced by the increase in the immigration of free workers as well as by the expansion of the pastoral industry. In 1831, under the influence of the ideas of the systematic colonizers on the advantages of concentration of settlement, Lord Goderich introduced a minimum upset price of five shillings per acre for the sale of crown land, the proceeds to pay the passages of migrants to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land.

Between 1835 and 1840 the amount paid and the categories of people entitled to assistance were increased. Some attempt was made to meet the principle of selection of immigrants by drafting regulations defining types considered suitable. As colonial criticism swelled against what they described as the sweepings of the poorhouses, a bounty system was introduced in 1835 by which the passage was paid only when the immigrants produced on arrival testimonials of good character, signed by clergymen and other respectable inhabitants of note, and evidence that they were within the age groups for which a bounty was paid.

### 1. PAST REVOLUTION AS LAND, LABOUR, AND CLASS CONT.

Between 1831 and 1850 over two hundred thousand emigrated to the Australian colonies under the government and the bounty scheme. So emigration schemes appeared to contribute towards reducing redundancy in the United Kingdom. In the colonies the immigration systems caused both anger and dismay. Employers in the towns and settlers in the up-country were

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appalled by the quality of the immigrants' labour. The settlers complained that the immigrant was reluctant to leave the towns; whereas the convict could be forced to put up with the hardships and loneliness of the bush, the immigrant either jibbed at leaving the town, or if he did go inland he bolted back to the city so fast that neither persuasion nor bullying could make him honour his contract to work. In the 1840s Caroline Chisholm, the wife of an Indian Army Officer, moved by Christ-like compassion for the fate of the immigrant girls, as well as by sympathy for the labour needs of the settlers, shepherded immigrant girls from the town of Sydney across country to the more outlying districts.

The settlers also complained that the ruinously high wages either encouraged the free workers to squander their earnings at a bush inn, or to use the money to buy land and so vacate the labour market. The demand for workers in the country districts was insatiable. The fact is,' wrote one settler early in the 1840s, 'we must have Labour in some Shape or other — free Labour if we can get it, — if not, then Prison Labour, and failing either, Coolie Labour.

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But those were not the terms in which the leading settlers discussed the future of the convict system. They discussed its success or failure as a source of labour. Up to the middle of the 1830s they were prepared to put up with all the inconveniences of convict labour — the petty thefts, the debauchery, and the possible moral contamination of their families — because convicts were cheap and could be forced to perform work that no free labourer would do. By 1840 some of the wealthy free settlers in New South Wales doubted whether the transportation system was an efficient source of labour. In 1835 the British Government had instructed the government of New South Wales to pay for police and gaols out of the land funds; that is,

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some of the money the settlers believed to be earmarked to pay the passages of immigrants was to be used to meet the costs of the convict system.

In 1840 James Macarthur, the son of John Macarthur, told the legislative council of New South Wales that a great portion of the distress felt by the colonists for want of labour arose from the diversion of this fund from the purpose to which it was pledged. Free labour, he went on, was preferable to convict labour, for free labour was always preferable to slave labour, because the latter always was and always must be unprofitable. The diversion of the land fund had prevented them from getting free labourers. As he saw it, transportation had been of great advantage to the colony, as the convicts' labour had laid the foundations of civilization and created the wealth of the settlers, but by 1840 it had performed its historic mission: the colony had now arrived at such a degree of wealth, thanks to convict labour, as to be able to populate the country with a free and virtuous people. Not all the wealthy settlers agreed with Macarthur. Those who still believed that their economic future depended on the use of convicts tended to argue that the system of transportation and

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assignment was the most humane and reformatory punishment that had hitherto been devised. The most impassioned defender of transportation was William Charles Wentworth, who had become one of the largest landholders in New South Wales.

By contrast, the discussion in England on the future of transportation concentrated on its success or failure in punishing and reforming convicts. In 1837-38 a committee of the House of Commons on transportation under the chairmanship of Sir William Molesworth inquired into the system and reported that transportation had been ineffective in deterring from crime but remarkably effective in still further corrupting those who underwent the punishment. They found these qualities to be inherent in the system, which therefore was not susceptible of any improvement. They added that there belonged to the system the 'yet more curious and monstrous evil of calling into existence, and continually extending, societies, or the germs of nations most thoroughly depraved, as respects both the character and degree of their vicious propensities'. They therefore recommended that transportation to New South Wales and to

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the settled districts of Van Diemen's Land should be discontinued as soon as practicable.

This was not quite the way in which the British government discussed the question. In 1840 the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord John Russell, told the House of Commons that assignment was nothing less than slavery, since it consigned a man who had committed a crime to slavery in a penal colony. Where there was slavery, there also were the evils of slavery. On the one side there was the man existing in a mere state of dependence, actuated by fear, the desire for revenge, and every motive that debased human nature; on the other hand there was the master exposed to motives equally debasing, to temptations to tyranny, caprice, arrogance, and the indulgence of

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all the degrading passions. The assignment system ought not, therefore, he thought, to exist any longer. For these reasons, in 1837 the governor of New South Wales had been instructed to prepare the way for the abolition of assignment, which tended more to degrade the character both of master and slave than all the rest of the evils attendant on the system of transportation. Convinced by the report of the transportation committee that the system did not deter from crime, in 1839 the British government ordered the abolition of assignment in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. In 1840 they abolished transportation to New South Wales.

When the news reached Sydney in October 1840, the enlightened settlers and free workers celebrated the occasion as a triumph for their own ideas of morality, though other settlers shouted that these groups did not fear an influx of crime but an interference with the monopoly of labour. The Anglican Bishop of Australia, William Broughton, congratulated those who were born in the colony upon the removal of an opprobrious imputation under which their country had too long laboured. In Hobart the decision to continue transportation to Van Diemen's Land aroused neither fear nor moral indignation, because the convicts were still making a useful contribution to the wealth of the community. When the abolition of transportation to New South Wales produced a glut of convicts in Van Diemen's Land, the settlers there joined with chaplains and philanthropists in cries of horror at the Sodom and Gomorrah in their midst.

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All through the 1830s, however, anger and indignation, both in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, were directed in the main against the land laws imposed on them by the British government. As early as 1826 the government had tried to meet the criticism of favouritism and minor corruption levelled against the land-grant system by introducing a system of land

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sales. By 1831 they had become convinced that the combined system of land grant and land sales had not succeeded in making the landholder use his land, or in preventing dispersion of settlement. They were aware, too, of the emancipist's charge that the existing system greatly favoured the immigrant with capital rather than the native-born. To reduce dispersion of settlement they had defined in 1826 boundaries outside which it would be illegal to settle. These boundaries were redefined in 1829, but a line on a map proved no more successful as a deterrent against dispersion than the land laws in encouraging cultivation of the land held under freehold or lease. To promote cultivation and concentration of settlement, and to prevent labourers from becoming landowners too soon, in 1831 Lord Goderich introduced the sale of crown land at the minimum upset price of five shillings per acre. In 1838, believing that five shillings per acre was an inadequate check to dispersion of settlement, Lord Glenelg raised the minimum price to twelve shillings, and in 1842 Lord Stanley introduced a minimum price of one pound per acre.

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The settlers in the outlying districts maintained that the price of land was too high for them to accumulate much acreage, while the regulations for leasing and licensing gave them no security of tenure. Until such time as they acquired this security they did not propose to plant civilization on their runs, to build houses, schools, or churches. The land laws, they argued, were responsible for barbarism in the Australian bush. The laws were also responsible for another curious paradox of the period. The men on a one-year lease or licence were part of the landed wealth of New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, Swan River, and, after 1836, South Australia, and as such they should have been pillars of law and order and subordination in society. But

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their very insecurity of tenure forced them into a wild and reckless abuse of government. So, in a society that knew no political traditions and was not surrounded by any monuments of the past, the men who might have spoken for authority and stability mouthed words of revolution. The settlers at the Swan River believed their colony was being ruined by political economists and a group of Whig incompetents. Nor were the working classes any happier about the introduction of a minimum price for land. The price was too high for them to invest their savings in a block large enough to give them a living. So the moralists shook their heads in grief and woe as the bush workers squandered their wages at the rum shanty instead of investing in blocks of land. Land, after all, was the great source of wealth as well as the means to respectability and prestige, and of all the sources of wealth from the land the most romantic, the most popular, and

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possibly the most lucrative, was the grazing of sheep on crown land in return for the payment of an annual lease fee or licence. The men who did this were called squatters. According to the popular notion the squatter was a happy man, far removed from all the cares of the world, who lived a calm pastoral life and grew rich without much fuss or trouble, while contemplating and applauding the breeding powers of his sheep. There had been a time when men had grown wealthy quickly by the use of cheap convict labour which kept costs down, and by the sale of their wool in London. But by the middle 1830s the country had become more and more thickly settled, and the squatter was obliged to drive his sheep three to four hundred miles into the interior. They took up their runs in the new districts recently discovered by explorers, such as the New England district, the Darling Downs, the Bathurst plains, the Goulburn plains, and the Western District of Port Phillip.

The squatters were either men who were able to receive financial accommodation from a bank or from a merchant, or men with sufficient capital to invest in their enterprise. Some formed partnerships, and some worked as agents and managers for city men with land in the settled districts. Their social origins were almost as diverse as their sources of capital. Some were British gentlemen who had been educated in the best schools and colleges and belonged by birth to a class in whose halls hung 'the armour of the invisible knights of old'. Others were successful

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merchants or farmers who had arrived in New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land in a state of penury and had risen to affluence by their own exertions. Others were the sons of convicts. Others again were commissioned officers who were attracted to the Australian colonies by the special concessions in the land laws for officers in the army and the navy.

After filling the drays with provisions to meet the human

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needs of food, clothing, shelter, and liquid and spiritual refreshment, the squatter, with his stock, his workers, and possibly his wife, set out for the bush. They travelled for the most part over country where there was neither road nor track. At times the way lay across deep gullies; the drays descended easily into these depressions and were pulled up the other side by the bullocks to a volley of oaths from the driver. At times they were halted by rivers in flood, or by swamps through which they could pass only by frequent unloading. At times the drays sank up to the axles in mud, and at other times bullocks and men laboured against flies and dust. On a good day they travelled twelve miles, on a bad day as few as three or four, so that the journey to a run took between forty and sixty days.

After selecting the run, master and men put up a simple bark hut, dug deep into the side of a hill to make a coolhouse for their food, and erected the hurdles inside which the stock were folded down at night for protection against the wild animals. Then the master, or manager, set out on the long journey to stake his claim to the run at the lands department and pay the lease or licence fee. The shepherds remained to watch the sheep, beguiling the time by reading if they were 'scholars', playing on the Jew's harp, or carousing at the nearest bush-hut or shanty, where they were warmly welcomed.

The evenings at the bush-hut were spent in cheerful conversation and merriment. As one observer put it, two-thirds of the shepherds and pastoral workers of the country were in perpetual migration, and so the bush-hut developed to meet their needs at a time when almost everyone in the colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land knew each other. The great scarcity of cash in the up-country districts contributed to a tradition of bartering and sharing. At night, after supper was over,

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the short pipes were taken out and quart pots of tea were placed

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in front of the fire. One man sang a song, another told a tale of the early days in the colony, another described the exploits of the bushrangers, others bragged about or cursed their bullocks, and the recent immigrants told the latest news from 'home' and put up as best they could with the colonial jokes about 'bloody immigrants'. At midnight they stretched out on the floor, their heads protruding from the blankets at one end and their feet at the other. At a rum shanty the aim of the drinkers was to seek oblivion as quickly as possible in rum, and the aim of the publican was to rob them of their earnings as quickly as possible. As one reformed drunkard put it, after earning their money like bullocks they spent it like asses. To such men the sight of a white woman was a novelty, and they spent their lives as strangers to the refining influence of religion and education.

The life of the masters was characterized by the same loneliness and the same absence of the refinements of civilization. In the beginning the life of the squatter was a hard one. 'A Settler's life here,' wrote one squatter, 'is very much that of a gipsy living a great part of his time under a hedge hut doubled up in an opossum cloak before a fire at Night and on Horseback all day.' The squatter was plagued by his own ignorance and inexperience, by diseases in his sheep that might rob him overnight of all his working capital, and by the vagaries of the seasons, which threatened to cheat him of that profit to gain which he had steeled himself to face such hardships. Some tired of roaming about a 'beastly ugly sterile country' without finding a safe investment for their capital.

For their life was one long emergency. In February 1839 a squatter near Braidwood in southern New South Wales went for a bath on a hot, sticky day when the temperature was in the nineties and the humidity very high. On returning he was alarmed to see smoke billowing down the gully. All hands turned

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out and found the whole bush on fire, and the flames bearing down on the huts fanned by a hot searing wind. They worked

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until they were nearly blind, when the wind turned to the south, the temperature dropped in five minutes to sixty degrees, and the huts and stock were saved. In that year the whole of New South Wales assumed a poor, barren appearance after two years of drought. All through the Murrumbidgee area travellers came upon dead horses and working bullocks. Sheep and cattle crawled to almost-dry waterholes, became bogged down in the mud and died, leaving their rotting carcasses as a testimony to the series of dry seasons.

Gentlemen squatters were appalled by the dirty work some of their fellow squatters practised to make money. Gully-raking, or sheep and cattle stealing, was common in most districts. The gentlemen blamed the ex-convict squatters for such practices and wrote long letters to their friends and relations in the British Isles complaining that this was not a country for gentlemen or men of honour and integrity, as gentlemen could not compete with the rascality of every transaction and the deceit and lies that were made use of every hour. The genteel, the weak, and those not able to adapt themselves to the rough-and-tumble of the new life held up their hands in horror or cried to their Lord to save them from such dens of iniquity. The greatest difficulty for the squatters was the shortage of labour, or what one man called 'the want of hands'. With the abolition of assignment in New South Wales in 1838 every newspaper in Sydney, Melbourne, and the country districts was filled with advertisements for men, some asking for ten, twelve, and even twenty shepherds at a station. The incompetence and waywardness of the shepherds drove the squatters at times to desperation. Convict workers could be flogged for disobedience or negligence. Free workers behaved with all the independence conferred by the acute labour

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shortage. If the boss displeased them, they bolted. In December 1839 Learmonth, a squatter near Ballarat in the Western District of Victoria, lost nine hundred lambs from his fold during a severe storm. He sent two shepherds, Mooney and Gabb, to search for them, but they procured rum from a dray that arrived at the run and became as drunk as fiddlers. The two of them and all the men who had come for the shearing spent the next day in bed recovering from the debauch. Two weeks later Learmonth discharged all the shearers for repeated drunkenness, whereupon

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they celebrated their departure with such gusto that his cook-house-keeper, Ben Good, did nothing for two days, being, as his master put it, 'unwell from the effects of drink brought up by the dray'. On one beautiful bright day in April 1840 Learmonth went up to see the fence-splitters on his run, and when he returned he found all the men raving drunk from the wine that had been brought up from Melbourne the previous day. For days the men remained drunken and unruly and threatened to bolt till Learmonth appeased them, at least for the moment, by handing out more bottles of wine.

From Chapter Six, Politics and Culture 1843-1851, from page 115:

Within six months the proceedings of the legislative council were plunged into uproar by the publication by Governor Gipps of new squatting regulations. Gipps said that three million acres of crown land were out on lease or licence to the squatters from which the crown collected only seven thousand pounds a year in revenue. He conceded that the squatters could legitimately claim security of tenure on their runs in return for the contribution they were making to the wealth of the community. To raise the revenue of government, to exact a just price from the squatters for the use of the land, and to give them security of tenure, Gipps proposed in April 1844 that the squatters should pay a separate annual licence fee of ten pounds per run, which was not to exceed twenty square miles. No single run should cover an area capable of depasturing more than five hundred head of cattle and seven thousand sheep. Pandemonium broke loose in the squatting community of New South Wales, Meetings were hastily summoned at Scone, Goulburn, Penrith, Mudgee, Camden, Singleton, Melbourne and Sydney. At the Sydney meeting on 9 April Wentworth spoke of his deepest alarm about these regulations, which were unconstitutional in their application, oppressive in their influence, and calculated to add materially to the existing distress of the colony. To thunderous and possibly even drunken

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applause he called on all present to use every constitutional means to force the government to change the regulations.

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The squatters were more successful [in NSW Legislative Council] with their demand for security of tenure. Under the power conferred on it by the Sale of Waste Land Act of 1846 the Privy Council issued an Order in Council, which was published in the Sydney papers in October 1847. The colony was to be divided into three districts: the settled, the intermediate, and the unsettled, in each of which the squatters could take out leases for up to fourteen years in return for a small annual rental. Freehold in the land could be bought at a minimum price of one pound per acre. Again the

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squatters howled that all the fruits of their labour were put in jeopardy by armchair theorists in London. By an odd irony the price of one pound, which was intended as a declaration that land should not be sold till it realized more than it was worth, became in effect a declaration that it should not be sold at all. This meant the accumulation of landed property in the hands of the few to the exclusion of the many. For the squatters acquired de facto their security of tenure and with it a monopoly of the grazing and agricultural land of Australia: in New South Wales alone the Order in Council handed over 180,000,000 acres of land to about 1,800 persons. So the regulations that had been designed to prevent dispersion of settlement ended by allotting one hundred thousand acres to some squatters outside the boundaries of location in New South Wales, and this, as a committee of the legislative council pointed out in 1847, could not have been outdone by even the wildest abuse of free grants.

With security, the squatters began to make improvements on their runs, fencing their paddocks and putting up homesteads in brick and stone worthy of their rank and prestige in society. In the settled districts, such as New England, Canberra, the Western District of Victoria, the valley of the Derwent, and the south-eastern districts of South Australia, they began to cooperate with the governments in Sydney, Hobart, or Adelaide to erect schools and churches as outward and visible signs of order and civilization. Some squatters at Yass in southern New South Wales summed up their anguish and their nostalgia for older civilization by carving on the bell tower of the Church of England the words, 'I sing the Lord's song in a strange land.' The

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squatters also devoted their energies to the solution of the problem of the chronic shortage of labour in the up-country districts; but the very desperation of their situation caused them to snatch at remedies that robbed them of the reputation and respect they

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might have enjoyed as stewards of the countryside. Ironically that security of tenure had presented them with the opportunity to adopt such measures.

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While priests and parsons wrangled over the role of religion in education, the squatters were driven to desperate remedies to solve their labour shortage. In 1843, believing they were threatened with inevitable ruin by the scarcity of labour, they proposed to introduce Indian coolies. These men, they argued, were well adapted for the role of shepherds, and had exhibited a remarkable example of honesty and sobriety. Besides, the squatters argued, their residence in this country could not fail to communicate to them the habits of civilized life and, by the removal of prejudices, render them more accessible to the influence and adoption of Christian principles. Impatiently dismissing the cackle about civilization and Christ, Ben Boyd, a whaler from Boyd Town near Eden on the south coast of New South Wales with extensive squatting runs in the Eden-Monaro district, recruited shepherds from the islands of the Pacific. The liberals and humanitarians in the towns reviled him as a greedy monster who was trying to create a new slave trade in the Pacific. The workers in the towns protested against the wickedness of lowering the rate of wages by methods that they said could not fail to hinder the growth of virtue and morality, for coolies, they argued, meant slavery and inferiority. Besides, they went on, the labourers here were Europeans, or the descendants of Europeans.

So in their first attempt to preserve their standard of living the workers consciously argued that Australia should be preserved for the white man. They began to see the squatters as traitors to this idea of a White Australia. The squatters, as a group, would preserve the benefits they had enjoyed under the convict system, to the manifest injury of the other classes of the community. At the same time in London the permanent head of the Colonial

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Office, James Stephen, wrote two minutes on the squatters' proposals. In July 1843 he wrote:

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. . . introducing the black race there [from India to New South Wales] would, in my mind, be one of the most unreasonable preferences of the present to the future . . . There is not in the globe a social interest more momentous — if we look forward for five or six generations — than that of reserving the Continent of New Holland as a place where the English race shall be spread from sea to sea unmixed with any lower caste . . . we now regret the folly of our ancestors in colonizing North America from Africa.

Again in September 1843 he minuted that 'the [coloured people] would debase by their intermixture the nobler European race.' Faced with the opposition to coloured labour of the professional classes, the middle classes, the workers, and the members of the establishment in England, some squatters turned their minds to the possibility of renewing transportation. When transportation to New South Wales was abolished in 1840, Lord John Russell had planned to reduce the number transported to Van Diemen's Land by keeping some of the convicts in the United Kingdom. A change of government had upset these plans, and so Van Diemen's Land was swamped with convicts. Between 1829 and 1840 an average of 1,658 convicts each year had been transported to Van Diemen's Land; between 1841 and 1846 that number shot up to 3,527. At the same time no provision was made to increase the buildings to house the convicts, nor was the number of officials increased. The settlers did not benefit from the glut of labour because assignment was abolished in Van Diemen's Land in July 1841 and replaced by the probation system, under which the convicts worked in gangs on government farms or public works. The government of Van Diemen's Land could not use them because it had been instructed to pay for their services, and the revenue of the colonial government could not meet the cost. So the convicts in the probation gangs,

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or parties, were employed in producing food for themselves.

Very soon the settlers in the country districts and the inhabitants of the towns began to complain that these probation parties that were intended to be the scenes of reformatory influences were nothing else than the schools of advanced depravity. The

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parsons wrung their hands in horror at a system of penal discipline that encouraged members of probation gangs to practise nightly the 'horrid, debasing, disgusting, detestable sin of the Cities of the Plain, who were denounced by Divine fire to extinguish their abominations'. The economics and administrative chaos of the years 1841-46 opened the eyes of the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land to the moral evils of transportation. As soon as Gladstone, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, heard there was sodomy again in the Australian colonies, he suspended transportation to Van Diemen's Land in 1846 for two years.

### 2. PRESENT REVOLUTION AS BIG BELIEF, EDUCATION, AND CLASS

From Chapter Two, Convicts and Settlers 1788-1809, from page 29:

In the meantime an event occurred in New South Wales that was to influence profoundly the texture of civilization in Australia. In September 1791 the first Irish convicts arrived on the convict transport *Queen*. By October 1800 there were 1,207 in the settlements at Sydney Cove and Parramatta. They were the occasion of the coming of Catholicism to Australia. In Ireland the priest was attached both by the needs of survival as well as by moral convictions to the side of the peasant in the long and bloody fight against the Anglo-Saxon. In Australia this association between the priests and the lower classes was perpetuated because both bond and free tended to remain on the bottom rungs of the social ladder.

Australia's Catholics, both priests and laity, were steeped in prudery. In addition, except for the few born to and educated in the aristocratic tradition of European society, they were also steeped in a credulity and superstition that nauseated the Protestant majority and that other tiny minority that had been taught by the writers of the Enlightenment that religion barred the path to human progress. What the Protestant was unable to perceive were those affections of the Irish mind and heart that were outside the range of the men of enlightenment, that image of Christ the Irish had kept alive despite the appalling squalor, the superstitious practices encouraged by their priests, and the stupor and ignorance in which they prepared for 'the life of the world to come'. For their religion explained to them why riches did not belong in this world to men of understanding and promised

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them that, although the Protestant boys had gained the day, they would not gain the night.

The Protestants saw the Irish Catholics in quite a different light. To them the superstition and the squalor provided proof of the commonplace in their view of the world: that the Protestant religion and British institutions protected liberty and a high standard of material civilization, while the Catholic religion encouraged arbitrary despotism and material squalor. So when the Irish convicts began to arrive in large numbers at Sydney Cove, the Protestant establishment began to take alarm, not only at a people who threatened English rule in Ireland and who

### 2. PRESENT REVOLUTION AS BIG BELIEF, EDUCATION, AND CLASS CONT.

were in that sense disloyal, but also at a people whose religion and way of life threatened 'higher civilization. From the beginning the Anglo-Saxon was on his guard against the menace of what he called these 'deluded and infatuated' people.

The Protestant establishment had some reason to be alarmed. In April 1798 an Irish convict who worked in a gang at Toongabbee threw down his hoe and gave three cheers for liberty. He was rushed off to the magistrate, then tied up in the field where his 'delusions' had first overwhelmed him, and flogged so that his fellow-Irishmen might ponder on the consequences of challenging the English supremacy. In September 1800 Governor Hunter, who had taken over from Grose in 1795, believing that the Irish convicts were forming seditious assemblies, held an inquiry. The magistrates sentenced suspected ringleaders to be flogged till they divulged the plot: one was flogged on the back, and when the skin in that area became too raw, he was flogged on the bottom, till the Protestant magistrate confirmed that an Irishman would die rather than betray a fellow-countryman to enemies of his race and religion.

In March 1804 William Johnston, an Irish convict, gathered his fellow-Irishmen at Castle Hill with a mixture of blarney,

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threats, and promises of liberation from their Anglo-Saxon oppressor, armed them with sticks, staves, hoes, and a few rifles, and marched them towards the Hawkesbury in preparation for the conquest of Sydney. But an informer warned Governor King, who had taken over from Hunter in late 1800, in time so that before their numbers became formidable they were cut down by a small detachment of troops. In the sequel the leaders were hanged; those close to the leaders were sentenced to floggings of up to one thousand lashes and transported to the penal settlement at Newcastle, where on weekdays they hewed coal and on Sundays heard of the gifts of divine love from the Book of Common Prayer, which was read to them by the military commandant acting on orders from the Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of New South Wales. The rank and file were pardoned as deluded but not wicked men. In this way the Irish were cowed into subjection, but not at the price of the surrender of their precious faith, for the faith survived as a vision of the world different from that which sustained the minds of the Protestant ascendancy. In this way the wrongs of the Irish in

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New South Wales began to be added to their melancholy history in Ireland.

In the beginning, however, the dominant note of civilization in New South Wales was sounded by the Protestants. From the pulpit and, after 1803, when an ex-convict began to publish the Sydney Gazette, from the press as well, the evangelists presented their view of the world. They painted terrifying pictures of the evils of drunkenness, sexual promiscuity and gambling, which robbed a man of the prize of respectability in this world and condemned him to everlasting flames and torment in the next. On politics they taught the simple lesson that throne and altar fell together, and they warned all and sundry to beware of that great snare for the wicked — the principles of liberty

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equality, and fraternity. They reminded congregations and readers that in the sanctuary of God men learnt the significance of those gradations of rank and wealth that God in His infinite wisdom had created for their own good. From the Holy Bible the poor learnt to raise their eyes to those scenes of bliss that grew brighter and more enchanting as they approached the grave. From the same source the rich could read a stern reminder of how difficult it was for them to reach the promised land.

The clergy and the Sydney Gazette never wearied of reminding people of all the blessings Divine Providence had bestowed on the members of the established Church of England. By contrast, the members of all other persuasions wandered in great darkness: the Asians practised disgusting superstitions; Catholics wanted to enslave mankind; Jews belonged to a limbo between the Protestant paradise and Catholic hell; the followers of secular creeds were baited and hounded from pulpit and press; unbelievers were reminded of their handicaps in the law courts, where their testimony was discounted, and of their even greater handicap when they approached the throne of Judgment. The clergy and the Sydney Gazette urged the education of the young to rescue them from the evil influences of their parents and to prepare them for their eternal salvation — the purpose of literacy, in their eyes, was to learn the way to eternal glory. Knowledge was to be encouraged as a foe to vice and not first and foremost as the means of learning a trade. Schools had been begun by the Reverend Richard Johnson in the time of Phillip, and as the

### 2. PRESENT REVOLUTION AS BIG BELIEF, EDUCATION, AND CLASS CONT.

settlement expanded the clergy and government tried to provide a parish school for each church, where the children were instructed in reading and arithmetic, read the Bible, and studied the catechism according to the Church of England. The schools were both foes to vice and wickedness and, at the same time, centres of proselytism for the Anglican Church. The Catholics

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grieved; the Presbyterians and dissenters accepted the secular enlightenment.

It was this unqualified and uncritical faith in their Protestant civilization that lent pathos to, and imposed a tragic note on, their relations with the Aborigines. They expected the Aborigines to be grateful for the precious gift of 'higher civilization', and as long as they seemed prepared to receive such a gift the colonists proposed to extend to them that amity and kindness their instructions from England had urged them to use. But when the Aborigine became convinced that the white man proposed to stay, and that the white man was driving him away from all the best food-gathering areas into more barren places and at the same time committing sacrilege against those trees and animals that had been sacrosanct for his people since time immemorial, he began the long, unequal struggle of fighting the white man, spearing his animals, setting fire to his crops and his houses, and murdering him. On 30 May, 1788, two rush cutters were murdered by the Aborigines and their bodies dreadfully mangled and butchered. At the same time the Aborigines began to evince disgust and hatred for some features of the white man's civilization. When a convict was detected stealing tackle from an Aboriginal woman in 1791, Phillip decided to have him flogged in the presence of the Aborigines to prove that the white man's justice benefited blacks as well as whites. All the Aborigines displayed strong abhorrence of the punishment and sympathy with the sufferer. They shed tears, and one of them picked up a stick and menaced the flagellator.

From Chapter Three, The Age of Macquarie 1810-1821, from page 49:

In the age of Macquarie, however, the tone of civilization was still set by the evangelicals. From press and pulpit came warnings that the drunkard, the philanderer, the gambler and the idler, would not gain those prizes of affluence and respectability in this

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world, while, as for the next, remorse would be their scourge and eternity their dread. While the native-born tended to be silent on their heritage from the British Isles, the apologists for the Protestant ascendancy tended to take inordinate pride and pleasure in being British. 'Great and miraculous Providence!' wrote the Sydney Gazette in praise of their being British, 'the author of all Good! how we are indebted to your saving Power!' While the native-born were beginning to take pride in their natural environment and to look on it with the eye of a lover rather than the eye of an alien, the apologists for the Protestant ascendancy tended to write of Australia in the early Dutch-English tradition as an exceedingly barren land. An early poet, Barron Field, the second judge of the Supreme Court, wrote of the country as a place which:

emerg'd at the first sinning,  
When the ground was therefore curst;  
—And hence this barren wood!

Towards the end of the age of Macquarie the voice of the other view of the world that has influenced the development of civilization in Australia began to be heard publicly in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. In May 1820 two priests, J.J. Therry and P. Conolly, arrived from Ireland to minister to the Catholics in both colonies. They were not the first priests on the continent, as they had been preceded by three transported during the troubles of 1798 in Ireland. In 1817 Father O'Flynn had arrived without formal credentials from the Secretary of State and had been promptly forced to leave by Macquarie, who was piqued as much by O'Flynn's low insolence towards the Protestant clergy and his claims for the magical power of the sacramental bread as by his lack of credentials. The arrival of

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Therry and Conolly ensured that the Irish Catholics in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land would continue to be instructed in those ideals of charity, compassion, love of God, and the preservation of their holy faith by men who at times confounded these ideals with the worldly aspirations of the Irish people, just as the religious sentiments of the Protestants, their profession of faith in one God, the Maker of heaven and earth, were confounded with the worldly aspirations of the British. The Protestants mocked at the Catholics' low standard of living, their stooping to their priests, their superstitions, the tinsel and

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ornament surrounding their acts of religious devotion. The Catholics grieved at the Protestants for sundering the unity of Christendom, for performing ceremonies that were but a pale shadow of their own rich liturgy, and for seeming to condemn a portion of God's children to a perpetual position of inferiority in society. So by the end of the age of Macquarie two different views of man and his destiny confronted each other in Australia.

From Chapter Four, The Transition 1821-1831, from page 80:

The behaviour and values of the white men were beginning to be influenced by the climate and environment and the peculiar composition of their society, as well as by their European past, whether Protestant, Catholic, or Enlightened. Before 1830 observers in Sydney were beginning to speculate on the effect of the uniformity of the climate and scenery. They predicted that it would produce such a tameness and feebleness of character that the inhabitants would write little or no poetry and would have no impulse to rise in the scale of morals. In New South Wales, they argued, there was no long summer day or long winter night, no fall of the leaf, no sudden exuberance of flowers in the spring,

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no song of birds, no deep, continuing twilight, no season of absolute gloom. Instead there was a plain, level uniformity. The imagery of English poetry was not understood by the children of New South Wales. The environment in which poetry had been written in England did not exist in New South Wales. Where, it was asked, were the 'blue-veined violets, hare-bells, buttercups, daisies, soft silken primroses, the heather or hawthorn's bloom? Where were the lions, the tigers, elephant, hippopotamus, camel and other noble quadrupeds? The sequestered glens or purling streams, or mountains peaked with snow, the towering crags, or the gushing waterfalls — all that scenery which was sublime?' By contrast, they argued, New South Wales was flat, uniform and sombre.

The same flatness and dullness prevailed in its society. Men sought distraction and comfort not in art, literature, or religion, but in drinking, making money, and eating. The rest of the heavy, dull hours were consumed in scandal, which had become, in the words of one captious observer, 'the unrectified, pernicious alcohol, which undermines the enjoyment of more

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lives, than that ever did which enters the mouth'. Scandal had made every man distrust his neighbour. Difficulties with servants robbed many of the higher use of their leisure. In Sydney the domestic servants were said to be 'of the worst description under the sun'. The settlers in the country who used convicts to work their estates and serve in the house were afraid to spend time in the towns in social intercourse because the Aborigines or the convict servants might steal or destroy their possessions. Women with social aspirations protested that riding through rows of gum-trees or viewing cornstalks was not to their taste. As to conversation, 'one woman wrote to the Sydney Gazette in 1823, 'nothing can be so sheepish. Young Arable's wits are gone a wool gathering — ever since he commenced grazing. Talks of

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music, and asks for a song, young Wholesale chaunts over an invoice, "Money is your friend, is it not?" '

From Chapter Five, Immigrants and Squatters, 1831-1842, from page 93:

In the towns the arrival of immigrants from Ireland as well as England and Scotland exacerbated those sectarian sentiments that had taken root during the convict period. The Sydney Herald wrote on 17 March, 1840, that the sale-of-land funds had been handed over to agents who swept the gaols and parishes of the cumberers of the property of popish landlords for the contemptible purpose of establishing a popish ascendancy in New South Wales. On the other hand the priests of the Catholic Church grieved lest the scheme be used by the Protestant ascendancy to deprive Irish paupers of their faith: those monsters of iniquity who had already converted the most beautiful island of God's earth into a land of skulls were probably plotting to pervert the minds of Catholic immigrants with the poison of their apostasy.

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The immigration schemes certainly provided the occasion for the sharpening of tensions between Protestant and Catholic in New South Wales and to a lesser extent in Van Diemen's Land. The Irish immigrants brought the same way of life and values as the Irish convicts. No earthly inducement would allow them to go against the wishes or opinions of their priest, since

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they considered that their salvation hereafter depended upon following his instructions. They brought with them that charity of the poor towards each other even where there was no claim to any relationship, and that compassion for the multitude they had learnt from their holy faith. They also brought with them the memories of their melancholy history, believing there was no justice for a Catholic in a court presided over by Protestants; and so, to outwit the traditional enemy of their people, lying, informing, treachery, arson, theft, outrage, and even murder was permissible. The priests grieved and warned the faithful not to endanger their eternal salvation by the satisfaction of the primitive passion of revenge. Although the Australian colonies and the United States of America were the best cures the English ever discovered for Irish lawlessness, colonial society became the setting for a desperate confrontation of the Catholic and Protestant views of the world.

Whereas the English and Scottish Protestant— and even the Irish Protestant — knew how to make wealth, understood the laws of political economy, and saw the connection between the upright man and the successful man, the Irish knew the secret of charity, compassion, and togetherness. In the United Kingdom the Irish lived in appalling filth and squalor, sustained in part by a sense of outrage and abomination against a whole people, in part by their holy faith. In New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land they confronted again the traditional enemies of their people, who with the effrontery of the successful told them that their

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success depended on their embracing British institutions and the Protestant religion. At the same time the Protestants took fright lest their standard of living be lowered by these waves of free immigrants from Catholic Ireland, or their minds perverted and degraded by their superstitious and idolatrous practices.

In the 1830s the other great subject of public discussion was the future of transportation. In 1835 five convicts on the estate of a Major Mudie at Castle Forbes, driven to desperation by perpetual and excessive floggings, fired at the manager, wounded him, and then took to the bush. After their arrest they were tried and found guilty. When the judge called on them to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced upon them, they requested permission to exhibit their lacerated backs to the

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court to show what tortures they had endured. The people in the court shuddered in horror; so, briefly, did the humanitarians in the colony. But those who were outraged by the 'legalized abomination' of flogging were few, as were the numbers whose moral sensibilities were offended by the servitude and degradation of the convict system. A Catholic priest, the Reverend W. Ullathorne, wrote:

We have been doing an ungracious and an ungodly thing. We have taken a vast portion of God's earth, and have made it a cess-pool; we have taken the oceans, which, with their wonders, gird the globe, and have made them the channels of a sink; we have poured down scum upon scum, and dregs upon dregs, of the offscourings of mankind, and as these harden and become consistent together, we are building with them a nation of crime, to be, unless something be speedily done, a curse and a plague, and a by-word to all the people of the earth . . . The removal of such a plague from the earth concerns the whole human race.

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The other great plague of the squatter was the Aborigine. By the end of the 1830s the British government, influenced by special pleading from the humanitarians in London, had decided to take action to protect the Aborigines of New South Wales and the few survivors in Van Diemen's Land. 'The inhabitants of New Holland in their original condition,' wrote a committee of the House of Commons in 1837, 'have been described by travellers as the most degraded of the human race; but it is to be feared that intercourse with Europeans has east over their original debasement a yet deeper shade of wretchedness.' For the better protection and civilization of the natives the British government ordered Governor Gipps in 1838 to divide Port Phillip into four districts and to appoint a protector of Aborigines to

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each district. These protectors were to be both missionaries and teachers, and were charged with the protection of the Aborigines against the greed and cruelty of the white man. The squatters were not impressed. To them this appointment, like all other appointments by London, seemed useless and expensive, for no man could or should preserve peace between white and black. When the black men stole their stock or threw a fire-stick in their dry grass, they retaliated by putting poison in the flour given to the blacks.

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In 1838 a party of white men near Myall Creek, driven to desperation by the behaviour of the blacks, captured some, tied them together with a rope, shot them, and then burnt their bodies. Eleven of the white men were tried and acquitted, but the governor ordered a retrial. Seven were found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. The colony was in uproar. The press in Sydney accused humanitarians and philanthropists of squeamishness. But Gipps stood firm, and the men were hanged in Sydney. In the frontiers of settlement the cause of the Aborigines remained as hopeless as ever: all attempts to civilize them were derided as 'founded in delusion and supported in folly'. Earlier, in Van Diemen's Land, in a last desperate attempt to save the few hundred survivors from total destruction, Lieutenant-Governor Arthur had organized a man-hunt in 1830 across the whole island. Only one woman and one boy were caught, and the days of the remainder were numbered, for in 1869 the last male Aborigine died, and in 1888 an East Tasmanian Aboriginal woman died at Kangaroo Island. So the pure-bred race became extinct. Both on the mainland and in Van Diemen's Land the expansion of settlement with the increase in the number of squatters had spelt doom to the Aborigine.

For the squatters who survived the ordeals of the early days there were great compensations. The festivals of the Christian

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year were observed with much ceremony. On Christmas Day 1839, for example, a large party sat down to dinner in a squatter's hut near the shores of Western Port. The table was covered with the usual English cheer of roast beef, roast potatoes, and roast vegetables, washed down by champagne. 'We were a merry party that evening,' wrote the squatter to his friends in England, 'though sitting in a hut which a beggar in England would hardly live in, the walls full of holes, the floor the natural earth, and situated in the middle of the eternal forest where till eighteen months before, a white man had never trod.' It was this sense of achievement, this sense of creating a new way of life, of planting civilization in areas where hitherto barbarism and savagery had prevailed, which sustained them in their dark days. Some relieved their boredom by reading. Some sweated out their days in the bush in the knowledge that each year there was relief and pleasure to be tasted in the towns of Sydney, Melbourne, or Hobart. All were sustained by the hope of material gain, for some earned

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between one thousand and two thousand five hundred pounds in a year, while their stock multiplied and the value of their run soared as competition for land intensified.

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To educate the sons of these settlers to act as a governing class in society, William Grant Broughton, who succeeded Scott as archdeacon of New South Wales in 1829, recommended in 1830 the creation of colleges in which scholars would be given 'a liberal education'. He had been shocked to find in his first year in the colony that the inheritors of large properties, young men who were to take the lead in society and occupy a station of importance in the country, were too often destitute of the acquirements that should qualify them for such a station. To his horror, these young men were sacrificing all their respectability and influence by associating with their own convict servants. Such a forgetfulness, he believed, would disappear if their minds were duly cultivated. He proposed to teach them to exercise their powers of reason and to encourage habits of patient investigation by steeping them in a classical education and by providing a general instruction in the chief articles of the Christian faith. In these King's Schools, as they were to be called, the sons of the squatters were to be groomed as a governing class. The first school was opened at Parramatta in 1832, but the pupils proved stony ground for the seeds of Christian humanism. The rapacity with which the squatters pursued their material interests in the 1840s, especially in agitating for convicts or coolies to meet their labour demands, alienated the rest of the community. So while their sons were surprised to learn at

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The King's School that in addition to the horse there was also the idea of the horse the fathers were depriving themselves of political and social power and prestige by their own folly and greed.

At the same time the public life of New South Wales and to a lesser extent of Van Diemen's Land was disturbed by an acrimonious debate over the future of education. In both colonies Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists and dissenters resented the Anglican monopoly of education. Governor Bourke, who took over from Darling in 1831, was a Whig in politics and a liberal

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in religion. He wanted to promote the religious instruction and general education of the people. In a colony that included members of all the religious persuasions, it was, he believed, impossible to establish a dominant and endowed church without much hostility. The inclination of the colonists, which kept pace with the spirit of the age, was decidedly averse to such an institution. So he proposed to give financial assistance to every one of the three grand divisions of Christians indifferently — that is, to Anglicans, Catholics, and Presbyterians. Immediately Anglicans and Presbyterians howled that the proposal would subvert Protestantism. Broughton demanded that all children should be taught to read the Bible upon the principle that Holy Scripture contained all that was necessary to salvation. The Anglican Church, he went on, had given the English-speaking world the Bible in its native language. That was its glory and its claim to their gratitude and favour. By such bombast the Protestants forced Bourke to abandon his plans.

But when Bourke's successor, Gipps, a liberal in religious questions, announced in 1840 that the highest interests of mankind required that the youth of the country be nurtured in feelings of love and charity towards each other irrespective of religious creeds, the Anglicans and the Catholics took fright. For Gipps

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insisted that if each separate denomination had its own school in each district, then even in the towns a large proportion of the population would remain uneducated. He proposed a comprehensive scheme to include all Protestants. But Broughton was still unhappy. From the persuasion that all forms of religion are alike, he argued, it was but a step to the more total persuasion that all religions are unimportant. When Ullathorne and Polding, two English Benedictine priests who had arrived in Sydney in the early 1830s, remonstrated with Gipps, he told them it was his duty to adhere to the strongest party, and he added, 'I don't think you are the strongest.' So Ullathorne and Polding organized a procession through the streets of Sydney. Preceded by a huge cross, with magnificent banners flying, three hundred girls dressed in white as a symbol of the mystical purity of Christ's church, followed by the laity, acolytes, priests in their sacred robes, and the saintly Polding in full canonical dress bringing up the rear, marched to demonstrate that if they had to choose between Christ and secular truth and enlightenment, they would

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choose Christ. It was on this altar of varying religious truth as seen by Anglican, Catholic, and Presbyterian that secular education was sacrificed in both New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. In South Australia, by contrast, the greater number of dissenters, and the numerical weakness of the Anglicans and the Catholics, allowed religious education to be sacrificed on the altar of secular education.

From Chapter Six, Politics and Culture 1843-1851, from page 119:

In the meantime the politics of all the colonies continued to be disturbed by the argument over education. By 1844 it was clear that the denominational system had failed to provide education for the children, and that its failures were more marked in the country districts than in the towns. It was also criticized for its wastefulness, its expense, its aggravation of sectarian sentiment, for enforcing the subservience of the schoolmaster to the parson, and for the poor quality of the teachers since the low stipends attracted only the odd, the bizarre, and the picaresque. The government, the Presbyterians and the dissenters suggested a system of national schools, in which the children would be taught religious opinions but not religious doctrines. But neither the Anglicans nor the Catholics would have a bar of it. To both all attempts to teach something so vague as a religion on which all agreed would lead to indifference and unbelief. Broughton went so far as to tell the chairman of a select committee of the legislative council on education in 1844 that if the children were not to be taught the doctrines of their own persuasion he would rather they were not taught at all. Bishop Polding took the same stand, though he cleverly evaded giving the appearance of preferring ignorance to error.

This time in New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, and South Australia the government had the courage to ignore the prophecies of the priests and parsons on national schools as seedbeds of immorality and unbelief. In the first two colonies between 1848 and 1849 a dual system of education was introduced. A denominational board had the responsibility of dividing among the denominations the money provided by the state. A national board had the finances and power

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to build schools, equip them, and pay teachers, who were to be persons of Christian sentiment, of calm temper and discretion, and imbued with a spirit of peace, and who were to teach obedience to the law and loyalty to the sovereign. Textbooks were selected in which would be found a large infusion of what all Christians agreed upon as the most important elements of religious truth. Doctrinal religious instruction was to be given at set periods by the clergy of the various Christian persuasions.

The Catholics branded the national schools as Protestant seminaries. Some Protestants were beguiled into accepting them as preferable to surrendering to 'popish' domination. In an attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable both the denominational and the national schools were starved of funds, and so the quality of both types of education paid the price of sectarian folly. The state was consenting to the growth of an education system wherein three types of schools, Protestant, Catholic, and those run by followers of the Enlightenment, presented fundamentally different views of the nature of man and the meaning of his life.

By contrast in 1851 South Australia created a central board of education from which representatives of the religious denominations as such were specifically excluded. Under its supervision schools were established in which children were given a good secular education based on the Christian religion, apart from all theological and controversial differences on discipline and doctrine, and no denominational catechism was used. The Anglicans and the Catholics protested against the attempt to teach religion without doctrine; the Presbyterians and the dissenters celebrated another victory for the voluntary principle and contemptuously brushed aside the warning of Anglican and Catholic that religion without doctrine prepared the way for an age of unbelief.

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In August 1849, in one of those perennial complaints of immigrants against the absence of intellectual culture in colonial societies, a writer to the Sydney Morning Herald posed the question: 'Gentlemen, is our Australia to become a second Boeotia, a proverb among Nations? What single building or institution do

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we possess connected with art or science worthy of an enlightened people? Or are there none who care about them?' He was wrong on the last point, for there were the few, as in all societies, who cared; but they were hopelessly divided in their view of the nature of man and the meaning of his life. Of the 265,503 who lived in New South Wales on the eve of the discovery of gold, the 70,130 in Van Diemen's Land, the 63,700 in South Australia, and the 4,600-odd who lived in Western Australia, all had been influenced by at least one of the three creative forces in their civilization — Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, and the Enlightenment.

At first sight it appeared that all these colonial societies were agitated and consumed by a never-ending sectarian argument between Protestant and Catholic. The press, the pulpit, the public platforms, the pamphlets, and even at times the proceedings of law courts, were given over to unseemly exchanges between Protestant and Catholic. At the end of July 1838 the town of

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Sydney was placarded with notices summoning Catholics to a meeting convened by Bishop Polding to protest because Judge Willis of the Supreme Court had charged them with the worship of idols. In 1848 Protestant congregations throughout New South Wales declared the day on which two Anglican clergymen, Sconce and Mackensen, were received into the Roman Catholic Church as a day of mourning and a chastisement by God because in their wickedness they had turned away from Him like lost sheep. A priest of the Catholic Church, John McEncroe, called John Calvin a sodomite and all the leaders of the Protestant revolt in the sixteenth century the slaves of sensual lust. As in earlier periods, the Protestant was obsessed with the horrid nightmare that his high material standard and his personal liberty might be swept aside by an increase in Catholic power. He was affronted, too, by men from poverty-stricken Ireland who had the colossal impertinence to inform him that there was no salvation outside the church of Rome. To the Protestant this opinion could only have been held by men who were morally mad. The Catholic was obsessed by the feeling that exposure to a Protestant-dominated society, whose schools, public buildings, and public ceremonies breathed the very spirit of the Protestant religion, might cause shipwreck to the faith. They harboured, too, the grievance that their inferior position in society was the

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price to be paid for being Catholic, as the top places in the professions, the business world, and the services were, they believed, reserved for Protestants. So with all the passion of men afraid both for their temporal and their eternal welfare both Protestant and Catholic blackened the hearts of each other in wanton displays of human madness and folly.

Appearances deceived, however, for they distracted attention from the quickening of both Protestant and Catholic culture during the period. The Protestants were enlivened partly by

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the coming of the Anglo-Catholic' Tractarian movement to the Australian colonies — the two main proselytizers were Broughton in New South Wales and Nixon in Van Diemen's Land. Outside the Anglican church the Protestants were enlivened and strengthened by the coming of the Voluntaries and by the evangelical revival in England and Scotland. They were strengthened, too, at least temporarily, by the arrival of men such as Carmichael and Mansfield who believed there was such a thing as the religion of everyman, a religion without a catechism and without doctrines, firmly based on revelation of God's word in the Old and the New Testament. At the same time their religion drew inspiration from the teaching of the Enlightenment on human brotherhood and the possibility of achieving happiness on earth. By the 1840s the Protestants were not only split into a bewildering variety of sects, but were beginning to be divided in their vision of the world. Amongst the Anglicans, the Presbyterians, and even some Methodists there were those who viewed the life of man as an act of tragic grandeur. They had learnt their vision of life in a stern school. From Shakespeare they learnt that the flaws in the clay of men who had the stuff of greatness in them brought them deep damnation on earth. From the stories of Absalom, and Susanna and the Elders, from the books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes, and from some of the Psalms, they learnt that evil men were more powerful than good, that the righteous were not rewarded in this world, and that men endowed with charity and compassion were impotent against the wicked.

By contrast the piety preached for the many by the Protestants was still concerned with morality. A correspondent at Burra, South Australia, was pleased to report in 1849 that that

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bane of the human race, inebriety, was fast fleeing from Burra through the instrumentality of the total abstinence society. At a recent tea party, he noted with pleasure, there was barely elbow

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room, and the tables were loaded with tea and biscuits and cakes. Many who could not obtain standing room within thronged the building outside. 'The congregated sons and daughters of sobriety and rational enjoyment,' he continued, 'were addressed by some eight or ten speakers, the speeches being interspersed with temperance hymns, to which every effort was given by a band of able musicians.' By their fulsome support for temperance movements, as well as for the reduction of prostitution and gambling, the Protestant clergy were identified in the public eye as moral policemen for a particular way of life rather than teachers by precept and example of the way to salvation. By continuing to counsel subordination and to urge the poor to accept their lowly station in life, they prostituted their religion to the service of the social needs of the classes in power in the Australian colonies and in London. For good or evil the Protestant clergy had allowed their religion to become a religion of social utility and its reputation to depend on the survival in that society of the need for moral policemen.

On the other hand the Catholic priests from Ireland behaved in such a way as to cause those outside their church to identify it with the worldly aspirations of the Irish people. From the priest the faithful were taught the wrongs against Ireland and the sins of the Protestants with the same zeal as they were taught to say the rosary. In this way the Catholic Church, like the Protestant churches, tended to become a religion of social utility. Like the Protestant clergy, the priests assumed the role of moral policemen, denouncing drunkenness, whoring and gambling. But again appearances deceived, for the Catholic Church in New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, and Western Australia began to be affected by the Catholic intellectual revival in England during this period. This was brought to the Australian colonies by such Benedictine priests as Ullathorne and

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Polding in New South Wales, Willson in Van Diemen's Land, and the Spanish Benedictines at New Norcia near Perth. They spoke of the Catholic Church as the creator of European civilization, and of its lofty and noble traditions rather than of that priest-ridden, sectarian-tainted, bigoted, and superstitious corruption of Christianity that had emerged from centuries of poverty and oppression in Ireland, still preserving by some miracle the image of Christ and the Holy Mother of God. While the Irish priests were sympathetic to the wordly aspirations of the Irish lower classes, the Benedictines taught the case for rank and for inequality in society.

At the same time the bush workers were groping towards quite a different set of values. Ignorant of the consolations of religion, untouched by the traditions and conventions of European society, they looked for a comforter to offset the loneliness of their lives and to protect them against its dangers. They found it in mateship. One observer noted:

There is a great deal of this mutual regard and trust engendered by two men working thus together in the otherwise solitary bush; habits of mutual helpfulness arise, and these elicit gratitude, and that leads on to regard. Men under these circumstances often stand by one another through thick and thin; in fact it is a universal feeling that a man ought to be able to trust his own mate in anything

The same conditions promoted a belief in equality and the habit of judging a man by his performance rather than his inheritance. Prepared to stand by each other in anything, the bushmen were at the same time morbidly suspicious of the newcomer or the intruder who might upset their monopoly of labour, or disturb their way of life. The sentiments of mateship tended to be reserved for the native-born, and the ideals that were the

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offspring of their loneliness and isolation became in turn forces to strengthen their provincialism and their xenophobia.

### 3. FLEETING REVOLUTION AS GOLD FEVER AND REBELLION

From Chapter Seven, Gold 1851-1861, from page 146:

In the meantime observers in New South Wales and Victoria were commenting on the effect of the life on the goldfields on social values. One man in the Bathurst fields wrote at the end of 1851:

Nothing indeed can have a more levelling effect on society than the power of digging gold, for it can be done, for a time at least, without any capital but that of health and strength; and the man innured to toil, however ignorant, is on more equal terms with the educated and refined in a pursuit involving so much personal hardship.

By 1853 another English observer noted that on the Victorian goldfields all the aristocratic feelings and associations of the old country were at once annihilated. Plebeianism of the rankest and, in many instances, of the lowest kind prevailed. It was not what you had been but what you were that was the criterion. If you could not work, you were of no use, and would infallibly sink in social rank in a society in which physical activity and industry were made the highest standards of a man's abilities for getting on in the world. Victoria, he concluded, had become 'an equalising colony of gold and beef and mutton'.

By the end of 1853 the decline in the income of the alluvial digger caused him to perceive a wider significance in the difference between the equality and mateship of the goldfields and the inequality and political and social privilege that prevailed in the society that surrounded him. By the end of 1853 the stump orators on the goldfields were beginning to address their audiences on wider issues. They were beginning to talk of the three great grievances of the diggers: the licence grievance, the land grievance, and the political grievance. They complained that it was beyond their capacity to pay the licence fee, and that the

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police were unduly severe and tyrannical when searching for unlicensed persons. Diggers without licences were treated like felons, marched along the highway in charge of the mounted police, exposed to the gaze of the populace, and, if unable to pay the fee, put into a cell with thieves, horse-stealers, lags and murderers amidst filth and vermin. Others were chained to posts where they were exposed to the sun and the ridicule of the rather insensitive troopers. All this was happening in colonies with a

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tradition of implacable hatred for the police by the working classes. Knots of diggers were heard murmuring that in California this state of things would soon be altered, or grumbling to others about the evils of a police-ridden country. They were grieved, too, by the lack of opportunity of acquiring land on reasonable terms. Some wanted to invest their earnings from gold in land and found it was impossible to do so. They were also grieved by their lack of political rights. As they saw it they had contributed to the wealth and greatness of the colony without enjoying any voice whatever in its administration.

On the night of 6 October, 1854, James Scobie was found murdered on the goldfield of Ballarat. The proprietor of the Eureka Hotel, James Bentley, his wife, and John Farrell were tried for the murder and found not guilty by the magistrates. The diggers, sensing in this acquittal the corruption and bribery in high places that plagued their class, gathered outside the hotel and burnt it to the ground. From that day the diggers began to hold a series of mass meetings in which the demand for justice against the murderers of Scobie was soon swallowed up in the demand for the redress of grievances. At Bakery Hill on 11 November a mass meeting of 10,000 diggers joined in a reform league and pledged themselves to work for (1) a full and fair representation; (2) manhood suffrage; (3) no property qualification for members of the legislative council; (4) payment of members;

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(5) short duration of parliament. In addition they demanded an immediate change in the management of the goldfields by the dismissal of the commissioners, and the abolition of the diggers' and storekeepers' licence tax. The response of the government in Melbourne was to dispatch more troops to the goldfields and to organize more licence hunts.

On 29 November the diggers held a mass meeting that ended on a note of enthusiasm and passion when the diggers, inflamed by the stump orators, burnt their licences in a huge bonfire. With incredible folly the commissioner chose the next day for a general licence hunt, which precipitated a riot and the reading of the Riot Act. The more fanatical among the diggers then began to arm and to erect a stockade at Eureka in Ballarat, behind which they drilled. At night, when the flag of the Southern Cross was raised over the stockade, they solemnly took

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an oath of loyalty. On the morning of Sunday, 3 December, when all but one hundred and fifty diggers had become discouraged and left the stockade, the commander of the troops called on the remainder to surrender. When they refused, he ordered the troops to charge. After fifteen or twenty minutes the whole affair was over. Twenty-five of the diggers were killed and thirty wounded, while three privates and one officer of the troops were killed and eleven privates wounded. When the soldiers had once tasted blood, they became violent. The mounted troops began to mangle the diggers till they were stopped by their commanding officers. The police also bullied the correspondents of the newspapers on the goldfields for publishing accounts of their abominations against the diggers.

The leader of the diggers, Peter Lalor, having lost an arm in the fighting, hid for a season to escape the vengeance of the authorities and reappeared years later as a conservative in the Victorian legislative assembly.

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It looked as though the appeal by the governor for all true subjects of the Queen, and all strangers who had received hospitality and protection under her flag, to assist in preserving social order and maintaining the supremacy of the law had triumphed over the forces of rebellion and the demands of the radicals. The government hastened to redress the grievances of the diggers: a miner's right of one pound per year replaced the hated licence; an export duty on gold of two and sixpence per ounce was imposed to raise money for the administration of the fields; the administration of the goldfields was changed with the substitution of wardens for commissioners; the goldfields were made part of electoral districts, and the possession of a miner's right became a qualification for voting for the legislative assembly in Victoria. Once again the Anglo-Saxon seemed to have silenced the radical by acceding to the demands of the moderates. But the idea of Eureka was to prove more tenacious than the original defenders of the stockade. In the 1890s the alluvial diggers at Kalgoorlie in Western Australia used Eureka as their inspiration in another fight for the rights of diggers. At the turn of the century the poets of the radicals began to write of Eureka as the origin of all the democratic and radical achievements since that time. Victor Daley wrote:

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Yet, ere the year was over,  
Freedom rolled in like a flood:  
They gave us all we asked for —  
When we asked for it in blood.

At the same time Henry Lawson wrote in his ballad 'Eureka':

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:

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'Reform your rotten law, the diggers' wrongs make right, Or else with  
them, our brothers now, we'll gather to the fight.'

In this way Eureka became a part of the tradition of those of the Australian people who viewed their history as a steady progress from the dark and bloody days of the birth-stain to their great and glorious future when the people would be liberated from capitalist and imperialist enslavement.

But no such vision crossed the minds of the diggers chafing under the indignity and ignominy of the licence tax. Once that indignity was removed they were soon caught up in other obsessions. The first of these was the Chinese. They began to arrive in the goldfields of Victoria in large numbers during the years 1855-56, when the income of the alluvial diggers was sinking to that of unskilled manual workers, and when gold was being found at such depths that gold mining by companies, employing diggers as wage earners, was beginning to replace alluvial digging by teams of four to six independent diggers. The Chinese came from southern China, generally bound to some headman to work under his orders to pay debts in the homeland. They arrived in groups of six or seven hundred, each man with a pole and two baskets and a hat like the top of a haystack nearly a yard across. In the beginning their manners were those of the old world; the young respected the old, and would not sit down till the aged bade them. But as one cynic observed: 'I expect they would lose their good manners when they got colonised.'

By 1857 there were 23,623 Chinese on the Victorian goldfields and by 1861 there were 24,062 of whom only six were women. At that time there were 203,966 Europeans on the fields in Victoria, of whom 130,535 were men and 73,431 were women. By 1857 the Europeans both in the towns and on the goldfields

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had become afraid of the Chinese. John Pascoe Fawkner asked

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the legislative council of Victoria to appoint a committee to frame a bill to control the flood of Chinese settling in the colony, and 'effectually prevent the Gold Fields of Australia Felix from becoming the property of the Emperor of China and of the Mongolian and Tartar hordes of Asia'. The diggers accused the Chinese of immorality caused by the absence of women, of not contributing to the wealth of the country but on the contrary exporting all their wealth to China, and of crimes of great magnitude. But the principal grievance was the great diminution in the yield of gold and the lowering of the price of labour. The Europeans took fright. The Chinese retorted that they thought the English very kind and were delighted by the mercy manifested. They said:

We Chinamen who are here get no gold only by working headings and tailings, and from old holes abandoned by Europeans, and from which we can but barely make a living. We having only the refuse cannot make as much as Europeans, but with their chances we should not be so poor. As soon as we get a little money we will try to get home to our aged parents, for our ancient books teach that we must look after our parents . . . Now we hear you are going to put a tax of a pound a month and we much sorry we do not know what to do . . . We pray your Honourable House will feel for the poor man, and not exact this money, and then all the Chinese will be happy and ever honor the Governor and Legislators and never forget those who are so kind to poor people, and when we get to our own country we will ever speak in honor of such rulers of poor people.

The Europeans were not moved by such tugs at the heart strings. The parliaments of New South Wales and Victoria passed legislation to restrict the entry of Chinese and to discriminate against those resident on the goldfields. Undaunted, the Chinese began to land in South Australia and walk overland in single file

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in groups of six to seven hundred from Adelaide to the Victorian goldfields. On the fields the Anglo-Saxon diggers took the law into their own hands. On the Buckland River in Victoria in 1857 there was an ugly riot against the Chinese. At Lambing Flat near Young in New South Wales on 30 June, 1861, the storm of anti-Chinese feeling broke with astonishing violence. To cries of 'Roll up', upwards of a thousand men armed with

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bludgeons and pick-handles assembled round a 'No Chinese' standard. Forming themselves into a rough line, to the accompaniment of martial music supplied by a local band, the men rode to the Chinese quarters at Lambing Flat, shouting, yelling, and singing to high heaven of their undying hatred for the Chinese. These monsters on horseback, as they were described by the correspondent of the Sydney Morning Herald, armed still with their bludgeons and their whips, took hold of the pigtails of the Chinese, pulled them towards the rumps of their horses, where they cut off their pigtails and left them to the fury of others who surrounded them. One Chinese boy went down on his knees and, with tears running down his cheeks, begged for mercy. A ruffian gave him a blow sufficient to kill a giant, knocking him to the ground. A European woman married to a Chinese was assaulted, and her clothing and that of her children was torn to pieces while her tormentors took counsel on how to rape her, only to be foiled by the restraining influence of other Europeans. All day the outrage went on till police and troops, summoned from neighbouring districts by the bush telegraph, arrived to restore order. In September juries at Goulburn acquitted all the Europeans charged with riot, which, wrote the Sydney Morning Herald, was 'a fitting wind up for so disgraceful a commencement with which it is so perfectly in keeping'. With the decline in alluvial digging in the next decade the agitation against the Chinese declined, only to be fanned again to white heat by

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the passions roused during the last quarter of the century. The diggers had found a scapegoat for their subterranean passions; in time the minds of large sections of the community would be moved by the same emotions.

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From Chapter Five, Immigrants and Squatters, 1831-1842, from page 99:

The settlers howled at the absurdities and inequities of the [Land] system. Workers, they said, were not prevented from becoming landowners, and the land laws were not preventing dispersion of settlement. The settlers were paying money for the passage of immigrants who then worked in the towns. The settlers of Port Phillip complained that the revenue raised from the sale of land in their district was being used to bring immigrants to the settled districts of New South Wales, where the powerful settlers, the members of the ancient nobility of New South Wales, grabbed all the labour. The settlers in the Port Phillip district grumbled and began to agitate for separation from New South Wales. The settlers in New South Wales, fearing the loss of revenue from the sale of land in Port Phillip, closed ranks to concentrate on

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the demand for self-government from London. In their eyes the British government had so mishandled transportation, immigration, and the land laws that the first step to the preservation of their economic and social power was the transfer of political power from London to their own hands.

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All were looking to the towns or to London for their supplies, their pleasures, the education of their children, and the redress of their grievances against the land laws and the Aborigines. They paid little attention to strictly local or regional affairs. The dispersion of settlement and the absence of any other cause forcing them to co-operate with each other, together with the pressures to remain at home to protect families and stock against convict servants, drunken shepherds, or marauding Aborigines, made most settlers centre their lives on their own runs. Where closer settlement and the strength of Indian bands forced the settler in the northern British colonies into that co-operation in defence of their possessions that became their first rude school of local and

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self-government, the tendencies in the Australian colonies were towards centralization. The conditions in the bush that nurtured

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feeling of equality and mateship amongst the bush workers did not promote their combination for political purposes. So a society in which one section was passionately attached to equality was also creating administrative centralization that brought with it the possibility of conformity and equality under the tyranny of the majority.

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In the meantime the politics of New South Wales and to a lesser extent of Van Diemen's Land were concerned less and less with issues between emancipists and immigrants. So long as the immigrants, and more particularly the exclusive faction of the immigrants, continued to be favoured in land grants and continued to propose such measures as the exclusion of emancipists from jury lists, the franchise, and membership of any

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future house of assembly, the emancipists and the native-born had an interest in common in resisting their proposals. On the other hand, so long as the emancipists demanded trial by jury and a house of assembly and opposed exclusion of emancipists from jury lists and electoral rolls, the obvious course for the immigrants in general, and certainly the exclusives in particular, was to oppose them, arguing that the colony was not ripe for such developments. By the middle of the 1830s the governor's patronage was sufficiently extensive for the emancipists to demand the right of the native-born to be appointed to public positions, which added a 'job' argument to the emancipists' case against the immigrants.

In 1835 the emancipists formed the Australian Patriotic Association to agitate for their claims both in Sydney and through their representative in London. But by then the winds of change had begun to blow through the politics of New South Wales. The introduction of a minimum upset price for land in 1831 removed ill-feeling between the native-born and the immigrants over land grants. By 1838 wealthy emancipists and wealthy immigrants were beginning to find common ground in opposing British proposals on the sale of crown land, on immigration, and the future of transportation. In July of that year some emancipists and some exclusives had joined together

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in the legislative council of New South Wales on the convict question. Three more years of British control of land policy, immigration policy, and convict policy, together with the threat to allow Port Phillip to secede, converted the immigrants to the need for self-government. At the same time wealthy emancipists such as Wentworth were alarmed by the radical proposals of the rank and file of the emancipists. So at a meeting in Sydney on 4 February, 1841, to protest against the dismemberment of New South Wales, James Macarthur urged emancipists and

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exclusives to join forces to show they were ripe for representative institutions. For his part he was prepared to forget the past, to drop the long-agitated emancipist question, and concentrate on the demand for self-government.

The decisions of the British government in 1842 gave added point to that demand. By an act of 1842 they changed the legislative council of New South Wales from a nominated council to a council of which twelve members were to be nominated by the crown and twenty-four elected by inhabitants who possessed a high property qualification. But the right to legislate on the disposal of crown lands was reserved to parliament, which also retained the power to disallow any act of the legislative council within three years of its passing. Another act of parliament in the same year enlarged the legislative council of South Australia to seven, to enable the Queen in council to nominate some unofficial members. The legislative council of Van Diemen's Land remained a nominee council, as Her Majesty's government did not feel justified in proposing to parliament the extension to Van Diemen's Land of a similar form of legislation because of the incompatibility they considered to exist between the grant of such a form of constitution and the continuance of transportation to the colony. Within a decade, however, the convict question in Van Diemen's Land started an angry campaign for self-government, while in New South Wales angry cries of 'no taxation without representation' suggested that the colonies of Australia might be on the eve of a Boston Tea Party.

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From Chapter Six, Politics and Culture 1843-1851, from page 114:

In the depth of this depression, in June 1843, the writs were issued for the first election of twenty-four members to the legislative council of New South Wales. The Sydney Morning Herald told its readers that the issues of the election were whether the executive government was to have an undue preponderance of power, whether labour should be bond or free, whether to protect native industries, how to finance immigration, and the eligibility of emancipists for municipal and legislative honours. The candidates could, the paper believed, be divided into three groups — a government party, a landowner party led by James Macarthur and W. C. Wentworth, and city radicals led by Robert Cooper. A week later the same paper was regretting that the elections generally had taken a personal turn, as with scarcely

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one exception the contests would not be upon principles. On 1 August, 1843, the new legislative council of twelve government nominees was sworn in, including five official members, large landowners such as Berry and Blaxland, and twenty-four elected members, dominated by such large landowners as James Macarthur, Hannibal Macarthur, James Macarthur Junior, W. C. Wentworth, and W. Lawson, and including Robert Cooper, the workingman's friend, and the stormy J. D. Lang, who had stood for election for Port Phillip, it was said, because he was too well-known in Sydney.

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The uproar [over Gipp's new squatting regulations] led to renewed agitation for the grant of self-government. Wentworth immediately moved in the legislative council for the appointment of a select committee, with himself in the chair and other landowners and professional and business men of like mind to support him, to inquire into general grievances. In their report they wrote of the evil tendencies that followed from the entire separation of the legislative and executive powers. They wrote, too, of the utter state of pupillage in which the governors of the colonies were held by the necessity of constant reference to Downing Street. The lack in London of the necessary information to decide correctly on questions of a purely local nature, which naturally resulted in wrong decisions and imperfect legislation, was a still greater evil. To remedy the evil

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of the separation of the legislative and executive power the committee recommended responsible government; to remedy the greater evil of reference to Downing Street the committee recommended self-government, or the absence of all interference on the part of the same authorities, except on questions purely imperial. They wanted the colonial parliament to have the power to legislate on land, immigration, education, posts and telegraphs, and customs, while defence and foreign policy and all related questions were reserved to the Imperial Parliament.

As it had in the agitation for trial by jury and a house of assembly in the 1820s, the intemperate language of Wentworth damaged the cause in official circles in Sydney and London. If true wisdom, wrote the Sydney Morning Herald, consists in the pursuit of the best end by the best means, Wentworth was not a wise man. Often, they went on, his strongest arguments were neutralized by the coarseness and violence with which they were mixed up, and his intentions, though in the main uprightly

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patriotic, were misunderstood and condemned by the rancorous personalities in which his tongue ran riot. Wentworth, they concluded, had a self-destructing fatality that convinced others that his resolutions on responsible government and self-government were not inspired by a generous love of country, or zeal for the public good, but rather by a wish to annoy and degrade the distinguished officer whom he sneeringly called 'the Imperial Officer'.

In London the demands were confronted by people who were masters in the art of evasion. Lord Stanley wrote on the demand for responsible government:

Her Majesty must decline to enter into any stipulation at once so abstract and so vague . . . In neither case [i.e. neither in Canada nor in New South Wales] has the Queen entered into any statement of any Theory or abstract principle of Colonial Government, nor is Her Majesty advised that to discuss such Theories, or to propound such abstract principles, forms any branch of the duties which the laws and constitution of the British Empire call on Her to discharge.

It was the English way of saying 'not now', and using the opportunity to lecture the colonials on the first principles of government.

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Some squatters in New South Wales used the opportunity [Gladstone suspend transportation to Van Diemen's Land in 1846 for two years] to invite the British government to renew transportation to New South Wales. Under the chairmanship of Wentworth, a committee of the legislative council, well stacked with members of the landed interest, boldly suggested in 1846 that the life of a shepherd or a hut-keeper would humanize and restore a fallen human being and estrange him from his former tastes and pursuits, especially as the way of life would provide ample opportunities to contemplate the power and beneficence of the 'Great Author of the Universe'. 'This grand system of National education and immigration,' as they put it, 'would ultimately reduce to a mere nominal amount crime and pauperism in Great Britain and, at the same time, solve the labour problems of the squatter.' In the meantime the British government, under the pressure of an increase in crime, decided to renew transportation to New South Wales, provided the convicts were not assigned to settlers. When the announcement was made in New South Wales, the

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inhabitants spoke of treachery and breaches of solemn pledges by members of the government.

On 11 June, 1849, a great protest meeting was held at Circular Quay in Sydney to demonstrate against the arrival of the ship *Hashemy* from London with convicts on board. In spite of continued rain, four or five thousand persons gathered to hear the speakers. To enthusiastic applause, Robert Lowe, an albino who was driven to spite and malice to compensate for all the humiliations he had suffered at boarding school in England, came forward to second the protest. The threat of degradation, he said, had been fulfilled. The stately presence of their city, the beautiful waters of their harbour, were this day again polluted with the presence of that floating hell, a convict ship. To the accompaniment of immense cheers he told them that once again New South Wales must be the university at which those scholars in vice and iniquity finished their course. Again the moral filth of Great Britain had been tipped into New South Wales. This was a breeches-pocket question for the working classes: convicts might increase the profits of the squatters, but for them it was a struggle for liberty and against a system that in every

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country had destroyed freedom. As in America oppression had been the parent of independence, so it would be in this country. Here, too, injustice and tyranny would ripen into rebellion, and rebellion into independence. After other speeches the meeting dispersed without any noise or tumult, and the conduct of the people throughout, according to the reporter of the Sydney Morning Herald, was grave, decorous, and becoming. In the heat and passion of the moment the meeting entertained wild ideas of taking Government House by storm and forcing the timid Governor Fitz Roy to order the captain to take his cargo of moral filth out on to the high seas. But Government House agreed to receive a deputation, and in the upshot some convicts were sent

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to the up-country districts and the rest sailed in the Hashemy for Moreton Bay, where the squatters were clamouring for labour and there was no middle or working class to oppose them.

Not all the squatters in eastern Australia had abandoned the hope of convict labour in the face of angry opposition from the working and the middle classes in the towns. The squatters of the Moreton Bay district petitioned for independence from New South Wales provided they could have convicts. Some squatters in Port Phillip did likewise, so that from 1847 in Port Phillip there was a pro-convict group agitating for independence from New South Wales in co-operation with an independence group in Melbourne that was implacably opposed to the renewal of transportation. At the same time anti-transportation associations were formed in all the colonies except Western Australia to agitate against the renewal of transportation on moral grounds. When the convict ship Randolph anchored in Hobson's Bay in Port Phillip in August 1849, excitement ran high in Melbourne. At a public meeting the inhabitants pledged themselves to cooperate with other colonies determined to reject the use of convicts. On 1 October, 1850, the legislative council of New South Wales, after receiving many petitions against transportation, resolved that no more convicts ought to be sent to any part of the colony.

In the meantime Fitz Roy was writing secretly to London that the anti-transportation movement was the work of designing and disaffected persons who were instilling in the minds of the lower orders of the community sentiments of disloyalty

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to the government of the mother country. To give the lie to such reports an anti-transportation league was formed in Melbourne in February 1851 whose members pledged themselves to prevent the establishment of English prisons or penal settlements in Australia. Within three months there were branches in all the

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colonies except Western Australia, and the league had chosen the Southern Cross as the national emblem for the movement. In this way the convict question fostered sentiments of some community of interest between the inhabitants of the Australian colonies. But Lord Grey, relying on the Fitz Roy reports about designing and disaffected persons, was playing into the hands of the hotheads and the extremists by flatly rejecting the resolution of the legislative council of New South Wales and the requests of the anti-transportation league.

So it was the transportation question that had infused a note of urgency into the demands for self-government and responsible government. The inhabitants were so caught up with their heated and acrimonious denunciations of existing constitutions that they devoted no time to thinking about what sort of constitutions they wanted. Most of such thinking was being done in England by men such as Grey and Stephen who had been greatly influenced by the writings of de Tocqueville, especially his work *De la Democratie en Amerique*. While the colonists thundered about British oppression, Grey was turning over in his mind the problem of how to introduce that nursery of self-government, experience in local government, in colonies where dispersion of settlement and the use of convicts had developed a high degree of administrative centralization. Grey was also pondering the problem of what provision there could be in the new constitutions against the tyranny of the majority in a society without an aristocracy. He was considering, too, the disadvantages of four colonial parliaments legislating on such subjects as railways, or customs duties, in which the colonies had a common interest, and on which variations in legislation might prove costly. In magnificent periods of language, redolent of the rhythm and cadences of the Book of Common Prayer, he drew the attention of the colonists to the case for a federal assembly that could pass

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legislation binding on all the colonies in certain specified fields. But the colonists remained implacably single-minded. They sang again their song for self-government, while members of the legislative council of New South Wales added that they were not interested in a federal assembly that could not be dominated by New South Wales; and South Australia, as a hint of future provincial loyalties, rejected the proposal as in a British sense unconstitutional. In their eyes a federation such as existed in the United States was an un-British activity, since it was opposed to the social institutions of the colony, and endangered their colonial experience. Intercolonial customs and different railway gauges were part of the price paid for indulging in such folly. For Grey, after reflecting on the colonial reactions, provided in the final draft of the Australian Colonies Government Act, which passed through parliament in 1850, for the separation of Port Phillip from New South Wales, for legislative councils for New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, South Australia, and Victoria (formerly Port Phillip) in which one-third of the members were nominated and two-thirds elected on a high property qualification. He also included a clause that conferred on these legislative councils the power to draft new constitutions to be submitted for approval to the Imperial Parliament.

When the news of the contents of the Australian Colonies Government Act reached Sydney towards the end of 1850, it was greeted with howls of disappointment. In a 'Declaration, Protest and Remonstrance', adopted early in 1851, the legislative council of New South Wales recorded deep disappointment and dissatisfaction at the constitution conferred by the act on the colony.

They protested that the power to tax should be exercised only by the colonial legislature, that the revenue arising from sale of crown land ought to be subject to their control and

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application, that customs and all other government departments should be subject to the direct supervision and control of the colonial legislature, that offices of trust and emolument should be conferred on the settled inhabitants (the office of governor alone excepted), and that plenary powers of legislation should

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be conferred upon and exercised by the colonial legislature. They solemnly warned Her Majesty and their fellow-countrymen in the United Kingdom that it would be impossible much longer to maintain the authority of a local executive that was obliged to refer all measures of importance, no matter how great the urgency, to an inexperienced, remote and irresponsible department in London. In Hobart the act was greeted without enthusiasm. The press urged the new council to get more control over local affairs and rescue the colony from the infamy of convictism. The old nominee council, wrote the Hobart Courier, had outlived public respect. Adelaide received the news quietly, with the grave decorum with which the upright are wont to discuss the decisions of their social superiors. In return for the material gains from convicts, the inhabitants of Perth were prepared to forego that birthright of Englishmen to self-government.

From Chapter Seven, Gold 1851-1861, from page 142:

...But on that day in August 1853 when it was announced that transportation had ceased few paused to ponder the legacy of the convict labour system. Rejoicings and prayers of thanksgiving were offered in Sydney, while in Hobart a high festival was held on 10 August, which the inhabitants celebrated as a voluntary holiday. To mark the occasion the legislative council of Van Diemen's Land in the following year prayed to Her Majesty that the island might be called Tasmania in honour of the first European discoverer. On 21 July, 1855, an order in council in London proclaimed that from 1 January 1856 the said colony of Van Diemen's Land shall be called and known by the name of Tasmania.

At the same time the discovery of gold was causing British officials to have second thoughts on the future constitutions of the Australian colonies. By the end of 1852 the Secretary of State accepted the view that the most loyal, respectable, and influential members of the community wanted responsible self-government. He was influenced, too, by the discovery of gold, which would, he believed, stimulate the advance of population, wealth, and material prosperity with unparalleled rapidity. He therefore invited the legislative councils of New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia, and Victoria to draft new constitutions and submit them for approval and ratification by

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Parliament. Those councils promptly appointed committees to draft such constitutions. It was during the debates in the legislative councils, in discussions in the press, and at public meetings that there emerged two quite different views on who should exercise political power in Australia.

All agreed that power to legislate on customs, disposal of crown lands, and, indeed, on all local questions should be vested in the colonial parliaments. But there the agreement ended. One group, representing the large landowners and conservative opinion in the cities, wanted the constitution to reflect the large interests in the community. They wanted a constitution in perpetuity for the colony, not one that could be set aside, altered, and shattered to pieces by every blast of popular opinion; they wanted, as Wentworth put it to the legislative council of New South Wales, 'a conservative one — a British, not a Yankee constitution'. To achieve this Wentworth proposed at first that the upper house should be composed of those holding hereditary titles, but he was laughed to scorn by the local wits, who talked with effect of a 'Bunyip Aristocracy' and suggested scurrilous titles for those whose wealth had been created by convict labour — James Macarthur would be called the Earl of Camden and have a rum keg on his heraldic emblem. So Wentworth compromised and suggested a nominated upper house of men of wealth, property, and education, 'men,' he said, 'not raised from any particular section of the community, but from every class that has the energy to aspire to rank and honour'. As a further safeguard for conservative interests he suggested a clause by which the constitution could be amended only by a two-thirds majority in both the assembly and the council.

The liberals in New South Wales were not happy with these proposals. They wanted a constitution in which population rather than the interests of property and education were represented

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in parliament. At public meetings their speakers howled at and derided the Wentworth proposals. When W R. Piddington, a liberal, came forward at a public meeting in Sydney in August 1853 and asked the people whether they submitted to be robbed of their rights, they shouted 'No'. When Piddington went on to

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mention the Wentworth proposal to create a colonial nobility with hereditary privileges, there were tremendous groans. 'Colonists,' Piddington concluded to loud cheers, 'speak now, or for ever hold your peace.' But power then rested in the pastoral interest, the city interest, and the official interest rather than with the people. So Wentworth won the day, and a bill went off for approval by parliament in which conservative interests were protected by a nominee legislative council, the two-thirds majority amending clause, plural voting, and property qualifications for electors to the legislative assembly.

In Victoria, by contrast, the conflict between pastoralists and bourgeoisie was not so sharp. There was less of that confrontation between conservative and liberal and more of a spirit of compromise between the two groups to resist the radical demands of the gold-diggers. The colonial secretary in the legislative council of Victoria declared in December 1853 that it would be a very poor policy to dam up the flood then setting in, saying that it would be a truer policy to direct that stream into the proper channels, and to develop properly that democratic element. It was the Tocqueville plea for a democracy guided by the educated and the intelligent rather than the opinions of any mob. He wanted the legislative assembly to represent both 'interests' and 'people', and the legislative council to represent the fixed and settled interests of the colony. So the legislative council sent off for approval by Parliament a constitution in which there was plural voting for both houses, a property qualification for voting for both houses, and a power to amend the constitution by an absolute majority

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of both houses. A similar constitution was sent by the legislative council of Tasmania.

In South Australia, on the other hand, where the subdivision of landed property prevailed to such a great extent that a high proportion of the population had a fixed interest in the soil, it was argued that a democratic constitution could be adopted without threatening the interests of property or education. So the South Australian constitution conferred the right to vote for the legislative assembly on all males of twenty-one years of age who had been on the electoral roll for six months before the election. At the same time the representation of 'interests', and especially property, was provided for by the property qualification

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for voters for the legislative council. In general, then, the constitutions were mixed constitutions, compromises between the representation of 'interests' and the representation of 'people', and between the conservative and liberal views on who should exercise power in a colonial society. In the constitutions, the Imperial Parliament remained sovereign. All bills passed by a colonial parliament dealing with subjects such as amendments of the constitution, the powers or salary of a governor, defence, foreign policy, or marriage and divorce had to be reserved by the governor for the assent of the British government. A copy of every act passed by a colonial parliament had to be transmitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and could be disallowed by him within two years of his receiving the text of the act. That was on paper. In practice the colonial parliaments were sovereign on local questions, and the British Parliament was sovereign on foreign or imperial questions. So the colonial parliaments of New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria received self-government on local questions and responsible government, i.e. the political and legal responsibility of the executive to the legislature, in the constitution acts passed for

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those colonies by Parliament between 1855 and 1856.

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Experience on the goldfields infected the diggers' ideal of mateship with the poison of race hatred, but the levelling and egalitarian tendencies present before the discovery of gold continued to be strengthened by events. By the end of 1854 the diggers had begun their campaign for political equality. At Beechworth in Victoria in October 1855 the diggers' candidate for election shod his horse with gold shoes and led off a drunken and rowdy procession down the main street to a mass meeting in favour of votes for all. During 1856 reform associations were formed in Melbourne and Sydney and on the goldfields, and the members pledged themselves to work for manhood suffrage, perennial parliaments, no property qualifications for members, no compensation to the squatters, abolition of state aid to religion, and compulsory free secular education. Noisy demonstrations occurred outside the first parliament in Melbourne

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under responsible government when it assembled in November 1856. Inside the new parliaments both in Sydney and Melbourne, members from the goldfields electorates demanded the radicalizing of the constitution, while some members from city electorates demanded its liberalization. In May 1858 Henry Parkes told the legislative assembly of New South Wales:

Here all men, comparatively speaking, were on a level . . . In principle, this country was essentially democratic, and the difference of grade, so far as it went amongst us, would be laughed at by men in the Mother country. They were bound to establish their institutions in accordance with the spirit of the country.

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He therefore supported the proposal to introduce manhood suffrage for the legislative assembly, a distribution of electorates to provide representation of people rather than interests, a vote by ballot, the abolition of the two-thirds majority for amendments to the constitution, and the abolition of the property qualification for members of the assembly. He believed in the representation of majorities and the career open to talent, rather than birth or privilege.

Both in New South Wales and Victoria this bourgeois liberalism was strongly opposed by the large landowners or squatters, who continued to defend the principle of the representation of interests. They wanted the two houses to represent the main interests in society — the landed interest, the city interest, the gold interest (pained though they were to admit its existence), and an educated or professional interest. S.A. Donaldson, for example, argued in the legislative assembly of New South Wales that to concede such demands would convert the legislative assembly into a convention as dangerous, as damnable, and as destructive of property and of liberty as that which met in Paris in 1789. He believed the proposals of the liberals would convert a hitherto prosperous colony into a home of destitution and drive both credit and capital from it. In the legislative assembly of New South Wales, Daniel Deniehy made an impassioned plea for special representation of the University of Sydney on the ground that men of education might soften the otherwise harsh materialist spirit of a colonial society; but the advocates of government by the majority defeated his proposal, and the advocate of sweetness and light was buried later in a pauper's grave,

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while the colony of New South Wales swept on over wave after wave of material prosperity.

In both New South Wales and Victoria between 1856 and 1858 the liberals succeeded in introducing manhood suffrage,

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vote by ballot, a redistribution of electoral districts, and the abolition of the property qualification for members of the assembly.

The interests of property were protected by plural voting, by the nominated legislative council in New South Wales, and by the high property qualification for voters for the legislative council in Victoria. One by-product of this principle of majority rule was the decision of the British government to accede to the requests of the inhabitants of the northern districts to implement a clause in the Australian Colonies Government Act and proclaim them a separate colony with the name of Queensland. By letters patent of June 1859 the boundaries of the new colony were defined by an Order in Council. In the same month the new colony was given a constitution the same as that of New South Wales — that is, the Constitution Act of 1856 as amended by such acts as the Electoral Districts Act passed by the New South Wales parliament between 1856 and 1859.

While these changes were occurring in political institutions and values, the material setting of the colonies was changing rapidly. Between December 1851 and December 1861 the total population increased from 437,665 to 1,168,149. In Victoria alone the population increased from 97,489 to 539,764 within those years; South Australia — 66,538 to 130,812; Tasmania — 69,187 to 89,908; Western Australia — 7,168 to 15,936; New South Wales — 197,265 to 357,362. Queensland had 34,367 in 1861. The sudden increase did not change the pre-gold proportion between those from the United Kingdom and those from Europe or the Americas. The one significant change was the creation of a Chinese minority, of whom there were just over 24,000 in Victoria by 1861 and over 13,000 on the Queensland goldfields by 1877. Nor did it change the proportion of Catholic to Protestant in the colonies, for Catholics had approximately 23 per cent of the total population in 1861.