



THE IRISH IN NEW SOUTH WALES, VICTORIA AND SOUTH
AUSTRALIA, 1788-1880

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INTRODUCTION

The Irish diaspora of the nineteenth century was determined by events in the history of Ireland of the previous three hundred years, and the emigrants who constituted the dispersion were themselves products of this history. Three decades of economic and political exploitation of Ireland by England and proscription by law of the Catholic religion in Ireland limited and defined the motivation and prejudices of the Irish people, but provided a common bond between individuals from isolated peasant communities which could be called upon when the more specific identity of family and home town or county was shattered by emigration.

The Irish who emigrated to America arrived in a country which had been colonised by others for many generations and where the sense of alienation was therefore not only in place but in relation to the people of America; but they were the first of a series of 'invasions' by another nationality, each aided to assimilate by the arrival of the subsequent national group.¹ Australia presented a totally different situation: there the Irish were among the first colonisers, and the national composition of the United Kingdom was reproduced without any substantial leaven of other races.² The fact that the first settlement of Australia was penal in character enhanced the potential continuation of the divisions and hostilities that prevailed between English and Irish, Protestant and

1. Will Herberg, Protestant, Catholic, Jew. An Essay in American Religious Sociology, p. 20.

2. The extreme hostility of the Irish and of the Catholic press to the Chinese is an indication of the use that might have been made of such later 'foreign elements' to aid the assimilation of the minority Irish national group, as was done by the native-born in their struggle for recognition in the 1890's. The small numbers and unobtrusive presence of the Chinese, however, limited their value as an alternative focus of 'British' hostility, and riots like those at Lambing Flat in 1861 were not repeated outside of the narrow community of the goldfields and were, in fact, strongly condemned by the colonial press.

Catholic, rulers and ruled, in the Old World, particularly as many of the convicts sent from Ireland believed they had been provoked into crime by the poverty which England's exploitation had brought upon Ireland.

Transportation to the Australian mainland ceased in 1840, however, and the convict population had no vital determining role in the development of an Australian identity. By the time free immigration into Australia from Ireland began, many of the elements that constituted the Irish distinctiveness in the United Kingdom had been undermined.

From 1800 the ascendancy of the Gaelic language had gradually been eroded, and while this removed a source of division between English and Irish, it destroyed what was for the Irish and other communities in the New World a major source of ethnic differentiation and identification.³

The land grievance, so vital in Irish nationalism, was a class rather than a racial issue even in the context of Irish history, and the situation was reproduced in Australia as the conflict between pastoralist and farmer, irrespective of national affiliations. The question of Irish political independence was not readily solved, but remained in limbo in Ireland itself between 1848 and 1867, the years of maximum Irish emigration to Australia, and became an issue rather for the second generation of Irish-Australians, during the Home Rule movement of the 1880's. Above all, the major grievance against English rule in Ireland was removed by the passage of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, applied to the colonies the following year - long before the arrival of any substantial number of free Irish in

3. Herberg, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

Australia. This Bill would appear to have been an unmitigated benefit to Ireland, but in fact it marked the beginning of a new era of Irish troubles. The way in which the concession was won itself augured badly for English-Irish relations and the stability of Ireland, and left a legacy of mistrust of English promises and acceptance of the threat of violence as a weapon to win constitutional demands.⁴ Most importantly, it removed a bond between Catholic and Protestant Irish which had been forged by the denial of civil and religious liberty to a large body of Irishmen by a foreign power. The early Irish transportees to Australia had left an Ireland where Protestant-Catholic cooperation for greater Irish independence was still possible - indeed, the aim of the Society of United Irishmen, founded in 1791, for support of which many of the transportees were thus sentenced, was to abolish 'unnatural' religious distinctions and to unite all Irishmen against English oppression.⁵ By the time of free emigration to Australia, this unity had been undermined by a revival of Catholic-Protestant antagonism, the formation of Orange lodges, the 'exclusive' aims of the Catholic Association(s) formed between 1806 and 1823, and the wooing away of the Presbyterian communities from making common cause with Catholics by promises of government stipends to the Presbyterian clergy.

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4. For details of the agitation for Catholic Emancipation in Ireland, see T. Wyse, Historical Sketch of the Late Catholic Association of Ireland (1829) and J. A. Reynolds, The Catholic Emancipation Crisis in Ireland 1823-1829 (1954).
5. E. Curtis, A History of Ireland, p. 330. Grattan, the founder of the Society of United Irishmen, stated in 1781 'I conceive it to be a sacred truth, and written as it were in the tables of Fate - that the Irish Protestant should never be free until the Irish Catholic has ceased to be a slave.' W. T. Jones, A Letter to the Societies of United Irishmen in Belfast, 1792.

Thus, while the Irish transportees were regarded by the colonial authorities as a single class, the Irish immigrants of a later period were increasingly differentiated by religious affiliation, not only by English and Scots fellow colonists, but by themselves. In 1892 an observer wrote

One of the first discoveries I made after coming to Ireland was that, as a rule, difference of religion meant also difference of race. I found two races living side by side, but known from each other by religious not racial names. ⁶

The continuing relevance of this observation is obvious in the present-day situation of Northern Ireland.

In Australia there was no legal disability placed in the way of the establishment of the Catholic religion after 1829, and little challenge to the Irish dominancy of the Church. Nevertheless, it was now placed in an unaccustomed minority position and the extremes of anti-Catholicism existing in England, Scotland and Ireland itself were imported into the colony by immigrants from those countries. In this somewhat beleaguered situation, Irish Catholics were able to draw upon a long heritage of Catholic defensiveness, group loyalty and acceptance of clerical authority. It was the Church that sustained Irish nationality in Australia, rather than the reverse, and this was enhanced by the continuing importation of Irish priests and teaching orders.⁷ Few Irish Catholic immigrants were men of wealth or education and the mediation between the Catholic community and the wider colonial society was frequently undertaken by a few English Catholics, often

6. 'A Guardian of the Poor', The Irish Peasant. A Sociological Study, p. 20.

7. Only after 1880 did the Orders founded in Australia exceed in number those originating in Ireland, while those originating elsewhere were negligible. R. Fogarty, Catholic Education in Australia, vol. 2, p. 274, Table XLI.

converts, while most Irishmen who gained social position and leadership were Protestants who, either in rejection of the increasing sectarian heat of colonial debates or by personal predilection, denied any particular obligation to their (mostly Catholic) Irish countrymen. The continuing depressed state of Ireland and the regular arrival of immigrants from there sustained interest in developments in 'the ould sod', and the Protestants Napper Tandy and Theobald Wolfe Tone were regarded as Irish patriots along with Daniel O'Connell, but within the Australian colonies it was the Catholic Church that became the focus of the local, personal and community aspirations of most Irish immigrants.

At times the Church attempted to reject the combination of national and religious affiliation, and it was often criticised for its failure to more fully support the secular ambitions of its members. The spasmodic Irish national movements before 1880, however, provided no real alternative source of self-identification, and in fact tangibly hindered acceptance into colonial society, accusations of 'disloyalty' being met by Irish Catholic immigrants in both their religious and national roles. Even those who sought power and wealth by merging themselves in the 'Australian' society had to face the problem that this society was essentially English and Protestant, and that they thus risked accusations of defecting not only to Mammon but to 'the enemy'. One could be applauded for denying the national divisions that prevailed in the Old World but, in spite of widespread antagonism to Catholicism, apostasy from one's Church and religion was neither

expected nor respected.⁸ The Catholic church tended to accommodate and honour the new rich of the colony as well as poor Irish labourers⁹ and activity in local Church affairs was much less controversial than membership of Irish national movements. Irish Home Rule found many supporters in the colonies during the materialist and secularist era of the 1880's, when a new generation of Irish-Australians were coming into adulthood and found their problems and ambitions were not catered for by a Church working single-mindedly to establish a national system of primary education. Again, however, Home Rule was found to be essentially an emotive cause, for which Irish-Australians could actually do very little, and it was soon replaced by local labour and Australian-nationalist movements.¹⁰ The Catholic Church was able to secure its role in both of these developments, and thus further aided thousands of Irish Catholics to contribute to and be assimilated into the mainstream of Australian society and accept their nationality as Australian, retaining their Irish heritage with pride and

8. 'Our knowledge of human nature, and that traditional wisdom, upon which, after the ancient wisdom, we are formed, instructs us, that to invite anyone where there is no volunteered manifestation of a predisposition of mind, is to make a hypocrite who will sooner or later disgrace our cause.' Vicar-General Ullathorne at a meeting of July 14, 1839. quoted in H. N. Birt, Benedictine Pioneers in Australia, vol. 1, p. 426. The Church was not, however, averse to accepting voluntary converts, and one of the Anglican clergymen converts of 1848, Rev. Thomas Makinson, became in 1855 Archbishop Polding's private secretary, and was to hold that post until Polding's death.
9. This readiness was occasionally the cause of scandal, as in the connection of Archbishop Carr of Melbourne with the notorious millionaire racketeer, John Wren. See Frank Hardy, The Power and the Glory. (Wren was also a generous contributor to the Home Rule Movement. see Niall Brennan, John Wren, Gambler. His Life and Times, p. 114).
10. The Irish were initially disproportionately strong in the Australian Natives' Association, both as members and as officials. See Marian Aveling, 'A History of the Australian Natives' Association 1871-1900'. Ph.D. Monash University, 1970, p. 15.

sentiment but devoid of a sense of inferiority to or hostility towards their fellow countrymen of English or Scots ancestry. Religious acrimony was perhaps all the more bitter for this absorption into it of national identity, and the upward mobility of the Irish community was delayed by the stand taken by the Church on education, but the evils of Tammany Hall or the Know-nothing movement were avoided, and no battles were fought on Australian soil in the name of some far-distant 'homeland'.

CHAPTER I

NEW SOUTH WALES 1788-1830

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES

The first group of Irish to come to Australia directly from Ireland¹ were convicts aboard the Queen in the third fleet in 1791; 133 men and 22 women in a total consignment of 2041 prisoners.² They were the first of a long series of 'unwilling emigrants' from Ireland which only ceased with the transportation to Western Australia of men convicted of complicity in the Fenian rebellion of 1867. Little can be said of these early arrivals to distinguish them from the other convicts. Partly this was due to the lack of information on many of those convicted in Ireland. In 1876 Governor Hunter protested that few of the shiploads of Irish convicts to that time had been accompanied with lists of the nature of their offence or the length of sentence.³ Nor was this evil quickly or ever fully remedied.⁴

Numerous accounts, especially by Irish and Catholic writers and by those sympathetic with an alleged radical Irish impulse, arguing that the

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1. There were an estimated 300 Catholics in the first fleet (J. Waldersee 'Some aspects of Catholic society in N.S.W. 1788-1860', Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney 1970, p. 9) and no doubt some of these were Irish convicts and soldiers. In the following calculations, however, the proportion of Irish convicts given is of those directly from Ireland. Irish-born were not regularly differentiated among those sent from England and, besides, tended to be those living in big cities, convicted for common offences rather than specifically Irish crimes. They represented some 6,000 (about 4% of the total convicts sent to Australia) compared with 39,000 directly from Ireland. A.G.L. Shaw, Convicts and the Colonies, p. 166.
 2. Ibid., p. 363; T.J. Kiernan, Transportation from Ireland to Sydney, p.9.
 3. Historical Records of Australia, Vol. 1, p. 556, Vol. 2, p. 31.
 4. The Buffalo, which finally brought lists that included the sentences of those who had landed in the Queen, the Marquis Cornwallis and the Brittania, did not arrive until May 3, 1799; the Ann's indents did not arrive until 1820; and those of the Friendship, one of the Irish rebel ships of 1800, were never made up. Shaw, op. cit., p. 171.

Irish convicts were distinct by the lesser nature and political motivation of their crimes, and begging for them the justification of provocation by harsh and discriminatory laws, do not seem to hold true for the first decade of convict settlement. More than half of all convicts arriving 1788-92 were from the large city centres of Dublin, London and Middlesex.⁵ As Table 1 shows, the total intake from Ireland before 1800 was proportionately small compared with the subsequent influx. Of these early arrivals, only

Table 1. Transportation from Ireland, 1788- 1840.

Year	Male	Female
1788	-	-
1789	-	-
1790	-	-
1791	133	22
1792	-	-
1793	235	70
1794	-	-
1795	-	-
1796	168	70
1797	151	45
1798	-	-
1799	-	-
1800-1810	1,347	357
1811-20	3,581	712
1821-30	7,675	1,430
1831-40	8,471	2,698
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	Total	
	21,761	5,404
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	Total 1788-1799	
	687	207
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Source: A.G.L. Shaw, Convicts and the Colonies, pp. 363-7

5. Ibid., p. 147.

about one hundred have been firmly identified as agrarian (and then not essentially political) offenders, arriving in the Marquis Cornwallis in 1796 and the Brittania in 1797. Another sixty, about half of those transported in the Boddingtons in 1793, had been sent from disturbed counties, but all need not have been therefore agrarian offenders.⁶ By 1800 only about one sixth of those sent from Ireland had been convicted for crimes which distinguished them from their English criminal counterparts, and many of these represented isolated cases of revolt in response to excessive personal provocation rather than a concerted political move against the manifestations of English mis-rule.⁷

Nevertheless they, and the Irish convicts who followed them into exile, were seen as a distinct group by those in authority over the convict settlement. This was not entirely without cause: the first recorded attempt at escape was by the recent arrivals from Ireland in the Queen in November 1791.⁸ An insurrection had allegedly been planned in the fourth Irish transport, the Marquis Cornwallis, resulting in the death of one prisoner⁹ and in November 1796 a deposition was laid against arrivals in

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6. Ibid., p. 171; T. J. Kiernan, The Irish Exiles in Australia, p. 11 implies a greater number, specifying thirty seven 'Defenders' sentenced to transportation at the Dondalk assizes in 1793 and 'many others' sentenced between 1791 and 1793 in Meath, Cavan, Louth and Monaghan, but gives no overall figure for these early years and is, besides, an over-sympathetic source.
7. As was, for example, Joseph Holt, according to his own account. Kiernan, op. cit., p. 18.
8. H.R.A., Vol. 1, despatch of November 18, 1791.
9. Ibid., p. 556. Details of the insurrection, pp. 653-661.

the transports from Ireland, the Sugar Cane and Boddingtons (a number of whom had already absconded, and whom Hunter condemned as 'those turbulent and worthless characters call'd Irish Defenders').¹⁰ The following year Hunter described the Irish convicts generally as 'a very turbulent description of transports' who had 'more than once threatened opposition to all authority if they are not liberated when their time of servitude is expired',¹¹ and concluded his report a few months later with the warning

If so large a proportion of these lawless and turbulent people, the Irish convicts, are sent to this country, it will scarcely be possible to maintain the order so highly essential to our well-being.¹²

Nor were his fears eased in the following months: the Irish were constantly seen as the most ready to escape, to rebel against their condition and to express general dissatisfaction. While this in itself was not surprising to Hunter, he did recognise the influence in their restlessness of the claim of many that their sentence had expired. In view of the knowledge that some of the ships were not accompanied by indents, a number of convicts ineligible for release no doubt made false claims of injustice, but as the most common sentence of transportation was seven years, many complainants were probably due for freedom, or soon to be so.¹³ In addition, the

10. Ibid., p. 700.

11. Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 31.

12. Ibid., p. 118.

13. Many of the political prisoners, however, may have been under longer sentence, as the penalty for belonging to a secret society was fourteen years transportation. Thus it is possible that it was the prisoners transported for overtly criminal rather than political offences who were primarily causing unrest during this period.

Governor did not feel free to grant a ticket of leave or conditional pardon to a convict whose original sentence was unknown, no matter how exemplary his conduct in the colony.¹⁴ The awareness of prisoners that there might be no proof of the expiration of their period did little to reconcile them to quietly 'working out their time'.

By the end of Governor Hunter's rule, concern with the 'seditious' nature of Irish convicts was beginning to have more basis in fact. The first essentially political prisoners arrived in the ships Minerva and Friendship early in 1800, convicted of participation in the United Irishmen rebellion of 1798.¹⁵ Yet, surprisingly, Governor Hunter appeared more sympathetic to some of these rebels than to former arrivals from Ireland, and obviously wished to allow them to preserve their dignity in the penal settlement -

Many of these prisoners have been bred up in genteel life or in professions unaccustomed to hard labour. They are a dead weight on the public store; and, really, my lord, notwithstanding we cannot fail to have the most determined abhorrence of the crimes which sent many of them here, yet we can scarcely divest ourselves of the common feeling of humanity so far as to send a physician, a formerly respectable sheriff of a county, a Roman Catholic priest or a Protestant clergyman and family to the grubbing hoe or timber carriage. 16

14. H.R.A., Vol. 2, p. 122.

15. T.J. Kiernan, Transportation from Ireland to Sydney, estimates that by the end of 1800, 265 of the 653 Irish convicts landed were agrarian offenders and that 715 of those arriving 1800-1803 were 'United Irishmen and agrarian offenders merged with the United Irish society'. P.S. Cleary, Australia's Debt to Irish Nationbuilders, estimates 450 by 1800, as given by Hunter in despatches of September 28 and October 1, 1800. Shaw, op. cit., estimates 400. By March 1801 King estimated the number of 'sworn' United Irishmen as 600. H.R.A., Vol. 3, p. 9.

16. Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 475. The prisoners mentioned were Bryan O'Connor, Joseph Holt, Father Dixon and the Rev. Henry Fulton.

If one suggests that Hunter, and indeed most of the Governors before Macquarie, managed to 'divest (them)selves of the common feeling of humanity' in relation to the majority of Irish convicts, this only serves to point out the basis of their antagonism: that the essential factor in the English fear and dislike of the Irish was not strictly race hatred but terror and incomprehension of the passions of the ignorant masses. Because of the assumption by the English ruling class of the superiority of English institutions and established religion, the hostility of their representatives in the colony was less directed against those involved in rebellion who were literate and gentlemen and very often Protestant, than against their violent and ignorant followers, with whose thinking and reactions they had no point of contact and rarely any sympathy.¹⁷ Such was the strength of the class factor that Hunter included Father Harold Dixon among those whom he felt obliged to treat with respect, in spite of Dixon's obvious connection with the Catholic Church and adherence to the Catholic religion - a religion circumscribed in both England and Ireland, a religion whose claims and links with Rome presented a threat to 'duly constituted authority', a religion which was frequently blamed for the primitive situation of most of the Irish population. Normally, however, the assertion of the Catholic faith was deemed by the ascendancy as further evidence of the ignorance and credulity

17. The Society of United Irishmen, founded in 1791, was Protestant in inspiration and origin but gained much local support from Catholics prior to the revival of Catholic-Protestant antagonisms and the foundation of the Orange association in 1795. Until the nineteenth century, most concessions were won for Ireland by constitutional action led by Anglo-Irish. Behind these negotiations, however, lay the constant threat (both to the British Government and to the Irish politicians and statesmen) of violence by the Celtic Irish masses.

of the Irish masses, and contempt for race and creed went hand in hand. The Catholicism of most of the convicts from Ireland ensured the reproduction of this situation in Australia, with both fear and contempt magnified by the minority and gaoler status of the Protestant ascendancy there.¹⁸

Before 1800 the religious aspect of the danger presented by Irish Catholic convicts had been non-existent in the colony. No Catholic priest was provided for to accompany the first fleet, nor was included in the needs of the new settlement. In 1792 a petition for a Catholic priest had been presented to Governor Phillip by two free and three emancipist Catholics at Parramatta.¹⁹ It was not presented on behalf of the convicts of the colony, who then numbered about three hundred, and even had there not existed the current attitude to Catholicism, it seems unlikely Phillip would have recommended that the administration be put to such expense to serve so few members of the community. Another appeal was made in 1796, this time on behalf of the convicts, by Catholics in England. It was based on the reports of the priests who attended the convict hulks at Woolich and Gosport and the Catholic chaplain at Newgate, and was evidence of their concern at the total lack of spiritual guidance for convicts of the Catholic faith once they left port.²⁰ Though the morality of convicts in the settlement generally was appalling, Catholics had especial cause to fear loss of faith. Under an order by Phillip of November 9, 1791, all were forced to attend Anglican services on Sunday, under penalty of a reduction of rations. This

18. P. O'Farrell, The Catholic Church in Australia. A Short History 1788-1967, p. 3.

19. P.F. Moran, The Catholic Church in Australia, p. 6.

20. Ibid., p. 7.

ruling lapsed during the administrations of Grose and Paterson²¹ but the orders given to Hunter in 1794 included enforcement of attendance at Divine Service 'as circumstances permit'.²² After the rising of 1804 compulsion was revived, with heavy penalties for nonconformity.²³

Nothing was achieved by these early petitions and though the arrival of the first Catholic priests in the colony was under the auspices of the British authorities, it was hardly by a means destined to endear them to the establishment in N.S.W. Fathers James Harold and James Dixon arrived respectively in the 'rebel ships' Minerva and Friendship in January and February 1800, convicted of complicity in the revolts of the United Irishmen in Ireland in 1798. Their arrival, and that of Father Peter O'Neil in 1801, revived a desire among the Catholic convicts for their own priest - King mentioned in 1803 that 'This circumstance has occasioned two or three petitions to me'.²⁴ Here indeed were the elements most likely to foment the rebellion and sedition so feared by Governors of the penal settlement. Not only had these Catholic priests shown their disloyal propensities by (alleged) participation in the 1798 revolt, but their class as such was feared for its tradition of close contact with the Irish peasantry.²⁵ Though

21. C.M.H. Clark, A History of Australia, Vol. 1, p. 138.

22. H.R.A., Vol. 1., p. 523.

23. Twenty five lashes for the first offence, fifty for the second, transportation to Norfolk Island for the third. J.G.Murtagh, Australia, the Catholic Chapter, p. 11; R. Therry, Reminiscences of Thirty Years Residence in N.S.W. and Victoria, p. 145; H.R.A., Vol 5, p. 78.

24. P. O'Farrell, Documents in Australian Catholic History, Vol. 1, p. 50.

25. This potential was recognised by the foundation of Maynooth in 1795. Founded by a grant from the Irish Parliament and supported by annual grants by the British government after the Act of Union, it was intended to stop the flow of Irish seminarists to France, where they might imbibe democratic or revolutionary sentiments. As such, it was part of a war-time measure to secure the loyalty of the Irish people. E.R. Norman, Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England, p. 27.

Hunter expressed reluctance in putting the priests to manual work, and implied thereby their status above other convicts; King, who took over as acting Governor that year, soon found cause for dissatisfaction. If his preconceptions concerning the seditious nature of the Irish were the same as Hunter's, they were substantiated by his experiences of that year. King implicated Father Harold and 'several others' in the alleged conspiracy of 1800, but without proof: like the trials in Ireland during the periodic proclamation of disturbed counties²⁶ the trial of the insurgents of October 1 was for 'conspiring' to rebel, the evidence based largely on rumour and suspicion, while the penalties were, commensurate with the fear created rather than with any offence committed, severe, varying from 200 to 1,000 lashes.²⁷ Harold was sent first to Norfolk Island and later to Van Dieman's Land and returned to Ireland in 1810 without again figuring in any agitation.

This suspicion of Catholic priests was revealed again and again by colonial Governors and officials throughout the next thirty years, and was influenced both by fear of their potential leadership of a people with 'natural propensities' for such activity, and mistrust of the priest as a minion of the foreign-based power of the Roman Catholic Church. It was an attitude formed prior to any experience in the settlement, by awareness of

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26. The Insurrection Act was passed in 1796 and renewed periodically until allowed to lapse in 1825. It was revived again during the Irish potato famine.
27. H.R.A., Vol. 2, pp. 575-6. Harold had warned the Governor of a planned Irish conspiracy but refused to name his informant. T.J. Kiernan, The Irish Exiles in Australia, pp. 18-20.

the relationship of the Catholic clergy in Ireland with the Irish people and their frequent championship of the peasants' cause against the landlords; nor was this suspicion modified by the usual stress of the parish priest in Ireland on the peaceful solution of grievances, or by the strictly anti-revolutionary stance of the Catholic hierarchy. Even Father Dixon, who had been found praiseworthy since his arrival and who had been allowed since May 1803 the limited exercise of his functions as a priest²⁸ was not permitted long to remain above such suspicion. Though he had expressed great satisfaction with the beneficial effect of Dixon's ministrations to the Catholic convicts²⁹ King saw fit to remove the priest's privileges after the revolt of March 1804 by Irish convicts. He spoke darkly in his despatches of the part played in the revolt by 'some very artful designing wretches, above the common class of those deluded people' and, though Dixon was not implicated (he had, in fact, accompanied the troops sent to put down the rising) the rationale for the cessation of Catholic services thereafter was seen by one contemporary as the removal of the opportunity they allegedly offered for conspiratorial discussions and planning.³⁰

28. Judged by one Catholic historian, J.G. Murtagh, op. cit. as 'sufficiently quiet - and stupid' to be trusted. p. 4.

29. H.R.A., Vol. 4, p. 470.

30. C. Fitzpatrick, Catholic religious and social life in the Macquarie era, p. 30.

Some historians have seen this move by King as indicative of the readiness of the English Protestant ascendancy to seize on any pretext for curtailing the practice of Catholicism. In fact, the conditional freedom given to Dixon had originated with Lord Hobart's suggestion, and King's acceptance of the idea was at once limited³¹ and determined on purely practical grounds.³² The rebellion of 1804 occurred in spite of Dixon's ministrations, thus seeming to vindicate King's doubts³³ and the trial of Hobart's experiment in pacification was accordingly discontinued.

The events of 1807 further showed that the concern of the colonial authorities had been with the potentiality of the clergy as leaders of Irish convict rebellions rather than with their spiritual function and their inculcation of false doctrines. Bligh, by nature a suspicious man, continued the tradition of authority's fear of the Irish (rather than the Catholic) bogey with his discovery of a further plot among the convicts. Like the conspiracy of 1800, however, no actual violence was perpetrated and the 'evidence' was less than convincing. The trial of the suspects was held in June, when the evidence against them, described by the Sydney Gazette as 'clear and connected' was

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31. King declined to extend the privilege to Father Harold (then on Norfolk Island) or to utilise either priest in the more intimate (and thus more influential) position of schoolteachers. P. O'Farrell, Documents, Vol. 1, pp. 49-50.
32. H.R.A., Vol. 4, pp. 82-3.
33. It must also have seemed to fulfil the prophecy of the Anglican Rev. Samuel Marsden who warned in 1803 that 'It is more than probable that if the Catholic Religion were once allowed to be celebrated by Authority, that the colony would be lost to the British Empire in less than one year'. P. O'Farrell, The Catholic Church in Australia. A short history, pp. 5-8.

... that the conduct of many of that description of prisoners who had been exiled for seditious and treasonable practices, had been untoward and highly disrespectful to their masters, at and about the above stated period; and that from this sudden change of conduct, in addition to the various informations that were communicated by persons whose veracity was to be depended upon, no other inference was accurate than that the projected insurrection was on the very point of bursting forth, and that the devoted victims to delusion and artifice were confident of a successful issue. 34

Although this was the last time the Irish were specifically mentioned in the colonial despatches until the era of assisted immigration, the events of these first years reveal the pattern of the concept and treatment of Catholicism and the Irish that was to persist in colonial society even after the arrival of Governor Burke and the transformation of N.S.W. from a penal to a free settlement. The preconceptions of the military and civil authorities concerning 'the Irish' were both reinforced by the escapes, rebellions and conspiracies of the Irish convicts and the cause of them. The actual manifestations of 'Irishness' were hardly surprising. The Irish convicts were often first offenders, occasionally transported wrongly and frequently without civil trial, whose crime had often been provoked by devotion to their land,³⁵ whose violence was often the result of ignorance and desperation, but they were forced to submit to the harsh treatment designed for hardened and habitual criminals. In their escapes and revolts they tended to cooperate with their own kind, indicating a lack of identification with convicts who

34. Sydney Gazette, June 7, 1807.

35. 'Farm' would be something of a euphemism to describe the miserably small potato plots on which many Irish peasants relied for existence.

differed from them in race, religion and often language, as well as in the nature of their crime.³⁶ The references of various Governors to the unsettling effect of new arrivals from Ireland on the Irish convicts similarly implies some unanimity in the aims and sentiments of this group.³⁷ During the Castle Hill rebellion Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson, left in command in Sydney when King set out to the scene of the revolt, feared that 'if the rebels should succeed at the Hawkesbury, the whole of the 2000 Irishmen in the Colony would rise simultaneously', and even within the limits of the Hawkesbury area some 400 convicts did take up arms.³⁸ By all accounts the insurrection, like those of 1801 and 1807, was a specifically Irish one.³⁹

This line of reasoning should not, however, be taken too far. Early in 1804 King had judged only 600 of the Irish as 'ready to revolt', though by then more than 2000 convicts had arrived from Ireland⁴⁰ and even in this estimate it is likely that fear and anxiety to convince the Colonial Office

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36. In a letter to Lieutenant Menzies of the Newcastle settlement, dated May 8, 1804, King apologised for sending twenty English convicts with very bad records, but suggested that they would at least dilute the Irish composition of the convicts there. This implies that he saw no danger of the English and Irish prisoners working together to effect mischief. On the other hand, the same despatch commented on the alleged intention of the Irish rebels in the recent rebellion to liberate their countrymen at Newcastle after defeating government troops at the Hawkesbury. H.R.A., Vol. 4, pp. 411-412.
37. Ibid., p. 242; Vol. 2, p. 115.
38. G.Mackaness, Blue Bloods of Botany Bay, p. 49.
39. This view is accepted by Irish historians with considerable pride, e.g. M.Davitt, Life and Progress in Australasia, pp. 197-8; P.S. Cleary, op. cit.; J.F. Hogan, The Irish in Australia.
40. Shaw, op. cit., p. 170. Various reports were given after the event: that of Capt. Johnston gave some 400 as actually involved in the revolt and 250 actually engaged by the troops. This tallies with King's report of 333 in the rebel party and two groups of about fifty each having later¹⁹³⁷ their way. H.R.A., Vol, 4, p. 564.

magnified the actual extent of the threat.⁴¹ There is no logical reason why peasants who had committed a single crime of revenge or desperation should feel much in common with the ordinary criminal of Dublin or Cork city, especially in view of the limited contact they had probably had with any life outside their own village. Nor was there any singular combination of the political-agrarian transportees. Most of the agrarian crime in Ireland during this period was local and sporadic; there was no central organisation of 'Defender' or 'Whiteboy' activities and in many areas movements parallel in aims and methods had their own distinctive local names.⁴² The one attempt at a national revolt, by the Society of United Irishmen in 1798, had failed miserably, developing into a series of local affrays or degenerating - as in county Wexford - into conflict between Catholic and Protestant peasants over long-standing competition for land.⁴³

On the other hand, while the stress of colonial authorities on the vital role played by 'artful designing wretches above the common class of those deluded people' cannot be ignored, there was rarely conclusive independent evidence that these leaders were past United Irishmen, or that their intentions were in any way essentially 'United Irish' ones. Many of the Irish sent originally for political offences (usually for being members of the United Irishmen society) were exemplary prisoners and received conditional pardons

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41. King was requesting that no more Irish political prisoners be sent, and seeking approval for measures he had taken to ensure the security of the colony. H.R.A., Vol. 2, p. 9.
42. W. Broehl, The Molly Maguires 1965, pp. 21-2.
43. E. Curtis, A History of Ireland, 1936, pp. 341-3.

and land grants.⁴⁴ There is no impartial evidence to show that any of the revolts or conspiracies were motivated by antagonism to the representatives of British authority other than the simple distaste of convict for gaoler.⁴⁵ The password of the 1804 revolt was the rather ambiguous and biblical 'St. Peter' and the demand of the leader of the revolt, Phillip Cunningham, for 'death or liberty' was a statement of the reality of the situation as much as it was a philosophy.⁴⁶ In spite of the predominance of Irish convicts captured while actually leading the revolt, King implied suspicion of the Scottish prisoner Maurice Margarot and the Irish Protestant Henry Hayes as the real manipulators behind the revolt; while the informers in both 1804 and 1807 were Irishmen, the two on the latter occasion receiving pardons for their services.⁴⁷

It is apparent that such considerations had little effect on the attitude of colonial authority to the Irish convicts at this time. Nevertheless, the lack of any stress on the distinctive nature of the Irish prisoners in subsequent years showed an increasing awareness by both convict and official of the autonomy of the colonial situation, as well as being a response to changes in the 'home' scene. During the period 1807-1814 there was no coercion in Ireland, indicating a decline in agrarian

44. For details of these, see p.22 ff.

45. All accounts of the revolt have relied on the official despatches. For a typical view, see G.W.Rusden, History of Australia, Vol. 1, p.260.

46. Jacobin ideas had penetrated to Ireland from France by the end of the century, but were adopted in their practical rather than their theoretic form. Curtis, op. cit., p. 333.

47. H.R.A., Vol. 4, p. 570. Margarot had been raised in France, and was there when the Bastille was stormed in 1789. In Scotland, however, he agitated for constitutional rights by constitutional means. Hayes had been transported for the abduction of a young hieress and, as a former county sheriff in Ireland, had been an upholder of the status quo in his country.

outrages. But even after the Insurrection Act was revived in 1814 and other coercive acts widely implemented between 1814-18 and 1822-25, and in spite of a great increase in post war crime,⁴⁸ the colonial despatches no longer showed a preoccupation with the disturbing effects on the settlement of the arrival of large numbers of Irish convicts. Partly also this was due to the fact that, as the population increased, new arrivals, even though in larger numbers, had proportionately less effect on the establishment. In addition, as the colony developed and expanded the situation became less conducive to concerted action, for convicts were frequently moved from one district to another, from settler to settler, to outer settlements to farm or to build roads, or from private to government assignment.⁴⁹ Simultaneously, the encouragement of free immigration from 1816 began to dilute the penal character of the colony, hastening the demise of a purely convict-gaoler existence already undermined by the relaxation of the single-minded punishment aspect with the institution by Governor Phillip of land grants and task work for wages or rewards.⁵⁰

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48. The end of the war with France in 1815 was followed by considerable dislocation in Britain, including increased crime. In 1817 the sentence of transportation for minor crimes (including animal theft, forgery and larceny) was legalised to counter this. Increased acquisitions to the penal colonies were the result. Shaw, op. cit., pp. 177-8. During the existence of the Insurrection Acts in Ireland, curfews were imposed and people could be transported merely for a breach of curfew.
49. F. Crowley, 'Working Class Conditions in Australia 1788-1851', Ph.D. thesis 1949, p. 3.
50. L. Thomas, 'The Development of the Labour Movement in the Sydney District of N.S.W.', M.A. thesis 1965, p. 8.

These developments within the colony coincided with the replacement in 1810 of Bligh by Macquarie, who saw convicts in a new light; as men to be - and capable of being - rehabilitated by life in the colony, rather than merely punished. Macquarie therefore tended to present the convicts as a single class, and this was reinforced by the vigorous opposition to his views by the growing number of free settlers. At the same time, the changing situation in Ireland ensured a lapse of interest in transportees from Ireland as a distinct group. After the 1798 rebellion there was no united agitation in Ireland for many years.⁵¹ The first real awakening of mass political activity found expression in a specifically Catholic movement, with the agitation for Catholic Emancipation under the leadership of Daniel O'Connell and the revived Catholic Association from 1823. In the intervening period there was a lull both in organised activity in Ireland, and in interest in the country by England, except as a country to be pacified while England pursued its war with France. These considerations, together with the lack of any overtly political acquisitions from Ireland by the N.S.W. settlement, influenced the attitudes of the administration under Macquarie, and ensured that his attempt to present a new human image of the convicts was not marred by any Irish rebellion.⁵² By the time the Irish

51. Not that the 1798 rising was, ultimately, a united one - the plan was not aided by the arrest of the leaders a few days earlier. At the time, however, the United Irish society allegedly had some 500,000 members and the revolt was at least national in concept, if not in organisation or in fact.

52. Between 1817 and 1822 only 6% of the Irish transportees were sent for 'Whiteboyism' or for assaults connected with 'Ribbonism'. Shaw, op. cit., p. 178.

in Australia came again to be distinguished in the colonial despatches, the stress had moved quite definitely to their identity as Catholics rather than as Irishmen.

By 1820 the population of N.S.W. was 23,939, more than half of these residing in Sydney. Only 1,307 of these had arrived free and 1,495 were born in the colony of free parents. The rest of the population was convict or of convict origin, with almost two thirds of these actually serving or having served sentence.⁵³ During the period 1791-1820, 5,615 male and 1,276 female convicts had been sent from Ireland, constituting 27% of the total transportation. A few free settlers (as distinct from civil and military officials and their families) had arrived since the removal of restrictions in 1816⁵⁴ but were not encouraged by Macquarie unless possessed of considerable capital⁵⁵ and the system of free passages and land grants on arrival was discontinued in 1818.⁵⁶ There is no way of assessing the number of Irish among these, but it has been estimated that in 1825 there were less than fifty Catholics in the colony who had arrived free.⁵⁷ Though it is

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53. T.A. Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, Vol. 1, p. 47; W.A. Duncan, 'Notes of a Ten Years Residence in New South Wales', in Hogg's Instructor, 1851, p. 131; J.T. Bigge, Report of Commissioner of Enquiry on the State of Agriculture and Trade in New South Wales, p. 80.
54. E. Scott, A Short History of Australia, p. 106.
55. T.A. Coghlan, op. cit., p. 89.
56. W.A. Duncan, op. cit., p. 131.
57. E. O'Brien, The Foundations of Catholicism in Australia, p. 97; T.L. Suttor, Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia 1788-1870, p. 22. In the 1828 census there were 528 Catholics returned as landholders, and this is believed by Waldersee to be an underestimate - but many of these would have been emancipists. J. Waldersee, 'Some Aspects of Catholic Society in New South Wales 1788-1860', Ph.D., University of Sydney, 1970.

likely that the number of Irish immigrants would have exceeded the number of Irish Catholic immigrants - the Ulster Irish had a long tradition of emigration, and there were certainly a number of free and eminent Irishmen at the first public celebration of St. Patrick's day in the colony in 1827⁵⁸ - it is obvious that free Irish were only a negligible factor in the colonial population.

During the next twenty years, the number of convicts transported exceeded greatly the volume of the previous three decades, bringing the convict proportion of the population to a peak in 1830. This was, however, paralleled by an upsurge in free immigration, much more favoured by Governor Brisbane than by his predecessor, though initially still partial to settlers with capital of £500 or more, since the main aim of the administration was to increase the demand for assigned convicts. The commencement of assisted immigration in 1831 decided the issue finally in favour of a free society: by 1834 the proportion of convicts had fallen to the 1819 level of 38%, and continued to decrease rapidly. Six years later, transportation to N.S.W. ceased, and by 1847 the convicts constituted only 3.2% of the total population.⁵⁹

The situation of those convicts arriving after 1820 was considerably less favourable than that of the earlier transportees. Although the rule of Governors before the twenties was apparently absolute, authority was often

58. See Chapter 2, p.36.

59. C.M.H. Clark, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 406.

lax in practice.⁶⁰ The system of land grants to emancipists begun in 1791 was, though haphazard, a practice followed by all Governors, especially Macquarie, and convicts had been able to work for wages on task-work almost from the beginning of settlement.⁶¹ Following the Bigge tours, however, discipline was tightened and the system of working for wages was discontinued.⁶² The influx of convicts reversed the balance of supply and demand, making assigned convicts, as individuals, a much less valuable commodity, while an increased volume of free arrivals through assisted immigration became available to employers as an alternative source of labour. The large-scale alienation of land under Macquarie,⁶³ while benefiting emancipists, meant that convicts who were pardoned or completed their sentence after 1820 could only get land distant from Sydney and therefore often preferred to remain in the city as labourers. Though Sydney in the twenties provided a situation favourable to labour, the immigration of the following decade was to challenge this position, and the ex-convict labourer often found his situation worsened as the chance of gaining independence and wealth on the land steadily decreased.

The Irish section of the convicts shared equally in the general convict situation, their position as prisoners of the Crown creating an identity that,

60. L. Thomas, op. cit., p. 11.

61. T.A. Coghlan, op. cit., pp. 49-52.

62. L. Thomas, op. cit., p. 8. The instructions given to Bigge by Bathurst in 1819 strongly indicated the belief that the sentence of transportation had lost its terrors, and that measures should be taken to restore its power as a deterrent to crime. Bathurst to Bigge, January 6, 1819 in J.T. Bigge, Report of Commissioner of Enquiry, pp. 3-4.

63. J.S. Bach, 'Land and Sea Communication between Sydney and Melbourne 1837-1864', M.A. thesis, Sydney University 1954, p. 30.

in everyday issues, prevailed over their particular distinctiveness from other convicts. Under the assignment system there may have been occasional instances of partiality for or against Irish convicts comparable with the sentiments expressed concerning Irish immigrants at the 1849 Immigration Commission of Enquiry (especially after the 1807 conspiracy trials, at which it had been alleged that Irish assigned servants had planned to murder their masters)⁶⁴ but there is no evidence of this. No specific provisions were made for the Irish convicts after 1807, except in their capacity as Catholics.

The contribution of the convict population of N.S.W., as convicts, was limited to monuments in stone. As convicts, they took no initiative, following free men into pastoral expansion, building roads into the interior in road gangs, accompanying and aiding, but never leading, voyages of exploration and inland expeditions.⁶⁵ As emancipists, whether ticket-of-leave or expiree, many made valuable individual contributions, improving both their own position and that of the colony generally. Many early Irish transportees had settled in the Bankstown-Liverpool area by 1820, on land grants originally made by King, and gave the name 'Irishtown' to a settlement

64. H.R.A., Vol. 6, p. 128. Even the allegedly anti-Catholic Governor Darling was prepared to take advantage of the arrival of a shipload of single women from Ireland in 1831 to supply himself and his friends with domestic servants. See Chapter 2, p.54 .

65. One exception to this pattern was in the field of journalism. The editor of the first colonial newspaper, the Sydney Gazette, was a convict, as were the subsequent editors, William Watt and Edward O'Shaughnessy, the latter later joining the staff of the highly respectable Sydney Morning Herald.

on the Sydney side of Liverpool (now Bankstown).⁶⁶ One of these grant holders, James Meehan, transported in 1800 for offences in the 1798 rebellion, took over the work of the Government surveyor Grimes during his absence 1803-6, continued as acting-surveyor until 1812, and accompanied expeditions to Port Dalrymple (1811) and the Blue Mountains (1818). Given a full pardon in 1806 and a series of land grants 1803-1816, Meehan became a wealthy land owner, was granted a pension in 1821 for his surveying services and was one of the few influential early supporters of the Catholic Church in the colony.⁶⁷ Michael Hayes, transported on the Friendship with Meehan, received a small land grant in 1812 on the Nepean and, unable to afford a passage home for himself and a large family, encouraged his brother to join him in the colony, suscribing to a pattern of chain migration that was to be much in evidence among later settlers from Ireland.⁶⁸ Like Meehan,

66. These included Michael Dwyer, Arthur Devlin, Martin Burke and Hugh Byrne who arrived in 1805 as voluntary exiles, having chosen that course rather than face conspiracy charges in Ireland. They were granted land initially by Governor King to divert them from trouble-making among the other Irish convicts, but were immediately suspected by him as leaders of the 1807 plot and were illegally sent to other penal settlements as punishment. This move was, however, apparently revoked after Bligh's deposition, and the men returned to their farms. H.R.A., Vol. 5, pp. 551-2, 638 and Vol. 6, p. 128, 159; B.T.Dowd, 'James Meehan' Royal Australian Historical Society, Journal and Proceedings, Vol. 28, 1942, p. 117. The houses of Dwyer (Liverpool) and Byrne (Campbelltown), as that of Dempsey in Sydney, were used as meeting places for lay Catholic services during the years without a priest. C.Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

67. Dowd, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-118.

68. Hayes was granted a conditional pardon in 1803, but a subsequent conviction for illicit distilling delayed his full pardon and chance of a land grant. Australian Dictionary of Biography, ed. G.Serle, Vol 2, p. 527.

however, his distinct contribution was as a Catholic rather than as an Irishman, for his letters to another brother, a priest in Rome, deploring the immorality in the colony and the destitution of the Catholics there of any spiritual guidance or education, helped to create an interest in and concern for the convicts of the settlement that led to the mission of O'Flynn in 1817.

Among other successful emancipists were a majority of the original owners of the Australasian Chronicle, the first Catholic newspaper in the colony,⁶⁹ three of whom were early members of the Sydney branch of the Repeal Association founded in November 1842.⁷⁰ One of the proprietors, William Davis, a blacksmith, transported for his part in the 1798 rebellion, was prominent during the early struggles of the Catholics in N.S.W. for the freedom of their religion, and remained a generous contributor to the Church until his death in 1843.⁷¹ Another of the transportees of 1800 was the Rev.

69. These were John Murray, Thomas Smidmore, Thomas Bousset Coveny, Thomas Smith, William Davis, Roger Murphy and Timothy Maher. W.A. Duncan, Autobiography MSS. Mitchell library, p. 29.

70. M. Payton, 'William Augustine Duncan 1811-1885', M.A. thesis, University of N.S.W. 1965, p. 212.

71. For many years Davis was credited with having owned the house in which the Blessed Sacrament was left by O'Flynn in 1818, but recent research has placed this rather as the house of James Dempsey, another 1798 rebel transportee. O'Farrell, op. cit., p. 14; C. Fitzpatrick, op. cit., p. 13. For details of Davis' contribution to the Church, see H.N. Birt, Benedictine Pioneers in Australia, Vol. 1, p. 465 and M. Shanahan, Out of Time, Out of Place. Henry Gregory and the Benedictine Order in Colonial Australia, p. 88.

Henry Fulton, who became the third official salaried Anglican chaplain in 1811 and ministered in the colony until 1840.⁷² Most of these men belonged to the ticket-of-leave group of emancipists, regarded as the cream of the convict population and described in 1826 as a 'rich and respectable' class,⁷³ and were usually possessed of superior education and skills on arrival.

In addition, transportation was responsible for the introduction by free passage of a number of Irish immigrants, wives and families of convicts deemed worthy of this privilege, and there is evidence that within this system was developed the nucleus of the practice of chain migration that was to be much in evidence in subsequent large-scale assisted immigration. The readiness of most wives to take advantage of the proffered free passage (indeed, in many cases, to apply for this concession) is an indication both of the distress in which many families were placed by the removal of the father, and of the lack of stigma attaching to transportation among many, at least in the later years of the transportation system. As late as 1835 one woman, Mrs. McNeal, refused a passage for herself and her family on the ground that they did not wish 'to spend the remainder of their days with the man who has covered them with disgrace'.⁷⁴ Such a rejection was, however, rare: a much more common response was to make acceptance conditional on the inclusion of another relative in the grant, though no

72. Fulton officiated in Sydney from 1806, but his position was damaged by his support of Governor Bligh, and he only gained a regular chaplaincy after a trip to England with Bligh in 1810.

73. T.A.Coghlan, op. cit., p. 193.

74. Letter of Arthur O'Neill, July 30, 1835. Petitions to Dublin Castle, Convict Lists 1828-1836. State Paper Office, Dublin.

doubt many people felt, like Susanne Donnelly, that they could not go 'as it would be parting with all her relatives for ever in this country'.⁷⁵ Certainly many women received every encouragement from their transported husbands, with their promises of the high wages obtainable in the colony. The motivation of some convicts was neither romantic nor subtly communicated; thus Peter Fitzgibbon urged his wife not only to try to get a commutation of his sentence from within Ireland, but also to emigrate herself since 'if you come out here you could draw me from Government anyday you thought proper, and if you did I would just be the same as a free man.'⁷⁶ The desire of many convicts and ticket-of-leave men that their wives join them was an indication of the way in which the colony was developing by the 1830's, and attitudes by this time were no doubt rather different from the earlier years of transportation, when the thought of Botany Bay still had power to strike terror in men's hearts. The reports of these men concerning their favourable prospects in the colony were obviously coloured by the desire to induce their wives to join them, but it is significant that these men used the prospect of good wages to accept the idea of life in the colony, and not as a promise of funds to enable a return to Ireland.⁷⁷ Comparisons between N.S.W. and Ireland were frequently made, always in favour of the former. Most commonly, the comparison was purely of

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75. Convict Lists. Rev. Northlands, July 11, 1835 to Sir William Gossett.
76. Convict Lists. Peter Fitzgibbon to 'My dear Margaret', December 6, 1835.
77. Few of the Irish convicts in fact wanted to return. Rusden, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 221; Michael Davitt, Life and Progress in Australasia, 1898, p. 204.

economic prospects⁷⁸ but the other disadvantages of existence in Ireland were not forgotten; thus Alexander Boyce wrote to his wife not only of wages of five shillings to seven shillings and sixpence a day and 'other indulgencies, which a man can avail himself of, that he cannot partake of in Ireland' but also of land that could be held rent free for seven years 'free from tyths and taxes'.⁷⁹ The women thus aided to emigrate were not always totally desirable immigrants⁸⁰ but there is no cause to believe that many did not fulfil the role expected of them by the Government and by their husbands, that of stabilising and securing ex-convicts as productive and useful members of the colony.

On the whole, however, the role of the transportees, including the Irish, in the shaping of the new society was limited, because of both the cessation of transportation to N.S.W. in 1840 and of the increasing proportion of free immigrants in the colonial population. Even during their years of numerical dominance, their participation was circumscribed by the stigma of their origin and their position as servants of the Crown. Nor did they contribute significantly to the development of future Australian-born

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78. Convict Lists. William Moore, February 7, 1836; Timothy Regan, May 9, 1835.
79. Convict Lists. Alexander Boyce, January 25, 1835. Boyce was then ticket-of-leave and was due for a full pardon the following March.
80. e.g. 'I do not suppose that purity of character is considered requisite in the wife of a convict. She has been much convicted since her husband left her but she was not without blemish before and was not married according to the regular forms of her church but, to use her own words to me, by a couple _____ beggar. There is no doubt however that she is his reputed wife'. June 25, unsigned, per Robert Derby on behalf of Cavan Murphy.

generations for, in spite of the Government's attempts at redress, the imbalance of the sexes, combined with the disinclination of many convicts to marry, the absence of convict-immigrant intermarriage and the high infant mortality rate in the settlement, limited the progeny of the convict class.⁸¹ While some convict unions produced children who were to be impressive figures in colonial life - possibly the most notable among those of Irish descent being Daniel Henry Deniehy⁸² - this was a matter of chance rather than a result of their condition as convicts, and proved a relatively minor source of colonial leadership and initiative.

The development of division in the twenties between emancipists and the small class of wealthy free immigrants, though it threatened to divide the colony and retard its progress, bode well for the maintenance of a sense of unity among the emancipist class and the absorption of historic national differences by a common struggle as colonists with a future to protect in Australia. The emancipists were led by an Australian of Anglo-Irish descent, William Wentworth, while the 'opposition' contained the most outstanding representatives of the English Protestant ascendancy (including the Macarthurs, Rev. Samuel Marsden and Governor Darling), thus making it easy for the Irish in the colony to identify with the common emancipist cause; nor were there many free Irish immigrants of wealth and influence to confuse loyalties by siding with the exclusives. No leaders yet emerged

81. T.A.Coghlan, op. cit., pp. 561-2 estimates that in the N.S.W. population in 1841, only 5000 male convicts and 13,825 of convict parentage remained, in the total population of 130,856, able to infuse convict blood into future generations, although (60,199) 46% of the population then was convict or of convict parentage.

82. William Wentworth also had a convict mother, Catherine Crowley, who had been transported to Norfolk Island.

among the Irish zealous for agitation on behalf of Ireland or desirous of separating them as a national group, for the veterans of the last (1798) Irish rebellion had either died, left the colony, or found a viable existence there, and Ireland until the thirties produced no further concerted movement for political reform or revolution by which to fire expatriate enthusiasm or to deliver frustrated leaders into the penal settlement.

The promise of the twenties - that, providing the struggle against the exclusives could be won, the people of N.S.W. would gain a sense of colonial identity instead of regarding themselves as exiled English - , Scots - and Irish-men - was destroyed by the same event that ensured the rejection of the concept of N.S.W. as 'a vast sheep walk' for the enrichment of the few: the inauguration and encouragement of assisted immigration from 1831. Nor was this the only result of the new type and scale of the immigration of the thirties. With it, a new division entered colonial society, a division more encompassing in its effects and more lasting in its impact than any based on race. The 'civilisation' of the colony with the coming of free immigration was paralleled by the introduction of sectarian Christianity.

The Catholic convicts, without a priest or the toleration of the practices of their Church, could be held in contempt as worshippers of an idolatrous and superstitious religion. But a colony where the inculcation of even a primitive morality was often despaired of was an unlikely locale for divisions on the basis of theological dogma. The early convict priests, during their residence in the settlement, were watched suspiciously as

potential leaders of the Irish convicts, not as priests. Father Dixon continued his ministrations after Governor King's prohibition, allegedly with the connivance of the administration and personally supported by the contributions of Protestants.⁸³ The arrival on November 9, 1817 of Father Jeremiah O'Flynn, fired with the zeal of an ardent missionary by reports in Rome of the destitution of the Catholic convicts in N.S.W., gave a jolt to Governor Macquarie and revived the spectre of possible rebellion among the convicts.⁸⁴ The story of O'Flynn's three months in the colony, his defiance of the restrictions placed upon him by Macquarie, and his ultimate deportation, is well known.⁸⁵ The Catholic historian Eris O'Brien argues that Macquarie's reports on O'Flynn's proselytising activities in the colony were exaggerated in justification for the deportation without prior approval from the Colonial Secretary, and as an angry response to the support of O'Flynn by many non-Catholics otherwise discontented with the Governor's rule.⁸⁶ Many historians have accepted that Macquarie was motivated by the anti-Catholicism supposedly typical of the Protestant ascendancy.⁸⁷ The more balanced view of Patrick O'Farrell seems closer

83. Michael Hayes wrote to his brother Richard 'It is well known to Mr. Dixon that many Protestants contributed to his support here'. November 25, 1812. Hayes Letters, 1799-1825, Mitchell library.

84. H.R.A., Vol. 9, p. 799. O'Flynn was in Rome to defend himself against charges of insubordination and incompetency by his former superior in the West Indies, Monsignor Neale, Archbishop of Baltimore.

85. The most detailed discussion is in E.O'Brien, Life and Letters of John Joseph Therry, 1922. Macquarie's view of the affair is documented in H.R.A., Vol. 9, p. 799ff.

86. E.O'Brien, The Dawn of Catholicism in Australia, Vol. 2, p. 19, 29-30.

87. These include P.F.Moran, History of the Catholic Church in Australasia, p. 100; W.Ullathorne, From Cabin Boy to Archbishop. The Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne, p. 8; C.M.H.Clark, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 321.

to the truth - that O'Flynn had no credentials, was obviously lacking in education and refinement and, above all, disobeyed 'explicit instructions', and so potentially undermined civil authority.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, as O'Farrell also recognises, the Catholics of N.S.W., and many in Ireland and Rome when O'Flynn's deportation became known, saw Macquarie's action as religious persecution. The violence that Macquarie had feared from O'Flynn's arrival was not forthcoming, but the priest's presence had given a new unity and purpose to the Catholics of the colony and a petition was got up by Catholic emancipists to request that O'Flynn be allowed to remain,⁸⁹ in addition to that of seventy-six Catholic soldiers of the N.S.W. Corps on behalf of 200 of their number.⁹⁰

88. P. O'Farrell, op. cit., p. 13-14. This concern for order and uniformity and dislike for men of defective education by Macquarie was evident when he complained in 1814 of the unauthorised use by Rev. Marsden of a new version of the Psalms, fearing such innovations as dangerous, particularly as Marsden and his chaplains 'are originally of low Rank, and not qualified by liberal Educations in the Usual Way for the Sacred Functions entrusted to them ... If these Principles were Sanctioned by me (as they would appear to be, were I not to repress them) they would give such Latitude to Dissent, that I am fully Convinced various Sectaries would spring up in this Young and Unschool'd Colony, much to the Injury of that established Uniformity of Worship, which I conceive to be of the Utmost Importance to the Peace and Harmony of the Colony to preserve Inviolate. H.R.A., Vol. 8, p. 337. Michael Hayes had written in 1812 '... it would require clergymen of great learning and good address, used to be persevering in their functions. To be noticed by the Governor or principal men here, would require those qualities'. Yet Hayes, too, in 1818, said O'Flynn was deported because of the Governor's 'hatred to the Catholic religion'. Hayes Letters, 1799-1825, November 25, 1812 and May 8, 1818, to Richard Hayes. Copies in Mitchell library.

89. E.O'Brien, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 37; Hayes letters, op. cit., May 8, 1818.

90. O'Farrell, op. cit., p. 13.

The surprising aspect of this incident was, in fact, not Macquarie's understandable apprehension about O'Flynn, but the lack of a general Protestant outcry against the priest's impudence, both in the colony and in England. Colonial Secretary Lord Bathurst had not given sanction to O'Flynn, and fully supported Macquarie's action in deporting him,⁹¹ yet in his correspondence with Dr. Poynter about O'Flynn's appointment in 1817, he had declared that 'he should be happy that some Catholic clergy should go thither'.⁹² The petitions for O'Flynn's continued presence in the settlement were signed by Protestants as well as Catholics⁹³ and though these were described by Macquarie as representatives of the 'malcontent party', seeking any excuse to attack his administration, the instance is an indication of the lack of any general or over-riding religious antagonisms among the colonists. Similarly, the arrival in 1820 of the first two official Catholic clergymen, Fathers John Joseph Therry and Phillip Conolly, met with no opposition from the Protestant settlers and the first Catholic public meeting on June 15, 1820, to consider means of raising funds for a Catholic chapel was 'attended by all the respectable Catholics of the Settlement and also some Protestant Gentlemen of sentiments friendly to the design'.⁹⁴ The decision to accredit

91. J.J. Eddy, Britain and the Australian Colonies, p. 279.

92. O'Brien, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 209.

93. Moran, op. cit., p. 65; O'Farrell, op. cit., p. 13.

94. Sydney Gazette, July 1, 1820.

Therry and Conolly was made as a result of the agitation created over O'Flynn's deportation not only by Catholics in England and Ireland, but by Protestant members of the House of Commons.⁹⁵ Macquarie, who had dismissed O'Flynn only a few years before, and imposed conditions on the ministry of Therry and Conolly in 1820,⁹⁶ consented to lay the foundation stone of St. Mary's chapel on October 29, 1821, and performed the ceremony with an expression of confidence in 'the beneficial result to be derived from the erection of the above edifice'.⁹⁷ That the attitude of the administration towards the Catholic clergy remained unchanged, was implied in Macquarie's further remarks at the ceremony that

I have every hope that the consideration of the British Government, in supplying the Roman Catholics of this colony with established clergymen will be the means of strengthening and augmenting (if that be possible) the attachment of the Catholics of New South Wales to the British Government and will prove an inducement to them to continue, as I have ever found them to be, loyal and faithful subjects to the Crown. 98

To Macquarie, at least, the employment of the two priests was a pragmatic decision, distinct from the realm of dogmatic belief. No judgement here of the validity of the tenets of the Catholic Church, nor any question of

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95. A three-fold attack on the Government by Bennet on February 18, 1819, included accusations of religious intolerance, as shown by O'Flynn's expulsion, as well as attacks on Government arbitrariness and financial extravagance. Eddy, op. cit., p. 68.
96. Not to celebrate marriages between Protestants or between Protestant and Catholic and to keep a register of all marriages, to baptise only members of their own Church, and to refrain from making converts.
97. P. O'Farrell, Documents in Australian Catholic History, Vol. 1, pp. 28-30.
98. Ibid.

allowing the practice of that religion in the colony as a matter of justice or equality. The appointment of Therry and Conolly, and their acceptance by Macquarie, was motivated by considerations of the recognised potential of the Catholic clergy to influence the Catholic laity. Now, in the colony, with the priests salaried and sanctioned - in effect, Establishment - it was believed this influence would be for the greater order and morality of the Catholic convicts and the consequent improvement of the stability and quality of the colony as a whole.⁹⁹ Failing that, the withdrawal of their priests could be threatened as punishment for any disobedience by the Catholic prisoners.

When these hopes were not fully realised with Father Therry, the Government was able to take punitive action against him by simply suspending his salary.¹⁰⁰ This did not prevent Therry from continuing his ministrations, nor from maintaining considerable control over Church finances and institutions, but it successfully inhibited those disposed to accept the dictates of the colonial authority and colonial society as it existed; and, under the more liberal administration of Macquarie, the number of those

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99. Salary was at the rate of £100 p.a. compared with £250 for Anglican chaplains, and was paid from the Police Fund rather than the Treasury. H.R.A., Vol. 10, p. 599. The significance of this has also been indicated by P.O'Farrell, The Catholic Church in Australia, p. 16.
100. Therry was suspended in 1825 for an alleged insult to the Protestant clergy of the colony, when in an advertisement in the Sydney Gazette he declared his 'qualified respect' for them. Though this was found to be a printer's error, Therry was not reinstated until 1837. For details of the incident, see Therry's own petition of 1833 in Therry Papers, extracts in Adelaide Archdiocesan Archives.

willing to accommodate themselves within the status quo was increasing. Though there is evidence that Therry's own courage in the face of official disapproval made others more aware of the disabilities they suffered as Catholics, and more ready to challenge these,¹⁰¹ Therry did not become the figure-head of the social aims of the emancipist Irish of the Colony. That position was reserved for the Irish clergy and laymen who gained government appointments after the passage of Catholic Emancipation in 1829 - and who were prepared to work within the framework of colonial society, and to base their championship of colonial Catholics on the issue of civil liberty, rather than on the 'truth' of Catholic doctrine. This was only the first phase of a long campaign which was regularly forced to change its emphases in response to changes in the prevailing climate of opinion in the colony and in England, and it was won symbolically by the passage of the Church Act of 1836, which placed the Catholic and the Presbyterian communities on an equal footing with the Church of England and gave state aid to the Catholic Church as a right. The energies of the first Vicar-General, William B. Ullathorne, who arrived in 1833, were vital in airing the grievances of the Catholics of the settlement in England, but it was the application within the colony of liberal principles in all religious issues by Governor Bourke and an early Catholic appointee, Roger Therry, that gained the recognition of civil and religious equality contained in the Church Act.

101. e.g. letters of John Dalton, a convict on the hulk Phoenix, October 7, 1825 and of Patrick O'Sullivan of Windsor, August 4, 1827 complaining of the enforced attendance of Catholics at official Anglican services. Therry Papers.

CHAPTER II

NEW SOUTH WALES 1830-1861

The first major appointment of an Irish Catholic to the colony, subsequent to Catholic Emancipation, was that of Roger Therry as Commissioner of the Court of Requests in April 1829. The significance of Therry's appointment was, and was seen to be, in his character as a Catholic. His cooperation with Father Therry was immediate, and gave the priest some much needed support in his battles with authority.¹ Roger Therry had been active in Ireland in the agitation for Emancipation and, throughout his career in the colony, showed a determination to gain both a formal declaration and the reality of 'a perfect equality in religious and social relations' for the Catholic community.² Unlike Father Therry, his stress was on the social implications of the disabilities suffered by Catholics; a stress that was necessary even after Emancipation and the Church Act of 1836, for Therry himself was to encounter, and to protest vigorously against, discrimination on the basis of religion.³ Therry had also been Secretary of the National Society for the Education of the Poor in Ireland, and he retained in his new situation the conviction that education was a vital pre-requisite to remedy the subordinate position of the Catholic body that he had noted on his arrival. He recognised that the lack of Catholics in public office was closely linked

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1. e.g. Letter of Therry, May 26, 1832 asking if Father Therry had received a satisfactory reply to his allegations that Catholic children were excluded from the Orphan schools and schools of industry of the colony. Therry Papers, op. cit.
 2. Roger Therry, Reminiscences of Thirty Years Residence in N.S.W. and Victoria, 1863, p. 147.
 3. See his letter of October 21, 1844 to Governor Gipps, protesting that he had been passed over for promotion to the Bench to succeed Dowling because of his religion. N.S.W. Governor's Despatches, Vol. 46, 1844. Gipps to Stanley, October 23, 1844.

with the absence of a substantial free element in the colonial Catholic population. Consequently he advocated the right of Catholics to a fair share in the immigration fund and in that part of the colonial revenue that was spent on education. But in both these issues - because Catholic immigration derived almost totally from Ireland, and because the general education schemes of the 'thirties were identified with the Irish national system and with the Irish Governor Bourke - Therry was inevitably judged in his capacity as an Irishman as well as a Catholic.

A number of Irishmen already held appointments and had attained standing in the colony prior to Therry's arrival. The first St. Patrick's day dinner was held in 1827, with D'arcy Wentworth and Dr. Douglass as members of the Committee and Chief Justice Forbes as an honoured visitor at the celebration.⁴ In 1832 there were sufficient Irishmen of wealth and respectability to organise a dinner to which the Governor was invited as a guest.⁵ This dinner was attended by 'almost one hundred gentlemen' including the Governor and his personal staff, the Chief Justice Sir James Dowling, the Attorney General John Kinchela and a number of military officers, in addition to Roger Therry and the other organisers of the celebration. In traditional style, the evening was for gentlemen only, with more drinking than

4. Freeman's Journal, March 17, 1866.

5. Therry Papers, op. cit. Report of a Meeting of the Sons of St. Patrick held in the Post Office, Sydney, February 20, 1832. The organising committee included Thomas Arnold, F.A. Hely, Thomas Macquoid, Major Poole, James Raymond, Arthur Kemnis, Charles and David Chambers and Lieutenant Innes. Raymond was Postmaster from 1829 and Hely was principal superintendent of convicts.

dining, and with evidence of some 'broken Heads' among 'the boys' after the event.⁶ The condition for admission was not strictly on Irish birth - Dowling was London-born and William Wentworth was a native of the colony, But all those named in the press reports of the dinner were at least of Irish descent, and many held high administrative positions. This evidence is at odds with the alleged menial position of the Catholic body at the time, as described by Therry and other contemporary Catholic reports,⁷ and is an indication that discrimination in appointments was aimed against Catholics rather than Irishmen.⁸ There was no antagonism in the press to the principle of an Irish national celebration; indeed, following the lapse of such gatherings in subsequent years, the Australian rebuked the Irish colonists:

For thus treating with contempt, or rather, for not treating at all, the Patron of Erin and his sons, there can be no reasonable excuse; that the mercurial soul of Paddy should be closed to the feeling against which, even the cautious Scots are not⁹ proof, is indeed a proof of apathy which is astounding.

Perhaps shamed into activity, the Irish community organised a sumptuous dinner for the next St. Patrick's day, on which the Herald reported -

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6. Sydney Gazette, March 20, 1832.
 7. C. Fitzpatrick, Catholic Religious and Social Life in the Macquarie era, ed. Monsignor C. Duffy, p. 13.
 8. Only Therry and probably some of the military officers among the committee were Catholics.
 9. Australian, March 21, 1834. The comment on the Scots was a reference to the celebration of St. Andrew's day with a dinner the previous year.

We do not recollect a more pleasant entertainment, or a more harmonious meeting, than that of the Sons of St. Patrick and their friends on Tuesday last, who had congregated to do honour to the memory of the patron Saint of Ireland. The last two years, we believe, passed away and St. Patrick's day was allowed to remain unnoticed by the colonists from Ireland, except, indeed, by the lower orders, who demonstrated their love and honour of the Saint by their broken heads. But this neglect was amply atoned for in the elegant manner in which the present dinner was got up ... 10

Implicit in this report was the differentiation between the respectable and the 'lower orders', in worth and integrity of motive, that was to be highly developed by the Herald during the education and immigration controversies of the thirties and forties and was to be used particularly to the disadvantage of the Irish colonists. Differentiation of the Irish within the respectable class was, however, to precede this.

The dinner, though not attended on this occasion by the Governor (who sent an apology for his absence) was remarkable for an even wider and more comprehensive attendance than that of 1832, including the English-born Justice Burton and the Registrar of the Supreme Court, J. E. Manning, and the Scots, Colonial Secretary Alexander MacLeay and Colonel Kenneth Snodgrass, as well as the Catholic clergy and 'nearly all the merchants, general civil officers, etc., etc.'¹¹ Certainly the paucity of a civilised social life, and the limited membership of respectable society, contributed to the rejection of national exclusiveness evidenced by the attendance at the

10. Sydney Morning Herald, March 19, 1835.

11. Ibid.

dinner. Even so, the general amity of the evening was marred by the reference of Justice Burton to the 'late division'¹² in which Roger Therry had been the focus of the controversy.¹³ In this, Burton set a precedent for the abrupt change in attitude that had taken place by the following anniversary of St. Patrick's day.

An article in the Herald that year noted the absence of a national celebration in a disarmingly friendly manner which, simultaneously, implicitly ridiculed the stereotype Irish Catholic colonist - the brawling, intemperate, ill-educated figure with the peculiar Irish manner of speech -

Thursday last was St. Patrick's day in the calendar, though the boys of the Emerald Isle declare it was not. Not a single head was broken, not a shilelah was to be seen; shamrock certainly was plentifully scattered in the hats and bonnets of the elect but few, very few, evinced that spirit which is wont to flow almost imperceptibly into the veins of an Irishman, as the last hour of the preceding day draws to a close. 'What a falling off was there, my countryman'. Some attribute this miraculous change to 'a deadly fine lot of the crature' thrown to the fishes of Botany Bay, who never know'd what it was to sup the likes, and bad luck to 'em; whilst others say that the parties who go about preaching temperance 'are clear turning the heads of the original rale men', and that in the after generation of tea-drinkers there will not be a single friend of St. Patrick left, nor a man that can handle a shilelah at all,. The large

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12. In 1834 a petition had been got up by James Mudie and others against the lenient treatment of convicts under Bourke's administration. Therry had attacked the motives of those responsible for the petition in a series of letters to the press under the pseudonym 'Unpaid Magistrate'.
13. Australian, March 20, 1835. Burton had already aroused the ire of Catholics by his moves to prevent Catholic witnesses from making the sign of the Cross before taking the Oath in civil trials, and was soon to become notorious for his attacks on Vicar-General Ullathorne and the Catholic community in his book The State of Religion and Education in New South Wales, published in 1840.

quantity of spirits seized the other day by the Police comes in for its share of the cause. The most probable one however is the great scarcity of cash in these 'prosperity times'. 'Nevertheless notwithstanding' St. Patrick's opinion of the matter it is gratifying to have to record that scarcely one case of drunkenness or disorderly conduct occurred, beyond the everyday's practice, which does not need addition. There was no public dinner on the occasion. ¹⁴

A further article on the 24th provided a clue to this 'concern'. There had been attempts to get up a dinner, the paper commented, but they had failed because Roger Therry had been the proposed chairman of the organising committee. 'This event', the editor commented tartly, 'of so little importance in itself, is nevertheless a pregnant sign of the times'. It proves that some people are not so popular as they would endeavour to persuade other people that they are'.¹⁵ The interplay of nationality and politics had begun, and for many years to come the Irish of the colony were to be the losers in this game.

Roger Therry had found much success in the colony, and gained the esteem of many, including Governor Bourke. But he had also made enemies for his stand on religion and liberalism. His support of Father Therry had early earned him the hostility of the official Catholic chaplain, Christopher Dowling, who had arrived in September 1831 as successor to Father Power. In a letter to Goderich in 1832, Dowling explained Therry's actions on behalf of the suspended priest in terms of national affinities -

14. Sydney Morning Herald, March 21, 1836.

15. Ibid., March 24.

I can only account for his conduct in this respect, by the fact of his Rev-d Name-sake and self, being from the same place or Province, and by this Rev-d Gentleman's continued attention and calculating obsequiosness to Mr. Roger Therry's family, circumstances that create a peculiar and powerful influence in Ireland, and which had produced the same effect here. 16

Similar accusations were soon to be hurled against Therry's relationship with Governor Bourke. The Herald remarked acidly, following the defeat of Therry's candidature for the Chairmanship of the Court of Quarter Sessions, that -

His Excellency, Governor Bourke, has not raised the dignity of his office by the seeming zeal with which, it is said, the cause of his countryman, Roger Therry, has been espoused.¹⁷

By the following year, the identification of Bourke with a generalised 'Irish faction' was clearly asserted in the baleful comments of the Herald on the existence of 'an Irish "head" and an Irish "tail" ' in the colony.¹⁸ Though the paper was on this occasion rejoicing that even this could not ensure the formal (i.e. 'respectable') celebration of St. Patrick's day, its description succinctly summed up the range of prejudice that the Irish of the colony evoked. The 'Irish tail' concept encompassed the Irish of the lower classes - traditionally drunken, vociferous, and shilelah-wielding, who appeared in groups at public political meetings, to disrupt

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16. August 20, 1832. Despatches to the Governors of N.S.W., 1832 no. 123. Mitchell library A 1269.
17. Sydney Morning Herald, November 16, 1835. (My italics). The opposition to Therry was allegedly on the grounds that he already held one official position and had as well a private practice as a solicitor, but Bourke saw it as a further protest against his handling of colonial affairs, and confirmed his resignation after Therry's defeat.
18. Herald, March 24, 1836.

'respectable' gatherings and decried speakers with unpopular sentiments; always allegedly at the instigation of some designing political or clerical manipulator, rather than as a result of conscientious individual conviction. The extent of one's belief in the representative nature of this group and in an Irish 'mob mentality' depended on one's own racial origins, social class and political propensities, but there is no doubt that its influence was much feared and its support assiduously repudiated by the various political interests, particularly during elections. ¹⁹

The 'Irish head' was Governor Bourke, who could not be positively accused of active or direct leadership of any faction. Nevertheless, the identification of Therry and Bourke - both Irish by birth, University-educated, Whig in politics and Liberal by nature - was made even by the pro-Government Australian, and any opprobrium attracted by Therry was frequently transferred to the administration of the Governor. Accusations of a general 'Irish influence' within the administration increased, and reached a crisis in the single colonial deliberating body, the Legislative Council, over the issue of national education with which both Therry and Bourke were deeply concerned.

Initially the attacks on Governor Bourke and his education proposals were justified in terms of opposition to Irishmen and Irish institutions in a predominantly Anglo-Saxon society. The Herald stated unequivocally

19. With subsequent extension of suffrage, however, this 'Irish vote' was as frequently solicited, covertly or openly, as it was reviled by those with no hope of winning it for themselves.

'Being Englishmen, we do not like the name Irish system of education ... (we) also have an objection to theoretic Governors and lawless Irish convicts'.²⁰ But it was soon evident that, underlying a vague national antipathy, were the issues of religion and socio-political attitudes to the role and future in society of those who had originally arrived 'in chains'. Political stances taken on earlier issues - still defined by the press as Whig and Tory in spite of the many modifications necessary in the colonial situation - helped to determine attitudes to this newest liberal proposal of the Governor. From the fact of most of their body being of convict origin or descent, the Irish Catholics of the colony supported the Whig group. As a result, there was developed a connection between Irish convict, Catholic and Liberal, recorded without any sense of incongruity at the time, and accepted by many historians as evidence of some inherent radicalism in the Irish colonists, a rejection of landed and Protestant authority because of the experience of these in Ireland. In fact, the 'exclusive' group in the colony, who opposed the granting of civil liberties to emancipists, were mostly landowners and almost exclusively Protestant, and it was as much their antagonism that forced the radical character upon the Irish of the colony as were their previous experiences of insufferable land laws in Ireland.

The irony of the identification of Catholic and liberalism would have been appreciated by those Catholics who sought to gain democratic lay representation in the temporal affairs of the Church in the fifties.²¹ At

20. July 4, 1836. Quoted in C.M.H.Clark, History of Australia, Vol. 2, p.240 Roger Therry had been consulted by Bourke on the education proposals, and in 1836 published a pamphlet entitled Explanation of the Plan of the Irish National Schools showing its peculiar adaptation to New South Wales (R. Fogarty, Catholic Education in Australia, Vol. 1, p.28) and much of the antagonism was motivated by dislike of Therry's power.

21. See Chapter II, pt. 2.

the time, however, the reference was to the connection of the adherents of Catholicism with liberal movements in colonial politics, rather than to any inherent compatibility of Catholic doctrine with liberalism; while the epithet 'liberal' tended often to be a term of abuse, a synonym for 'demagogue' among the opponents of both Catholicism and moves to grant equal status to convicts.²² Consequently, attacks on Catholicism were as much motivated by political and class convictions as by simple religious affiliation, especially when made by those with substantial property interests to protect within the colony. Nevertheless, it was the strictly anti-Catholic forces, led by Bishop Broughton, that ensured the defeat of the Governor's education proposals. This first test case of 'Irish' political control had revealed the complexity of motivation of those who alleged and attacked this control, but had shown at the same time that anti-Catholicism was the call to which a variety of interests would answer, and under which they could act in unison. The Herald initiated the campaign against Bourke's proposals, brandishing these sectarian cum class weapons, and prospered.²³ Nor was it the only source to thus give a degree of respectability with which the educated and ignorant alike could bolster up their often irrational and second-hand prejudices against Catholicism. The

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22. Bishop Broughton particularly opposed the 'ill-judged' liberalism which early informed the treatment of Catholicism in the colony, and Lang increasingly developed this stance following Catholic attacks on his pamphlet, The Question of Questions.
23. The Herald became a daily in 1840, and its circulation of 3100 in 1841 was the largest in the colony. Sydney Morning Herald. A Century of Journalism 1831-1931, pp.50, 102. In 1855, the circulation was 7-8000 and the paper was valued at £10,000 p.a. F. Fowler, Southern Lights and Shadows 1859, p. 18.

head of the Anglican Church, Archdeacon (later Bishop) Broughton, and the first Presbyterian clergyman in N.S.W., John Dunmore Lang, were themselves active and consistent opponents of the advances of Catholicism in the colony. Though by no means working as a team,²⁴ their attacks were all the more devastating for the different priorities they pursued, (Broughton refuting the doctrines and authority of the Catholic Church, and Lang concerned with limiting the potential adherents of that Church by discriminatory assisted immigration), and for the range of support they accordingly gained.

Broughton, who arrived in the colony on September 13, 1829, as successor to Archdeacon Scott, saw in 1833 the final revocation of the Church and Schools Corporation on which the Church of England had based its hopes for permanent endowment and for at least the tacit acknowledgement of the Church's establishment. Already in 1831 Broughton had commented gloomily on the power of other denominations in the colony, and had waxed indignant at the favourable reception given by the Colonial Office to Lang's plan for the Presbyterian Australian College - in preference, Broughton believed, to his own projected King's School. It was not long, however, before he began to concentrate on what he saw as the major rival of true religion, the Catholic Church. In 1834, while on a visit to England to encourage the emigration of Anglican clergymen and schoolteachers and to collect funds for their support, Broughton revealed how he had been influenced in this

24. See despatch Goderich re the intemperate letter of Lang in which Lang had attacked Broughton. Goderich to Bourke, April 3, 1832. Despatches to Governors of N.S.W., 1832, no. 83.

move by evidence of similar Catholic zeal -

It is impossible to describe the activity which the Roman Catholics have exerted for the promotion of their cause in every part of the empire, and certainly not least in N.S.W. It is incomprehensible by what means they are able to obtain such an influence with the Government as to do with apparent ease what we cannot by any means accomplish. There certainly is a connected system at work, all the parts of which and the agents employed (many of whom I am sorry to say are called Protestants) do cooperate in a manner quite astonishing, and with a success truly awful. You are, or soon will be, that (sic) the late administration appointed four additional ministers of the persuasion (one of whom is a Bishop or Vicar-Apostolic) for N.S.W., besides four catechists. These things strike all reflecting and religious men with dread and apprehension; and it is truly a subject of painful consideration how we may best strive against them. Our king is, personally, devoted to the Church as his father was, and manifests it in every possible way; but in his public character and regal capacity, the spirit of the times is more than he can cope with. 25

From the time of his arrival in the colony, Broughton had publicly refuted the doctrines of the Catholic church, with more regard for personal conviction than for courtesy or social harmony. In 1832, he unequivocally declared that 'no man could subscribe to the erection of a Roman Catholic chapel without guilt'. His letters from England 1834-6 show that his fear of Catholicism was increasing apace with evidence of the progress of that religion and its institutions in the colony.²⁶ On his return from England

25. Letter to Samuel Marsden, March 14, 1834. Marsden Papers, Vol. 1, pp. 553-4.

26. Polding had been consecrated Bishop in June 1834, an Order of the Sisters of Charity was established in 1838 and Catholic schools were being established under the provisions of the Church Act of 1836. The Church Act itself had established the Catholic church on an equal footing with the Church of England, the Presbyterians and the Methodists.

in June 1836 Broughton immediately sought the cooperation of the Dissenting sects (whom he had previously disparaged for countenancing the progress of Catholicism through an ill-advised liberalism)²⁷ and gained within six weeks the withdrawal of Bourke's proposals for the establishment of national schools.²⁸ Later in the year, he opposed the use of a territorial title by Bishop Polding as contrary to the law of England, and because of this issue refused to sit with the Catholic Bishop on the Female Orphan Board. These attitudes were in contradiction to the spirit of tolerance that informed the attitudes of Governor Bourke and of the Colonial Office in its clerical appointments and its concern with the creation of religious harmony in the colony, and were much criticised by some sections of the colonial press. They were not, however, entirely unexpected. Bourke, when he sent his proposals for the support of education and religion to the Colonial Secretary, believed such policies would be generally regarded with favour by the people of N.S.W. whose inclinations 'Keeps pace with the Spirit of the Age', but expected opposition from Broughton,²⁹ and by 1843 Lang had joined the attack on 'extremely liberal views of religious matters' that Broughton had so long warned against.³⁰

Initially, the attempts at Anglican ascendancy had effectively insulated the Catholic community against general Protestant repression. No

27. The attitude that Broughton condemned was exemplified in the Australian, September 25, 1835, supporting the grant of a salary of £500 to Polding, and by the Gazette, October 1, 1835, welcoming Polding's arrival.

28. R. Fogarty, Catholic Education in Australia, Vol. 1, pp. 29-30.

29. Despatch Bourke to Stanley, September 30, 1833. H.R.A., Vol. 17, pp. 226-7.

30. Port Phillip Herald, May 30, 1843.

conscientious attempts could be made by the other denominations against the domination of the Church of England if they simultaneously sought to deny equality to Catholics. There was considerable non-Catholic support for the extension of civil and religious equality to Catholics. Often, however, this support was motivated by antagonism to the official administration which denied full toleration³¹ or by hostility to the pretensions of the Church of England. There was some apparent vying among the three major colonial newspapers for the support of the Catholic community, but this largely took the negative form of accusing each other of covert attacks on Catholicism, and could only be half-hearted in those newspapers which, like the Monitor and the Gazette, had editors who were personally evangelical Protestants and who had the interests of religion and morality as a major avowed concern of their publications.³² The fact is that the Catholics, though forming a large part of the convict-emancipist population, and so an integral part of the group on whose behalf the struggle of the twenties was conducted against the 'exclusives' and authoritarian government, were not considered a valuable or distinct asset by their champions, nor were held to represent any real

31. e.g. Australian, December 19, 1825.

32. Hall, editor of the Monitor, originally came to the colony as a lay missionary, and retained the proselytising spirit when it did not interfere with his primary aim of justice for the colonists against the Darling administration. The editor of the Gazette in the twenties was Robert Howe, whose 'spiritual awakening' in 1820 and close contact thereafter with Sydney Methodists strongly influenced the concerns of the paper. (C.M.H. Clark, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 68, 74, 70, 163).

cause for alarm by the administration.³³ Even Governor Darling, who would have gladly have seen Father Therry's removal from the colony and believed the teaching of the Catholic religion involved 'the subjugation of mind', tacitly recognised that Catholic priests would continue to be sent to the colony, and only asked that English priests be preferred, as less likely to play upon the inherent bigotry and superstition of Irish Catholics in the colony.³⁴ The dangers that Catholicism was believed to present were in its erroneous doctrines and in an alleged obedience of the laity to the dictates of a priest. Darling, as most Governors before him, had done his best to undermine the potential of the latter, but Archdeacon Scott, under fire himself from the other Protestant denominations, had not succeeded in launching any concerted attack on the doctrines of the Catholic church. Under Governor Bourke's administration, the official obstacles to the development of Catholicism were removed, but a new and vigorous assault on the basis of dogma was undertaken by Broughton, which, combined with the activities of Lang in the field of immigration, provided a severe check to this new tolerance, particularly in the maintenance of the 'respectability' of anti-Catholicism.

33. Darling assumed that others, like himself, were really more concerned with politics than with religion. He accused Hall, editor of the Monitor, of aiming to arouse the passions of the 'lower classes of the community', particularly the Irish. On another occasion, he linked Father Therry with a rather varied collection of opponents of the administration, all of whom he feared because of their influence over others - 'He was satisfied that Wentworth was a demagogue intent on manipulating the emancipist opposition and suspected that Hall, the Methodist Walker, and Father Therry - dangerous because of their close contacts with the convicts - had made common cause'. J.J. Eddy, Britain and the Australian Colonies 1818-1831, pp. 108-9; Clark, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 70.

34. Darling to Bathurst, September 6, 1826. Quoted in P.O'Farrell, Documents, Vol. 1, pp. 63-5.

But the Catholic cause in the thirties had, for the first time, educated and prominent exponents, clerical and lay, and no attack need go undefended. Broughton's protest against the donations by Protestants to Catholic buildings³⁵ was replied to in kind by Roger Therry in a published 'Appeal' which brought him the admonition of the Colonial Office, but must have greatly relieved the pressure on the Catholic laity and their two priests to defend their Church against prejudice and misrepresentation. Polding regarded Broughton's later protests against his use of a territorial title and of the vestments appropriate to it with considerable phlegm; and regularly, and with no hint of obsequiousness, requested aid and additional clergy for the Church under the provisions of the Church Act. The Catholic laity, far from being intimidated by attacks on their religion, responded quickly and aggressively, as with the public meeting of July 29, 1836, concerning Justice Willis' allegations that the Catholic religion was idolatrous.³⁶ All this, however, preceded the era of large-scale immigration, which retarded the growth of mutual acceptance and toleration among the denominations by the introduction of reinforcements to each distinct community and creed. By 1841 -

... the entire face of colonial society became at once changed, and those who had been for some time established in the colony were amazed to find themselves suddenly surrounded by a population totally different in manners and habits from those to which they had been accustomed. It seemed almost as if they had gone to bed in Botany Bay, and awakened in England!

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35. W.Broughton, A Letter in Vindication of the Principles of the Reformation, addressed to Roger Therry, 1832.

36. Herald, August 3, 1836; Gazette, July 31, 1836.

37. W.A.Duncan, 'Notes of a Ten Year's Residence in New South Wales' in Hogg's Instructor, 1851, p. 132.

The Church Act of 1836 was to be vital to the Catholic community not as a final word on the issue of equality, but as a rallying point from which they derived the strength and confidence with which to assert their rights against future attempts to demean and discriminate against them. The threat was no longer of civil discrimination or the legislative proscription of the Catholic religion, but of the stagnation of the Church and loss of its members in the face of an increasingly Protestant society, and it was this threat that the Church and its lay champions sought to counter in the next two decades.

In a new settlement like Australia, particularly with the intimations of the cessation of transportation, the continued growth of the Irish and Catholic communities depended vitally on immigration. The Irish had a long tradition of emigration in times of want at home, and though the focus of emigration had formerly been countries from whence return was possible, there was every reason to believe that emigration even to distant Australia would be acceptable if that country could offer more than Ireland. This was recognised as quickly by the Church and the Irish communities in Australia as by the enemies of Catholicism, and each was to use all the avenues open to them to shape the course of emigration to their ends. Initially, emigrants themselves were powerless to affect the flow of emigration, dependent as they were on various and often biased sources of information on the prospects offered by the new country, or forced by conditions in Ireland to remove as quickly as possible to wherever they could go. As assisted emigration to Australia progressed, emigrants gained an increasing influence over the motivation and attitudes of other prospective emigrants. The private letter from an emigrant relative or acquaintance came to replace the public advertisement or lecture as the definitive assessment of conditions in the colonies and direct action by colonists - through the purchase of passage certificates and remission of money - introduced many as immigrants who might otherwise have had neither the inclination, courage nor funds for voluntary emigration. Nevertheless, Government assistance to emigrants was a vital factor in the ultimate decision to emigrate, and those in Australia who wished to encourage or

discourage the introduction of particular groups generally worked within the Government system. Consequently, the fluctuations of immigration policy reflected not only variations in the colonial demand for labour and colonial prosperity generally, but also the attitudes of colonists towards emigrants - and it was therefore these opinions that both pro- and anti-Catholic Irish forces sought to manipulate.³⁸

One of the most consistent advocates of free immigration into Australia was the Rev. John Dunmore Lang, who arrived in New South Wales in May 1823 as the first Presbyterian minister to the colony. On a return visit to England in 1830, Lang was appalled by the distress he found there, and saw emigration as a means of alleviating the situation -

I could not help contrasting the state of things I saw around me, in all parts of the country I visited, with the state of great prosperity I had witnessed so shortly before in the colony.³⁹

Lang's motives were not entirely disinterested - he had gone to England initially to gain support for his projected Presbyterian secondary school, the Australian College, and the emigrants he selected were mechanics and their families, who were to repay their passages from the wages paid for their aid in the construction of the College.⁴⁰ They were generally well

38. Obviously, this was more so following colonial independence and the control by colonial legislatures of the funds used to aid emigration. Even before independence, however, strong expressions of colonial opinion concerning emigration schemes could influence the policy of the Colonial Office and, indeed, such expressions were frequently put forward by the C.O. in its own defence.

39. Diary entry made during the return voyage from England, December 1830, quoted in A. Gilchrist, J.D. Lang, Chiefly Autobiographical, Vol. 1, p. 119; also in Lang's pamphlet, 'An account of the steps taken, in England, with a view to the establishment of an academical institution or college...' reviewed in Herald, November 14, 1831.

40. Gilchrist, op. cit., p. 120.

received in the colony on their arrival in October 1831, although they allegedly roused the antagonism of some emancipists who believed they had 'come to take the country from us'.⁴¹ But they had been preceded by another group of immigrants of a character that was later to provide Lang with a much more pressing rationale for encouraging his selection of settlers. At the time of their arrival, however, these other immigrants had been warmly welcomed. The Herald, in an article entitled 'Good News', had commented

All who labour under the hardship of 'single blessedness' will be glad to hear that a vessel is shortly expected with fifty free female emigrants from the Emerald Isle. They are sent out under the patronage, we believe, of a society, and the parties are to be placed under the charge of Government for disposal, as servants or matrons. We have no doubt the Government will see the propriety of giving every disconsolate swain and backwoodsman, who has lost hopes of revisiting his Mother Country, a chance of settling for life.⁴²

The Australian expressed its wish that three or four times as many had come, and was dissatisfied only with the apparent partiality with which the girls had been distributed - the nationality of the girls had obviously not diminished their worth as servants in the eyes of Governor Darling, McLeay and other members of the Government.⁴³

41. J.D.Lang, An Historical and Statistical Account of the Colony of N.S.W., Vol. 1, p. 229; R.Lawson, 'J.D.Lang and Immigration', M.A.thesis 1966, p. 22.

42. Herald, July 18, 1831. The girls were from a foundling hospital in Cork.

43. Australian, August 5, 1831.

This type of local, private and limited sponsorship of emigration was made redundant or, at least, negligible in its effect on the total British emigration, by the formation in June that year of an official Emigration Commission. The Commission was in direct contradiction to the laissez faire policies and desire for administrative economy then prevailing in the British Government, and in August 1832 it was dismissed 'on the ground that they had accomplished their tasks so successfully during fourteen months activity that their further assistance was entirely superfluous'.⁴⁴ The Commission had begun as a centre for collecting and disseminating information on emigration to the British colonies, and initially had no funds at its disposal to aid prospective emigrants. By September 1831, however, the Government had decided to contribute £8 towards the passages of females aged fifteen to thirty, particularly those from rural areas and with experience in domestic service.⁴⁵ This was funded by the appropriation of £10,000 from the Treasury, based on expected colonial revenue from land sales, and was soon extended to cover a £20 grant to the families of artisans and skilled workers.⁴⁶ By the time of its abolition, the Commission had sent the families of 103 mechanics at a cost in allowances of £1,961 and despatched two

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44. P. Burroughs, Britain and Australia 1831-1855, p. 74. The Commission consisted of five members and was appointed on the recommendation of the Select Committee on Emigration of 1827, moved as a resolution by Charles Tenant in the House of Commons in December 1830. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
45. The Commissioners had authority to contract with parishes and private persons for the removal of emigrants. Most of the women were consequently taken from institutions. House of Commons, *Sessional Papers*, Vol. 1 1830-1, pp. 465-6.
46. The mechanics were bound to repay the grant, but the £8 for single women was free. Burroughs, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-72.

shiploads of single women, one each to N.S.W. and Van Diemen's Land.⁴⁷ Though there was general agreement in N.S.W. as to the desirability of a free population, the colonists resented being forced to contribute, through a fixed land cost, all the funds towards a system that was primarily designed to benefit Britain, and soon found cause for dissatisfaction with the quality of those sent.⁴⁸ The alleged preference of some of the women to live on government support at the Depot aroused further indignation⁴⁹ and on October 8 the Herald declared that it had

... a decided objection to the appropriation of Colonial funds, or Crown Revenue, generally spent in colonial improvements for such, or any other purpose, under the exclusive direction of the British Government.

Such objections were to be frequently raised until the colonies gained control of their own land revenue and could appoint their own Emigration Agents, after the granting of responsible government in 1856. More important to the Irish community, however, were the preferences that began to be aimed at the areas from which the emigrants were to be taken. Lang had published his emigration plans of 1830 only in London and Edinburgh.⁵⁰ In its comments on emigration in 1832 the Herald had suggested 'There are hundreds of families in the midland counties of England, in the North of Ireland, and in Scotland, who would embrace the proposals' for the advancement of passage

47. This revenue was from the sale of land at a fixed minimum price of five shillings per acre, instituted as the sole means of the alienation of land by the Ripon regulations of July 1831.

48. Herald, March 5, 1832.

49. Herald, September 17, 1832.

50. R. Lawson, op. cit., p. 14.

money, to be repaid from wages earned in the colony. Any discrimination at this time was merely implicit. In the midst of the anti-Bourke, anti-Irish Catholic sentiments of the mid-thirties, however, the preferences were much more overt. An editorial in the Herald in 1836 reflected its current antagonism to Irish Catholics, reviling the character of the single women sent from Ireland and the aid thus given to the Irish landowner instead of to his rate-paying counterpart in England.

Another batch of Free Females has arrived by the Duchess of Northumberland, drawn from that focus of agitation, the county of Cork, and adjacent districts. The public object to this exclusive importation of Irish orphans and tenants of poor houses, and receive them with apprehensions of evil. ... They too frequently sink down into the Convict class. They marry convicts. Their children are educated with convict feelings and principles, hostile to good institutions and at enmity with the character and feelings of free Emigrants ... Much of this might also happen with English females of the same class under similar circumstances, but it is generally admitted that English females have a more lively perception of the degradation they entail on themselves and their children, by a hasty union with convicts, than the low, depraved and bigotted classes who are selected from the south of Ireland. 51

This concern to 'prove' the superiority of the English Protestant Emigrant reached its apotheosis four years later when, following the lead given by an indignant North Irish correspondent - 'Why class the sober, steady, useful Emigrant from the North of Ireland, with the indolent bigot of the South?' 52 - the Herald concisely differentiated the qualities of Irish immigrants.

51. Herald, October 13, 1836.

52. Ibid., July 1, 1840.

Can anyone object to the Irish labourer of the North? No, it is to the Popish serfs of the South that every rational colonist objects. Fill New South Wales with the orderly, intelligent and industrious population of the North of Ireland and our Saxon scrupulousity on the matter will be amply met ... Why, we ask, is the famished Protestant of every degree of opinion to die of starvation in England, Scotland and the North of Ireland while, to suit the views of Mr. O'Connell and the Priests, the Irish Papist is to be sent out at Protestant expense to New South Wales - to swell the importance of an intolerant priesthood, to depress Protestantism, and to stifle civil liberty in its cradle? 53

If any doubt still remained that hostility to the southern Irish was genuinely based on their unsuitability to colonial conditions rather than on racial or religious grounds, this was dispelled by objection taken to the arguments of Governor Gipps, in the 1840 Legislative Council debates on immigration, that 'The question should be, is a man a good shepherd or labourer? if he is, never mind whether he is Irish or English, Roman Catholic or Protestant'. The Herald condemned this attitude as immoral, adding that they preferred the open advocacy of Irish immigration by the Attorney General, J.H.Plunkett, to 'a time-serving, trimming Protestant'. 54

Yet the Herald still sought intermittently to rationalise its opposition to Irish immigration in a more acceptable form, as in March the following year,

53. Ibid., October 6, 1840.

54. Ibid., November 12, 1840. The paper's comment, May 24, 1842, when Gipps repeated in the Council on May 17th that 'it mattered not which of the three countries he (a good immigrant) came from', was almost identical.

when it explained that the nature of small-holdings in Ireland rendered those reared in this situation inadequate in the totally different colonial system.⁵⁵ The Rev. James Dunmore Lang made no such concessions. He vigorously protested against the high proportion of Irish in the assisted immigration of 1840-1841, and particularly objected to the practice of sending Irish immigrants first to Plymouth, from whence they sailed to Australia on government vessels classified as emigrants from England.⁵⁶ Lang had no high opinion of the quality of the south Irish, and described the emigrants on the Glenswilly, on which he himself had returned to Sydney in 1841, as 'persons in the most abject poverty and in the lowest stages of debasement'.⁵⁷ But Lang's main concern was with the religion of most of these emigrants, and their effect on the Catholic Church in the colony.

For the progressive development of the Papacy in Australia kept pace with this enormous influx of Irish Roman Catholic immigration; the priest was transformed into a Bishop and the Bishop into an Archbishop, with a whole bevy of suffragans, and the usual staff of nuns and eremites; while the genuine Irish priest and his 'Tipperary boys' were always at hand to disturb or to put down by mere physical force any public meeting the objects of which were at all at variance with the cause of Romish predominance. 58

The same connection was made by Bishop Broughton, and though Broughton did not make immigration his major concern nor emulated the practical interference of

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55. March 2, 1841. The main attack was on the slovenly habits of the Irish female farm servant, but 'It is precisely the same with an Irishman in a farm; he can do nothing well; and as he is necessitated, from the poverty inseparable from small holdings, to put up with very imperfect implements, often of his own making, his whole operations become a series of wretched makeshifts'.
56. J.D.Lang, An Historical and Statistical Account of the Colony of New South Wales, Vol. 1, p. 308.
57. A.Gilchrist, op. cit., p. 292.
58. Lang, op. cit., pp. 366-7.

Lang in the course of emigration from the United Kingdom, he was initially able to influence immigration policy from his position in the Legislative Council. The Report of the Immigration Committee, of which he was Chairman, for 1840 (published in 1841) stated that there was no anti-Irish feeling in N.S.W., but an addendum to the Report criticised the inequitable distribution of assisted passages which allowed the influx of Catholic immigrants as 'a departure from the principles of justice, the proportion above stated being widely at variance with the respective numbers of the religious persuasions in this Colony; and with the relative contributions of Protestants and Roman Catholics towards the Land Fund, from which the means of supporting Immigration are derived'.⁵⁹

Nor was the agitation dropped while the number and proportion of Irish in the New South Wales emigration remained high, as it did until the late sixties, though the acrimony lessened after the initial influx of the forties. It should be remembered that, for a majority of colonists, and in the eyes of the press, the Irish-English, Protestant-Catholic debate was only one of many aspects of the concern with immigration, and was itself informed by other questions relating to the most preferable system of immigration, who should control and subsidise it, the selection, reception and distribution of immigrants, etc. In these issues the press was as definite and vociferous in its preferences as it was about Irish Catholic immigrants. Nevertheless, it was understandable that the Irish Catholic community in the colony should be deeply affected by these attacks and react in direct response to them.

59. Report in Sydney Morning Herald, September 14, 1841; G.W. Rusden, History of Australia, Vol. 2, pp. 220-221.

This response took a variety of forms. The Catholic clergy and hierarchy in the colony were primarily concerned with their spiritual mission. Bishop Polding tended to regard anti-Catholicism as political and feared more for civil discrimination than for the effect of Protestant attacks on Church doctrine.⁶⁰ Writing on the subject of Irish immigration in a report to the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, January 12, 1839, Polding saw the current agitation as evidence of religious antagonism and implied the need for vigilant attention by the Emigration Agent, Elliot, who was responsible for the selection of emigrants -

Dr. Ullathorne tells me that we are indebted to the expressions of Dr. Lang respecting the prevalence of disaffection and White-boyism amongst the Catholics, for the deluge of Scotch and North of Ireland men with which the Colony has been inundated. A quieter people the sun sees not in his travels. Elliot, the agent for emigration, should be sharply looked after. Again, it has been said that the Irish emigrants are not liked in the Colony - nothing more false. Let proper care be used in their selection, and they will be received with equal if not a warmer welcome than any others. 61

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60. He responded to Broughton's attacks on the Church Act in 1836 (as constituting state support of error) in a series of temperate and anonymous letters in the Australian, under the pseudonym 'Catholicus Ipse'. Following Justice Willis' comments in 1838, however, because of the implications of Willis' sentiments on his impartiality in his public character, Polding first wrote to Willis for verification and then chaired a public meeting to express Catholic lack of confidence in the Judge. After the meeting Polding wrote, in a letter to Dr. Brown, September 27, 1838, 'Really I do not recollect that even in unhappy Ireland at the time when Orangeism triumphed, that ever a Judge so far forgot his place and the semblance of good feeling as to insult the Catholics after the fashion of Judge Willis'. H.N. Birt, Benedictine Pioneers in Australia, Vol. 1, pp. 300, 339; O'Farrell, p. 46. See letter to Dr. Brown, referred to above, for Polding's assertion that Willis was 'a mere tool and puppet' of Judge Burton ('another deeply imbued bigot') and his 'party'. This belief in a minority, essentially political, antagonism was also evident in a Pastoral Letter by Polding read at the commencement of a Catholic meeting July 14, 1839 called to reply to attacks on the Catholic body and particularly Dr. Ullathorne. (Birt, *ibid.*, pp. 422-4); Australasian Chronicle, August 2, 1839.
61. Birt, *ibid.*, p. 400.

But he took no active role in defending the quality or right to assistance of Irish emigrants. He was absent on a visit to Europe during the agitation over the 1840 report of the Legislative Council on immigration, having left with Vicar-General Ullathorne and Dr. Gregory on November 16, 1840 in an attempt to gain priests for the Australian mission. It was anyway Polding's practice to refrain from public controversy, except where the authority of the Church was directly threatened: as Ullathorne ungenerously but accurately stated it -

It was the maxim of the Bishop ... that it was the business of the Vicar-General to meet all the blows, and to keep his Principal in the good odour of peaceful reputation. 62

More damaging to the Catholic defence was the loss of Ullathorne himself who, since his arrival in February 1833 had been a vigorous and prolific exponent of Catholic rights and a defensor fidei against misrepresentation. But, like Roger Therry, Ullathorne tended to draw personal criticisms for his activity on behalf of the Catholic body, particularly after his condemnation of transportation at the Select Committee in England in 1837 and his distinctions between the characters of English and Irish convicts in his comments there and in his pamphlet The Catholic Mission in Australasia, also published while he was in England.

62. Birt, op. cit., p. 486 from Ullathorne's Autobiography.

It is commonly some impulse of deeply aroused passion which comits an Irishman, and not an habitually corrupted nature. Unhappily, many of them who were horrified at the crimes they found prevailing amongst the vile classes amongst which they were thrown, contracted vices in the temptations into which they ought never to have been thrown. 63

As a result, his advocacy must sometimes have been an embarrassment to those Catholics who wished most for peaceful co-existence, and Ullathorne himself was eventually worn down by the constant fire his stance provoked. He did not return to Australia again after 1840.

On the departure of Polding the administration of the Church officially went to Father Francis Murphy, who had been appointed Vicar-General. More active on behalf of the Catholic community in the civil sphere during Polding's absence, however, was Father John McEncroe, senior to Murphy, who had arrived with J. H. Plunkett in 1832. McEncroe had spent his early

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63. W. Ullathorne, op. cit., p. 108. Ullathorne's pamphlet ran into four editions and caused much controversy in both England and Australia. The Herald, reviewing the fourth edition, was vicious in its accusations - 'The animus of this Romish priest is nowhere more manifest than in his attempts to palliate the crimes of the Irish at the expense of English convicts ... stop, Protestant reader, and mark the attempt of the Popish priest to elevate the character of the transported Irish felon (upon whose credulity he and his brother priests survive) over the English felon ... We premise, as we have invariably premised, that, prima facie, an English Protestant convict is a bad man, but bad as he may be, we have yet to learn that an Irish Roman Catholic convict is a better'. August 6, 1838. Ullathorne alleged that the antagonism to his remarks was motivated by the moneyed interest of the colony, who thrived on cheap convict labour, and whom the Herald represented. But even the Australian, which had been generally supported by the Catholic community for its tolerant and reasonable opinions, condemned the intemperance of Ullathorne's remarks on the state of the colony before the Select Committee and in another pamphlet, The Horrors of Transportation, in editorials of January 15 and 17, 1839. This apparent 'volte face' of the Australian was possibly a determining factor in the establishment of the Chronicle later that year - see Chronicle's comments on this, March 27, 1841.

missionary life (1822-9) in America where he had been much influenced by the way in which Bishop John England of Baltimore had sought to aid the assimilation of Irish immigrants there by the maintenance of close contact with them and with their secular concerns and sentiment for Ireland through a local newspaper, which McEncroe had aided him to edit. The enormous influx of poor Irish immigrants into America from 1825 not only had posed difficulties for the Catholic Church there (the Hierarchy of which was largely French) but also ensured that the status of the Irish community generally was lowered, as the immigrants were relegated to the lowest positions in society. Though the situation in N.S.W. in the thirties and forties was not so extreme, McEncroe saw the parallels and the potential danger, and actively sought the foundation of a Catholic paper from 1837.⁶⁴ He convinced Polding of the merits of this undertaking, and the Bishop gained the financial backing of a group of wealthy Irish Catholic emancipists and free men, and selected William Duncan, a Scots convert who had arrived in the colony in 1838 and was then teaching in a Catholic school in Maitland, as the paper's editor.⁶⁵

In this manner, the burden of publicly defending Catholicism and Irish immigration, which reached its highest level in 1841, fell on laymen. There could be no clearer indication of the general belief that attitudes to Irish immigration were motivated by religious considerations than the fact that the

64. P. Phillips, 'John McEncroe', M.A. thesis, 1965, p. 9; O'Farrell, op. cit., p. 59; Suttor, op. cit., pp. 57-8.

65. M. Payten, 'W.A. Duncan 1811-1885', M.A. thesis, 1965, p. 36; M. Shanahan, op. cit., p. 113. McEncroe gained Polding's active support in 1837, but the venture failed because of an insufficient number of prospective shareholders. One of the most valuable indirect influences of the Catholic clergy on the Catholic laity was the encouragement they gave to immigrants who later played important roles in colonial society.

Chronicle, an avowedly Catholic paper edited by a Scotsman hostile to expressions of Irish nationalism in the colony, immediately took up the immigration issue. The prospectus of the paper appeared on August 2, 1839, stating the dual purpose of its existence as the protection of the religious beliefs of Catholics and the civil rights of emancipists. In the connection of the two aims, the paper implicitly accepted that the majority of Catholics were emancipists, but stressed, as Polding so frequently did in his private correspondence, that the attempts to contain Catholics and emancipists generally in an inferior position in society were essentially political and economic, and limited to the exertions of a small but powerful group.⁶⁶ The Chronicle made it plain that it saw the Herald and the interests that that paper represented as the greatest danger to the position of Catholics and emancipists in N.S.W. It recognised the logical inconsistency of the Herald's assertion that most Catholics were convicts with its parallel complaints about the disproportionate number of Catholics in the assisted immigration. But Duncan himself rejected the society of the emancipist owners of the Chronicle, and often the paper was to find itself placed in an equivocal position by this division in colonial society and politics. Because of the hostility of Duncan to the Irish nationalist cause, the support which the Chronicle drew from the Irish Catholic population, free

66. 'We will, therefore, oppose the attempts of a party which, under the pretence of a purer descent, would create a distinction between two classes of settlers which every well-wisher to the Colony - who knows the history of mankind and who looks a little forward beyond the present generation - must wish to see gradually amalgamated.' August 2, 1839.

and emancipist, for its espousal of emancipist's civil rights and the full religious and civil equality of Catholics, was already modified. But, more importantly at this time, the unanimity of the Irish Catholic community which the Herald feared and the Chronicle sought to foster was not the reality it seemed. A tantalising fragment of evidence of a very basic division within the Catholic community was contained in a letter written by Bishop Polding to 'Molaro Amico' in February 1838 -

I assure you we have much to contend with, from the prejudices of the free settlers, who cannot brook to have their children educated and mix together in school with the children of the convicts. I however, consider it my imperative duty to use my every endeavour to (wipe) out such an unfair distinction and bring the rising generation to a proper level ... Such distinctions and prejudices only generate pride and every species of anti-social vices. ⁶⁷

Duncan fought many battles on behalf of the emancipists in the first years of his management of the Chronicle ⁶⁸ and was particularly vigorous in his agitation against the exclusion of emancipists from membership of the proposed Sydney Corporation Bill in 1840. ⁶⁹ By 1842, Duncan was showing evidence of disenchantment with the emancipists as a class following the increasing alignment of the wealthy emancipists with the former 'exclusives' in an attempt to protect their mutual economic interests and the privileges

67. Fragment of a letter dated February 10, 1838. Adelaide Archdiocesan Archives. Miscellaneous N.S.W. correspondence, uncatalogued.

68. The Sydney Corporation Bill; Macarthur's census bill of 1840.

69. e.g. editorial of May 29, 1840, entitled 'Freedom or Slavery'.

that wealth gave them against the increasing demand for democratic institutions and a fairer distribution of the colonial lands. More basic than this, however, in ending the old emancipist-immigrant issue, was the cessation of transportation to N.S.W. in 1840 and the simultaneous enormous influx of arrivals under the new bounty system of immigration from 1838. These numerical reinforcements enabled a new sense of identity based on nationality and religion, replacing former alignments determined by the means of one's introduction into the colony.⁷⁰ Thus it was to be easier to maintain a national sense of identity among Irish immigrants, but it was also to be more difficult to give expression to this sentiment without antagonising their non-Irish fellow colonists, particularly at times of revolt in Ireland against English rule. And just as it would be foolish - though the Herald did this often - to suggest that every Irishman, because he was Irish, was ready to cooperate with and share the opinions of every other Irishman on colonial issues, so it would be nonsense to say that every Irish immigrant remained, in the new political climate, as consistently and millitantly nationalistic as he might have been in Ireland.

The demise of the Australasian Chronicle itself, and the fluctuations of the subsequent Catholic paper, the Freeman's Journal, were determined by conflicting attitudes among Irish immigrants towards colonial support for

70. Assisted immigration was so common from the forties that no stigma attached to this use of aid. In public, at least, there was no differentiation made between those who came as assisted immigrants and those who paid their own passage. Antagonism to assisted immigration was common throughout the century, but it was as frequently expressed by recently arrived immigrants as by natives, and was raised only at periods of unemployment or relative depression.

national movements in Ireland.⁷¹ These conflicting attitudes were themselves very much influenced by the circumstances of the individual immigrant. It was not a fixed rule that any Irish immigrant who attained wealth and position in the colony would henceforth withdraw from national agitation - three of the wealthy owners of the Chronicle were members of the Sydney branch of the National Repeal Association - but it is obvious that few men of assailable public position in colonial society would risk endorsing any cause regarded by many colonists as disloyal. Duncan lost his editorship of the Chronicle largely because a majority of the paper's proprietors supported the Repeal movement. But this movement had aroused remarkably little interest in the colony and almost no antagonism⁷² and to support it was by no means to place oneself in an equivocal position; (meetings were addressed by Bishop Polding himself) - indeed, as was obvious in Duncan's case, it was more to one's disadvantage to oppose it. In the issues that strongly divided opinion in N.S.W., however, the wealthy emancipists showed themselves only too ready to abandon their fellow ex-convicts for the siren song of acceptance by the 'respectable' society that had been so long denied to them.

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71. Duncan maintained that his dismissal was motivated by the proprietors' antagonism to his attacks on all political and social exclusiveness, and that their advocacy of the Repeal cause derived from the desire to oust him from the paper. W.A.Duncan, Autobiography, p. 45. The important thing, however, is that it was a sufficiently divisive issue to finally ensure this dismissal.
72. J.D.Lang himself supported the Repeal movement, and published in 1848 a pamphlet entitled Repeal or Revolution - or, a Glimpse of the Irish Future, addressed to the Right Hon. Lord John Russell. See also the suggestion of Mark Lyons, 'Aspects of Sectarianism in New South Wales circa 1865-1880', Ph.D., Australian National University, 1972, that the Repeal movement did not yet have its subsequent overtones of treason. (p. 10).

Nor could common Irish nationality prevent divisions appearing among immigrant colonists whose fortunes in the colony differentiated them economically. Attitudes to colonial society were conditioned by the position that an immigrant or an emancipist gained in it, and changes in economic position could weaken as well as reinforce prejudices imbued in Ireland. Dennis Hickey, an emigrant from Limerick in 1838, stated ten years later that 'I am better off altogether than I was at home' but evidenced bitterness at his failure to obtain land in this country as in Ireland -

... its the sheepmasters that has the lands entirely.
It is only a few acres a poor man wants to keep his
children, God help them. ⁷³

James Cummings, on the other hand, had the rental of a total of 228 acres on long lease, owned a team of working bullocks and other equipment, and employed three labourers. He had been a farm labourer in Ireland, but had come to the colony at a time of greater opportunity than Hickey, in 1822. His relative success, and the similarity of the terms of rental from his two disparate landlords (100 acres was rented from Archbishop Polding, and 128 from James Macarthur) ensured Cummings' satisfaction with conditions in the colony and prompted his warning to future arrivals from Ireland that

73. Monteagle Papers, Dublin, National Library of Ireland. Voluntary Information of the People of New South Wales, collected by Mrs. Chisholm. Manuscript version.

Fractious, quarrelsome people must lay down their animosity and hate when they come to this country, for it is not a commodity that meets with any encouragement in this quarter. Our landlords, and long may they live, have but one measure for the lot, so there is nothing to be grumbling about. 74

A similar statement made in 1846 by 'T.F.', who had emigrated from Galway in 1841, shows again the influence of an improvement in economic position in modifying religious antagonisms that had been tied up with economic disparities in the Irish situation.

We came to this colony to make money. We were engaged the second day after our arrival by Squire B. near Liverpool. He employed us as farm labourers, wages 20£ per annum with a weekly ration ... Now each of us has this wage and allowance. Mr. B. behaved like a rale (sic) gentleman to us; he is a Protestant, but never mind that, he is the man to pay properly; has no tricks - a poor man may take his word; and if I had a relation coming out I would like him to get Squire B. as a master. He is a Protestant but never attempted to influence his men in their religion, and that is what I call honest. 75

Nevertheless, it was through their common religion that most Irish colonists were drawn together and differentiated from others in the nineteenth century, and this was not so easily undermined by changes in economic status. Irish nationality was in many ways a tangible thing - the brogue, peculiarities of wit and temperament, the warmth and readiness of expressions of love for the homeland, the songs, stories and ceremonies of

74. Monteaale Papers, Ibid.

75. C.Chisholm, Emigration and Transportation Relatively Considered, London 1847. Appendix 'Voluntary Information of the People of New South Wales', p. 41.

tradition - but such things could be lost after years in the new country, and especially with the coming of new generations of Irish-Australians.⁷⁶ The practice of Catholicism provided an even more tangible sense of kinship and continuity with the past, and one that could not (or, at least, should not) change from generation to generation or as a result of the new physical environment. The potential for a clash of purposes between the two was not easily recognised by immigrants from an Irish-Catholic majority country while, on the other hand, a Scotsman like Duncan could unconsciously foster Irish identity by his stress on the need for unity within the Catholic community.⁷⁷ The Catholic hierarchy certainly understood that they needed immigrants from Ireland if the Church was to flourish in the colonies. The Church itself, however, had no funds to aid such emigration and, recognising that it was frequently operating within a hostile climate in N.S.W., sought

76. As early as 1846 one of the witnesses before the Select Committee on Colonisation from Ireland, William Verner, Chief Commissioner of Insolvent Estates in N.S.W. and himself an Irishman, had stated 'The term we apply to all born in the Colony is 'Currency'. I have never seen any difference in the habits or character of the Currency people, whether born from English, Scotch or Irish parents'. Sessional Papers 1847, Vol. 6, p. 392.
77. Thus in 1840, after he had criticised the newly formed Immigration Association of being motivated by antagonism to Irish immigration, and had received a denial of this from an Irish Catholic member of the Association, T.A. Murray, Duncan charged that thereby 'He (Murray) has thrown the brand of disunion into the Catholic body, which we are under a sacred obligation of maintaining in unity to the best of our power ... We are not a native of Ireland, although we have spent a few of our happiest days in that fine country; we cannot therefore have any undue prejudice in favour of Irishmen as such, but we should consider ourselves to have forfeited every title to be considered a sincere Catholic if we had not done our best to expose the real character of a society, one at least of the avowed objects of which is to Protestantise this colony. It would be still more difficult for Mr. Murray to show how an Irish Catholic can consistently pursue a different course from ours'. Australasian Chronicle, December 15, 1840.

only to ensure that Irish emigrants gained a fair share in the assisted passages provided by the government. Archbishop Polding appears to have been less active than Bishop Goold in Victoria in encouraging immigrants, partly because of his preoccupation with internal Church affairs, and partly because he had in N.S.W. a Catholic newspaper able to propogate the Catholic viewpoint in terms much more aggressive than would have been appropriate for an Archbishop. Both the Chronicle and the Freeman's Journal were often at odds with the Archbishop over the stridency of their stance in a Protestant-majority colony, but there is no doubt that their defence of Irish Catholic immigration was necessary, and that this immigration could have suffered otherwise because of the Archbishop's characteristic unwillingness to become personally involved in controversy, and his personal dislike for the type of Catholicism imported by just those immigrants from Ireland who were opposed by the Herald and many of the 'respectable' citizens of the colony. Irish immigrants appeared to come without any extra encouragement, and Polding was more concerned with maintaining a supply of Catholic priests and schoolteachers to minister to them. Compared with Victoria, N.S.W. experienced little concerted action over Irish immigration. Peaks of immigration from Ireland were generally met with a hardening of attitudes, but this was not the norm. In 1841, the Sydney Gazette seconded the suggestions of William O'Brien in the House of Commons in June the previous year for the use of the Poor Rate levied in Ireland to aid Irish emigration, not only because this would enable the colonial land fund to be used for other purposes, but to ensure the supply of

labour for the colony. The fact that this labour would be Irish was in no way disparaged.⁷⁸ Such an attitude did not entail tolerance of militant activity by Irish Catholic colonists: when the 1841 report of the Legislative Council on Immigration was censured by these Irish Catholic colonists for its alleged sectarian comments, the Gazette condemned -

... all the intolerance and anti-Protestant feeling that found vent in the written speeches of the orators - nothing else could we expect from the men who composed the meeting - men to whom bigotry is as closely allied as is the want of that gentle spirit of toleration ... 79

Subsequently, the Gazette joined in the cry against bounty immigration, on the grounds that it introduced too great a proportion of Irish and Catholic immigrants, and might be the cause of their eventual numerical majority in N.S.W.⁸⁰ These sentiments were echoed by the Australian, former champion of the civil rights of Catholic colonists, in response to the unprecedentedly large numbers arriving under the bounty system -

... unless active steps are taken to introduce a select immigration from England and Scotland, this colony must eventually become Roman Catholic, a consummation which, as Protestant journalists, we must earnest (sic) deplore and deprecate. 81

Both papers began to harp on the Herald's theme of objection to the use of money contributed to the land fund by Protestant land purchasers to aid the emigration of Catholics, and to accuse the Irish immigrants of being

78. Gazette, January 9, 1841.

79. Ibid., September 18, 1841.

80. Ibid., October 2, 1841.

81. Australian, March 25, 1841.

inferior, and unfit material for colonists. In many cases the Irish were not the most desirable, having been forced to emigrate by circumstances in Ireland rather than by ambition to improve their prospects, and the Emigration Agents in Britain were regularly under fire for their shoddy methods of selection.⁸² But, as the Colonist noted, and condemned, in 1840, many judgements of these immigrants were coloured by other considerations, particularly concerning the acquisitions to Catholicism through this immigration. The paper's comments on what it saw as the reality of the situation were fair and logical -

... there have been good and bad among the English and Scotch immigrants as well as among the Irish, and that generally speaking the Irish have been found to be a tractable, laborious and generous people. It is wrong therefore, to wrong them by treating them with prejudice and disparaging their characters as labourers in this colony.⁸³

Its further comments condemning the sectarian motivation of many of the attacks on the suitability of the arrivals were most unexpected from an avowedly Protestant journal, especially one founded with the support of J.D.Lang, who had written many of its leading articles. In 1840, however, only 2,078 Irish were introduced by assisted immigration, compared with 8,218 the following year; in addition, the Colonist was now edited by James McEachern, who had come to that position in July 1839 with the

82. e.g. by letters Lang to the Herald, March 11, 1846, and April 17, 1848; editorials in Herald, February 13, 1836 and June 19, 1840; Colonist, September 24, 1840; Gazette, September 28, 1841; Australian, September 21, 1841.

83. Colonist, October 27, 1840.

statement that the paper would no longer involve itself in religious controversy, as this stance had rendered it a commercial failure.⁸⁴ On the other hand, there were bases to an objection to the volume of assisted immigration in 1841 other than sectarian ones, and Duncan himself supported the suspension of assistance in March 1842 on the ground that such a respite was necessary until all those already arrived had gained employment.⁸⁵

Between 1843 and 1847 assisted immigration into New South Wales was on a much smaller scale than during the preceding five years - in 1843 and 1846-7, assisted immigration was suspended altogether - and consequently raised little interest. In 1848-50, the number of Irish women among the 'orphan immigrants' prompted the allegation of the ever-vigilant Lang that this was part of a concerted scheme of the 'Papists' to Romanize the colony,⁸⁶ which cry was to some extent credited by the Herald and which, together with the obvious inexperience and lack of taste of many of the women for their intended role as domestic servants and farm hands, brought about the cessation of this particular scheme of assistance in 1850.⁸⁷ It should be noted, however, that while Governor Fitzroy of Victoria sent an objection to this immigration which included the comment -

84. Ibid., July 24, 1839. Such a change of attitude did not, however, ensure the popularity of the paper, which was absorbed by the Herald from January 1, 1841.

85. Chronicle, April 5, 1842.

86. Lang's letter to the Port Phillip Herald, January 24, 1850 (see Chapter III, p. 131); also letter in The British Banner, November 14, 1848.

87. See 11th General Report of the Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1851. House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1851, Vol. 22, p. 341.

That the circumstance of these immigrants being exclusively taken from the Irish workhouses is calculated to give, and in many cases has given, great dissatisfaction, inasmuch as if otherwise unobjectionable, it is unfair to exclude any portion of your Majesty's dominions from participation in the advantages thus conferred for the sole relief of the Irish Poor Law Unions. 88 -

the resolution of the N.S.W. Legislative Council of September 1850 merely commented that 'it is inexpedient that any portion of the land revenue should in future be applied to orphan immigration from the United Kingdom. 89

Throughout the 'fifties, Irish assisted immigration into N.S.W. remained high, averaging 2800 p.a. and representing approximately 40% of the total assisted immigration. As regards the reaction to this immigration in N.S.W., however, there was a considerable change from the previous decade. The Land and Emigration Commissioners themselves, attacked so often before for an alleged laxity in accepting too many Irish for assisted passages, began to take the initiative in limiting Irish numbers,⁹⁰ while the N.S.W. press (particularly the Herald), having made its point, allowed the issue to drop from public controversy. In addition, the panic famine-emigration from Ireland had fallen off by 1852 and the situation in Ireland itself presented more favourable prospects to the depleted labouring population, so that

88. House of Commons Sessional Papers, despatch to Earl Grey by Fitzroy, July 22, 1850. 1851 Vol., 35, p. 55.

89. House of Commons Sessional Papers, p. 59.

90. Thus 'Celticus', writing in the Freeman's Journal in 1858, charged that the N.S.W. Agent for Immigration, H.H. Browne, had shown himself only too eager in the Immigration Reports of 1855 and 1856 to point to any trivial excess in Irish numbers or any Irish misconduct on the voyage. (January 16, 1858).

emigration subsequent to that time tended to be of a more ambitious and less impoverished type. The aggressive attitude towards Irish immigration came rather from the Irish themselves (or, rather, their self-appointed representative, the Freeman's Journal) during this decade: in 1850 the Freeman's Journal called for the rejection of Lang as a candidate for Sydney in the coming Legislative Council elections, arguing Lang's sectarian antagonism to the efforts to aid Irish immigration of Mrs. Chisholm as one reason for his unsuitability;⁹¹ protested in 1853 against the use of the Irish and Scottish Relief Fund, raised in 1847, largely for the relief of Scots and northern Irish;⁹² urged voters, prior to the election of 1858, to question candidates as to whether they found Irish immigration 'distasteful';⁹³ throughout 1858 found fault with the Emigration Agent, H.H. Browne, and conducted a sturdy defence of the respectability of Irish immigrants;⁹⁴ in 1859 endorsed the allegations of a correspondent 'Celticus', that 'practically, it has been the aim during several years past to prevent free immigration from Ireland';⁹⁵ and in 1859 and 1860 complained of anti-Irish 'or, rather, anti-Catholic' feeling in the N.S.W. immigration department or among immigration agents in London⁹⁶ which, 'Celticus' also alleged, had enabled the introduction of 10,506 English and Scots by selection as vs only 1,084 Irish during 1857-8.⁹⁷

91. Freeman's Journal, July 18, 1850.

92. Ibid., January 13, 1853.

93. Ibid., December 26, 1857.

94. Ibid., January 9, June 9, 1858.

95. Ibid., December 21, 1859.

96. Ibid., May 2, 1860.

97. Ibid.

To an extent, it might appear that the Freeman's Journal was becoming as paranoid as J.D.Lang himself about the existence of sectarian-motivated enemies and their malign influence in immigration; that they were not completely 'slanting at shadows' is evident from a comment of the Herald in May 1860 criticising the prejudice against Irish female servants as 'calumnious and cruel', adding -

We read with regret in a local paper professing to be religious, an exhortation not to employ Irish female servants on pious grounds. It is perfectly shocking to find religion made the pretext for such antipathies ... An intermixture of the various populations, though attended with occasional jealousies and discontent, is not to be deprecated, and is evidently necessary and just. Those who, from religious scruples, cannot bear the intermixture, have no business here. ⁹⁸

Nevertheless, the principle of a 'fair share' for the Irish in assisted immigration was never in doubt⁹⁹ - it was asserted by the Herald in 1841 and by J.D.Lang in 1845 and 1848 and adopted as a principle by the 1845 Committee on Emigration.¹⁰⁰ In 1853, when the need of assisted immigration per se was questioned, there was no mention of Irish immigration as a factor in this, and even during a peak of anti-Irish feeling in the colony during the first Legislative Assembly elections in 1856, no move was

98. Herald, May 21, 1860.

99. This 'fair share' being in proportion to the proportion of Irish in the total population of Britain. What the Freeman's sought, however, was the acceptance of all Irish, within the limits of the assistance regulations, who wished to emigrate. In his Reminiscences, published in 1863, Roger Therry was able to speak of Lang's sectarian attitude to emigration, and the response to Irish immigration generally, with equanimity. (Reminiscences of 30 Years residence in N.S.W., p. 406).

100. R.Lawson, op. cit., p. 109; J.D.Lang's letters in The British Banner, November 14, 1848 (from cuttings book of Caroline Chisholm, compiled by M. Kiddle (Mitchell MSS.)).

made to impede the introduction of more Irish immigrants. In May 1861, a motion to amend the immigration regulations such that passages be granted in proportion to the English, Scots and Irish numbers in the colony at the 1861 census, condemned by the Freeman's Journal as designed 'to exclude Irish men and Catholics from the colony', proved so unpopular with most members that it was withdrawn without being put to the vote.¹⁰¹ Most important in ending sectarian debate on immigration, however, was the steady decline in assisted immigration from 1857 (and in immigration generally from 1860), which did not revive again until the late 'seventies. The period 1861-7 saw an interesting experiment with emphasis on 'passage certificate' immigration, by which immigrants were nominated by colonists rather than sought out and selected by the Emigration Commissioners, but the numbers thus introduced were small compared with the government and bounty schemes of the 'forties and 'fifties.

By the census of 1861, immigrants from Ireland represented 16% of the N.S.W. population, as compared with 21% in 1851 and population was not enumerated according to place of birth at the 1841 census. Between 1839 and 1851 the Irish proportion in assisted immigration to the colony was 48%¹⁰² and in the 'fifties averaged 40%. These figures were influenced by the high proportion of Irish women in the 'orphan immigration' of 1848-50 and in

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101. Freeman's Journal, May 1, 1861. The immigration grant had come under review by the new Parliament in April, and this new method of apportioning the grant was proposed by Piddington as an amendment to the motion of Rotton that the grant be halved.
102. R.B.Madgwick, Immigration into Eastern Australia 1788-1851, p. 234.

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assisted immigration generally, and by the coincidence of famine in Ireland followed by a boom in railway construction in England which placed labour there at a premium, which together ensured that quotas for assisted immigration were met by the Immigration agents by accepting a larger number of applicants from Ireland. In 1850, 79% of the assisted immigrants to N.S.W. were Irish, and still constituted 67% of those in 1851 - higher than at the peak of bounty immigration 1841-2. Only in 1848-9 and in 1857 did the Irish constitute less than a third of assisted immigrants. Thus the comparatively small proportion of Irish-born at the 1861 census was a result not of any effective discrimination against Irish immigration, but a measure of the native population both existing in the colony prior to the inauguration of large-scale assisted immigration and contributed to by the immigrants themselves.¹⁰⁴

At the census of 1851, when immigrants from Ireland constituted 21% of the N.S.W. population, 31,180 lived in counties constituting 20% of the population there, and 6,318 in the squatting districts,¹⁰⁵ where they represented 23%. In 1861, when the Irish-born were 15.6% of the colonial population, they were 15% of the urban population and 17% of that in rural areas,¹⁰⁶ and the number of Irish men in urban areas (9,757) was considerably less than that in rural districts (17,681), only the large number of Irish women in the major towns and cities swinging the balance in favour of a

103. The famine in fact began in 1846, but only really affected the flow of emigration from 1848.

104. At the 1861 census, 133,221 (31.97%) of the population were children under 15.

105. The total Irish population in 1851 was 38,659. They were also 25% of the population in the 'reputed county' of Stanley. N.S.W. Parliamentary Papers, 1851 2nd Session, Vol. 2.

106. Parliamentary Papers, 1862, Vol. 3, pp. 580-593.

greater proportion of Irish in the urban division. It is impossible to compare the figures of urban-rural distribution in 1861 with those ten years earlier, since the distinction made in the 1851 census was rather between counties and squatting districts: even though the classification 'urban' in 1861 was given to any place with more than 100 people, the male population in the areas designated rural in 1861 was six and a half times greater than in the squatting districts of 1851, though the total population had only doubled in these ten years.¹⁰⁷ It is obvious, however, that the wide distribution of the Irish population outside the towns and villages did not at either time mean that most of these were established as farmers or pastoralists. Opponents of Irish immigration liked to allege that the permanent labourer status of most of these arrivals was due to their unwillingness to move into the interior (and thus to possible ultimate independence, since it was only away from the towns that a labourer could hope to save much of his wages).¹⁰⁸ This was to a considerable extent true, as it was with regard to immigrants generally;¹⁰⁹ nevertheless, there were other limitations to the prospects for independent land-holding in N.S.W.

As early as 1820, 389,238 acres had been alienated around Sydney, nearly all through free land grants.¹¹⁰ Though the system of grants was

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107. The Irish males in the squatting districts of 1851 were 4,377 in a male population of 19,219, compared with 17,681 in a total of 127,698 men in the rural areas of 1861.
108. e.g. J.D.Lang's comments before the 1847-8 Committee on Colonization from Ireland, House of Commons, Sessional Papers, 1847-8, Vol. 17, p. 250.
109. As regards the Irish specifically, even Lang recognised the influence in this reluctance of an additional pious rationale. For an actual example, see the letters of Michael Normile ff.
110. J.T.Bigge, Report of the Commissioner of Enquiry on the state of agriculture and trade in the colony of N.S.W. (1823), pp. 33-35.

originally instituted to enable the greater self-sufficiency of the colony through the establishment of ex-convicts as independent farmers, only 35,309 acres of the total alienated to 1820 were by grant to emancipists, ex-pirees or ticket-of-leave men, and another 50,884 by purchases of this class. In addition, many of those originally granted small portions had since surrendered them, a few to other emancipists, but most to the free settler and official class of landowners, while the area of cleared land had actually decreased since 1810.¹¹¹ From 1819, Australian wool was increasingly in demand in England, where local sheepfarmers were unable to meet the demands of English manufacture, and this demand was to continue unabated. The readiness of Australian capitalists to take advantage of this situation ensured the dominancy of Australian wool in English manufacture¹¹² but simultaneously entailed the withdrawal of thousands of acres of colonial land from potential cultivation. In 1820, there were 30,396 acres under crop in N.S.W. - by 1845 this had increased to only 160,000 acres (including gardens and orchards) though the population had increased more than five times, and ten years later the area under crop was virtually the same, in spite of another increase of population.(see Table 2).

Table 2. Area under cultivation in New South Wales, 1820-1855, in relation to population.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Area (acres)</u>	<u>Population</u>
1820	30,396	23,939
1845	163,937	154,205 @
1855	171,100 ¹ / ₄	252,640 @

Source: J.T.Bigge, Report, p. 10; N.S.W. Statistical Register, 1861,p.195

@ Census of March, 1846.

@ Census of March, 1856

111. Ibid., op. cit. pp. 10-11.

112. S.H.Roberts, The Squatting Age in Australia, 1835-1847, pp. 42-3.

The system of free land grants ended with the arrival of Sir Richard Bourke as Governor in 1831, but the already entrenched economic and political power of the pastoralists ensured that they would not have to bankrupt themselves to purchase pasture for their flocks;¹¹³ though nineteen counties had been proclaimed in 1829 and settlement theoretically limited to within these boundaries, runs continued to be established in prohibited areas, while the regulations of 1828, ostensibly aimed against the unauthorised occupation of Crown land, enabled the leasing by established landowners of thousands more acres adjoining their freehold properties at an annual rent of 2/6 per 100 acres.¹¹⁴ In 1836, the existence of unauthorised settlement was admitted, and attempts made to regulate it, but the resultant issue of pastoral licences at £10 p.a. was hardly destined to undermine the position of the squatters.

From 1840 the hold of the squatters on the lands of N.S.W. was strongly attacked, and in 1844 the position of the large pastoralist seemed to be in real danger from a democratic alliance against it¹¹⁵ but the Orders-in-Council of 1847 secured their dominance and fixed the role of N.S.W. as a predominantly pastoral country. Yet this was not wholly a perversion of the 'true' role of the colony as a land of small farmers; Bigge recognised in 1820 that the normal 60 acre grant to emancipists and free settlers depended not only on their exertions, but on the availability of capital,

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113. The end of the free grants system was accompanied by the inauguration of land sale at an upset minimum price of five shillings per acre.
114. T.M.Perry, Australia's First Frontier, p. 36. By the end of 1829, 374,000 acres had been thus leased, to the advantage of the large landowners, who were very often also illegal squatters.
115. Regulations were gazetted by Governor Gipps on April 2, 1844 that only runs of not more than 20 square miles were to be held by licence at £20 p.a., with purchase rights that ensured security of tenure but also purchase obligations which, if not complied with, meant that the runs could be offered for sale elsewhere. K.Buckley, 'Gipps and the Graziers of New South Wales, 1841-1846', Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand, p. 179. May 1956.

agricultural knowledge and the ability to make a good original selection.¹¹⁶ Most of the best agricultural land on the Hawkesbury and the Cumberland Plains had already been granted, and it was soon to be clear that distance from Sydney - then the only market - made farming in the interior unprofitable. The reason for this, the high cost of transportation, was not readily overcome.¹¹⁷ Road building was widely undertaken by Bourke, but was adversely affected by the cessation of transportation in 1840 and depression in the colony soon after. The profitability of wool, on the other hand, ensured a growing demand for labourers: in 1841, 12,948 of the population were engaged as shepherds and shearers and another 16,670 as stockmen and gardeners, 53% of the total population whose occupation was recorded.¹¹⁸ In 1846 there were 13,500 shepherds alone¹¹⁹ and by 1851 the number engaged in 'grazing' still far exceeded those in agriculture.¹²⁰

Thus, although colonisation continued to be eulogised as a means of establishing the redundant population of Britain as independent farmers in the colonies, fluctuations in the cultivation of land in N.S.W. did not follow immigration trends. The area under cultivation, which had risen steadily but unspectacularly between 1825 and 1839, showed no sudden rise during the years of largest immigration, 1840-1857. To some extent, these

116. J.T.Bigge, op. cit., p. 24.

117. J.S.Bach, op. cit., for details of internal N.S.W. communications.

118. R.Mansfield, An Analytical View of the Census of New South Wales for the Year 1841, 1841, p. 20.

119. F.Crowley, op. cit., p. 200.

120. 1851 census. N.S.W. Parliamentary Papers, 1851, 2nd session, Vol. 2.

fluctuations were influenced by speculation following upon the increased demand these immigrants created both for land and its products, and by the vagaries of seasonal returns, that could either enable a farmer to buy and sow additional land, or induce him to risk less. A full explanation of annual fluctuations, as shown in Table 3, is beyond the scope of this

Table 3. Area under cultivation in N.S.W., 1840-1859 in relation to assisted immigration.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Area (acres)</u>	<u>Immigration</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Immigration</u>
1840	126,116	6637	1850	198,056 $\frac{1}{2}$	6055
1841	115,130	20103	1851	153,117 $\frac{1}{4}$	1846
1842	126,874	6823	1852	131,730 $\frac{1}{4}$	4981
1843	146,165	11	1853	139,014 $\frac{1}{4}$	10412
1844	144,661	4139	1854	131,857	7309
1845	163,979	498	1855	171,100 $\frac{1}{4}$	14567
1846	183,360	--	1856	186,033 $\frac{1}{2}$	7210
1847	165,784	--	1857	184,513 $\frac{1}{2}$	10205
1848	164,664	7885	1858	223,295 $\frac{1}{2}$	6916
1849	182,739	15773	1859	247,524 $\frac{1}{4}$	5114

Source: N.S.W. Parliamentary Papers. To 1851, figures include Port Phillip.

thesis. What is obvious, is that immigrants did not automatically buy and cultivate land on their arrival; at the end of 1861 there were still only 300,000 acres under crop, just double that of 1851, in spite of the doubling of population over the same period.¹²¹

This failure to establish a nation of small farmers did not, however, imply the poverty of the economy of the colony. The increase of population caused the diversification of the economy and therefore of the range of employment and social status attainable. The disadvantages of

121. N.S.W. Parliamentary Papers, 1855, Vol. 2; T.A.Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, Vol. 2, p. 971.

a declining supply of land available at a reasonable price was offset in the fifties by the gold discoveries and the opportunities offered by them - for, whether the discoveries were in Victoria or N.S.W. itself, they ultimately attracted large numbers of immigrants to all the Australian colonies.¹²² Contemporaries commented that the depression of the early 'forties greatly detracted from the esteem in which N.S.W. had been held for the emigration of both population and capital, and real wages for the labouring man in fact rose very little during the period 1820-1850.¹²³ In Ireland at least, however, the realities of the colonial situation had little effect on emigration since, before 1850, it was rather the state of Ireland that determined the decision to emigrate. Compared with famine Ireland (and many areas of Ireland were in extreme distress even before the worst of the potato famine) even the dangers of the 'fever ships' to the North American colonies were accepted by thousands, while Australia was increasingly attractive to those with a little more capital to contribute towards an assisted passage, with friends or relatives already there, or with the desire and funds to 'stock a run' from which so many settlers in N.S.W. seemed to be making their fortune. The extent to which these immigrants succeeded as labourers and as

122. In 1861 the proportion of miners in the population was second only to those engaged in agriculture, and the number of skilled working men was only slightly behind. The proportion engaged in pastoral activities had fallen to 4.13% and the number of unskilled labourers was even smaller. The role of women remained limited, 23.78% of the population were returned as domestic servants, of whom nearly all were women. 1861 census. Parliamentary Papers.

123. F.Crowley, op. cit., p. 452. This applied largely in towns, where rising prices kept level with increases in money wages. The situation of the pastoral worker, whose keep was paid by the employer, could often be favourable, depending on the state of the wool market and on labour supply.

independent land-owners was much discussed at the time, but rarely impartially because of the current sectarian debates involving these immigrants as Catholics.

One very hostile witness gave this detailed picture of the Irish in Sydney in 1849 -

... the Irish do not like going into the interior; they like to hold together like cattle, where they can squat down and gossip together about all the ins and outs of the neighbourhood, and have their priests and chapel in sight. An Irishman out here for twelve months knows more of the history of the people than an Englishman in seven years. Many of them get into the Police or Post Office or Government messengers; others go hawking about a few trifles, great strong men fit for any work; and others live by daaling, as they call it. Budge out of the town they will not. Through their systematic cooperation they are getting the upper hand of the Protestants. First, by being three parts Irish that has been sent out this last twelvemonth, and more than three parts of these Catholics, as the Registrar could prove. The next is, nearly every house that has a servant, one or two is Irish, and mostly Catholic. Many are forced to have all Irish, five or six I have often seen in a house and on the premises, because they could get no others. The consequence is, they know nearly all the affairs of their employers and can give every information at the Catholic headquarters. The greater part of the shops is now Maloneys and Callaghans, and when I see a shop closed, it is generally reopened by one of them. And if a servant is sent to purchase an article it is to one of them they go; and should their employer think of building or enlarging his premises, they are all immediately in the different trades warned of it and before an Englishman hears of it the whole job is taken by them; and should he enquire of one of them, is sure to get an unsatisfactory answer. The consequence is, there are now very few English mechanics in Sydney, many having emigrated to the other colonies, or driven into the interior, and if not known to some of the old hands, might walk for weeks the town without earning anything. They generally go meanly clad, and will accept of any charity, though earning good wages, and live two or three families in a house, and calling themselves the poor Irish; they

soon save money, and then commence for themselves, to level down those who have assisted to pay their passage out: I know of several who are now at work for these, their former servants. ¹²⁴

These comments were no doubt influenced by the reduction of the former high demand for labour that the introduction of a large number of penniless immigrants would bring¹²⁵ as well as by the correspondent's obvious personal religious and national predilections. Such a picture would no doubt have had as much power to entice more Irish to the colony as it would have had to arouse the indignation of the English Protestant parish to which it was addressed; more important, however, is the consideration of the truth in this portrayal. To some extent, the opinions expressed reflect the comments of the Herald, in the concern that it was Protestant money which had been used to bring these Irish out, and of the London Times, in the assertion that much of the poverty of the Irish was a sham by which they gained the charity of their Protestant fellow men.¹²⁶ Obviously, it is highly coloured, and is in many respects at odds with other reports, as that of Archibald Cunninghame, a barrister and landowner in N.S.W. who had emigrated from England in 1839, who stated before the Select Committee on Colonisation from Ireland in 1846

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124. Anon. Sydney, May 1849 to Rev. C.G. Fryer, Vicar of Eltham, in Emigrant's Letters, being recent communications from settlers in the British Colonies, 1850, pp. 20-21.
125. Wages for labourers were high in 1849 - see gloomy letter of a landowner, Charles Nicholson, to Archibald Cunninghame, March 4, 1849. Cunninghame Papers, Vol. 3.
126. Times, September 22, 1846 and August 14, 1847 in The Great Irish Famine 1845-1846. A Collection of Leading Articles, Letters and Parliamentary and other Public Statements. The Times Office, London, 1880. pp. 34-5, 115.

The South of Ireland men are, many of them, useful men as labourers, but not so large a number of them succeed in getting out of the labour market. They are very good labourers, but you find few of them employed as overseers or in situations of that kind. 127

It was true, nonetheless, that a great many Irish immigrants remained in the city or close to it: in 1851, 42% of the Irish resided in County Cumberland, and 26% in Sydney itself. Though in this they only conformed to the general distribution trend (22% of the total population resided in Sydney and 43% in the whole of County Cumberland)¹²⁸ they were apparently distinct enough there to give more credence to the accusation that 'the Irish' congregated in the city than their actual disproportion warranted.¹²⁹ The foregoing correspondent's explanation of this - that these people wished to remain near their priests and to each other - is supported by evidence of the advice to this effect given by the clergy in Ireland, and by the letters of at least one such emigrant.¹³⁰ Nevertheless, even a critic of this reluctance

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127. House of Commons. Sessional Papers. 1847, Vol. 6, p. 431.
128. Bigge had referred in 1820 to 'the general indisposition evinced by the mechanics to leave the towns, or to undertake labour in the country'. J.T. Bigge, Report, p. 20. Lang made similar observations a vehicle for an attack on the particular tardiness of the Irish in this respect, recognising in this the part played both by the social gregariousness of the Irish and their sense of obligation to their religious duties. Sessional Papers 1847-1848, Vol. 17, p. 250.
129. R.J.Schultz, 'The Assisted Immigrants 1837-1850', Ph.D., Australian National University, 1971, has computed that 10% more of the Protestant government-assisted immigrants moved to country areas on arrival than Catholics. (p.126). 86% of these Catholics were Irish. He makes no parallel comparison for the bounty immigrants, however, who were much more largely Irish.
130. See O MacDonagh, 'The Irish Catholic Clergy and Emigration during the Great Famine', Irish Historical Studies, Vol. 5, no. 20, September 1947; also letters of Michael Normile, p. 41ff. The Freeman's Journal urged immigrants to go 'up country' as soon as possible, to remove themselves from the temptations of drink and from high prices. (April 21, 1855). This was, of course, at a later time, when the clergy had increased and the population generally was more thickly distributed in the country districts.

among the Irish arrivals like J.D.Lang recognised that the availability of land also influenced removal from the port of arrival into the interior, and that this availability was hampered by delays in putting land up for sale and by the practice of offering it in large sections and at auction that put the small buyer at considerable disadvantage. Thus even the emigrant who came with both the determination and the capital to undertake pioneering farming found himself frequently disappointed, his capital dissipated on lodgings while waiting for suitable land to be offered for sale, while the often penniless Irish assisted immigrant was in a hopeless position. The making of fortunes in N.S.W. was as much determined by the circumstance of the colony at the time of one's arrival, and emancipists and immigrants alike were more likely to have succeeded if they had been able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the opening up of new areas of N.S.W. (including Port Phillip) before 1840. As assisted immigration swelled throughout the forties, the opportunities for poor and unskilled immigrants were decreasing, and the immigrants produced by the later years of the Irish potato famine found a less favourable situation than their predecessors. The relatively poor position of the Irish as a community was as much conditioned by the fact that large-scale Irish immigration lagged behind the first movement of English and Scots to the colony, as it was the result of the poverty of the country from which they came.

On the other hand, the extremely depressed condition of Ireland ensured that the initial response of Irish immigrants on arrival in N.S.W. was usually satisfaction. After some time, an abundance of food and apparently high wages might not be sufficient to convince an immigrant that he had made the right decision in emigrating, and especially not sufficient to allow him conscientiously to encourage any other Irishman to emigrate. Most immigrants were ready nonetheless to recommend the life of a labourer in the colony as preferable to that offered to any labourer in Ireland, and increasing dissatisfaction with their own situation prompted very few Irish immigrants to return. The sentimentality and nostalgia with which many increasingly regarded Ireland was rather a symptom of their conviction that they would never more return there, for their future was in the country to which they had come. Such an attitude could foster dissatisfaction with the apparent mal-administration and exploitation of Ireland which had enforced their emigration, and so cause immigrants to readily support movements for better land laws, or the political independence of Ireland, but did not automatically ensure a neglect of one's own interests in the new country in which most decided to remain.

The influence on time of arrival in the colony on economic success, and the subsequent response to an immigrant to the colonial situation, has been indicated earlier in the comparison of an immigrant of 1822 with one of 1838.¹³¹

131. Cummings and Hickey, see pp. 69-70.

George Grey, a Protestant emigrant from Fermanagh in 1841, and Michael Normile, a Catholic who left his native county Clare in 1854, provide a more complete contrast of this, and of the variety possible in the degree of acceptance by the Irish immigrant of the new society and its corresponding acceptance of them. While these two men are not necessarily typical Irish immigrants, they reveal the diversity of response of Irishmen to life in N.S.W. during this period. It should be remembered, however, that neither of these men contributed to the large proportion of the Irish population that lived in Sydney, and that this may explain in some degree their general non-conformity to the picture of 'the Irish' painted by the Sydney-oriented press of N.S.W.¹³²

N.S.W. in 1841 was on the verge of economic crisis following the collapse of the land boom which had reached its peak the previous years,¹³³ but this had not yet been generally recognised. The Herald spoke in March of the 'pressing need' for more labourers, and though it coupled this comment with an attack on the quality of Irish immigrants as labourers¹³⁴ it had already made clear the year before that it distinguished between Catholic and Protestant, north and south, when making such judgements. Thus George Grey, a Protestant from county Fermanagh, would have been both welcome as a labourer and unperturbed by any anti-Irish antagonism when he arrived with his wife and family on the Brothers on March 11 that year. Grey immediately went south to Wollongong, 'at that time the mecca of immigrants',

132. The Freeman's Journal itself distinguished between city and country Irish, the latter being regarded as 'sound' politically, while some of those of the city were disposed to adopt factional loyalties above considerations of unity with their countrymen. May 10, 1856.

133. B. Fitzpatrick, The British Empire in Australia, 1834-1939, pp. 71-4.

134. Sydney Morning Herald, March 2, 1841.

according to Arthur Cousins, local historian and friend of George Grey's grandson.¹³⁵ The districts south of Sydney (Liverpool, Appin, Wollongong, Kiama, and later Queanbeyan, Yass and Goulburn) had long been areas of considerable attractions for Irish arrivals, with immigrants following the pattern of settlement developed by emancipists,¹³⁶ and the immigration of 1838-1841 added considerably to this. Governor Macquarie's journal of his first inspection tour of the interior in 1810 mentioned visits to the farms of 'Holt, Burn, Develin, etc., etc., and ended it at Dwyer's'; all these were 1798 rebels.¹³⁷ Many of these farms were poor specimens, as Macquarie noted at that time and Bigge reiterated in 1821; there were, however, also a number of Irish among the squatters who initially extended the areas of settlement southwards. In January 1822 Macquarie visited the farm at Appin of Cornelius O'Brien,¹³⁸ the nephew of William Browne, an emigrant from Galway (via India) in 1816, who also had large estates in Illawarra (3,800 acres by grant by the time of his death in 1833) and in 1832 the Irishmen Burns, Fitzpatrick, William Osborne, etc. were among the 23 (unauthorised) squatters on Liverpool Plains.¹³⁹ Names of Irishmen were also evident among 137 squatters applying for pastoral licences after the issue of new regulations in 1836.¹⁴⁰ Early grants in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven districts,

135. A. Cousins, The Garden of N.S.W., p.

136. The Irish Catholic transportee, James Meehan was instrumental in opening up many of these areas by his work as acting government surveyor.

137. L. Macquarie, Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of N.S.W. Journal of his tours in N.S.W. & Van Dieman's Land, 1810-1822, p. 3.

138. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

139. J.F. Campbell, Squatting on Crown Lands in N.S.W., p. 1.

140. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

e.g., reflected the intrusion there of pastoralists rather than agriculturists¹⁴¹ but this did not ultimately mean the exclusion of small settlers from the district: many of the grantees were subsequently to lease their land, and after 1825 many of the further grants in that area were for less than 100 acres.¹⁴² At the 1828 census, only 48 residents were recorded in Illawarra¹⁴³ but by 1836 there were 6,000 acres under cultivation, mostly by small settlers.¹⁴⁴

George Grey arrived ten years after the era of free grants had ended, but was one of a number of immigrants who benefited indirectly from land grants, for in 1843 he took a clearing lease on 1,000 acres of the 1280 acre grant of James Robb, a Scots emigrant to Sydney in 1828.¹⁴⁵ The district to which he now came, some twenty-five miles south of Wollongong, claimed a number of Irish Protestants among its prominent land owners - James Mackay Grey, the Wentworths, Henry Osborne. Many such men were absentee landlords, however, and George Grey chose to introduce reinforcements to this group by the arrangement, with the cooperation of the British Colonial Office, for the emigration of a number of relations and acquaintances from county Fermanagh to aid him in the execution of the lease he had undertaken. It is possible that Grey was motivated in this action by religious considerations, since he applied not only to his own county but to the Orange

141. Of thirteen grants by 1821, three were for more than 2,000 acres and only three were under 1,000 acres. Perry, op. cit., p. 113.

142. Ibid., p. 114.

143. Ibid., p. 113.

144. F. McCaffrey, The History of Illawarra and its Pioneers, 1922, p. 35.

145. Ibid., p. 35.

lodge there for prospective emigrants.¹⁴⁶ The Catholic population of the Illawarra district in 1841 was estimated at 2,650, more than half of whom were around Grey's first place of residence in N.S.W., Wollongong, and Irish Catholic landowners were also prominent in the district, the largest being William Browne and his two nephews, Cornelius and Henry O'Brien. The Ireland that Grey left in 1841 was agitated by O'Connell's movement for Repeal of the Union of 1800, a movement towards which Grey, as a Protestant, an Orangeman and an Ulsterman was certainly opposed. The first Orange lodge appeared in N.S.W. in 1845; the fifth, and the first to appear outside Sydney, was opened in Kiama on March 8, 1846.¹⁴⁷ The men of the twenty-three families recruited through the Orange lodge in County Fermanagh comprised most, if not all its original members, and the lodge met in the house of John Grey, the nephew of George Grey.¹⁴⁸ Kiama was unique in possessing a greater number of Irish-born than of Catholics (71 Catholics, 146 Irish), while the number of Presbyterians outweighed the number of Scots-born to a much larger extent than in the colony as a whole.¹⁴⁹ George Grey himself was an Anglican, but most of the men urged to emigrate by him, and accepted as tenants on the estates of the Presbyterian James Robb and other Protestant landowners, were Presbyterians and Wesleyans.¹⁵⁰

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146. Information kindly given by Arthur Grey of 'Ashburton', Schofields, N.S.W., great-grandson of George Grey, in interview, October 6, 1972 and letter, May 1, 1973. Although the secondary sources generally give the year of the arrival of these immigrants as 1843 the Index to Bounty Immigrants, 1828-42 (N.S.W. Archives Authority) records the arrival of a number of emigrants from Fermanagh (including several persons named Grey) on the Wilson, January 7, 1842.
147. W.A. Stewart, Early History of the Loyal Orange Institution, N.S.W., 1926, p. 24.
148. Information of Arthur Gray.
149. 82 Scots, 193 Presbyterians (26% of the Kiama population, compared with 9.9% in the colonial population).
150. A. Cousins, op. cit., p.

After the expiration of his clearing lease on the Riversdale estate, Grey rented land from James Mackay Grey (no relation), a Presbyterian emigrant from county Armagh who had come to Kiama in 1834 after a few months in Van Dieman's Land, purchasing the 1,280 acre grant of his brother-in-law, Thomas Campbell (an emigrant from Belfast) for £400.¹⁵¹ Initially, J.M. Grey had used convict labour on his farm; the right to such labour ceased in 1836 and Grey obviously found it more profitable thereafter to lease his land - by 1856 he had twenty tenants, many also accepted initially on the clearing lease system, including George Grey.¹⁵² George Grey was not satisfied with mere tenancy, however, and after the expiration of his lease he bought twelve suburban lots in Kiama, and subsequently established his home, 'Mt. Salem' on the outskirts of the town. The family continued to prosper; George Grey's son William, born in Ireland in 1832, later established his home nearby and developed a large herd of first-class dairy cattle. After his initial gesture in organising the emigration of a group of fellow countrymen in 1842, George Grey devoted his energies to the development of his properties, and later to local affairs, including the establishment of the Church of England in nearby Gerringong. As he left no letters, it is impossible to say whether George Grey ever regretted leaving Ireland or desired to return there; no awareness of such regrets has been remembered by his family, nor did he take part in any local movements for Irish independence. In view of his many activities in N.S.W. it would seem likely that Grey was fully immersed in the realities of his colonial

151. McCaffrey, op. cit., p. 125.

152. Ibid., p. 125; also information from Mrs. J. Williams, descendant of J.M. Grey, of Kiama.

situation, and his son William similarly would have had little time to spare from his dairying and business ventures and activity in civic and church affairs to concern himself with movements in Ireland.

The Irish immigrant who remained a labourer was a more likely candidate for membership of Irish national movements not only because his situation in the colony did not meet possible expectations. A man who worked only to prescribed hours, in a job which did not demand total energies or commitment, and who might regularly change districts and so develop no sense of identification with local affairs (or, more commonly, live in Sydney or other large towns where such a sense was harder to develop) might find these factors as well as his relatively low economic position pushing him towards an emotional attachment to movements aimed at improving the situation in the country which he was forced to leave.¹⁵³ An immigrant who found life in N.S.W. little better than he could have had expected in normal times in Ireland could easily exaggerate the degree of 'expulsion' in his decision to emigrate and accordingly identify with movements against his particular foe, whether landlords, land laws, Orangemen, political rule by England or 'the English' generally. Such an association could also be a safety valve for

153. Such men, however, because of their working hours, could not readily undertake an official role in national societies as office bearers or committee members. For discussion of the occupations of those involved in national societies, see Chapter V. The role of emancipists in the early Repeal movement has already been noted (see p. 68). The extent of their expulsion from Ireland is obvious, but the forty years inter-political independence movement in Ireland, together with their success in establishing themselves in the colony, had muted the expression of their patriotism.

resentment against the failure of colonial conditions to meet expectations - it is obvious from immigrant's letters that while the high wages in Australia were well publicised in Ireland, the correspondingly high cost of food and rent came as something of a revelation. Certainly it would appear that some immigrants made agitation on behalf of Ireland rather a habit: the same names appear as leaders of a number of different movements¹⁵⁴ and the Irish labouring classes of Sydney were to become notorious for the readiness of some of their members to take part in any extreme agitation, local or national. Nevertheless, such a degree of involvement was not the norm. There is no questioning of the fact that Irish colonists were prepared regularly to contribute funds to a variety of Irish causes, and that the amounts contributed were generous, but such action was essentially passive, and the most common collections - for distressed areas and famine relief - were humanitarian and aroused general colonial sympathies. Where political movements were concerned, there was division within the Irish community over support of such movements as well as conflict between Irish and non-Irish colonists.

Whenever the character of 'the Irish' or the state of Ireland was under attack in the colony, most Irish were ready to spring to their country's defence. This was an automatic response by newly arrived immigrants, and by taking papers from 'home' many Irish colonists managed to keep in touch with events in Ireland and were able to counter the Times-conditioned

154. M. Lyons, 'Aspects of Sectarianism in N.S.W. circa 1865-80' (Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1972), appendix 1b, p. 406.

portrayal of developments there by the Herald and other colonial sources.¹⁵⁵ Basically, however, the regular refutation of dismal reports on the quality of the Irish or of life in Ireland, as provided by the Freeman's Journal and Irish spokesmen, was aimed at ensuring that Irish colonists were not discriminated against in N.S.W. for any wrongdoing of their countrymen in Ireland. Men like Roger Therry must have realised that passive acceptance of calumnies on the Irish character and ability, as made during the bounty immigration discussions of 1840-1841, would make easier the treatment of Irish settlers in N.S.W. as second class citizens. Throughout the 'fifties, the Freeman's Journal fought for the principle of the right of Catholic representation in politics, even though it did not accept in practice a Catholic candidate merely because he was a Catholic. It also patently urged the maintenance of a sense of Irish nationality by Irish colonists, and particularly feared the apparent revulsion from this sense of identification by Irish-Australians (i.e. the native born children of Irish immigrants).¹⁵⁶ At this stage, however, the editor did not suggest that these Irish-Australians should do anything on behalf of Ireland; merely that a sense of the glory and the ancient history of the Celtic race be inculcated into them, that they should never learn to feel themselves an inferior race. The real importance of this was indicated by an editorial the following year, when the editor made what began as an appeal to Irish patriotism a vehicle for the encouragement of support for the maintenance of state-aid to religion in the colony.

155. See letters of Michael Normile ff; also Freeman's Journal, e.g. February 5, 1852.

156. Freeman's Journal, July 14, 1855, May 10, 1856.

... Irishmen know what it is to have bad laws, and now since we are in a country where there is no such harrowing grievance, and have the advantage of being aided by Englishmen thousands of whom like ourselves, have been hunted away from their homes by the penal laws, it is imperative on us all to coalesce, to put shoulder to shoulder, and to return such gentlemen to represent us in Parliament as will fairly express our views and pursue a course of legislation we can approve of ... Senators will be wanted to represent the different colonial interests - squatting, commercial, agricultural etc. - and yet these seemingly hostile representatives may be chosen to agree in one point, in one material point, to be the advocates of religious equality, of equal religious and civil rights all over the colony ... No man who is averse to the principle of state pay to the clergy is sincerely an advocate of that doctrine. 157

This line taken by the Freeman's Journal was certainly the most realistic one. Concerted action in Ireland for reforms or for independence was only sporadic throughout the nineteenth century, and concern for Ireland in the colonies was correspondingly irregular. On the other hand, the reaction to Irish immigration into N.S.W. had shown how closely linked with the Catholic religion of most of these immigrants were attacks on the Irish character, and this was reinforced by the concern shown, from the first Legislative Council elections of 1843, with the religion of Irish candidates for public office.¹⁵⁸ For the Irish Catholic immigrant, it was likely that any hostility met in the colony was on account of his religion.¹⁵⁹ Any sense of alienation

157. Freeman's Journal, March 1, 1856.

158. The Herald, June 12, 1843 suggested to Maurice O'Connell that he had already lost many Protestant votes by an alleged 'undue leaning to the politics and to the creed of his celebrated kinsman, the Knight-errant of Repeal' and advised him that 'unless he shall tomorrow make an unequivocal declaration as to his own sincerity as a Protestant Christian he will lose many more'.

159. The Freeman's Journal did not make this any easier for an Irish immigrant by editorials like that of January 20, 1855, in which it declared that the 'mission' of the Irish exodus was primarily 'a mission of Catholic Ireland ... to spread the true faith of Christ'.

from other colonists could thus be met by denying or modifying the overt practice of one's Catholicism, or by reverting to a greater absorption in it and settling within an established Catholic community. Judging from the accusations made against Irish immigrants, that they were reluctant to move into remote areas because they would there be deprived of contact with priest and church, and from the tradition in Ireland of loyalty to the institutions and formal observances of one's faith, it would seem likely that the latter was the more common response (though this did not mean that Catholics necessarily acted in unity on all other issues, as the Herald and other commentators would have it). Certainly there was no evidence of apostasy by Catholics in N.S.W. (and, in view of the concern with conversions to Catholicism, any such reversals would no doubt have been widely publicised in the Protestant press), though the possibility of the growth of indifference among Catholics deprived of a priest and in Protestant majority districts was a constant source of anxiety to the Hierarchy.

Michael Normile, an emigrant to N.S.W. in 1854 from Derry, county Clare, was one Irish Catholic colonist who turned increasingly to his faith after settling in the colony. An assisted immigrant in 1854, together with his sister Bridget, Michael saw his move as a permanent one, and was obviously determined to accept life in Australia. Nevertheless, he was happy to find many fellow Irishmen on the emigrant ship and the sentiment was apparently mutual.

We came to the Depot, there we met our comrades, and you might think it was out of the heavens we came to them. Michael Grady, Patt McGrath and Bridget Neylor were as glad as if we gave them a thousand pounds for we being along with them. ¹⁶⁰

After a few months in N.S.W. Michael revealed the same pleasure in the proximity of his former neighbours, along with a readiness to be satisfied with what the new colony offered. Michael had gone to work immediately at a station at Lochinvar for the landowner who had contributed his passage money¹⁶¹ and was well pleased with his work and wages and with what he believed to be still better prospects ('would not give my chance for the best farm in Derry').¹⁶² Even in this early letter, however, Michael made the request for a newspaper from 'home' which he was to repeat so frequently over the next ten years.

Six months later Michael, who had now moved to West Maitland and worked loading teams with stores for the merchant firm, Solomin Vindin and Co., Millers and Store-keepers, where he was to remain for the next ten years, gave a very fair assessment of colonial conditions. The prospects for a farmer were excellent -

160. April 20, 1854. Letters of Michael Normile, loaned by Miss K. Normoyle, of Kilshanny, Derry, county Clare. These letters cover the period 1854-65, with another letter of 1869 and one from Michael's sister, Anna, from America.

161. November 11, 1855.

162. November 5, 1854.

... I mean to inform you of the fertility of this country. First if a man has a farm of land he can (do) very well. He sows wheat on the month of April as it grows first rate wheat. After cutting the wheat he ploughs it and puts in a crop of Indian corn. He has that off before he wants the soil for wheat, that is two crops in one year. (He can) grow two crops of potatoes in one year. All the crops pays very well, wheat from 11 to 15 shillings per bushel of 69lb, corn 9 to 11 shillings per bushel, so a man having land can live very happy. When a settler has good crops and has the luck of getting them in his yard or barn he has a gold crop, in fact everything he grows pay him well, but they have not plenty hands to work the land the same as home ... You will get land here for as much as you like from 1000 acre to 1 acre, or otherwise you will get land here for rent the same as home. There is no poor rates or taxes but your rent to pay. You will get first rate land here for 1£ an acre yearly rent that a pair of horses will work the same as home. If you take a clearing lease you will get it 5 or 7 years free to clear it from timber, and if you built a house on it the owner must pay you for all improvements. A man wants a good team of bullocks to plough new land, and after its ploughed once or twice with bullocks, a pair of horses will work it after. A man coming to this country he is nothing but a real fool for the first year especially Irishmen, for it is all the English system they have for working. If an Irishman goes to drive horses or bullocks here after he comes out from home, he might as well go whistle a jig to a milestone as to speak to them. 163

Nevertheless, Michael already had reservations about the suitability of the colony for certain types of emigrants, and revealed the caution and somewhat rigid piety in his nature which possibly as much determined his failure to improve his situation for many years as it was determined by it.

163. April 1, 1855.

A man having a comfortable living at home with his family, convenient to chapel and market, and a good bed to lie on, I would advise him to stop there, for he has many ups and downs to encounter before he has a comfortable home in this country. A man convenient to Mass at home and comes here, goes up the country, for perhaps he may not get a place that would suit him convenient to the towns, he wont see the face of a priest but once or twice a year, that is in Christmas and Easter, that is, a man with a family. A single man or woman is not to be compared to him, for they are young and healthy to work and go about until such time as they can get settled in some kind of business for themselves. I would advise a young man or woman that has to work hard at home and has not much by it to come here - although wages is coming down for there is such numbers of people emigrating to this country from all parts of the world ... It would take me too long to let you know how people make money in this country. There is some of them that adores money before the Almighty, such as them that thinks to make a fortune in a few years and go home. They go hundreds of miles to diggings and every other places for money, and they never think that they are to die. A man can't make a fortune here so very quick if he minds his duty to God and keeps convenient to chapel and keeps clean and regular clothes on, which I mean to do, please God. Whilst a man keeps from liquor in this country he is liked well and does well.

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Later that year, Michael again appeared well satisfied with his wages (45/- per week) and with the plenty of the colony in general ('There is no starvation or any thoughts of it, thank God. Potatoes grew first rate these two last crops, I mean winter and summer crops'); at the same time, however, he criticised the failure of many local farmers to sow potatoes (a reflection of his experiences of famine in Ireland, and the lingering fear of the recurrence of such times even in a country where potatoes were not the staple diet) and, commenting on an acquaintance who had recently returned to Derry and

164. April 1, 1855.

astounded people there with his colonial-earned wealth, wrote, almost as an aside 'I dont like to say too much concerning one thing but if I had too much money as he said he had and to go home, no body would ever see me again in New South Wales'. ¹⁶⁵

At no time, however, is there any indication that Michael Normile ever seriously considered returning to Ireland. His first child was born in March 1856¹⁶⁶ and by 1862 he had a family of four children to hold him in the colony. He appears soon to have reconciled himself to remaining a wage earner, and only in 1860, following the discovery of the Snowy River diggings, was he even slightly tempted to exchange his safe job with Solomon Vindin and Co. for the chances of gold-digging. ('I am living with the one gentleman for the last five years; they are very fond of me, they are frightened I will take a start to these last diggings. I have not made up my mind for it yet. I am very comfortable where I am, myself and little family'.)¹⁶⁷ In his earlier comments on the gold-fields in 1856 and 1858, Michael had made it clear that 'the diggings' were not the insurance of a man's fortune they were apparently believed in Ireland to be, the decline of alluvial gold having changed the nature of mining to an enterprise requiring capital as well as the energy to wield a shovel. Hundreds of men travelled to every new field in spite of these factors, however, and Michael's failure to join them is an indication of his satisfaction with his settled situation in Maitland as much as his awareness of the difficulties facing miners.

165. November 11, 1855.

166. It is not clear when Michael married; he appears to have been accompanied only by his sister on his voyage out, and at no time in his letters does he mention his wife's name.

167. Letters, August 19th, 1860., April 18, 1865.

In 1862 Michael wrote that 'to my grief I expect I never will see Ireland any more or the land that gave me birth, its all I can say, I wish yea and the country you live in every good luck and prosperity', but in the same letter added 'I am near the priest and church and religion, I have plenty as yet thank God. I am working in the old place still, I have 4 in family, 3 girls and a boy, the eldest is going to school. We are comfortable as yet, thank God'.¹⁶⁸ It may be an unjust accusation, but it would appear that Michael's complaints of high prices and repeated comments to the effect that 'this country is not turning out as good as people thought' were rather designed to excuse his failure to send money home to his father than as expressions of his general dissatisfaction. Such comments usually accompanied statements like 'I have been a bad son to you dear father, but I could not help it' and 'I am very sorry I cant send you some assistance. It takes all my earnings to support ourselves and little family, everything is very dear'.¹⁶⁹

N.S.W. in the 'fifties was a congenial place for an Irish immigrant, by and large; the immigration controversies of former years largely dropped, the desire for mutual acceptance and toleration of all nationalities in the ascendant,¹⁷⁰ no current issue creating antipathy between England and

168. April 18, 1862.

169. September 15, 1863.

170. e.g. Sydney Morning Herald, January 12, February 26, 1856. This toleration did not extend to the Chinese who were just as disliked by the Freeman's Journal (e.g. October 14, 1852) and who were also condemned by Michael Normile. ('This country is infested with that race of people. humans that they are, able to destroy an employer, they work for little or nothing') September 15, 1863.

Ireland, expressions of sympathy for the released '48 exiles quite acceptable in 1854, and the regular gold discoveries in N.S.W. and Victoria ensuring both well-paid work for those who wanted a stable existence, and the prospects of quick fortune for those who didn't. The situation for an Irish Catholic in N.S.W. at the same time was not so promising, with controversy over the idea of Catholic political representation and 'clerical guidance' in elections developing along with self-government, the new challenges to state-aided denominational education, and division within the Catholic community itself as a minority of clergy and laymen laid challenge to the administration of Archbishop Polding. Yet, in spite of the stir that each of these issues caused in the colonial press - and Michael Normile certainly read at least the Freeman's Journal - there is no mention of any of them in his letters during this period. To some extent this is probably an indication of the Sydney-centred source of most of these controversies. Maitland had always been an area of Catholic concentration: in 1836 Catholics were 365 of the town population of 1,163 (31%) and in 1861 they were 32% and 28% respectively of East and West Maitland, (Irish-born 22% and 16%), and Michael had no cause to feel personally threatened as a Catholic or isolated as an Irishman. Indeed, he wrote in 1857 'there is in this town 6 or 7 different churches; there is more Roman Catholics in the town than all the others and to put them all together' ¹⁷¹ and in 1856

171. April 8, 1857.

that 'There is a great deal of the neighbours about this town'.¹⁷² In addition, West Maitland enjoyed the luxury of a long-resident priest, Rev. John T. Lynch (later Dean Lynch) who officiated there from 1840 and was extremely active and successful: successful not only in the spiritual sphere but also in the establishing of the institutions of Catholicism in his mission.¹⁷³ Financial success was something most men appreciated, and Normile's admiration was apparent in his comment to his father in 1857 that 'We have a very fine priest here, Dean Lynch, a Dubliner, and I think a purse would not carry all the money he has'.¹⁷⁴ Maitland had been created a suffragan see in 1847, and though the appointed bishop, Dom. C. H. Davis, spent his six years in Australia in the Sydney diocese as Coadjutor to Polding,¹⁷⁵ Maitland thus gained a sense of autonomy that enabled Lynch to engage on local empire-building and to isolate to some extent the local Catholics from the internal Church controversies that elsewhere created rifts in the Catholic communities. When Michael Normile did refer to local issues that caused him dissatisfaction, these were basically issues connected with the colonial economy - the limited extent of public works seems a particular fetish of his, and it is hard to say how much this concern was influenced by experience of a similar failure of the government to provide such a means of unemployment relief during distressed times in Ireland, and

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172. August 3, 1856. In 1855 the Freeman's Journal advised that immigrants be sent to Bathurst and Goulburn, but that Maitland already had received its fair share because of the 'ease of conveyance there'. April 21, 1855.
173. In 1841 there were already two schools and three chapels in the mission; by 1854 Maitland was described as 'the second mission of importance in the Colony! P.O'Farrell, Documents, Vol. 1, p. 298, 150. For Lynch's successful fight against alcoholism, see Birt, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 47.
174. April 8, 1857.
175. Birt, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 131; O'Farrell, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 303.

how much by the personal inconvenience he experienced from a poor mail and communication service and the shocking condition of Maitland's main street. The one occasion on which he mentioned a controversy over religion was when he referred his father to an article in the Freeman's Journal issue he was sending - 'There is a great discussion between the Catholics and a Presbyterian minister, they broke the church down and gave the minister a good thrashing'.¹⁷⁶ There is much of a quiet satisfaction with this incident in Michael's brief comment, but no evidence that he, as a Catholic, had been in any way shaken in his faith by the controversies within and around the Church in the previous few years, of which this was but one incident. His pride in the achievements of his niece Mary Carrig in Brisbane ('Mary Carrigg is a clever looking girl and well educated, she is one of the leading girls that sing in Brisbane chapel in the choir, she is well liked by the bishop and priests of that town')¹⁷⁷ is the pride of a Catholic who fully accepted the authority of the Hierarchy and the institutions of his church, and he was harsh in his censure of Catholics who neglected their duties in order to make money in 'the bush' or on the gold fields.

I might be a wealthier man than what I am at present if I did go to the wild country to live, and live there like wild cattle, where I would not see a priest for years nor the face of a white man for months. Its strange to see and hear how some people lives in this country; I know some people living in what we call the bush in the interior far in the country - they might be Catholics. If they happen to have a family they can't run to a priest to have them christened; they come down here sometimes with as many as half a dozen at a time and get them baptised, and the whole of them well able to talk to the priest. 178

176. August 19, 1860.

177. October 21, 1861.

178. April 18, 1862.

This increasing conservatism and censoriousness went hand in hand with Michael's growing nostalgia in his expressions of concern for Ireland. The earliest indication by Normile of his awareness of himself as an Irishman was the rather prosaic 'I did not take much liquor in this country since I came there, that did me no harm, but one day, that was Patrick's day, I drank plenty that day in remembrance to the old shammerick shore'.¹⁷⁹ He subsequently revealed concern about the outbreak of war in America, as 'there is a good many true-hearted Irishmen killed or wounded there, and by all accounts by the last mail from home they leave no thoughts of having an end to it. I expect it will do a great deal of harm to Ireland for there was a good deal of money coming from there to Ireland'.¹⁸⁰ Two years later the war was unended, and Michael expressed himself still concerned, but 'great rumours of war between Russia, France and England' provoked the pious comment 'I hope there will, if it does any good for farmers in Ireland. They can't be much worse, I hear, than what they are at present'.¹⁸¹ Michael was conscious of his identity as an Irishman; nevertheless, there is always the suspicion that he wrote what he thought his family in Ireland, more directly affected by these things, would have expected him to say. In response to his father's fears that he and the neighbours might be evicted by the landlord, Michael replied indignantly 'I know from my heart that some of your Carrhuduff(?) neighbours is but very glad to see yea dethroned or ejected out

179. April 1, 1855.

180. October 21, 1861.

181. September 16, 1863.

of your hard earned home. They are worse than the bushrangers of Australia. My firm belief, they think there is no supreme being over them. I hope and trust in God that honourable gentleman Mr. O'Brien won't be said by them to hurl the poor families of Derry far from their homes', but followed this with a total refusal to send any aid in this time of need.¹⁸² In 1855 Michael had planned to bring his sister Anna from America to join him in Australia; Anna was happy at this, her other sister in America having by then married and living hundreds of miles distant,¹⁸³ but on finding that assisted passages did not apply from America, Michael reluctantly abandoned the idea.¹⁸⁴ In this case, it is obvious that Michael could not have afforded to pay the full fare, then around £20. When an assisted passage was attainable on behalf of others in Ireland, however, towards which he would have to contribute only £4,¹⁸⁵ Michael showed further reservations. Thus he wrote in the same letter

My wife is about paying her brother's passage to this colony. I wouldn't say yes or not about it for he might blame me, hereafter, therefore I won't say anything about it. I know a man can do very well that keeps himself sober and steady and minds his work regular, and at the other hand it will take him a long time before he has a comfortable home. The feeble efforts of a stranger in this colony is weak and delicate for a long time. There is good wages and as for eating and drinking it is of the best, but as to say this colony is as healthy as home, it is not, nor anything like it, winter time is very pleasant but summer time is too hot.

182. April 18, 1865.

183. Letter of Anna Normile, Westfield, America, October 3, 1855, in same collection.

184. August 5, 1856.

185. For revised remittance regulations of 1852, see T.A. Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, Vol. 2, p. 591.

Two years later he was forced again to adopt this apparently hard-hearted stance -

I suppose my uncle John will blame me for not sending for him. I am confident for it is better for him to stop at home. There is a good many here that would wish to be back again. It would become him very strange to do many things here that he would have to do - at one instance, there is many men here that has to cook their own rations and wash their own clothes; that, I know, John would not like. I have seen too many of that, after people paying money here for their passage and, coming out here, they curse them and scold them for bringing them here, therefore I won't have anything to do with them. Its not in account of what I pay for them, but having seen so many examples I don't like to do so. Business is getting very slack here of late, there is so many emigrating to this colony. 186

It is easy to accept Michael's protestation that it was not the payment of the contribution to the passage that motivated these refusals; it is likely, however, that it was not only the moral responsibility he would thus entail by encouraging others to emigrate that daunted him, but also the financial responsibility he might be obliged to undertake should any of these new arrivals find themselves without employment. It is evident Michael frequently felt guilty at his failure to aid his relatives in Ireland, but also that he had accepted that his first responsibility was to his immediate family and their future in N.S.W. His letters are a compromise between portraying N.S.W. as a land of plenty, in which he was relatively comfortable and certainly better off than he could have been in Ireland, and cautioning others of the difficulties to be faced, and the

186. December 8, 1858.

limitations of the success of an immigrant without capital, like himself. He did not want his father to believe he had been a total failure, or that he was suffering any privation in the new land, but he could not exaggerate his situation in view of the likely requests for assistance that would follow. By 1869 Michael appears to have finally left Maitland and taken a farm: this is, however, the last letter of the series, and it is impossible to know if this new independence enabled him to encourage the emigration of the brothers and sisters still in Derry to whom the letter was addressed.¹⁸⁷

Apart from the probable financial barrier to any return to Ireland, there was another factor that could militate against such a move. For Michael to return to Derry would not ensure the reunion of the Normile family. Michael's two sisters, Anna and Mary, had emigrated to America before he himself had left for N.S.W., and another sister, Susy, preceded Michael and Bridget to Australia, where she had settled with her husband in Moreton Bay by the time of Michael's arrival. Two of the other emigrants from Derry on the Araninta, who had initially gone with Michael to Lochinvar, moved to Melbourne the following year, but all the former neighbours kept in touch with each other and with those who emigrated after them. When Michael spoke of these relatives and friends, he gave no indication that they were dissatisfied with their situation in Australia nor that he believed they had in any way failed. Bridget Normile worked as a domestic servant in Maitland and later in Sydney before marrying (about 1861) and moving

187. June 6, 1869 - Forrest (sic - illegible). Letter not signed as Michael Normile, but 'Hannah and I'.

'up the country' with her husband. Sister Susy and her husband Michael Carrigg had their own home near Brisbane, where they apparently managed comfortably in spite of Michael Carrigg's loss of an eye in 1858, and their daughter Mary was, by 1861, training as an assistant teacher in Brisbane. Patt Neylor, a friend from Derry whose sister had also emigrated on the Araninta in 1854, was a much more restless character than Michael Normile, and appears never to have married - prior to 1858 he was also working in Maitland, but was then enticed by gold fever to 'a new diggings a good way from here'. He returned to Maitland by 1860 where he worked for 'another large firm in the town', but by the following October had gone 'a good way up country, he is hired with a squatter that keeps a dairy and a large farming business'. 188

Each of these immigrants thus contradicted the general belief that assisted Irish immigrants would not venture from their port of arrival. The way in which Normile writes of them is also an indication that the judgement, by contemporaries and historians alike, that a majority of Irish immigrants were basically unsuccessful in that they remained labourers, was not necessarily the judgement they made of themselves or of each other. At no time when he spoke of the restrictions on obtaining land did Michael blame the government or any 'landed aristocracy', but explained rather the need of capital and experience in the very different requirements of cultivation in N.S.W. The particular influences on his failure to buy land were financial ('I had a few pounds once and I was thinking of buying a piece of

188. December 8, 1858, August 19, 1860, October 21, 1861.

ground to build on it a house, but something came and took away which I don't like to tell. Often that providence laid sickness on both of us which cost me some scores of pounds')¹⁸⁹ and he gave no indication of experiencing any frustrated land hunger.¹⁹⁰ Michael had arrived in N.S.W. at a time of unprecedently high wages, and received 45/- per week without rations from Solomon Vindin and Co.; from 1855 wages generally began to fall, though earlier in some classes of work than in others, and by 1858 agitation by the newly unemployed had begun, but in August 1856 Michael was still earning £2 per week with 'a house free ... and many other prerequisites besides'. Michael had never earned the spectacular wages prevailing in Sydney at the time of his arrival¹⁹¹ but this had the advantage that he did not therefore experience the sense of depression that occurred thereafter. If even he then still tended to blame the uncontrolled flow of immigrants for the lowering of colonial conditions, how much more understandable is the opposition of the labouring classes of Sydney - among them many Irish immigrants - to assisted immigration, which resulted in the reduction of the immigration vote by half in the Assembly in May 1860. A clamour for land was not the first reaction by men experiencing loss of work or a decrease in wages in N.S.W. in the late 'fifties; Michael Normile's concern for the inauguration of public works was a sentiment shared by workers all over the colony as a short-term

189. September 15, 1863,

190. Re lack of any rush for land even after the institution of free selection in 1861, see C.A.Karr, 'Political Protest and General development in Rural N.S.W., 1865-1895', (Ph.D., University of N.S.W., 1969), p. 4; Coghlan, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 94.

191. For details of these, Coghlan, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 692.

remedy, while the prospect of more and richer gold fields kept alive the hope of the high wages and possibility of fortune of the early fifties. Candidates accused by the Freeman's Journal of antagonism to Irish immigration or to denominational education were still returned by electorates in which there was a high proportion of Irish Catholic voters, because these men adopted a general anti-immigration stance or otherwise expressed attitudes favourable to the improvement of the condition of the working classes. A concerted campaign by that paper from 1855 against 'ultra-liberalism', which included attacks on those who 'think and act out of Ireland, exactly as we were wont to think and act in it'¹⁹² and 'who think that because it was just and right to break down the English tyranny in Ireland, it is equally a duty and a holy work to oppose the government here'¹⁹³, completely failed to affect Irish Catholic support of the Parkes group against whom it was aimed or to maintain the Cowper government from whom it hoped for the passage of a bill in favour of denominational education.¹⁹⁴ The unruly activity of some of the Irish working class of Sydney during election campaigns, which brought the whole Irish community into disrepute, paved the way for allegations of a mass and bigotted 'Irish vote', and was frequently connected with clerical influence in elections, was ironically exercised in favour of the despised liberal, Parkes, more often than on behalf

192. Freeman's Journal, January 20, 1855.

193. *Ibid.*, May 10, 1856.

194. *Ibid.*, throughout October 1859. On July 18, 1857, the editor had urged Catholics to be 'true conservatives' and revealed the depth of its antagonism when it argued, October 1, 1859, 'The first "liberal" in religion ... was the devil himself'.

of any favoured Irish Catholic candidate. It was not surprising that the Freeman's Journal and its supporters often referred to the saying 'if you want to roast an Irishman, you will find an Irishman to turn the spit'.¹⁹⁵

The great education controversies over state-aided denominational education had not really come to the fore during the years in which most of Michael Normile's letters were written. Michael's comments on his niece Mary Carrig show complete approval of her becoming an assistant teacher, and his own care for education is obvious: in one letter he wrote, 'I expect you will keep my brothers at school as well as you can, for I never will forget you for what education you gave me. There is plenty of swells in this country that is worth thousands of pounds that don't know letter B from a bull's foot'.¹⁹⁶ The admonition 'don't forget in keeping my brothers at school' was repeated again the following year, and in 1862 Michael's own eldest daughter, then just six, was already going to school in Maitland. Michael did not specify whether Mary Carrigg was training as a denominational teacher, or if his daughter attended a Catholic school though, in view of the former's immersion in the Church and his own concern to remain close to the institutions of his faith, this would seem likely. The one issue on which Michael alleged religious discrimination was related to state aid, but aid to religion rather than to education, and was of a nature which his experiences in Ireland would have conditioned him to believe. Explaining

195. e.g. July 12, 1856. Irish names were also prominent in the requisitions for Charles Cowper and Lachlan Macalister, both staunch Anglicans, at the 1843 Council elections. Chronicle, January 21, 1843.

196. April 1, 1855.

that he had chosen not to go into the interior where one rarely saw a priest, Michael added 'Catholics has the worst chance of any such thing in the bush; as for other religions, I could count on many as 6 or 7, all of them has plenty what they call clergymen traversing the country, well paid from government for converting them, as they say so'.¹⁹⁷ The Ireland that Michael left in 1854 had recently witnessed a revival of Protestant proselytising activity, a reaction to the 'Papal aggression' scare of 1850 which saw the institution of territorial sees in England and the conversion to Catholicism of a number of the most prominent and brilliant men in Europe. There was considerable bitterness in Ireland at the apparent willingness of these evangelisers to take advantage of the distressed situation in many parts of Ireland caused by the potato famine. The first mission school had been established at Ballina in 1852 and there was much controversy over the apparent success of the Protestant effort.¹⁹⁸

This was, however, the only comparable instance of proselytisation upon which Michael commented in N.S.W. One wonders, therefore, what he sought in the Catholic newspapers he so frequently requested from home, the appreciation of which was obviously shared by his neighbours.¹⁹⁹ It is unlikely that these papers were needed to supply any deficiency in the vitality of colonial Catholicism - though a series of quite extreme attacks on internal Church administration were begun in the Freeman's Journal in

197. April 18, 1862.

198. J.Forbes, Ireland in the Autumn of 1852, p. 17; H.Martineau, Letters from Ireland, 1852, pp. 60-61.

199. 'I was very much obliged to you for sending me on last time a newspaper. I had to lend it to upwards of sixty people. It gives us great consolation to hear from home and especially a good Catholic paper'. March 17, 1861. 'You would not credit what pleasure I get in reading home papers. I had to conceal that paper from many people until I read it over. I lent it to upwards of twenty persons and then they were not done'. October 21, 1861.

May 1857 by 'Icolmkill', which were continued by 'Isidore' the following April and resulted in the withdrawal of official Church support from the paper, the issue of a joint Monitum Pastorale in June 1858 against extremism, the excommunication of the five leaders at a meeting of February 1859 which had demanded a lay share in the control of Church affairs, and the ultimate 200 departure from the colony of the focus of many of the attacks, Dr. Gregory, Michael showed no evidence of having been shaken in his confidence in the clergy by these events. While he may have agreed with the major concern of the dissidents, that of the better education of the Catholic community in the colony, he would have found little cause for personal dissatisfaction in Dean Lynch's zealously run mission.²⁰¹ Rather it was to learn of events in Ireland from a Catholic - i.e. sympathetic - source that made newspapers from 'home' valuable. Such a service was provided in N.S.W. only by the Freeman's Journal, and then not consistently, particularly after the pro-Irish editor Michael D'Arcy was replaced by the English convert, J.K. Heydon, in 1857, and the letters of 'Icolmkill' soon after even led to allegations that the paper was actually hostile to the Irish.

Thus it would appear that Michael Normile, though fully aware of his identity as a Catholic and an Irishman, did not feel himself threatened as such in colonial society and so did not need either to conceal or exaggerate

200. A coverage of these controversies may be found in the Freeman's Journal; also T.L.Suttor, Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia, p.166 ff. 'Icolmkill' and 'Isidore' were the pseudonyms of W.A. Duncan, former editor of the Australasian Chronicle and, like Heydon, a non-Irish convert.

201. In 1866 Maitland gained at last a resident Bishop, James Murray, who proved one of the most active and outspoken advocates of Catholic education in N.S.W.

his affiliations. His brief and rather bemused comment in a letter of 1860 on the 'good thrashing' given to a Presbyterian minister (Rev. William McIntyre) by local Catholics for his calumnies against Catholic doctrine was probably a more responsible rendering of the event than the 'Maitland Riot' headings of the Freeman's Journal a few months before.²⁰² The apparent irrelevance for Michael of many of the issues that so agitated the Sydney Catholic newspaper may be an indication that the obsessions of the Freeman's Journal were not those of all Irish Catholic colonists. 'Good' Catholics and 'loyal' Irishmen many were yet to prove themselves to be, but Michael Normile's letters provide a necessary reminder that there were many other bread-and-butter realities for Irish colonists, and that in the 'fifties too there were the intermittent gold-discoveries to agitate the mind and turn men's thoughts to earthly riches. Admittedly, the period covered by these letters was a favourable time compared with the disharmonies that had been in the 'forties and those that were to come. By 1861 the Freeman's Journal felt able to write -

The celebration of 'Patrick's day' in Australia is attended by none of those unhappy circumstances which are so much to be deplored at home ... We owe it to the Irish here, from whom comes the preponderance of the Catholic element, to welcome in all cordiality and reverence the day dedicated to their beloved Apostle.²⁰³

202. Freeman's Journal, April 4, 1860.

203. Ibid., March 16, 1861.

and to add at the start of the following year -

Free as we Australian Catholics are from the religious bigotry which has so detrimental effect upon our brethren in the United Kingdom, and enjoying as we do a free constitution, it will be our own fault if that religion we all so deeply venerate and love does not extend itself rapidly throughout the entire continent of Australia. 204

Irish Catholic immigrants of an earlier era like 'T.F.' and his brother, arrivals from Galway in 1841 already mentioned,²⁰⁵ had also testified to the lack of prejudice they had found in the colony: in this stance, however, their emphasis was clearly influenced by their surprise at this state of affairs, and their statement was no doubt chosen for publication by Mrs. Chisholm in an attempt to counter the widespread belief that dislike of Irish Catholics was common in N.S.W. Nor was the identity of a northern Irish Protestant then so little under threat in the colony (though perhaps this feeling was more conditioned by the apparent current threat to Protestants in Ireland presented by the Repeal movement) that George Grey did not feel the need to send to Ireland for men of like spirit with whom to work in establishing himself in the colony. The movement and spread of population throughout the 'fifties, largely as a result of the opening of new areas by the gold discoveries, greatly aided the even distribution and subsequent harmonious co-habitation of the various immigrant nationalities. The lack of any peculiar concentration of Irish in any of the divisions of Sydney and suburbs contributed to the lack there of any particular Irish

204. Ibid., January 1, 1862.

205. See p. 70 .

working class involvement in municipal elections comparable with that seen in Melbourne. In a town like Kiama, where a particular group was artificially reinforced but still remained a minority, the retention of old ways and old animosities was easier - in 1868 one of the northern Irish immigrants, who was then Grand Master of the Kiama Orange Lodge, was shot by a local Catholic, and it is significant that it was in this divided township that Parkes chose to reveal his 'knowledge' of a Fenian conspiracy in N.S.W.²⁰⁶ But these activities were reserved for the late 'sixties, following the perpetuation of a unique act of assassination by a disturbed man on a person with no real connection with colonial life. The Orange lodge closed in Kiama in 1851 as a result of the gold rushes, as did lodges everywhere, and did not reopen until 1860. Stife was not the order of the day in the 'fifties in N.S.W., and the letters of Michael Normile from Maitland, like the industrious life of George Grey in Illawarra, reveal the concern of such immigrants with their day to day existence as colonists, in which sectarian religious and national issues, though at times influential, were only a part.²⁰⁷

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206. See Freeman's Journal on the Orange bias of the Kiama Independent in 1868.
207. It is significant that national and religious societies founded during this period either failed or operated in an emasculated form. The St. Patrick's society founded in 1840 had nothing of the vitality and aggressiveness of the parallel society in Victoria. It began life under the presidency of Vicar-General Murphy, and in the fifties met in conjunction with the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. (Suttor, op. cit., p. 116). The Celtic Association was not founded until 1856 and though in 1858 it was active in defending the character of Irish female immigrants against the censure of the Immigration Agent, and organised a relief fund for evicted Donegal tenants, it resolved in October the following year to give less time to these 'extraneous' matters and concentrate on its own immediate concerns, the establishment of a library and a debating society. (Freeman's Journal, October 29, 1859). In 1854 the Freeman's Journal welcomed the revival of Catholic guilds (September 9) but in 1858 a correspondent wrote of the dismal record of Catholic associations, the first, founded five years before, defunct within four months, revived 'recently' but also failing again in three months (April 17, 1858).

CHAPTER III

VICTORIA 1836-60

The most immediately remarkable aspect of the two new Australian colonies founded in 1836 is their dissimilarity - in origin, in aims and nature of settlement, in relationship with the British government and the other colonies, in the type of settlers and the area to which they came. Essentially, South Australia was colonised to a plan, predetermined in both principle and practical detail. Its colonists were free, small capitalists or tradesmen or farmers from Britain, with definite views on what the colony was to become and their role in it.¹ They came with the sanction of the Colonial Office and a representative of that sanction in the person of Governor Hindmarsh. Victoria was settled haphazardly by men who wanted land to graze stock rather than to cultivate; who initially came, either in self-formed companies or as individuals, from New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land and who often brought with them 'old hands' (ex-convicts) and assigned convicts as stockmen and shepherds, without regard to the ultimate 'respectability' or the distant future of the district. They not only did not have the blessing of the Colonial Office on their enterprise, but were in fact specifically prohibited from such an expansion of settlement. John Batman's 'purchase', on behalf of the Van Diemen's Land - based Port Phillip Association, of some 600,000 acres from a party of aborigines on June 6, 1835, was refused recognition. Bourke's proclamation of August 26 declared Batman's claim to be void and he and his co-squatters to be trespassers, and was followed by a despatch from Lord Glenelg, the Secretary of State, on April 13 the next year, that revealed his current

1. D.Pike, Paradise of Dissent, p. 145.

concern with the effects of such expansion on both the welfare of the aboriginal population and the expenditure entailed by his office.²

In the meantime, however, the lure of land ownership had caused men to ignore the injunctions of Governors Arthur (Van Diemen's Land) and Bourke and to stream across the Tasman strait and overland from the settled districts of New South Wales to Port Phillip, which migration neither Governor had the capacity to restrain. Those leaving from Van Diemen's Land were prohibited from taking assigned convicts with them,³ but this was not possible to police in N.S.W. where convicts could legally be assigned to squatters in districts adjacent to Port Phillip.⁴ Eventually the Imperial government was forced to accept a fait accompli and capitulate, sending C.J.Latrobe as Superintendent in September 1839 on the recommendation of Bourke after his visit to the district on March 4, 1837 (when he had, on his own initiative, appointed William Lonsdale as police magistrate).

2. C.M.H.Clark, Select Documents in Australian History 1788-1850, pp.92-3. For a comparison of South Australia and Victoria, their origins and progress, see Port Phillip Patriot, January 21, 1841.
3. The number of those who did so illegally is impossible to ascertain. However, the records of absconders brought back from the new district imply that there remained others who were not caught. M.Kiddle, Men of Yesterday, pp. 52, 153, states that there were many convicts and ex-convicts from Van Diemen's Land in Port Phillip in the forties. E.M.Curr, Recollections of a Squatter, p. 173, says that nearly all servants in the early years of the colony were ex-convicts from the two older settlements. M.Bassett, The Hentys. A Colonial Tapestry, p. 446, mentions a number of runaways at Portland Bay in 1839. In 1852 a Convicts Prevention Act was introduced into the Victorian Legislative Council because of the influx from Van Diemen's Land following the end of transportation.
4. Though when it was realised that some squatters were buying property in the Sydney districts for the sole purpose of having convicts assigned to them, whom they then took into the Port Phillip district, Bourke passed a regulation extending the conditions of assigned service which applied in the central district to these outer areas. F.K.Crowley, 'Working Class Conditions in Australia 1788-1851', Ph.D. thesis, 1949, p. 73.

Nevertheless, the principle of non-alienation of large areas was adhered to, and the N.S.W. Legislative Council refused to consider the numerous and often rival claims until 1837, and then instituted land sale. In the end, even the earliest settlers, the Hentys, who, with no intention of founding an extensive colony, had settled at Portland Bay progressively from November 1834 to December 1836, were forced to purchase their land at a rate enhanced by their improvements, with only a remission of £348 on £1,390 paid for land involved in the newly planned Government township,⁵ while all settlers were obliged to pay for their 'selections' at the mandatory minimum upset price if they wished to own their run.

In spite of these legal difficulties, Port Phillip progressed more satisfactorily than its planned sister colony, where the greatest early problem was in meeting the letter of the law of no selection before survey. In the first twelve months, February 1836 to January 1837, sixteen vessels with 946 immigrants had been sent to South Australia, followed by nine more ships with 1,274 arrivals in 1837.⁶ It was impossible for the government surveyors to keep pace with the demand for land by this influx which, added to by prospective land purchasers arriving from the other colonies, amounted to some 2,500 persons by the end of the year;⁷ nor

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5. On the total sum of £17,245.10.5 paid for land in the first sale for the Portland Bay area, of which the Hentys paid nearly one eighth, only £1,738 was finally remitted in 1845. Bassett, *op. cit.*, p. 465, 525; A. Sutherland, Victoria and Its Metropolis, Vol. 1, p. 84.
6. M. Reynolds, 'Immigration into South Australia 1829-1852', Tinline thesis, University of Adelaide, 1923, p. 25.
7. E. Hodder, The History of South Australia, p. 69.

was the success of the colony aided by the speculation in land to which this situation gave rise. At the same time it was be-devilled by the difficulty that distance presented in regulating supply to demand in the matter of labour, a problem that was to be periodically a bone of contention between all colonies and the immigration authorities in Britain for the next forty years. Nevertheless, South Australia by 1840 was sufficiently confident of success and prosperity to call a changed financial climate during that year a depression.

In 1840 South Australia's population of 13,842 compared favourably with almost 10,000 in Port Phillip, but the following year was to reverse this position, with an assisted immigration of 175 to the former in strong contrast to nearly 8,000 to Port Phillip. The very planned nature of South Australia was proving its downfall, while the laissez faire spirit of Port Phillip was apparently blessed with success. In July 1841, 591 were on relief in Wakefield's colony; it had been declared bankrupt and become a crown colony; the office of Resident Commissioner was abolished and a disgraced Governor Gawler was replaced by Governor Grey. Nor did the restoration of the Crown to full supremacy provide an immediate remedy for the colony's ills. A policy of strict retrenchment and reduction of government expenditure, though a logically necessary measure in such a situation, increased the number of unemployed and revealed antagonisms underlying an overtly harmonious and homogeneous society.⁸ In July, the

8. e.g. see letter of George Warren, November 16, 1845 re the thousand or so lazy emigrants who found it more advantageous to stay on government works than take £1 to 12/- a week with rations in the bush'. South Australian Archives PRG 416.

591 men on relief works, who supported about 800 of the population when dependents are added, worked for one shilling and sixpence a day, with rations. This payment was reduced by Governor Grey to one shilling and twopence, without rations, but by November there were still 554 men on the works.⁹ The future of the colony looked dim, and many colonists began to emigrate to the other Australian colonies, while the difficulties of those remaining were added to by the attempts of the government to regain solvency by the imposition of additional taxes in 1842. A despatch received from the Secretary of State for the colonies in August of that year with the instruction 'to send to Sydney all the labouring immigrants at present on Government works' was construed by some as an attempt to disband the colony.¹⁰ The government's refusal was fortunate, though it involved a risk of some £4,000 per quarter to support the unemployed: for the good harvests and mining discoveries at Kapunda the following year augured well for the colony's revival, and took most of the unemployed off the public works. Although assisted immigration was not revived until 1844, and then introduced only 809 immigrants, the colony was able to attract and absorb considerable voluntary immigration, mainly from N.S.W. and Van Dieman's Land, particularly after the opening of the Burra mine in 1845; 2,044 miners alone arrived in 1846, some aided by the Commissioners and others brought out by the Australian Mining Company.¹¹

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9. Crowley, *op. cit.*, p. 252.
10. T. Worsnop, History of the City of Adelaide 1836-1877, p. 58.
11. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

With the revival of the economic situation in South Australia came, though unrelated, a period of depression in Port Phillip; not, however, of the proportions of its forerunner. In May 1842 there were 362 men unemployed, with 250 dependent women and children. Wages, which had risen steadily between 1836 and 1840, had then fallen rapidly to reach a low in 1843, and did not equal their original level again until 1850.¹² Here again, an influx of immigrants from Britain was a prime cause of unemployment. Possibly, too, the nature of the new immigration - which was much more like the original immigration into South Australia - was part of the difficulty. The majority of settlers in the early years were men from the established colonies of N.S.W. and Van Dieman's Land, 'men of means and mind, the prosperous stockowners and their sons, and those smaller men of the type of the true founders of the Yarra settlement' with experience in the business of stock-raising and general pioneering, and a greater sense of understanding of the land into which they ventured.¹³ The 'new chums' from Britain, on the other hand, tended to include large numbers of labourers and mechanics of small or no capital who were destined, in a district apparently suited to large-scale pasture rather than agriculture, to remain employees. Thus when depression hit the district with the fall in wool prices on the world market, it was not only many of the early run-holders who were ruined¹⁴ but also many of the new arrivals dependent on them for

12. Crowley, *op. cit.*, pp. 244, 249.

13. R. Bridges, One Hundred Years. The Romance of the Victorian People, p. 18.

14. G. Serle, The Golden Age, p. 2.

work. On the other hand, those overseas arrivals with capital who did make good as landowners often regarded Port Phillip as a place of exile, a place to gather sufficient wealth to retire 'home' early and comfortably.¹⁵ Nevertheless, within a few years after the depression of 1842-3 the colony was again thriving and rising wool prices were making life more secure for those who had weathered the bad years. The new land regulations of 1846-7 gave to land holding settlers a greater security of tenure and determined that many should view more readily and gladly the prospect of remaining permanently.

Thus by mid-century both colonies were on the way to prosperity, though the level of progress of the colony as a whole obscured the relative lack of improvement of the conditions of the working classes. By 1848 South Australia's population had increased by 64% as compared with that of 1844 and in that year her largest consignment of assisted immigrants to date was despatched. Victoria, in spite of her setback, had passed South Australia by the time of the 1846 census (32,875 c.f. 22,390) and at the census of March 1851 (before the start of the gold rushes) boasted 77,345, while South Australia's (January) census figure of 63,700 showed the population of that colony to have increased by 184.5% on the previous census. In 1849 South Australia had reached a peak of prosperity, as measured by the attraction it held for immigrants, not equalled that century, with the number of flocks reaching one million in 1850 and agriculture, radically aided by the introduction of the Ridley stripper from 1844, continuing to prosper in the face of rising grain prices.¹⁶ The self-government provided for in the

15. Kiddle, op. cit., p. 26.

16. C. Fenner, A Geographical Enquiry into the Growth, Distribution and Movement of Population in South Australia 1836-1927, p. 142 (graph).

changes in the colony's status in 1842 matured in the right, conferred in August 1850, for election of two-thirds of the Legislative Council in July of the following year. Port Phillip celebrated separation from N.S.W. in November 1850, though writs for the election of a Victorian Legislative Council, which was to constitute the formal severance, were not issued for another seven months. Thus within some fifteen years the two colonies had come a long way, not only in terms of formal establishment and material security, but in the creation of complex and distinct societies.

The story of the Irish part in these events is a tangled and incomplete one. Victoria to 1850 shared in the general immigration to N.S.W., though it received assisted immigrants direct from October 1839. Thus the question of immigration was interwoven with a growing demand for separation and the abolition of transportation, both factors tending to make the free colonists more conscious, as in South Australia from its inception, of the quality and nature of additions in the district. In the first years of arrivals overland from N.S.W., an indeterminate number of convicts came as 'old hands' and assigned servants brought by prospective squatters as stockmen and shepherds. Nevertheless, these were not a decisive influence, and the census of the district in 1841 showed the number of convicts to be only 359.¹⁷ The number of Irish among these, as among those free colonists who came overland to Port Phillip, can not be calculated, for records were only kept of arrivals and departures by sea, and not at all

17. T. McCombie, The History of the Colony of Victoria, p. 66. Nor did this illegal immigration ever loom large in the minds of those colonists who protested against the Pentonville 'exiles' in November 1844 and who were prepared to resist by force the arrival of a convict ship sent against opposition in August 1849.

anyway during the time of the colony's status as an 'off-limits' outer district of N.S.W. There were a number of Irishmen amongst the first overlanders whose names have been recorded in the annals of celebratory Victorian history, including the Coghill brothers, who travelled from their station at Monaro in 1837,¹⁸ and William Rutledge, who had earlier bought and speculated in land in N.S.W., in 1838. At the first Melbourne land sales of June 1 and November 1, 1837 very few of the overlanders bought land, and the only obvious Irish patronym among the purchasers was that of Michael Connolly, one of the recently arrived flockmasters from Van Diemen's Land;¹⁹ though Rutledge bought town lots at the Melbourne sale of September 13, 1838 when, contrary to the previous sales, the buyers were largely men from Sydney.²⁰

By 1840, however, migration from Britain was the largest factor in the growth of the colony, and the advent that year of the office of the Land and Emigration Commissioners ensured regular information on the numbers and nature of this immigration. In terms of voluntary immigration, each colony had to rely on the attractions of its own prosperity and the conditions of labour and employment in Britain - the latter being the major factor, and one over which the colonies had no control. Urgent demands had therefore to be met by concerted efforts to encourage immigration by assistance to the types of settlers desired. This was a basic proposition

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18. R.V. Billis and A.S. Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip, p. 43.
 19. Martha Rutledge, 'William Rutledge, An Australian Pioneer', Victorian Historical Magazine, August 1965, no. 3, vol. 36, p. 111
 20. J. Borwick, Discovery and Settlement of Port Phillip, pp. 105-6.

of the founders of South Australia where funds from land sales were to be used to that end.²¹ Victoria, while a district of N.S.W., benefited from the connection with that original and best-known area of Australian settlement, though these benefits were not always an unmixed blessing since a restoration of transportation to N.S.W., be it in whatever guise, would also automatically apply.

Port Phillip had early a peculiar attraction for Scots immigrants, many of whom came from Van Dieman's Land, where they had emigrated in the decade following the upheavals of the Napoleonic Wars. A large proportion had been Lowland farmers, and the attraction of the new colony to enterprising men seemed obvious.²² As early as 1839 there was a call by a Scots settler for the formation of a St. Andrew's society, and an attack by the Port Phillip Gazette on high land prices the following August argued

It was remarked to us by a capitalist lately arrived, that the desire, almost mania, for emigrating to Port Phillip, which manifested itself in the North of England and especially in Scotland, would receive a check so soon as the unexpected and inconsiderate alteration in the price of land was made known. ²³

During the period of immigration assistance 1832-1837, the average emigration of Scots and Irish to N.S.W. had been far from rivalling the English exodus.²⁴

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21. Although Wakefield had stressed the necessity of the sale of land regardless of the use to which the proceeds would be put. R.C.Mills, The Colonisation of Australia 1829-1842, p. 105.
 22. Kiddle, op. cit., p. 14ff, 47.
 23. Port Phillip Gazette, May 8, 1839. Many of these were Gaelic-speaking Catholic Highlanders.
 24. Average Scots emigration was 342 compared with 294 Irish and 2,808 English. Sessional Papers, House of Commons, 1839, Vol. 39, p.379.

The Report of the Agent General for Emigration for 1838, however, commented upon a new trend: the difficulty in getting new emigrants from England, and the consequent disproportion of Irish and Scots among the assisted.²⁵ The number of Scots assisted to N.S.W. 1839-1840 was higher than at any other time in the next forty years, but even so it had been already outstripped by the Irish emigration, which between 1840 and 1845 was greater numerically than even that from England.

Between 1839 and 1851, forty-eight percent of the total assisted immigration into N.S.W. was from Ireland. Until 1850 it was not defined how many of each country went to Port Phillip, as against those to N.S.W. generally. In 1839, the first year in which emigrants went direct to Port Phillip, that district received only 564 of the total of 7,852. The following year, 1,421 were received, and from 1841 Port Phillip shared much more largely in the influx.²⁶ In view of the ignorance of the geography of Australia - and agents under the bounty system allegedly deliberately misled emigrants in order to fill a waiting ship, to the extent that it was assumed that travel between Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide was comparatively simple - it might be assumed that the proportions of the immigrants to Port Phillip were comparable with those to the colony as a whole. Port Phillip was a growing district by 1840, and the demands of the Melbourne press for increased immigration were loud and long. Labour was in demand by those who had set up stations and by those wanting homes and facilities

25. Report to the Secretary of State, April 28, 1838. Sessional Papers 1837-8, Vol. 40.

26. 7,776 of the total of 20,103 to N.S.W.

in Melbourne, and the colony held up the promise of independence on the land for those with even a small amount of capital.²⁷ The total assisted immigration between 1839 and 1850 was 28,961. Assuming the proportion of Irish among these to have been the same as in the general N.S.W. intake, 13,000 Irish would thus have been introduced into the new settlement. This is supported by the calculations of Robert Shultz, which show that the Irish were approximately half of the bounty immigration of 25,000 and 11% of the government immigration of 1,270.²⁸ The census of 1851, however, showed only 14,618, which suggests that few Irish had come from the other colonies, either before 1839 or during the 'forties, or as unassisted immigrants, and that a number of those who had landed in Port Phillip subsequently made their way to the parent colony. It would appear that a large number of the Irish immigrants were influenced by the desire to settle in areas where they had relatives and friends or where there were established Irish communities, and that this was combined with a reluctance on the part of many (a reluctance shared with many of the non-Irish arrivals) to immediately embark on pioneering farming. A large proportion of the Irish immigrants were single women and, as most gave their occupation as domestic servant, it was natural that they should prefer the centres

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27. Port Phillip Patriot, February 20, 1839; Port Phillip Gazette August 3, 1839; Port Phillip Herald, March 20, 1840. Re demands for labour, E. Curr, op. cit., p. 23, 56. The promise of land available to all was not readily fulfilled - the government was reluctant to release Crown land, and when it did in 1840 it was offered in large lots in the suburbs. This led to speculation with wealthy men buying up land and offering it in subdivided sections at high prices. W.H. Newenham, Melbourne, The Biography of a City, p. 14.
28. R.J. Shultz, 'The Assisted Immigrants 1837-1850', Ph.D., Australian National University, 1971, pp. 22, 43, 73.

with a larger and more established population that could offer more variety and choice of employment. Most important, however, in the preference still evinced by the Irish for N.S.W. proper, was that a greater number of bounty ships were chartered for Sydney, and it was on such ships that Irish emigrants most readily found passage. There is a case for saying that the early Irish emigrants direct to Port Phillip were, as a class, somewhat superior to those who went to N.S.W.: certainly there was no complaint in the Melbourne press that they showed the servility alleged of the Irish working class of Sydney in 1850²⁹ and subsequently, and the early Irish immigration contained considerable numbers of professional men as well as most of those active subsequently in the St. Patrick's society founded in 1842. Many did not immediately venture outside Melbourne: when the conditions of traditional society were reproduced in Victoria, however, as on the Special Surveys of William Rutledge at Killarney and James Atkinson at Belfast, and when land became available to the small farmer on terms attainable by many former labourers in the 'sixties, the Irish showed themselves as eager as any other group to move out of the towns and work for independence on the land.

The Irish assisted immigration into Port Phillip shared in the opposition to this immigration into N.S.W. generally. The issue as it raged in the press was essentially, however, that of bounty vs government immigration, with the number of Irish introduced by each a factor in the preference given to the one system or the other. While in 1841 this took the form of a

29. e.g. letter of 'L' of Wollongong in Freeman's Journal, October 24, 1850; 'Index' of Warwick, Ibid., December 16, 1852; editorial, ibid., July 14, 1855.

rather genteel protest by the Port Phillip Gazette that the bounty system was responsible for the introduction of a disproportionate number of Catholics,³⁰ no holds were barred in the attack of the Argus in 1848 against the 'cheap and nasty' Bounty system

... under which this province in former years suffered the infliction of the importation of whole hordes of useless and lawless savages from the south and west of Ireland...³¹

To a large extent, the variation in press attitudes to Irish immigration was determined by the character and prejudices of individual editors: thus the Port Phillip Patriot 1841-5 and the Argus, edited by William Kerr, a Scots Presbyterian and one of the earliest active Orangemen of the colony, were consistent and often violent opponents of Irish immigration and of Catholicism.³² Nor were the influences purely local. The ubiquitous J.D.Lang was condemned in both the Gazette and the Herald when he stood

30. Port Phillip Gazette, August 4, 1841.

31. Argus, February 14, 1848.

32. The Herald was the one pro-Irish paper and, though Protestant in strictly religious issues, asserted the civil rights of Catholics. The Gazette pursued a middle course, prompted in its initial support for Irish immigration by its representation of the squatting interest, which needed labour, but later, affected by what appeared to be a general condemnation of the Irish female immigration, joined in the attacks on a general Irish unsuitability. The paper often attacked the intolerance of the Argus, but was merged with it in January 1851, which suggests that middle-of-the-road policies satisfied no-one. The Patriot, owned by Fawkner, who was apparently as changeable in his attitude to Catholicism and the Irish as he was on most issues, and edited by Kerr, was consistently and often unfairly anti-Irish and Catholic, but had little to say on immigration generally, contenting itself with tirades against the introduction of 'party politics' by the Irish. The Argus under Kerr 1846 to 1848 took a similar line, though with a better appearance of impartiality and a higher standard of journalism generally that gave its ultimate condemnation of the Irish a more damaging force.

for the Port Phillip District in the Legislative Council elections of 1843, one of the stated reasons being that he had contributed so largely to the appearance of sectarianism in the colony.³³ The Argus editorial mentioned above, however, showed the influence of Lang's diatribes on Irish immigration in its reference to the transformation of Port Phillip into 'a province of the Popedom', and its attack on Irish orphan females in 1850 reiterated Lang's attack that

These girls are, we believe, exclusively Roman Catholic; their main and avowed object, in coming here, is to get married; and that great end of women's ambition being usually achieved by the most ordinary of them, we should calculate a little on the probable result. These women, all Roman Catholics, will wed with our shepherds, hutkeepers, stockmen etc., who, as a body, we blush to say, are little better than heathens ... the result of such a match is, that if the children have any religion at all, they will be Roman Catholics to an individual ... ³⁴

The force of these arguments was obviously strong,-in April both the Herald and Gazette capitulated, to the extent of admitting that better immigrants could have been found, though the Herald remained outraged by 'the foul, filthy and unmanly imputation, which the indecent tongue of an habitual slanderer has attempted to attach to them'.³⁵ Yet the Catholics of Port Phillip were not intimidated. In the face of early attacks on Irish female immigration, the St. Patrick's society (founded in 1842, with

33. Gazette, January 25; Herald, February 10, April 25, May 26, 1843.

34. January 24, 1850.

35. April 18, 1850.

its main benevolent aim the advancement of education) had prepared a memorial to be sent to the Governor and to the Secretary of State for the colonies, refuting an apparent belief in Britain that Irish immigrants were not desired in the colony,³⁶ and in response even the Argus had been willing to admit the right of the Irish to a 'fair share' in the Land Fund.³⁷ Nor was Bishop Goold content to acquiesce in what appeared to be a general opposition to the orphan immigration, unlike Bishop Geoghegan in Adelaide who, when faced with a comparable situation in 1859, resorted to purely negative action.³⁸ When the Board of Guardians of Orphan Immigrants, of which Goold was a member, passed a resolution against the continuation of this immigration in April, Goold called a Catholic meeting in St. Francis' to consider this action. The meeting was attended by 300 to 400 and totally repudiated the expressed public condemnation of the women that had been introduced. The Argus opposed the tone of the meeting, but felt obliged by this show of strength to add that it had censored the scheme not because the girls were Irish or Catholic, but because their 'unfortunate' workhouse background had engendered poor character in many of them.³⁹ The resolution of the Town Council against the immigration, which was the most discussed issue at the Catholic meeting, was subsequently revised to remove all references to the 'immorality' of the women.⁴⁰ The influence of the Catholic-Irish protest was all the

36. September 14 and 17, 1849.

37. September 14, 1849.

38. Goold to Geoghegan, December 17, 1859. Melbourne Archdiocesan Archives.

39. Argus, April 19, 1859.

40. Herald, April 18, May 3, 1850.

more remarkable considering the amount of evidence to show that many of the Irish girls were unsuitable.⁴¹

The orphan immigration scheme was abandoned in relation to Victoria in 1850, but this was not an indication of the defeat of Irish sentiment. Certainly the controversy had exacerbated existing national and sectarian tensions, but it had not created them, nor was there any general moratorium on Irish immigration as a result. In 1854 the Irish were 16.8% of the population, and still 16.1% in 1861. This was a considerable decrease on their proportion in 1846, but then they had been much smaller numerically, and it was the native-born population rather than that from other countries that had made inroads on their statistical position. When an effort was

Table 4. Victorian Census Population 1846-1861.

Year	Total	Irish	Victorian	% Irish
1846	34,879	9,126	7,853	27.75
1854	236,798	39,728	29,996	16.75
1861	540,322	87,160	138,075	16.14

Source: Census of 1846, 1854, 1861. Victorian Parliamentary Papers.

made from 1854 to reduce the imbalance of sexes so exaggerated by the gold rushes, it was the emigration authorities rather than the colonists who remembered the earlier outcry against the Irish women. The report of the acting Emigration Agent for 1855 noted that

41. See report of George Binstead, schoolmaster on the orphan immigrant ship Digby which left Ireland in December 1848. Dixson Library MSS.

At present a very general demand exists for female domestic servants from England, the Lowlands of Scotland, and the north of Ireland, in preference to those from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and the southern and western parts of Ireland; the latter being better adapted for agriculture and dairying occupations than for domestic service. 42

Nevertheless, the Irish were 31% of the assisted immigrants sent that year and 54% of the single women. The Emigration Commissioners, while admitting that the Irish sent were less educated than the English and Scots, pointed out pertinently that it would be impossible to supply the demand without 'drawing very largely upon Ireland', particularly for single women.⁴³ The following year the Irish proportion was even higher at 38%, and in 1858 this rose to 45%. But there was little interest in immigration generally among the colonists in the 'fifties, for the attraction of gold had removed the necessity of competition for settlers with the other colonies, and at the same time provided employment for all who arrived.⁴⁴ The yearly returns collated by the Acting Immigration Agent provided detailed information on the religion, nationality, occupations and education of assisted immigrants, including cross-reference tables which could be used by those antagonistic to Catholicism, for example, to show that Irish immigrants were ill educated or limited in their occupations. Nevertheless,

42. Victorian Parliamentary Papers 1856-7, Vol. 4, no. 5, p. vi.

43. Ibid., no. 22, p. 11.

44. There were moves to end assisted immigration as unnecessary, but these were countered by farmers and pastoralists who urgently needed labour. At this time, the contribution towards an assisted passage was only ten shillings for single domestic servants and £1 for farm labourers, shepherds, etc., married or single, under forty years of age. The contribution rose sharply for all others, especially for those over fifty years. Parliamentary Papers 1856-7, Vol. 4, no. 62, appendix.

it was in Britain that the ultimate responsibility for selecting immigrants lay and here, as the Commissioners were fond of commenting, their willingness to meet alleged preferences for particular emigrants was of necessity tempered by considerations of what was available. They consequently satisfied no-one, for while the immigration authorities in Victoria complained of an excess number of Irish, the Church and the St. Patrick's society agitated for more Irish Catholic immigrants.

While he was willing to utilise it, Bishop Goold had little faith in the impartiality of the assisted immigration system. His letters from Britain, where he had gone in 1858 to obtain priests for the diocese, were pessimistic -

It is thoroughly Protestant from the Commissioner down to the sweeper in the office of the Irish Agency in Dublin (perhaps this last important official belongs to the 'old Faith') ... their plan of selecting our Irish Emigrants is wrong. The parson is generally the person who recommends - a magistrate's character is itself sufficient. With such references the good Catholic Emigrant the most suitable for the colony, had but little chance of obtaining the boon of a free passage ... the Protestant Emigration Agents will feel it to be in their Protestant interests to provide such a class of Irish Emigrants as belong to the Catholic faith as will make Emigration distasteful to the colony⁴⁵

In 1859 a new dimension was added, when a regulation was made by the Colonial authorities that each ship should be accompanied by a matron and surgeon who would give secular and moral instruction during the voyage. Since the increase of opposition from 1857 to assisted immigration, as a result of increasing unemployment in the colony, most assisted immigrants had been

45. Goold to Geoghegan, October 14, 1858. Melbourne A.A.

single women. These, Goold believed, would be particularly susceptible to proselytisation by their 'guardians' - who, being appointed by the Commissioners, would be Protestants. Goold maintained that the regulation had been most effective in strengthening the opposition of the Irish Catholic hierarchy against emigration - ⁴⁶ nevertheless, as Goold himself had noted earlier, 'people will take their labour and enterprise to the best market, which is our own favoured colony', in spite of the opposition of their priests.⁴⁷ Thus while the total of assisted immigrants decreased from 1857, the proportion of Irish among these did not decline until 1860.

The Irish showed themselves characteristically active in taking advantage of the remittance regulations introduced in 1851 and greatly extended in 1856 following the granting to the newly-independent colony of control of its land fund. Again the tendency to bring out single adults, rather than families, prevailed. In the five months August to December 1856, after the extended provisions came into force, 3,473 'souls' (3,346 adults) were sent from the United Kingdom and £17,259.7.0 had been paid in the colony on their behalf. Of this, the Irish contributed £9150.18.0 and 1916 Irish were among those introduced. The pattern was repeated in the first six months of 1857.⁴⁸ But the eagerness of Irish colonists to bring out individual countrymen to share the advantages of the colony did not indicate a desire to see mass immigration generally. It was the protest

46. Goold to Geoghegan, June 10, 1859; to Fitzpatrick, June 14, 1859.

47. Goold to Geoghegan, October 14, 1858.

48. Victorian Parliamentary Papers 1856-1857, Vol. 2, pp. 499-501.

of working men - many themselves emigrants to Victoria during that decade - against the aggravation of unemployment by assisted immigration, rather than any antagonism to the high proportion of Irish among those arriving, that resulted in the abolition of the remittance regulations in 1859 and the decrease in the overall immigration assistance.⁴⁹

The general belief in Victoria, perpetrated by the colonial press, that the Irish were always loyal to their own race and acted always in a sectarian spirit of nationalism, was the same exaggeration that had characterised the depiction of the Irish convicts by early colonial Governors. The illiterate Celtic Irish from impoverished counties who so largely filled the assisted immigrant ships to N.S.W. and Port Phillip in the 'forties were men whose prejudices as much involved class, wealth and creed concepts as national attachments. Letters of Irish immigrants show a specialised interest in the county from which an Irishman came, as well as with the fact of his being Irish. Large landowners in the colony were equated with landowners in Ireland regardless of their race or creed, and Irish Catholics in the colony, regarded by the colonial press as leaders of their kinsmen, were by no means assured of unanimous support from these immigrants. Formal St. Patrick's day celebrations, with tickets at £1 a head, ensured separate celebration of this national day by rich and poor Irish colonists. Above all, the first active loyalties of a newly arrived colonist remained with the family he had left in Ireland or the welfare of that he had brought with him. An Irish employer or landowner might show a preference for

49. After 1858 only single women were assisted. Coghlan, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 612.

Irish labourers when using his land deposit or nomination right to assist new immigrants, but it was individual Irish colonists, frequently themselves assisted immigrants, bringing out specific relatives and friends from their home town, who contributed to the reputation gained by the Irish of strong national loyalties. The papers of Lord Monteagle, who aided many to emigrate from his own Irish estates and who devised general schemes for emigration from Ireland, reveal the rather narrower concerns of such emigrants. Nearly every one of these who wrote to either Lord or Lady Monteagle to thank them for assistance also requested aid for the emigration of a brother, sister, mother or other relation, nor did their failure to repay to the Monteagles the money they themselves had been advanced embarrass them in these requests. There is a sense of urgency in many of these letters, an indication that they felt conditions in Victoria were at a height, and a desire that their relations should come to share in the spoils while they lasted.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, there were some, who had already established themselves comfortably in the colony and presumably had fulfilled their personal obligations, who were prepared to champion Irish immigration as such: the leaders of the St. Patrick's society, founded in 1842, were such men; another was Michael McNamara, tailor and draper of Collins Street in Melbourne, who in 1848 urged Monteagle to send more Irish peasants to the abundance of Australia and promised to himself aid all who came to find

50. e.g. Ann Kelly, Melbourne, January 12, 1849; John Danaher, Melbourne, January 1, 1852; Michael Martin, September 2 and August 28, 1859. Monteagle Papers.

employment.⁵¹ There was also an awareness by some of the emigrants of the contribution made by men like Monteagle not only to individuals but also to Ireland as a whole by the reduction of a redundant labour market.

I am glad to hear that the American as well as the Australian immigrants are taking away as much as they can of their own friends from a land which refuses them a livelyhood (sic). Should emigration continue on a large scale for a few years more, I hope poverty will be known only by name in our beloved Island. ⁵²

After their initial personal contribution to the emigration of another, however, most immigrants were only human in resenting any influx of government-aided immigration that could erode their own position and that of those they had encouraged to emigrate. Such antagonism was often specifically directed (particularly against the Chinese) and its impact was delayed by the gold discoveries of the early 'fifties which promised sufficient for all comers, but it is easy to see how this could develop into a general opposition to assisted immigration as personal and family loyalties gained precedence over a vague national loyalty.

This opposition to assisted immigration began in the late 'fifties and developed simultaneously with demands, particularly by disappointed diggers, for easier access to land. The Land Convention, the major organisation advancing this demand, included the restriction of assisted immigration in its programme.⁵³ The President of the Convention was Moses Wilson Gray,

51. Monteagle Papers, March 5, 1848.

52. Monteagle Papers, Patrick Danaher, Geelong, February 2, 1853.

53. The Land Convention replaced the earlier Land League in 1857.

an Irish patriot who had emigrated to Victoria with Charles Gavan Duffy in 1856, nor were other Irish colonists tardy in their support: in May 1859 Fr. Geoghegan wrote to Bishop Goold that 'huge numbers of Catholics have joined the Convention, and take the most extravagant part in its proceedings',⁵⁴ and W.J. O'Hea, born in county Meath, and J.J. Walsh (Galway) were active members. On the gold fields, where miners shared the same aims, interests and grievances, evidence of cooperation among the Irish miners lingered throughout the decade. Within the colony as a whole, however, there was no such single community of interest to ensure unanimity of thought and action among Irish arrivals. Some Irish were ready to merge themselves as colonials immediately on arrival, and others had come to think in colonial terms by virtue of long residence in the colony prior to the gold rush influx. To the extent that there was a particular Irish cohesion - and this was more so in Victoria than in N.S.W., at least in the field of politics - this was a measure of the similarity of interests within the colony of these immigrants, rather than an expression of unanimity as Irishmen.

Nevertheless, there were characteristics to the way these particular interests were advanced by some of their Irish supporters that tended to bring the Irish as a community, and frequently their causes, into disrepute, particularly their apparent readiness to use 'Irish' methods - i.e. intimidation and the use of 'clerical influence', emotive speeches and terms, general rowdiness and even violence - which were considered inappropriate to the Victorian, as to any civilised situation. There were distinct religious and national aspects to this 'Hibernian politicking',

54. Goold to Geoghegan, May 16, 1859. Melbourne A.A.

but the two were frequently related. Basically, it was the Catholicism of the majority of the Irish colonists that was believed to inform their actions as a group. The press reaction to the Catholic community prior to 1841 was conditioned by the small numbers and low social position of most of its members⁵⁵ and had generally been favourable to the efforts of that congregation to raise funds to support a priest and build a church.⁵⁶ As the Church was strengthened by acquisitions through immigration, tolerance was less readily shown, and the alleged inherent intolerance of the Catholic Church was frequently stressed.⁵⁷ Ultimately, it was with the potential for organisation and power inherent in the institutions of the Catholic Church that most non-Catholics were concerned. The fact that most Catholics shared a common nationality, and that many maintained this long after the cutting of personal ties with Ireland, gave this concern an extra dimension, but did not alter its basis. Few non-Catholics would have considered attacking George Higinbotham or even the Irish nationalist Moses Wilson Gray, whose ideas were the subject of much controversy, as Irishmen. At the 1851 Legislative Council election, John O' Shanassy was dismissed as 'essentially the representative of a particular sect',⁵⁸ but no such slighting reference was made to the national origins of Henry Miller or W.F. Stawell, the colony's first Attorney General, though

55. Thus the Gazette wrote of a fund raising meeting in 1841 - 'The meeting itself was quite in suo genere, composed generally of individuals who work their hands much more than their heads; but who proved themselves possessed of what was much more valuable than the refinements of the latter - good natured hearts'. August 4, 1841.

56. Gazette, May 1 and 8, June 15 and 22, October, 5, 1839.

57. Argus, August, 1846; February 8, 1848; Gazette, December 20, 1843, January 3, 1840.

58. Argus, August 9, 1851.

the number of Irishmen in the Ministry generally was commented upon.⁵⁹

The first suggestion of the cohesive identity of the Irish colonists had come with the opposed comments of the Patriot and the Herald in 1841 on the desirability of the celebration of St. Patrick's day. The Herald suggested that such a celebration would also contribute to the well-being of 'Australia Felix', since in such societies

Petty animosities then subside in the breast, kindly feelings take their place, and whilst this makes us friends with each other, it at the same time extends the boundaries of our affections to include the whole human race, and rivets still more strongly upon the throne as we join our voices in thundering forth 'God Save the Queen' ...⁶⁰

The Patriot ridiculed this, stressing that the failure to celebrate the day rather had meant that there was no

extra consumption of grog, flourishing of shillelahs, or disturbance of any kind that could have reminded the 'natives' of 'ould Ireland and Donnybrook fair'.⁶¹

A St. Patrick's society was founded the following year, however, on which occasion the Patriot made no editorial comment, while both the Herald and the Gazette gave full reports on the foundation meetings and praised the benevolent aims of the society, which were stated as

the encouragement of national feeling, the relief of the destitute, the promotion of education and, generally, whatever may be considered by its members best calculated to promote the happiness, the honour, and prosperity of their native and adopted land.⁶²

59. Argus, March 31, 1855. But the comments were not unfavourable, as most of the ministry were conservatives.

60. Herald, March 9, 1841.

61. Patriot, March 22, 1841.

62. Gazette, July 2, 1842.

The original membership of the society was, like that of the parallel society founded in South Australia in 1849, interdenominational. The first President was Dr. John Patterson, and speakers at the foundation meeting of June 28 included T.H.Osborne, R.W.Belcher, T.C.Riddell, Dr. Dixon and Mr. Campbell.⁶³ According to Edmund Finn (later President of the society for seven terms, and on the staff of the Herald from 1845-58),⁶⁴ nine of the original nineteen directors of the society were Episcopalians and five were Presbyterian, only the remaining five being Catholic.⁶⁵ Unlike the Adelaide body, however, the Melbourne society did not long retain this Protestant majority. In 1843 the decision to visit St. Francis' for the eulogy on St. Patrick, which was followed by a Mass, alienated a number of the Protestant members, even though the Catholic church had been chosen as the only one to deliver a panegyric on the saint. In March also, the Catholic priest Fr. Geoghegan was chosen as President to succeed Patterson, and the complexion of office-holders was entirely changed, with J.R.Murphy and Daniel O'Kelly as vice-presidents, D.W.O'Neill as secretary, T.Clarke and W.O'Farrell as auditors and J.Fitzgerald, assistant secretary.⁶⁶ This evidence of Catholic dominance in the society did not damage its popularity

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63. Patterson was born in county Tyrone in 1789 and arrived in Sydney in 1839 as ship's surgeon on the Argyle. He was acting Immigration Agent in Melbourne from 1840 to 1851. Belcher and Riddell were Anglicans and public servants, T.H.Osborne was a Presbyterian minister.
64. Memoir of Edmund Finn, by his grandson, E.P.O'Grady. Latrobe MSS.
65. E.Finn, The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, p. 646.
66. Gazette, March 25, 1843. Murphy was a brewer, Clarke an innkeeper, O'Farrell initially a butcher and later an auctioneer and rate collector.

among many prospective members - in August 1842 the membership was given as 127, sixty-three of these having paid their subscriptions; by October 1846, membership had risen to some 900.⁶⁷

The lower social standing of the new office-bearers, the alleged interest of some of the members in faction politics, especially in municipal elections, and the obvious Irish Catholic bias of the society's membership did, however, prejudice some in the non-Irish, non-Catholic sections of colonial society. Thus the Patriot on April 13, 1843 commented

We have no very great veneration for the St. Patrick's society as latterly conducted, but we have decidedly far too much respect for many highly respectable men who are or were connected with it, to mix up any report of the society's meetings in the same paragraph with a reference to the sayings and doings of the famous Dirty Darby, who appears as its champion in the Herald of Tuesday -

and alleged that the original worthy aims of the society had been lost - '... when the society, through the degeneracy of a few members, was made subservient to the encouragement of political agitation'.⁶⁸ These allegations had some validity, and had their effect on a number of 'respectable' Irish. Roger Therry in 1845 condemned the moves by members to counter a proposed Battle of the Boyne celebration by Orangemen.⁶⁹ A number of the original members were not seen again in any of the celebrations or activities of the society after 1843, and Finn later complained of the aloofness of

67. Herald, August 16, 1842; Gazette, October 21, 1846.

68. Patriot, April 13, 1843.

69. Therry to Geoghegan, July 11, 1845. Melbourne A.A.

'the would-be upper crust' among the Irish in the colony to national demonstrations.⁷⁰ Throughout the 'forties the society was conspicuous for the absence from its ranks of many of the leading men of Victoria: those Irish immigrants of quite a different type and of much smaller numbers, who paralleled the assisted Irish immigration of the 'forties, particularly the long line of Irish barristers and solicitors, who included such future eminent leaders of Victorian law, politics and society as James Croke (arrived 1839) Sir Redmond Barry (1839) and Sir William Stawell (1842).⁷¹ These men were distinct not only in their profession and class background from the majority of Irish immigrants, but in their religion.⁷² They were less important to the history of the Irish community in Victoria than, for example, John O'Shanassy or Gavan Duffy, but their contribution to the colony is unquestioned. They constituted a distinct group of Irishmen whose failure to cooperate with their more humble countrymen in national societies and demonstrations was frequently a source of indignation to the latter, and whose existence was conveniently forgotten by those who sought to revile or to ridicule the 'national characteristics' of the Irish in a wider condemnation of the religion which the majority of Irishmen professed.

70. E.Finn, The 'Garryowen' Sketches, p. 120; The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, p. 643.

71. This immigration was reinforced in the early fifties, with men like Robert Molesworth (1853), R.D.Ireland (1852), George Higinbotham (1854), B.C.Aspinall (1854) and Moses Wilson Gray (1856).

72. At the first Legislative Council election, 16 of the elected members were Irish, but only six were Catholic.

If the October 1846 membership figure of 900 is to be believed, the St. Patrick's society had attracted 10% of the total Irish population of the colony. This statement of the strength of the society came a few months following the first overt 'Orange vs Green' violence in Melbourne, when an angry crowd had mobbed the Pastoral Hotel where Orangemen were celebrating the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, and had been fired upon.⁷³ Nevertheless, a meeting of the society on July 7 - before the disturbance - had given the membership as 850.⁷⁴ Thus it would appear that the conflict of July 11, and the subsequent controversy over the existence of 'political sects' had little effect on the membership of the society. The terms and references used in the press commentaries were those of the Irish situation - Orangeism and Ribbonism, whiteboyism, Orange and Green - and at no time was the St. Patrick's society equated with the 'Green' faction, even though its current President, John O'Shanassy, was present in the crowd outside the hotel, and was tried for his part in the proceedings. On the other hand, those connected by public rumour or in the press with the Orange group were often quick to dissociate themselves from any part in the affair, and even of any connection with the Orange movement at all.⁷⁵ Those papers

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73. Herald, July 17; Gazette, July 15, 1846. A youth died from a wound received in the shots that followed, but the man tried for malicious wounding was acquitted. It was generally believed that the shot had been aimed at Father Geoghegan. Geoghegan to Gould, November 6, 1857. Melbourne A.A.
74. Herald, July 9, 1846.
75. e.g. John King denied the imputation of Fawkner in the Herald that he was an originator of the Orange movement in Victoria, arguing that he was not even connected with it, (Gazette, July 18, 1846) and also wrote direct to the Herald criticising the spirit of intolerance that informed Orangeism (July 21). A few months later, following an advertisement for a meeting of the Caledonian Orange Lodge signed by order of the Secretary, J. Frencham, the Gazette received a letter from Henry Frencham, stressing that he was not the secretary indicated; that he had been an Orangeman, but had resigned the previous November. (Gazette, October 14, 1846).

which apparently sympathised with the Orangemen, or at least preferred them to a 'Ribbonism' that 'exclusively ranks among its supporters the quintessence of savage ignorance',⁷⁶ argued that any sectarian societies were both dangerous and unnecessary in Port Phillip. The riot of 1846, and the Party Processions (Prohibition) Act which was passed because of it, meant an end to St. Patrick's day processions until 1850, but it was much more damaging to the Orange organisation, which remained in limbo until the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868 led to great acquisitions to its ranks in all colonies.

It would appear that the St. Patrick's society lost whatever potential it might have had to influence local politics, less because of the disfavour into which 'faction' had been brought by the events of 1846, than because of the extension, in area and scope, of colonial politics following separation from N.S.W. and the creation of a separate Victorian parliament. For the riot of 1846, though it created considerable disruption in Melbourne, and figured so largely in the colonial (Melbourne-based) press, had little effect on the colony generally, and could be dismissed by those not personally involved as the in-fighting of intemperate Irishmen.⁷⁷ There is some proof that religion did enter into electoral contests and confuse otherwise clear social and class patterns of voting, as in the Port Phillip

76. Patriot, July 16, 1846.

77. In an editorial of March 27, 1856, re the arrival of Charles Gavan Duffy, the Argus reminded its readers of the events of 1846, but added that the tensions displayed there 'has since so far subsided as to leave little fear of its ever being re-excited to any dangerous extent'.

by-election of 1850, when 24 Catholics voted for J.D.Lang and 88 for Charles Ebdon, though generally the working classes, to which most Catholics belonged, had voted overwhelmingly for Lang.⁷⁸ But Lang was a particularly emotive candidate, having offended both Irish and Catholic sentiment (and liberal religious attitudes) by his stand on Irish immigration and religious tolerance, and no such clear pattern emerged with other candidates, even when they were acknowledged Orangemen.

On the other hand, the split between O'Shanassy and Duffy, the leading Irish Catholic politicians over land legislation in March 1859 showed that there was no single Irish Catholic 'line' when contradictory economic interests or political principles were involved. While this split could have a beneficial effect on the image held of the O'Shanassy in the wider community,⁷⁹ it caused the Catholic clergy to despair momentarily of gaining any advantage from a concerted Irish Catholic vote. Thus Geoghegan wrote to Bishop Goold shortly after the announcement of Duffy's resignation 'The Catholic party is split for any practical purpose - the General Elections will, however, be the test by which to judge the extent of the division'.⁸⁰ In the Church view, O'Shanassy was easily a 'better' Catholic than Duffy, but Duffy retained widespread support. For a few, their support may have been determined by admiration for Duffy's services to Ireland, and indicated their belief in the primacy of national over religious considerations, but for many more

78. K.Elford, 'The Politics of John Dunmore Lang', M.A. thesis, University of Sydney, pp. 110-113.

79. Argus, March 16, 1859.

80. Geoghegan to Goold, May 16, 1859. Melbourne A.A.

working class Irish the decision to support him or any other faction leader rather than the viable Irish Catholic leader, O'Shanassy, was influenced by the type of arguments used by the Age: that O'Shanassy, by his compromise on electoral reform, was an apostate to the popular cause and that, as a land owner, he took a too cautious and interested stand on land reform. If the Church was prepared to maintain a Catholic ministry, which might be expected to favour the Church views on education and state aid at the expense of popular land legislation, the bulk of the Catholic electorate were not.⁸¹ For non-Catholics, antagonism to O'Shanassy was likely to be intensified⁸² by the belief that 'his politics are the instructions of reverend superiors' but this did not ensure that Catholics were correspondingly endeared to O'Shanassy by these traits. Nor did the oft-alleged extension of patronage to fellow Irishmen by the government, or simple national sentiment, ensure acceptance of a candidate: R.D.Ireland, Solicitor General in the O'Shanassy ministry and an open advocate of 'the policy of party patronage for the protection and vindication of libelled races'⁸³ was returned last for his former electorate of Castlemaine in 1859, and Patrick O'Brien, a founding member of the Melbourne St. Patrick's society and a trustee from

81. At this time, particularly, before the Education Act of 1872, which still gave aid to Catholic 'Common Schools' under certain regulations, many Catholics might have wondered why such emphasis was placed by the Church on this single issue, to the exclusion of many other spheres in which they may, as Catholics, have felt themselves to be discriminated against. As Brother Fogarty had pointed out, there was at this time no tangible 'Catholic education' and the antagonism of the Hierarchy to the Common Schools was therefore all the more difficult to comprehend. R.Fogarty, Catholic Education in Australia, Vol 1, p.141

82. Age, October 26, 1858.

83. Argus, March 19, 1859 re Ireland's speech at the St. Patrick's day dinner at Emerald Hill on the 17th.

1842-75, was rejected by his former constituency of South Bourke. Castlemaine, a mining district, rejected Ireland as a member of a government which had done little to meet their particular needs and as a minister who was responsible for the unsatisfactory Mining Companies Act:⁸⁴ sentiment for the man who had defended the Eureka stockade rebels, or for O'Shanassy as a sympathetic member of the Gold Fields Commission of 1885, did not prevail over the realities of the current situation. There was an established pattern of support for the leading Irish Catholics, Duffy and O'Shanassy, in their own constituencies, and a few electorates consistently returned Irishmen, but individual Irishmen were returned regularly for constituencies with a small Irish component (e.g. Lalor for Grenville) as well as those with a high proportion of Irish residents (e.g. Murphy for Murray boroughs). Local issues and local men, and the major question of land reform dictated the result of the August election, and only six Catholics were returned - the same as in 1856, though the total number of members had since been increased from 60 to 75 - while the O'Shanassy government suffered a resounding defeat.⁸⁵ For, in spite of all contemporary and historical preoccupations to the contrary, the few militantly Catholic or politically active and radical Melbourne Irish were not representative of the Irish of Victoria generally, and just as life for most Irish colonists could not be confined to narrowly political or religious considerations, so voting behaviour was not conditioned simply by religious and national affinities with particular candidates.

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84. Serle, op. cit., pp. 223-4; Argus, August 20, 1859.

85. The government did not retire immediately, but was defeated by a censure motion by Nicholson in October.

At the census of 1861, 81,747 of the male population of Victoria were returned as miners, 34,738 were engaged in Agricultural pursuits, 33,089 were artisans and mechanics, 11,104 were employed in various aspects of distributing food (shopkeepers, etc.) and only 10,221 were recorded as labourers. Mining had absorbed thousands of unskilled immigrants⁸⁶ and with the decline of gold it was from this area that demands for land for small farms, on easy terms, was to come. Irishmen were as numerous among the miners as in the population generally, constituting 30,475 of the 190,414 British miners in 1861, and they decreased in number less rapidly than did the English or Scots-born. In 1861, Irish miners accounted for 38% of the Irish people in the colony, as compared with miners as 35% of the colonial population. Certainly Irishmen were prominent among the miners at Eureka⁸⁷ and if one accepts at least the emotive influence of Eureka on subsequent radical action and progressive legislation in Victoria, these Irish miners made a distinct political contribution to colonial development. Apart from this incident, however, miners generally remained a distinct group with limited interests in the 'fifties, only emerging in the land reform campaign at the end of the decade. Sixty-two percent of the Irish colonists were not on the gold fields in 1861, but were scattered throughout

86. In the following pages, all figures for 1846, 1851, 1854, 1857 and 1861 are from the censuses of those years - data in various Victorian Parliamentary Papers. In spite of the increase in the population 1854-1857, the return for unskilled labourers showed a decrease in the 1857 census - the only category to do so.

87. For a list of the men connected with Eureka, see appendix.

the colony in diverse occupations - and possibly the variety of occupations and districts chosen by Irish immigrants was even greater before 1851, for the gold discoveries determined areas of settlement and of extension of settlement even for many of those hopeful diggers who gave up very early the search for gold to seek more stable employment.

The pattern of early settlement and the establishment of economic and political control by sheep farmers was common throughout Victoria - by 1850, only 400,000 acres had been sold in the towns and settled areas while individual pastoral licencees held areas of thousands of acres for which they paid a nominal fee.⁸⁹ In 1846, 23,468 of the population were contained within the 'locations' (the counties Grant, Bourke and Normandy), 10,954 in Melbourne alone, and only 9,411 were in the squatting districts. Catholics⁹⁰ represented 27% of the population in each division, but this does not mean that they were fairly represented among landowners. In Victoria, and in the Western district particularly, Scots landowners were predominant, and most of the Irish landowners were the atypical Irish immigrants - from Northern Ireland, frequently Protestant, and who bought or leased stations almost immediately after their arrival, having arrived from

88. In 1854, when the Irish were 16.8% of the colonial population, they were 19.53% of the population in the agricultural districts, 16.4% in the depasturing districts and 14.4% on the gold fields.
89. Serle, op. cit., p. 3. Two Irish among these were George Coghill, with 67,200 acres in Gippsland, and Francis Murphy, with 60,000 in the Murray district. Votes and Proceedings of the N.S.W. Legislative Council, 1853-4. Paper C 4.
90. There was no division by place of birth at the 1846 census.

Ireland or N.S.W. with substantial capital.⁹¹ In addition, a number of the early Irish acquisitions to the bar and bench combined their profession with pastoral pursuits - e.g. James Murphy and Sir Francis Murphy, and Sir William Stawell and his cousin, Foster Fitzgerald.⁹² Most of the Catholic Irish in the squatting districts were shepherds and stockmen, and while a few of these went on quickly to establish their own runs and to buy land,⁹³ the majority did not become independent until the 'sixties, if at all, or drifted into the towns following an unsuccessful stint on the gold-fields or the break-up of estates. In Gippsland, for example, which had been early taken up by sheep farmers, and which by 1850 had less than 2,000 people, the Catholic priest, Fr. McAlroy, gave his reason for resigning the mission in 1857 as the lack of society except among Protestants,⁹⁴ and stated that there was no place in which to hold services, since most Catholics had unsuitable houses. McAlroy admittedly had no intention of accepting

91. e.g. James Leahy, born in Dublin 1802, who emigrated in 1841 and bought land at Greensborough, and in 1846 leased a run at Cardinia Creek, much of which he later bought. He was active in local shire affairs and in the pastoral association and aided the establishment of the Presbyterian church in Cranbourne. A. Henderson, Early Pioneer Families of Victoria and the Riverina, for this and many other examples. Charles Ryan, born in Kilkenny in 1818, emigrated to Sydney in 1839 and overlanded to Port Phillip the following year, where he bought Kilferra station, north-east of Broken River, and leased Killeen station at Longwood in 1849. Ryan was the son of a wealthy Dublin solicitor, and 'though an Irishman, is not a Roman Catholic'. Letter John Cotton to his brother, William, August 1847, in G. Mackaness (ed.) The Correspondence of John Cotton, Victorian Pioneer 1842-1849, p. 69. Also M. Casey, An Australian Story, pp .67-8.
92. Billis and Kenyon, op. cit., for details.
93. e.g. James Kennedy, arrived in Portland 1841, was a shepherd for a year in the Wannon district, then took up a run of 3,000 acres at Cape Bridgewater, converting part of it into freehold after the Selection acts. (Henderson, op. cit., p. 482). John Fitzgerald arrived in 1841, and took up Menenia station, near Ararat, only three years later. Press cuttings and information from a niece of the Fitzgeralds, loaned by Lindsay Robertson, of Lake Bolac, October, 1972.
94. Letter McAlroy to Goold, February 9, 1857. Melbourne A.A.

'exile' to Gippsland⁹⁵ and his statement that there were not more than seventy adults in the district was an underestimate - the Catholic population in 1854 was over 400, and by 1857 had increased to 634 in south Gippsland alone.⁹⁶ McAlroy did, however, give the names and occupations of many of the Catholics he contacted, and the majority were classed as shepherds and workingmen.⁹⁷

In 1852, the police districts of Melbourne, Kilmore, Grant, Belfast and Benalla had attracted the greatest proportion of Irish residents, representing expansion directly north and west of Melbourne, to the best agricultural areas. The first major area of extension outside Melbourne - Geelong - was a district early taken up by sheep farmers from N.S.W. and Van Dieman's Land, and by 1851 contained a slightly below-average proportion of Irish. The first addition (to Melbourne) to the Catholic mission in Victoria was Geelong in 1842, and the first parish priest, Fr. Michael Stephens, laid the foundation of a church on his arrival that year. By 1846, however, the Church had still not been completed.⁹⁸ The landowners of Geelong, unsuccessful in their competition with Melbourne for labourers, frequently sent to England for their servants, and were prepared to accept 'exiles' from Van Dieman's Land in spite of the general antipathy to such

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95. McAlroy had recently been removed from Geelong, having been involved with Fathers Patrick Dunne and P. Bermingham there in a vigorous and distinctly Irish and politically orientated attempt to revitalise Catholicism, which had upset Bishop Goold (see letters of Dunne to Cardinal Barnabo in Rome, February 10, 1858, copy in Melbourne A.A; also T.L. Suttor, Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia, pp. 230-2).
96. Many of these Catholics probably were children however: the Irish population of Gippsland in 1854 was only 124, and some of these were non-Catholics.
97. McAlroy to Goold, February 20, 1857. Of the 15 heads of families named by McAlroy, 12 were shepherd, 2 working-men, and one a settler.
98. Letter Fr. Walsh to Geoghegan, February 29, 1846. Copy in Adelaide A.A.

importations in the colony. The strongest denomination in the district was the Presbyterian, and most of the immigrants on the three government ships that arrived direct in Geelong in 1842 were of that faith, having been induced to emigrate by the propaganda of J.D.Lang.⁹⁹ The gold discoveries enhanced the importance of Geelong as a food-producing area, and greatly increased the population, for Geelong was in a favourable situation in regard to Ballarat in particular.¹⁰⁰ The growth of population and the new mood in the colony generally produced during the 'fifties, encouraged a challenge to the dominancy of the squatters - in 1853 the district boasted a strong People's Association, whose cry was to 'unlock the lands' and which put forward candidates for the Legislative Council elections that year.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, there was little scope in Geelong for the small farmer for some years to come, for the position of the conservative landowners was not significantly eroded before the land acts of the 'sixties, and the district

99. W.R.Brownhill, The History of Geelong and Corio Bay, 1955, p. 49. It was Geelong voters that determined the return of Lang for the Port Phillip district in the 1843 Council elections, for he polled only fifth in the Melbourne and Portland divisions. (Port Phillip Gazette, June 24, 1843 for results of the Poll).

100. The first Ballarat land sale of November 1852, was held in Geelong. The population increased from 8,291 in 1851 to 20,115 in 1854.

101. Serle, op. cit., pp. 17, 144.

continued to be represented by men who supported the views of property.¹⁰²

Between 1857 and 1861 the population of the electoral district of Geelong actually decreased, as did the Irish proportion of it, some of the residents having left for the new gold fields near Ararat or for the greater opportunities for farming to the west or the north. The attractions of Geelong itself, however, as the second city in Victoria, ensured its attraction for unskilled Irish immigrants, especially for single Irish women who could gain employment as domestic servants in the homes of the wealthy.¹⁰³

In 1861, the town contained a population of 16,613, of whom 17% were Irish by birth. 62% of the Irish were women. Though this proportion of Irish was barely above the colonial average, the Irish of Geelong appeared more numerous because of their concentration in certain areas. By 1853 the price of town land in south Geelong had risen to a minimum price of £150

102. In 1856 Geelong was represented by Charles Sladen and Alexander Fyfe; in 1859, Geelong West returned James Harrison and J.H. Brooke (who had replaced Fyfe during the first Parliament) and Geelong East returned James Cowie and Alexander Thomson. In 1861 Brooke was returned for Geelong West with Nicholas Foott, and B.C. Aspinall and John Richardson representing East Geelong. The radical Graham Berry lost at East Geelong not only in 1860, when he was a resident of Melbourne, but in 1867 when he was editor of the Geelong Register. Only in 1868 did he triumph, against the recent Mayor of Geelong, for the West Geelong constituency. The trend in Geelong was to send candidates who balanced each other out - thus in 1856, Fyfe was a democrat and Sladen a conservative (Serle, p. 259n); James Harrison was a squatter and, through the medium of his Geelong Advertiser, an early advocate of protection, while Brooke was a democrat; Thomson was a liberal (or radical, depending on the political colours of the observer) who had been mayor of Geelong a number of terms, Cowie showed himself equivocal on the main question of the day (he favoured limited free selection - Argus, December 2, 1859). Aspinall in 1860 sympathised with the popularist views of the Convention.

103. Two such woman, Ellen and Mary O'Sullivan, were able to send home £10 to their parents shortly after their arrival in the colony, and urged their brother Cornelius, to emigrate and benefit from the current high wages for shearers and shepherds. (October 7, 1852 in Monteaule Papers).

per acre, and that in north Geelong to £300. As land in the 'suburbs' was only £5 per acre, it was inevitable that most Irish settled there, particularly in a valley west of south Geelong, where settlements became known as Irishtown, Newtown and Ashby.¹⁰⁴ By the end of the 'sixties, however, Geelong and most of the Western district was stagnating - Geelong's population showed an actual decrease between 1861 and 1871. All hopes of rivalling Melbourne had been dispelled, and the drift to the capital did not leave Geelong unscathed.

After Geelong, settlement of Victoria proceeded further west, and by 1846 the town of Portland was the third largest centre in the colony. Portland was, however, destined to be a service centre for the pastoral districts inland, rather than a self-supporting agricultural area, and though it received immigrants direct from 1849, this was the result of agitation by runholders for labour, not due to any promising aspect for local farming.¹⁰⁵ In 1851 the police district of Portland contained a population of 2,342, and more than 1,000 of these were living in Portland itself. Irish women were 25% of the females of the district, and Catholics represented 22% of the population. By 1861, however, this had fallen to 16%, and the effects of this on the church were apparent. Portland had gained its first resident priest, Fr. Michael Stephens, in 1847, becoming

104. P.F.Hogan, The Irish in Australia, 1888, p. 106. In 1846 there were 75 Catholics in the Irishtown population of 135, and 61 in the 256 at Newtown.

105. For complaints of Portland re immigration, Port Phillip Herald, February 2, 1849 and petition of 1848 in N.S.W. Legislative Council, Votes and Proceedings, 1849, vol. 1, p. 837. In reply to this, Latrobe said that most immigrants were unwilling to go to Portland in spite of the higher wages they could earn.

the third parish in the colony. At the laying of the foundation stone of a new church by Bishop Goold in 1857, £70 had been collected:¹⁰⁶ throughout the 'sixties, all the evidence of local priests stresses the poverty of the district. In August 1863 Father P.A.Courtenay stated that the Sunday collections averaged twelve shillings, and early the following year the situation was no better -

As to Portland, it is looking something like Goldsmith's deserted village ... The tenants are fled - some to the diggings, others to New Zealand, and some up to the Bush. No wonder, for although there is here a bay - one of the finest in the world - yet not a ship appears on its surface. No public works in the town, no good land in its neighbourhood to give employment to the hardy sons of toil. ¹⁰⁷

Courtenay assessed the number of Catholics at this time at 350, in some seventy families; nor were these all 'good' Catholics - 'the fruits of mixed marriages were visible in lukewarmness and negligence shown in regard to the practice of religion'.¹⁰⁸ In 1865 his successor, P. Riordan, gave evidence of the menial position of the local Catholics, almost half of his congregation being engaged on roads, carrying and labouring for the Road Board, and another 30 or 40 under private contract.¹⁰⁹ Riordan estimated the Catholics of Portland at only 120, but a clue to this disparity with Courtenay was given by the next resident priest, T.F.Neville, who in 1867

106. Letter Goold to Fitzgerald, 'Tuesday', 1857. Melbourne A.A.

107. Letter to Fitzgerald, February 17, 1864. Melbourne A.A. Also August 7, 1863.

108. Goold to Fitzgerald, *ibid.*

109. Riordan to Goold, March 21, 1865. Melbourne A.A.

wrote re

... the fact, which I learned with much regret, of many poor people absenting themselves from Mass, through shame at having their poverty exposed ... The best part of my people here are either gone or preparing to go ... In fact, the congregation here, at present, is composed altogether of women and children, and does not fill half the church. There were only five men at the second Mass last Sunday. 110

The collection had again fallen to 12/- and Neville was not sanguine as to any improvement. Portland had not reaped any permanent benefit from the shiploads of emigrants that had arrived regularly from 1849. These immigrants had been demanded by the station owners beyond Portland, and were soon contracted by them from the town. Typical was the case of John Neeson, born county Antrim 1832, who arrived in Portland in the Mary Anne, January 29, 1857, with his wife Catherine. He was employed from the immigration depot as a station hand by Frederick Corney, of Springvale station, eighty miles inland, and subsequently on the sheep runs of James Blair and Edward Hearne.¹¹¹ By 1865 Neeson had become the overseer on Hearne's station at Lake Wallace north, but following the opening of large areas of former pastoral leases in the Western district in 1865, under the Grant Amending Act of 1865, he determined to gain land of his own. He was

110. Neville to Fitzpatrick, February 2, 1867. Melbourne A.A.

111. Blair was the Police magistrate at Portland, who had led the agitation for immigrants direct from Britain. He was a Catholic, alleged to favour other Catholics over Protestants, and Hearne was an Irishman who had emigrated to N.S.W. in 1837 and had himself begun in the same way as Neeson, working on Horace Wills' stations until 1846, and moving with him to Port Phillip in 1840.

granted his first selection in 1867, and by 1879 owned 930 acres in the Nareen district, which his descendants have since increased to 4,000 acres. Neeson's first grant was shared with John Waters, a fellow Irishman who had also been employed on Hearne's station. Waters was an Orangeman, while Neeson was a Catholic whose home was always open to travelling priests and nuns¹¹² yet the two men remained friends all their lives, visiting each other every evening after work.¹¹³ Many other immigrants may not have been as successful as John Neeson, but the pattern, of immediate departure from Portland to work inland, and subsequent attempts to become independent following the selection acts, was a common one.

The choice of Portland was often not a conscious one by immigrants, particularly for Irish immigrants who crossed first to Plymouth and were eager to take the first available passage, rather than spend their meagre savings on accommodation in England. For those who made a deliberate decision to move to Portland from Melbourne, the attraction was employment at a higher wage and possibly the opportunity to save. The wage for unskilled labour in Melbourne in 1856 was eight shillings per day, decreasing to five or six shillings by 1861. Living expenses, in reasonable comfort, for a working class family in Melbourne were estimated at £3.13.0 in 1857 - a higher total than the weekly wage for an unskilled worker, even if he

112. Including Bishop O'Connor of Ballarat in 1875, when he came to open the Nareen church (of which Neeson was a trustee) in May.

113. This information on John Neeson was compiled and loaned to me by his grandson, the present owner of 'Glanleam' at Nareen, Ewan F. Neeson, whom I interviewed in October 1972.

worked six days a week - not a promising situation for the immigrant hopeful of an improved standard of living. The situation for shepherds was much better - £35 to £38 in 1857, with keep - but many immigrants were reluctant to live in the thinly-populated and often dangerous pastoral districts. Most Irish assisted immigrants were classed as farm labourers, and the situation for these in 1857 was perhaps preferable to that of day workers, at £22 to £25 p.a. with keep.¹¹⁴ Such immigrants did not go to Portland which offered little scope for the hopeful small farmer or farm labourer, but rather to the other rival centres on the west coast, Port Fairy and Warrnambool. One such immigrant was Thomas Sinnott from county Wexford, who came to Port Phillip in 1841 with his wife and three children. He worked as a general labourer in Melbourne for two years; he was well-educated, but there was little opening in the Melbourne of those early years to accommodate him, nor could the Church provide any opening - as Father Geoghegan wrote to Father Therry in 1843, concerning the prospects in Melbourne for a talented young Catholic classical scholar, 'My community are not of that class to hold out much prospect of success to him'.¹¹⁵ Sinnott was able to actively associate with his Church at least by serving Father Geoghegan at Mass, which he did until the family moved to Port Fairy in 1843. There the family took up land - possibly on the Special Survey,

114. Wages and living costs from Serle, op. cit., p. 240n.

115. Geoghegan to Father Therry, January 25, 1843. Adelaide A.A.

and certainly leased rather than owned - which was sown with wheat and potatoes and gradually diversified, but it was not until the return of Sinnott from the Ballarat fields that the family were able to purchase their own land at Yambuk.¹¹⁶

From as early as 1843, Port Fairy was being noted in Melbourne as a potential rival to the older town of Portland.¹¹⁷ In 1846, 20% of the Portland population of 510 were Catholic, compared with 15% in Port Fairy¹¹⁸ but the Irish Catholic component of the Port Fairy district was being rapidly augmented by acquisitions to the tenant estates of James Atkinson, 4,000 acres centred on the township of Belfast, which he himself had laid out and named, and that of William Rutledge, to the east of Belfast and adjoining it, centred on the towns of Koroit and Killarney.¹¹⁹ Rutledge's survey was tenanted initially by Irish farmers, apparently brought out direct from Ireland, on farms of 150-200 acres at a rental of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 bushels of

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116. Mrs. J.F. Devlin, 'A Few Remembrances of the Early Days of Australia' typescript loaned by T.A.Crowe, of Port Fairy. Mrs. Devlin was the grand-daughter of Thomas Sinnott.
117. Port Phillip Gazette, August 16, 1843.
118. 1846 census, abstract in Gazette, February 20, 1847.
119. The Rutledge and Atkinson surveys were distinct in the interests and rationale of their owners - the venture was more purely commercial for Atkinson, who lived in Sydney, where he practised as a solicitor, and later retired to Ireland, than for Rutledge, who lived in Belfast, was its member in the ^{Legislative Council} 1851-4 and the Assembly 1856-9, and conducted numerous improvements and enterprises in the district. Nevertheless, as they affected the tenants, the surveys had much in common, and in 1850 it was Rutledge who acted on Atkinson's behalf in the transference of a section in Belfast to the Government for use as a Court House. (Latrobe to Colonial Secretary, November 20, 1850. Dixon library Additional MSS 212). It was the 'absentee landlord' that J.F.Hogan took issue with in 1888 (The Irish in Australia, p. 118) and in 1849 the Argus had supported moves by the government to reserve land for wharves and to release land in the Belfast township in lots of not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ acre in view of the fact that 'the township of Belfast is the property of a single individual, who exercised the power of a petty sovereign among the inhabitants, and though not legally invested with the disposal of life and death, could, at all events, determine whether any man should have the means of living in Belfast'. (July 17, 1849).

wheat per acre. The conditions of tenancy demanded that the tenant clear and drain the land, but Rutledge provided seed and often implements, thus enabling even impoverished arrivals from Ireland to take advantage of this opportunity.¹²⁰ None of the land on the Rutledge survey was, however, available for sale until after his death in 1876, and many of the tenants consequently left as soon as they could afford to buy land. This was particularly common following the gold discoveries, when many made great profits from the exaggerated prices paid for grain and potatoes on the gold fields,¹²¹ but many sought no further for land than the rich adjoining area of Tower Hill, thus maintaining the Irish character of the district and attracting more Irish immigrants as labourers and as new tenants.¹²² Atkinson, who initially contracted with Irish immigrants in Sydney to tenant his survey, imposed the same conditions of tenancy as Rutledge, but with leases for 21 and 31, as well as 14, years, which could be converted into freehold. Hateful as tenancy and landlordism may have been in Ireland, there was no lack of takers for the farms which were offered for auction every July 1, and brought high rents of £4 to £8 per acre.¹²³ When the first 1300 acres of Rutledge's land were offered in 1876, 729 acres were sold on the first day, at prices from £37 to £60 per acre, and all went to local men, many former tenants and

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120. The immigrants brought by Rutledge were allegedly evicted tenants. Duffy, C.G., My Life in Two Hemispheres, Vol. 2, p. 151.
121. In July, 1855, potatoes brought £30 a ton; wheat rose from 2/6 to 25/- a bushel in 1853. Crawford, op. cit., p. 14, 19.
122. Most of the large allotments around Tower Hill had been selected 1842-1854, and many of these were later subdivided. M.C. Downes, 'The History of Tower Hill', Typescript in Latrobe Library, p. 20.
123. Hogan, op. cit., p. 121. H.A. McCorkell, A Green and Pleasant Land, shows that the roll of Koroit ratepayers was composed largely of those who rented land, usually 5 to 30 acres, and that these very largely had Irish names. pp. 121-129.

many Irish.¹²⁴ The lands agitation from the late 'fifties did not touch Port Fairy, for all the land had already been carved into small farms, and a small area of rich soil, though not freehold, appeared preferable to many to a government selection in a new area and of unknown quality.

In 1848, Port Fairy became the first parish division in Victoria, having earlier been included in the Portland mission, and gained Father (later Dean) Thomas Slattery as its first resident priest in March.¹²⁵ The decision to establish Port Fairy as a separate mission appears to have been determined largely by a desire to counter moves in that direction by the Anglican church,¹²⁶ without consideration of its practicability, and a few months later Geoghegan was in despair of finding a priest to send there, and disturbed by the possible reaction to this by the Catholic community of Port Fairy, who had already raised a subscription for a priest's support.¹²⁷ Slattery was acquired from the N.S.W. diocese early the next year, however, and had established Catholic schools at Tower Hill and Crossley by 1850 and at Koroit in 1852 before his departure to the new mission of Warrnambool in 1853. By 1851, the police district of Belfast (which included Warrnambool until 1853) had 1,005 Catholics, 26% of the population, and the nucleus had been established of a district in which

124. Crawford, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

125. Mackle, op. cit., appendix; Light (Ballarat Diocesan Journal), July 1969, p. 22.

126. Geoghegan to Goold, May 30, 1848. Melbourne A.A.

127. July 18, 1848.

Catholic schools flourished, absorbing by 1858 a national school which at one time had boasted 150 pupils.¹²⁸ In the 'fifties, the problem for the church in Belfast was not the lack of members and funds that faced the clergy in Portland, but the independence of the local Catholics. Patrick Dunne, who arrived in the mission in March 1856 (having been removed from Geelong by Goold) found a population amenable to his stand in expressing a militant Catholicism in the face of a Protestant-majority community, in spite of the objections to this by Bishop Goold. It is likely that normal local jealousy of Melbourne played a role in this issue, particularly in the readiness with which allegations of the misappropriation of Belfast Church funds to St. Patrick's were accepted, and Dunne's ability to gather supporters was proverbial.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, though by 1858 Slattery was able to maintain that no anti-Church or anti-Episcopal party existed in Belfast and that 'the collections made at the doors on Sundays show the kindness and liberality of the faithful towards the pastors and Church',¹³⁰ it appears that a peculiarly Irish type of Catholicism reigned in Belfast, fostered by the simulation of traditional tenant close settlement on the estates of Rutledge and Atkinson. Possibly, too, this independence was an indication of the presence in the district by the 'fifties of a number of successful diggers - not only men like Thomas Sinnott

128. Bonwick, *op. cit.*, p. 93 footnote.

129. T.L.Sutter, Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia 1788-1870, pp.229-236.

130. Slattery to Goold, April 3, 1858, in Geoghegan-Goold correspondence, Melbourne A.A.

who had already been in the area for some time and who returned after the first rushes with enough savings to establish themselves as small landowners rather than tenants, but other new arrivals, single young men like Sinnott's son-in-law, John Walshe Crowe, who came not as refugees from a land of want but for the excitement, adventure and chance of fortune offered by the gold fields.¹³¹ These immigrants reinforced the Irish component of the Victorian farming districts, either by taking up farms there if they had been successful on the gold fields, or supplying the demand for agricultural labourers if they had not, and contributed to the consolidation of the Irish character (and the Catholicism) of the area by intermarriage with the daughters of older residents or their domestic servants, as well as by the encouragement given to relatives in Ireland to join them. Thus generations of Australian-born children were brought up in a peculiarly Irish setting, physical and social, and in which there was little motivation to change the old ways, including the temporal leadership expected of the parish priest.¹³² While this did not necessarily involve alienation from the non-Catholics of the district, it could prove disconcerting to the outsider: in July 1870 the Italian priest Father Bassetto requested a transfer from this mission where there were 'Catholics speaking only the Irish language, and come to confession ignorant', and his departure soon

131. Devlin MSS, op. cit., p. v.

132. It was quite common to hear the Irish brogue in Catholic schools in the Western district even in the 1930's, even though the children might be third or fourth generation Australians.

after caused an irate Dean Slattery to remark to Vicar General Fitzpatrick that 'You will find Bassetto, like all foreigners, useless'.¹³³ Belfast was the centre, with Koroit and Warrnambool, of the electoral district of Villiers and Heytesbury¹³⁴ which triumphantly returned Charles Gavan Duffy in 1856 and at two subsequent elections, and replaced him with another Irishman during Duffy's absence in Europe for the fourth general election in 1864. In 1861, Villiers and Heytesbury contained 2,718 Irish in a population of 10,308 and, though the town of Belfast suffered a setback in 1862 with the collapse of the mercantile firm of William Rutledge and Co., had increased this number by 37% by 1871, to boast the third highest proportion of Catholics in the colony, and was behind only Melbourne, Kilmore and Dalhousie in its proportion of Irish-born.

Yet, in spite of the peculiar situation of the Special Surveys on the west coast, it was the settlements of Kilmore and Kyneton, north of Melbourne, which attracted most notice as Irish settlements before 1860, though smaller in numbers. Kilmore was described by John Bond, an English emigrant on a walking tour of the area around Melbourne in 1853 as 'a small Irish village' and by William Kelly in 1859 as 'it appeared to me like a place at least half a century old ... so completely and intensely Irish ... in appearance, in accent, and in the peculiarly Milesian style of huckestring arrangement in which the shops were set out'.¹³⁵ The Catholic priest William Finn

133. Bassetto to Vicar-General Fitzpatrick, July 13, 1870; Slattery to Fitzpatrick, August 8, 1870. Melbourne A.A.

134. Belfast itself was created a separate electoral district in 1851 .

135. J. Bond, 'The Diary of John James Bond', 1853-. MSS Latrobe Library p. 52; W. Kelly, Life in Victoria, p. 364.

described Kilmore in 1870 as still 'The most Catholic and Celtic town in Victoria, and well does it serve the honoured distinction'.¹³⁶ In 1861 the electoral district of Kilmore contained 940 Irish-born residents in a population of 2,897 and in the town of Kilmore itself, 519 of the 1,668 inhabitants were Irish immigrants. The district prospered greatly with the gold rushes, particularly Kyneton, which was some miles west of Kilmore and consequently closer to the goldfields markets. Kilmore, however, was more strategically placed for permanent advantages, for it was on the Sydney road, which carried increasing traffic with the development of both colonies, particularly following the discovery of gold at Beechworth and McIvor to the north in 1855.¹³⁷ Coaching firms flourished in Kilmore, as did the hotels in the town and all along the road - any 'natural' Irish propensity for hotel-keeping would have been immensely reinforced by the impetus that the goldfields and the heat of Australian summer gave to the consumption of alcohol. One of the early Irish residents of Kilmore, Lawrence Kelly, who had set up as a blacksmith by 1840, recognised the potential of the town and became a wealthy man by the re-sale of allotments he had purchased earlier.¹³⁸

In spite of the attractions of the many nearby diggings, the resident population of Kilmore, and the number of Irish in it, increased slightly

136. William Finn, Glimpses of North-East Victoria, p. 8.

137. Lines of settlement had spread south from Sydney and north from Melbourne, and coach stations appeared along this line of communication. At the Sydney end, particularly, the names of the coaching firms were predominantly Irish - Doyle and Levy, Ireland and Co., Pooley, Malone, Moran, Barry and Elliot - but none were able to meet the competition of Cobb and Co. in the 1850's. T.W.Ransome, The History of Goulburn, New South Wales, pp. 55-57.

138. J.A.Maher, The Tale of a Century. Kilmore 1837-1937, p. 24.

between 1854 and 1857. At the first land sale in the town, almost all of the 6,000 acres south of the town offered for sale were sold, in blocks of 6 to 18 acres, at an average of £3 to £6 per acre.¹³⁹ The enhanced value of farm produce meant that many small farmers felt no need to leave for the goldfields in order to profit by them. Similarly, not all the newly arrived immigrants sought for immediate wealth in gold, but settled for the less spectacular but more enduring fruits of the soil. Thus, though few resisted the temptation of an initial foray into mining in the early years of the discoveries, many had resorted to farming by the mid-fifties, and the volume of agricultural production increased steadily from 1854.¹⁴⁰ In many instances, farmers were to fail from lack of capital or experience, but those around Kilmore were more favoured, by the quality of the soil and the established markets of the diggings.

As usual, word of the new developments in the colonies reached friends of colonists in even the most remote parts of Europe, and encouraged others to emigrate. William Waugh, a trader and storekeeper in Melbourne, welcomed in 1856 his brother Hugh from county Down, and sent him off to work in a store on the McIvor diggings, to the profit of them both.¹⁴¹ Others, like John Walshe Crowe and Andrew Dempsey remained on the fields only long enough to save the capital to set up as farmers and hundreds took their place in the

139. Ibid., p. 44.

140. Land sales in Victoria increased enormously in the 'fifties, from 40,042 in 1850 to 492,248 in 1860, having reached a peak of 500,383 in 1857.

141. William Waugh to his father, January 26, 1857. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Material relevant to Australia, copy in Latrobe Library.

occupations subsidiary to the diggings, among which the purchase of a bullock and dray in order to engage in the lucrative practice of carting supplies to the fields was particularly popular among Irishmen.¹⁴² Not all the hopeful diggers were successful, but their emigration frequently had repercussions on the lives of other members of their family or village. James Getty, an emigrant of 1852 from Balleymoney in county Antrim, who made his way to Kilmore and worked on the surrounding fields, received a letter from his brother John asking should he too emigrate. John's opinion that 'Ireland is no place to make money, though times is very good ... it is only losing one's time stopping here', seems to have coincided with that of his brother in Australia, for in 1857 James received a reproachful letter from his father, reminding him that James had said he would only be away for six years, and unable to understand why he remained, since he was not enjoying success on the gold fields.¹⁴³ James had given his father a clue to his decision to remain which apparently puzzled the old Irishman - 'You say you are Colony' - but which was probably a quite common reaction among the young men, a measure of their rapid adaptation to the new situation, and of the promise of new gold rushes that lingered throughout the 'fifties.¹⁴⁴

142. This practice was illegal, and subject to the depredations of bushrangers, but the profits to be made placed such considerations at a discount.

143. Getty Letters, July 11, 1853 and February 22, 1857.

144. e.g. Peter Mathews returned to England after 9 years in the colonies, but vowed to return. P. Mathews, Letters, March 19, 1862. Mitchell MSS.

It is easy, in view of the prosperity of Victoria at this time, to understand that ties of home and kin might not be strong enough to force immigrants to return to a country where conditions, though improving, offered little scope for the landless and unskilled. Identification with the new colony was greater for those who had established roots in the soil or found an otherwise viable existence in the towns. Nevertheless, a more total acceptance of spending one's life in the colony was made possible by the presence of the people and institutions of one's homeland in 'Irish' centres like Kilmore - which gained no additions to its Irish-born population in the 'sixties, but which retained the description of 'an Irish town' because of the community created and maintained among the Irish population both by social organisations and by the Catholic church.¹⁴⁵

In April, 1849, the first Catholic priest arrived in Kilmore, and established a temporary church the following year. On his death in 1854 Father Clarke was replaced by Father Timothy O'Rourke, who was able to open a Catholic school and another church in 1855. It would appear that the school attracted the Catholic children of the district, for in 1856 only four of the 36 children at the Kilmore national school and two of the 72 at Kyneton were Catholic.¹⁴⁶ Under O'Rourke, an ambitious new church was founded which took thirteen years to complete but which was paid for (at a cost of £19,000) totally by voluntary contributions.¹⁴⁷ After nearly ten

145. The local newspaper was also in the hands of an Irishman, the subsequent representative in the Assembly, Thomas Hunt, from 1865 to his death in 1935.

146. Parliamentary Papers 1856-1857, Vol 4, no. 67, p. 38.

147. Hogan, op. cit., p. 110.

years as pastor of the district, O'Rourke's successor, Father Brannigan, described his flock as 'good, kind, single-minded Catholics, who would quickly take scandal at any indiscretion in a priest'.¹⁴⁸ This sentiment was echoed by William Finn, who visited the district that year -

Any stranger on a Sunday perceiving the hundreds approaching the Church of St. Patrick to be in time for the first or second Mass, would at once admit that Kilmore is certainly Catholic in every sense of the word. As a rule, the people are mostly of the farming class; at the same time some of the chief business in Kilmore is in the enterprising hands of Catholics. 149

Finn's preoccupation with the Catholic rather than the Celtic identity of Kilmore may be attributed to his personal predilection - Finn himself was a Catholic priest, visiting Kilmore during an annual collection tour of the north made on behalf of Vicar-General Fitzpatrick. Nevertheless, it should be noted that by 1871 the Irish-born had decreased from 940 to 736, while the Catholic population had increased commensurately with the general increase of the population of the district. In 1874 the constituency which the Argus had described in 1859 as belonging to O'Shanassy 'Body and soul ... scot and lot, whip and bludgeon'¹⁵⁰ rejected the old Catholic leader for a local Irishman, Thomas Hunt, editor of the Kilmore Free Press and a resident of the town since 1858. The Kilmore electors recognised not only O'Shanassy's growing conservatism, but also his failure in the fight against secular education, and returned a local man who was at least familiar with their particular economic interests and needs, which were in direct contrast to those

148. Brannigan to Goold, May 27, 1870. Melbourne A.A.

149. W.M. Finn, op. cit., p. 8.

150. Argus, September 1, 1859.

of a large landowner like O'Shanassy.¹⁵¹ Hunt was also an Irishman and a Catholic, but his return over O'Shanassy was the triumph of a spirit of local self-preservation in an area where most voters had severed their links with Ireland some twenty years before.

The Western district and the Kilmore-Kyneton settlements were the major areas of unusual Irish concentration outside of Melbourne. Other areas were noticeable for the lack of Irish inhabitants - the vast area of Gippsland, e.g., had only 273 Irish people in 1857, and this was after an increase to their number following the demand for labour in the district after the loss of men to the goldfields; in 1854 the number of Irish had been only 124.¹⁵² On the goldfields, the Irish appear to have maintained an aggressive national identity, or at least to have had it thrust upon them. Ballarat gained a Catholic parish priest soon after its foundation as a goldfield, in 1853, but by 1858 no permanent Catholic church had yet been built.¹⁵³ Father Smythe, it would appear, gained more attention from the Irish Catholic miners because of the arrest of his servant by a licence

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151. P.S.Cleary, Australia's Debt to Irish Nationalbuilders, p. 146; There was evidence also of reservations towards O'Shanassy even as a Catholic, indicated by the local priest, Michael Farrelly, who wrote to the Vicar General that 'I hear Sir John does not care for the clergy much, except so far as they may be auxiliaries to him to carry out his views - and the time is not very far remote when he was not (if report be true) on the best of terms with his Bishop'. Farrelly to Fitzpatrick, April 16, 1874. Melbourne A.A. There is something of irony in this, in that, at the same time, O'Shanassy was being attacked by the Age for his partiality as a representative of one particular creed. Age, April 16, 1874.
152. Censuses 1854, 1857; letter Father Verling to Goold, September 5, 1856 re the increasing numbers of Catholics in upper Gippsland. Melbourne A.A.
153. F.Mackle, The Footprints of our Catholic Pioneers, n.d., p. 109.

hunter - which incident had considerable propaganda value - than for his ministrations and attempts to establish a mission.¹⁵⁴ Certainly he believed himself threatened by these same diggers in December 1854 because of his refusal to take a firm stand with them on the licence issue.¹⁵⁵ By the end of the decade, however, life on the goldfields had become more stable, though many of the residents were still miners: at the Ballarat East Catholic school in 1863, for example, the occupation of most of the fathers of the 177 children there was given as miner or artisan, while at the nearby Buninyong Catholic school, nearly all the 24 children had fathers who were labourers.¹⁵⁶ In 1861, only 11% of the population of the town of Ballarat West, 13% of that of Ballarat East, and 12% of Castlemaine were Irish, and this pattern was repeated in the areas around the towns.¹⁵⁷ More Irish proportionately had emigrated in the later 'fifties (38% of the total assisted in 1856, 47% in 1858) and those who went to the goldfields tended to be single, and the Catholic population in these districts thus more closely paralleled the Irish population than in older established areas. There were concentrations of Irish outside the main centres, including Bungaree ('Tipperary Gully'), east of Ballarat, and the inevitable Irishtown, west of Sandhurst, and by 1870 Catholic parishes had been established in the

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154. The meeting at Bakery Hill of October 23, 1854, was called on the issue of Gregory's arrest.
155. Letter Smythe to Henry Archer, December 13, 1854. Melbourne A.A. Speaking in the third person, Smythe wrote 'It was meditated at the camp to arrest him - at least so I hear, and it was decided at the stockade to shoot him; - of this I am certain. At the camp it twice came to my ear that a person should be on one side or the other'.
156. Report of Inspector, August 4 and March 18, 1863. Extracts loaned by Father Linane.
157. In the corresponding electoral districts, the figures were 11.6%, 15.2%, 11.5%.

mining districts of Ararat, Carisbrook (Maryborough), Creswick and Inglewood, as well as Ballarat. A St. Patrick's society flourished in Ballarat in 1860; nevertheless, Ballarat was one of the first districts to reveal the trend for national societies to be subsumed by societies that stressed the Benefit aspect of membership: by 1872 the Ballarat Hibernian Benefit Society, with ten lodges, had almost as many members as the ten lodges still extant in Victoria of the St. Patrick's society.¹⁵⁸ The goldfields population was reinforced after 1860 not by direct immigration but by the settlement of other colonists as farmers around the fields or as labourers and tradesmen in those towns that had established their viability independently of the goldfields. Few of the miners themselves took up land following the Duffy Land Act of 1862, so any preponderance of Irish on the goldfields was not automatically translated into a permanent settlement of Irish farmers in former mining districts.¹⁵⁹

All the upheavals of the 'fifties had not damaged the primacy of Melbourne, though in 1861 it contained the lowest proportion of the colonial population than at any other census. By 1861 the population of Melbourne was 36,868, four times that of 1846. The number of Irish in the city increased correspondingly, such that by 1861 the city had an Irish population

158. Parliamentary Papers 1872, Vol. 2, no. 2.

159. The Land Act of 1862, Progress Report, in Parliamentary Papers 1862-3, Vol. 3, no. 17.

three times greater than that of its nearest rival, Geelong. The Melbourne Irish represented only 10% of the Irish population of Victoria, but many more lived in the adjacent suburbs, particularly Collingwood East, Fitzroy, Richmond, Prahran and St. Kilda. This would seem to indicate

Table 5. Irish Distribution in Urban Centres at the Census of 1861:

<u>Town or Suburb</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Irish</u>	<u>% of Irish</u>	<u>Irish women</u>
Melbourne	36,868	8,549	23	4,763
Geelong	16,613	2,864	17	1,770
Richmond	11,355	1,705	13	1,000
Fitzroy	11,807	1,620	14	986
Collingwood East	12,653	1,518	12	922
Emerald Hill	8,822	1,403	16	799
St. Kilda	6,408	1,055	17	701
Prahran	9,886	1,157	12	716

Source: Victorian Parliamentary Papers 1864, Vol. 2, no. 2.

that Irish were evenly distributed throughout the suburbs, but it should be noted that in all these areas Irish women comprised well over half the number and these were more often servants in wealthy homes than the mistresses of them, many having been assisted to emigrate for this specific purpose. In Melbourne itself, more Irish were to be found in the north and west, where the general concentration of working class settlement existed. It is difficult to determine exactly how these Irish were employed and if they could be differentiated in any way from the non-Irish working class of the city. As unskilled labourers, it might be assumed that most were employed in manufacture, and certainly this was the case at the time of the development of the Labour movement in the 'eighties.¹⁶⁰ In 1861, however, only some

160. C. Hamilton, 'Irish-Australian Catholics and the Labour Party: a Historical Survey of developing alignments in N.S.W., Victoria and Queensland 1890-1921', p. 9ff. M.A.Melbourne University, 1957.

3,000 men were working in factories in Melbourne, and the average number of employees in a particular business was six.¹⁶¹ The 'fifties had seen a great expansion of public and private services, especially of roads and railways, and the Irish were apparently numerous among those thus employed.¹⁶² In accordance with popular belief, Irishmen were numerous in the police force: the Mayor of Melbourne had explained in 1846 that he had not used the police force to disperse the 'Orange vs Green' rioters because 'the Police force under my command is, with but one exception, exclusively composed of Irish',¹⁶³ and a list of resignations from the force over the period 1859 to 1861 showed much evidence of Irish names in all categories, though a parallel list of officers revealed Irish names only among the lowest group, the sub-inspectors.¹⁶⁴ Another list, of men who had been enabled to join the force ahead of other applicants between January 1862 and January 1863, showed 22 Catholics in the total of 30 men. Seven of the men had been in the Irish constabulary and one in the Dublin police, and Irish names figured largely overall.¹⁶⁵ This preponderance of Irish is not explained merely by the supposition that the Irish had some peculiar suitability for the force. Wages in the police force were high, and standards low, at a time when many Irish were arriving in the colony and this, together with the permanence

161. Serle, op. cit., p. 234.

162. J.F.Hogan, op. cit., p. 37.

163. Argus, August 4, 1846.

164. Parliamentary Papers 1862-1863, Vol. 2 D no. 36 Appendices C.E. no. 2,K.

165. Most of these men had been placed 'out of turn' by order of O'Shanassy, as the Colonial Secretary, but no indication was given that this was regarded as patronage of a particular nationality.

offered by the job, had its attractions. John Danaher, one of the tenants aided to emigrate by Lord Monteagle, wrote in 1852 that he was earning 6/- per day as a constable, and that the force was now prepared to pay much more because of the loss of men to the diggings.¹⁶⁶ There was some equivocation by Irishmen in their response to the police force, influenced by their experience of those forces in Ireland which had often seemed the thing of the landlords, but Irish predominance in the Victorian, as in the N.S.W. police force, continued into the 'seventies.¹⁶⁷

The Irish were also represented among the artisan class: among those Irish noted for their activity in the formation of the St. Patrick's society, in the organisation of relief funds for Irish distress, and in municipal politics were a tailor, (Michael McNamara) a housepainter (Christopher Collins), a butcher (William O'Farrell), a publican (James Murphy), an innkeeper (Thomas Clarke), a draper (John O'Shanassy), and a journalist (Edmund Finn) as well as a Protestant Irish doctor (Dixon) and the Immigration Agent (Patterson). On the other hand, the most active members of lay Catholic associations tended to be men of more wealth and middle class status, including the English converts W.H.Archer, the Registrar

General and Dr. A.C.Brownless, Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University, and

166. Monteagle Papers, January 1, 1852 from Melbourne.

167. The most dramatic example of this equivocal attitude was given by the 'Jerilderie Letter' of Ned Kelly, in which he described the Victorian police (and other law officers) as 'a parcel of big ugly fat-necked wombat headed big bellied magpie legged narrow hipped splay footed sons of Irish Bailiffs or English landlords' and condemned Irishmen who became police as 'a disgrace to his country not alone to the mother that suckled him ... a traitor to his country ancestors and religion ... ' Ned saw himself as a wronged Irishman, but the police he killed and those who finally captured him were also Irish.

few apart from the political advocate of the Church, John O'Shanassy, attracted public opprobrium for their activity. Anti-episcopal activity within the Church in Victoria came from the clergy, and though these priests were frequently supported by their congregations, there was no evidence of lay initiative against the administration of the Church comparable with that taken by the laity of Sydney in 1859. The correlation of Irish and Catholic was more evident in Victoria, both in fact and in public conception, than in either South Australia or N.S.W., yet the two were often quite distinct forces. Those Irish Catholic colonists who were to the fore in all demonstrations of an aggressive nationalism may have been influenced by a sense of alienation as Catholics from a Protestant majority (and certainly Protestant dominated) society. The Protestant Irish played a major role in Victoria in the administration of politics and justice, but any evidence of the extension of office to Irish Catholics was immediately noticed - and frowned upon - by the public, as represented by the press.¹⁶⁸ When Ireland and the Irish were under attack, particularly during the immigration controversies of the 'forties, it was frequently the religion of the majority of the Irish immigrants that informed the antagonism, and the Victorian press early adopted the long-accepted English explanation of Irish ignorance and poverty as the design of Catholic priests, whom it allegedly profited.¹⁶⁹ There is no evidence of large-scale conversion to Protestantism

168. The press did not appear to recognise the inconsistency of its contention that Catholics in office filled subordinate positions with fellow Catholics with the picture it liked to portray of the Irish as menials.

169. This trend involved allegations of 'priestly interference' at elections, accusations that the stance of the Church on education was determined by a desire to maintain the control of the clergy over the laity, and the usual 'escaped nun' stories of yellow journalism. These latter were, however, never of the dimensions of those in N.S.W.

or even the denial of Catholicism by the Catholics of Victoria, though the early years gave much anxiety to Geoghegan and Goold at the strength and potential competition of the Church of England.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, it would appear that the tradition of lay passivity in religious matters in Ireland carried over into the new colony, though Irish Catholic immigrants were very ready to resist any insult to their race or creed. The necessity of active organisation of the Catholic laity by their Hierarchy was the logical corollary of this state of affairs, and this was well recognised by laymen W.A.Duncan and J.K.Heydon in N.S.W. In Victoria, however, this need -which was the need of the laity in their self-image and status as a community as much as it was essential for the vitality of Catholicism - was obscured by the 'politicisation' of all the controversies affecting the Church and Irish immigrants, and the possibility that the presence in Parliament of good Catholic and Irish representatives therefore offered of the gaining of desired ends through this medium.

The first successful Catholic newspaper in Victoria, the Catholic Tribune, founded in July 2, 1853 by 'a committee of Catholic laymen, at the instigation of Goold, was the first attempt at the diversification of the grounds on which the Irish Catholic cause could be fought. It was addressed not merely to the Catholics of the colony but 'above all to our Irish Catholic brethren' and was to be devoted not only to the advocacy of civil and religious liberty but 'Above all, and dearer than all, Ireland -

170. Geoghegan to Goold, May 12 and 30, 1848; Goold to Geoghegan, December 6, 1849. Melbourne A.A. and Adelaide A.A.

beloved Ireland - will find a voice of sympathy in the Catholic Tribune'.¹⁷¹
 The paper failed after an indeterminate number of issues, however, and the following publication, the Victorian, founded July 5, 1862 could find no editor in Victoria after Duffy's refusal of that honour, and imported Daniel Henry Deniehy at the instigation of Duffy - in recognition, perhaps, of the very valid basis of Deniehy's rebellion against the administration of the Church without reference to the laity in Sydney in 1859, and the relevance of an active lay apostolate in the current situation of Victorian Catholicism. The Victorian was originally intended as a Catholic paper and O'Shanassy, one of the members of the Victorian newspaper committee, had great hopes that 'It will certainly produce Catholic unity in Victoria',¹⁷² but by 1863 the paper had lost favour with Bishop Goold. Following the pattern of the Freeman's Journal in Sydney a decade earlier, the editor stated 'Our duties as Journalists lie entirely outside ecclesiastical matters; we trust we know those duties' and that he now saw the aim of the paper as

... mainly harmonising the views of the Irish population towards common objects for the common weal - of aiding their power and influence in an enlightened direction - of resisting aggression and misrepresentation - and of avoiding any sectional partisanship in the Catholic community. 173

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171. F.Mackle, 'A Century of Catholic Journalism - The Catholic Press in Victoria' Crusader, May 1, 1936, p. 290. No copies are extant of the Tribune and it is not clear how long the paper lasted.
172. O'Shanassy to Goold, no date, but written the day after the meeting, which was held July 21, 1862. See a report of the meeting by Francis Quinlan, July 23. Uncatalogued letter in Melbourne A.A.
173. Victorian, April 4, 1863.

Deniehy had carried over into Victoria his concern that the Church should be both more vigorous itself in the pursuit of the secular interests of its members and more active in supporting instances of lay initiative - a concern that should have been all the more encouraged by the Church in that Duffy was a native and had earlier (1859) charged the Church in the colonies with caring more for self-perpetuation than for the accommodation and advancement within the community of colonial-born Catholics. Taught by his experiences in Sydney in 1859, or aware of the essential passivity of the Victorian Catholics, however, Deniehy did not press the issue beyond the forum provided by the Victorian, acknowledging the withdrawal of official Church support but not challenging it or its rationale. The main interests of the paper from this time seem to have been literary, and though in January 1864 it was strongly defending the Church's views on education, it reiterated in February that 'the aims and duties of the Victorian are such as become a purely lay organ of opinion'.¹⁷⁴ This was in response to the censure of a correspondent for the paper's earlier criticism of Bishop Goold, but it did not satisfy and on April 2, with no prior intimation, the last issue of the Victorian appeared. A lay Catholic journal was apparently doomed to failure when it had neither the authority of an official Church organ nor the vitality of a partisan Irish stance (and this was a particularly dull time in Irish politics) to recommend it.

The Catholic Tribune, the Victorian and the Advocate which succeeded them, in spite of their avowed intentions to represent the Catholics of

174. Victorian, February 13, 1864.

Victoria, followed the secular press in their Melbourne orientation and in the concern of the editors with parliamentary political issues. Consequently, there was little to counter the tendency to accept the views and behaviour of the Irish working class of the city as representative of Irish colonists. Occasional editorials in the Advocate, and Irish Catholic writers like William Kelly, James Francis Hogan and Duffy celebrated the success of Irish immigrants in Victoria, especially as farmers, but there was little contemporary modification of the view of the Irish as ignorant, priest-ridden, intemperate rabble. Of the increase of nearly 23,000 to the Irish population in the decade 1861 to 1871, more than 17,000 had gone to swell the population of North Melbourne, and though such an addition did not increase the proportion of this nationality there, it reinforced the image of the rough Irish labourer. As has been noted, it was in Melbourne and suburbs and other urban concentrations that national societies flourished, a reflection not only of the greater Irish concentrations there but also of the security that could be derived from membership of the smaller group within an often hostile society. Yet the national societies made no great accessions from the increasing working class Irish numbers. The leaders of the St. Patrick's society were generally self-employed men, and the aims of the society may have appeared somewhat remote from the problems and aspirations of the unskilled Irish labourers, particularly as they were 'not solely intended for the present generation, and every effort should be made to endow them with such permanence as to secure their advantages to posterity' and disavowed anything of a religious and even religious character.

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175. E.Finn, St. Patrick's Societies, their Principles and Purposes, pp.6,19.

The view most commonly taken of Irish 'national loyalty' was that of an early pioneer to the Yass district commenting on one of the party, the drayman A.G.B.(ennett) 'a true son of Erin from the city of Cork who had not forgotten the ould Countrie and had many a song about old times and the land of the Green Isle',¹⁷⁶ and it was to this pattern that the Melbourne and other urban Irish conformed, seeking identification and self-assertion not in any official organisation, but in the maintenance of their traditions and social habits of their homeland while accepting the laws and structure of the predominantly English society which gave them employment and equal civil rights - a structure to which they had been used in Ireland, but which they had opposed there as an artificial super-structure, since it was imposed on a native and majority Irish society, but which situation did not apply in Australia, which was, after all, a series of settlements initiated by British colonisation, and which had already shrugged off the most obvious traces of interference from the Old World when they gained self government in 1856. The move by Irish colonists towards advancement of their community by supporting a particular party within existing society was made only later with support of the Labour movement - and by then, with the erosion of the Irish population by the cessation of immigration assistance, and with the emphasis earlier placed on Catholic education as a divisive issue, the aim was the advancement of individuals and of the Catholic rather than the Irish community. The number of Irish-born declined steadily from 1861, but the number of Catholics continued to increase, as did the efforts on their behalf of the Catholic clergy and Protestant fears of domination.

176. J.M.Darlot, Reminiscences 1834-8. MSS in Latrobe Library, p. 13.

In 1859, when the Irish proportion of the colonial population was at a peak, and when a large number of these were recent arrivals, the O'Shanassy ministry was attacked for an alleged Catholic bias. In 1872, though the Irish population had decreased, the ministry of Charles Gavan Duffy was defeated for its reluctance to modify the existing system of denominational education, and Duffy was criticised for being more concerned for the rulings of his Church than for the deficiencies of education undermining the potential of the children of the colony. Though Duffy himself believed he had been victimised on account of his race, and though the Argus followed the ministry's defeat with accusations of the anti-English attitudes of some of its members, there was no evidence of anti-Irish sentiment in the election that followed, but sectarian antagonisms were widely aroused by the Pastoral of Bishop Goold on education prompted by the Duffy ministry's defeat. As in the other colonies, the 'seventies saw increasing emphasis on the Catholic identity of the Victorian Irish, and even in the Home Rule agitation of the 'eighties the colonial press took delight in pointing out all the prominent Irishmen who did not support the movement - nearly all Protestant Irish. Yet the assertion of the Advocate, that it was on education and related 'Catholic' issues alone that Irish Catholics differed in their views from other colonists, was in large measure true. In spite of localised support for the Fenian movement, the introduction of the actual physical struggle for Irish rights into the colonial arena was rejected by Irishmen there, and hostile allegations of the disloyalty entailed in support

of Home Rule by the Irish colonists were vigorously denied; nor would this support for Irish national movements even have given rise to dispute in a more tolerant and less English (and therefore interested) situation, since at no time was there a question of giving more than money and words to the cause. Strong competition for allegiance also came from colonial political associations, particularly Protection in the 1860's, which was strong in west and north Melbourne, and later the Labour movement, and from shire and council politics in both country and urban areas, in which Irish colonists appear to have been inveterate 'joiners'. Public recognition of what was essentially a realistic stance taken by most Irish colonists was, however, diverted by a negative of specifically Catholic issues and by developments in English-Irish relations 'at home' and by the persistence of an apparently unchanged 'Irish spirit' as represented by the verbally expressed sentiments of self-appointed spokesmen of that race rather than by a consideration of their peaceful co-existence in society and failure to initiate any radical changes in the existing structure or to develop any identifiable sub-culture.

CHAPTER IV

SOUTH AUSTRALIA 1836-60

In South Australia the conditions of the original settlement were such as to preclude the poorest members of British society, whether English, Scotch or Irish. The bill to establish the colony as a charter to the South Australian Company was finally passed in August 1834. The South Australian Association that prompted the scheme was founded by disciples of the principles of colonisation of E.G.Wakefield, but the final charter was essentially a compromise, that gave the control of land and emigration to a Board of Commissioners chosen by the Association only at the expense of conceding political control to the British government.¹ Before the Act could come into force £35,000 worth of land had to be sold at at least twelve shillings - later raised to £1 - per acre.² The recruitment of purchasers was in the hands of the Board of nine Commissioners, headed by the Chairman, R.R.Torrens, a Liberal member of the House of Commons. Torrens was an Irishman, who was convinced that the only solution to Ireland's problems of starvation and unemployment was large-scale emigration.³

The special condition of Ireland had been recognised by Wilmot Horton in his colonisation schemes for Canada in the 'twenties, and even Wakefield, who was primarily concerned with demonstrating how emigration would benefit

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1. P. Burroughs, op. cit., p. 176; R.C. Mills, The Colonisation of Australia 1829-42, p.
 2. Burroughs, p. 177. Much land was ultimately sold, however, at 12/- per acre.
 3. In 1817 Torrens had sent a paper to a Select Committee then concerned with the reduction of the Irish Poor rates by emigration. In 1828 he applied for land in Western Australia and in 1829 for a position there. In June 1835 he published a work on Colonisation of South Australia, and from 1836-42, while Chairman of the South Australian Commission, he zealously campaigned for emigration, especially of Irish labour.

the emigrants themselves, had taken note of the contribution of emigration to the maintenance of the status quo in the country which they left.

For England again, a very useful end of colonisation would be to turn the tide of Irish emigration from England to her colonies; not to mention that the owners of land in Ireland, most of them being foreigners by religion, might thus be taken out of the dilemma in which they are now placed; that of a choice between legally giving up a great part of their rental to the hungry people, and yielding to the people's violence the land which was taken by violence from their fathers. ⁴

Torrens similarly was not averse to suggesting what would be in effect a perpetuation of the current system of land tenure in Ireland, though he saw this in terms of its benefit to Irish peasants as well as to the landowners. Thus the propaganda in a pamphlet published by him in 1839 was addressed not only to 'farmers of small capital, having children, without property of their own, who are willing to assist him in the labours of the field', but also to the 'proprietors of over-peopled estates, who cannot improve without consolidating farms, and cannot consolidate without ejecting the cottiar tenants from the small holdings upon which his subsistence depends' and who could, by buying land, obtain the right to bring or send out surplus labourers 'from his over-peopled Irish estate to his uninhabited Australian estate'. But these labourers would not always remain as such. Torrens concluded his pamphlet with the Wakefieldian promise of ultimate independence on the land for all -

4. E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney and other writings, p. 123.

A landed proprietor, by advancing in this country £800 for the purchase of 800 acres in South Australia, may improve his Irish estates, and obtain from his Australian property a rental yielding a very high percentage on his purchase money, while placing twenty half pauper families in a situation in which moderate industry may enable them to become capitalists and landed proprietors. ⁵

The appeal of the new colony was felt in Ireland: the deputy-surveyor, G.S. Kingston, the first Anglican clergyman, C.B.Howard, and a number of subsequently leading men in the colony, including T.S.O'Halloran, C.H. Bagot and Torrens' own son, Robert Richard, were among the early immigrants. No ship arrived direct from Ireland until 1841, when the Alexandrina berthed on April 28 from Dublin, but there were a number of Irish patronyms in the passenger lists of ships arriving 1839-40, especially in the Birman which arrived from Greenock on December 7, 1840. ⁶ From 1841-5 emigration to South Australia virtually ceased while the colony struggled for survival amid bankruptcy and depression. Only one shipload of immigrants was sent by the Commissioners during this time, although from the time of the discovery of copper at Kapunda in 1843 unassisted immigration revived and organisations like the Australian Mining Co. assisted miners and labourers for their own needs. ⁷ From 1848, however, assisted Irish emigration to

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5. R.Torrens, Emigration from Ireland to South Australia, pp. 18, 21 (Dublin 1839). See also Prospectus, Irish-South Australian Emigration Community Papers, South Australia, Mitchell Library, A 272, R.R. Torrens, Hon. Secretary.
 6. The Register also commented on Irish immigrants in the William Nichol which arrived June 27, 1840 from Greenock and Dublin. There are extant no complete passenger lists for all ships arriving before 1840. The above comments are derived from the information in G.H.Pitt (compiler), Index to Pioneers arriving in South Australia from Overseas Ports, July 1836-December 1845. S.A.A. 1048; also E.A.D.Opie, South Australian Records, prior to 1841, p.100.
 7. After 1840 the South Australian Commission was dissolved and assisted immigration to all the colonies came under a three-man body, the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners. The position of Agent General for South Australia, created 1837, was also abolished.

South Australia began in earnest, reaching a peak in 1855 and only decreasing appreciably from 1858. Over these eleven years 1848-58, 15,448 Irish were introduced by assisted immigration, and provided the bulk of the Irish component in South Australia. There was no further substantial assisted immigration from Ireland, except for a limited period 1864-6, until the mid-seventies, and the Irish proportion of the South Australian population fell steadily from 10.38% in 1860 to 3.1% in 1901.

At the census of 1861, more than three quarters of the Irish colonists were recorded as having arrived in the decade 1851-60, compared with 777 in 1836-40 and 1,966 between 1841-50.⁸ The disparity in the number who emigrated 1851-60 (14,350) and those resident in 1861 (9,645) was largely due to the number of immigrants who left for the Victorian goldfields almost immediately upon their arrival in South Australia. This subsidy for emigration to Victoria was a source of irritation to the colonists of South Australia, but the demand for labour in the colony caused by the losses to the lure of gold of some thousands of colonists between 1851-2 ensured that assisted immigration continued.⁹ The gold discoveries particularly benefited many intending Irish emigrants, for the new measures taken by South Australia to ensure a supply of labour included the removal of regulations imposing extra contributions on emigrants with large or young families, and a willingness to accept people from any country where they could be found.

8. South Australian Parliamentary Papers, 1862, Vol. 1, no. 5.

9. There was an attempt to prevent this loss to Victoria by the regulation of June 1852 that assisted immigrants guarantee to remain in South Australia for four years from the time of their arrival. The regulation was never enforced, and as late as 1855 this abuse of the South Australian Land Fund was still complained of, as in the Times, January 3, 1855.

Ireland at the same time was recovering from the worst effects of the famine of 1846, and increasing wages following the massive exodus of the famine years enabled more labourers to save the £2 necessary for a single labourer or domestic servant. For others without sufficient funds, their landlords were often only too eager to supply the fare in order to clear and to consolidate their estates.¹⁰ Under these conditions, the Irish assisted immigration rose to 1,078 in 1852, 2,391 in 1854, and 5,115 in 1855.

This immigration of Irish from the late forties was decidedly different in character from that smaller group of the early years of settlement. The complexion of the St. Patrick's society, founded in 1849 largely by the early Irish arrivals, was distinctly Protestant. The President, Major O'Halloran, and the Vice-Presidents, C.H.Bagot, R.R.Torrens, C.S.Kingston, Capt. W.L.O'Halloran and C.B.Newenham (who was also Treasurer) were all Anglicans, and the Anglican Rev. Newenham sat on the Committee together with the Catholic Father Michael Ryan. Of the office-holders, only the Secretary, Thomas Young Cotter, was a Catholic. While this was not a contradiction, in view of the avowedly national rather than sectarian nature of the Society, it was in contrast with the strongly Catholic identification of the parallel societies in Victoria and N.S.W. The aim of the founders was

... to call the attention of their countrymen at home to the many advantages presented by this admirable colony to the intending emigrant. They were no less bound to call the attention of the home authorities to the right which Irishmen had to participate in their fair proportion of the facilities for removal furnished by our Land Fund. ¹¹

10. M.Reynolds, 'Immigration into South Australia 1829-1852', Tinline thesis, University of Adelaide, 1923, p. 111.

11. Adelaide Observer, July 14, 1849.

This assertion of the rights of the Irish was in reaction against the past disproportion in the numbers of English and Irish arriving in South Australia, alleged by Major O'Halloran as in the ratio 20:1, and as being the result both of the deliberate policy of the Emigration Agents in England and of the lack of information on South Australia circulated in Ireland. The tone of the Address adopted by the Society was much influenced by the class to which the officials belonged; though stated as an Address 'to their countrymen at home' it implicitly spoke to those of the same class - landowners - in Ireland who would act on behalf of 'the distressed thousands at your doors' and to 'officers on half-pay and others of limited but fixed income'.¹² It is not surprising then to find the Committee of the Society concurring the following year in a condemnation of the character and inexperience of many of the female orphans recently sent from Ireland;¹³ nor was there any conflict of national pride apparently involved, whereas the St. Patrick's society in Melbourne tended to deny any fault in the Irish girls even in the face of the most obvious examples of ill-chosen emigrants. No doubt many of the members of the society - successful and important in colonial society, if not uniformly so before they emigrated, and above all 'respectable' - shared in the paternalistic and self-congratulatory attitude

12. Ibid.

13. Register, May 3, 1850.

expressed by Torrens at the inaugural meeting of the Society on July 7,
1849 -

For himself he could say, he looked back with unmixed satisfaction to the efforts he once had the opportunity of successfully making to direct the attention of several of his poorer countrymen to this colony; and often had he, when oppressed with anxieties of his own, felt comfort at witnessing their prosperous condition. 14

Such men quite genuinely desired to aid their impoverished countrymen to become happy and prosperous farmers in South Australia, contributing thus to the welfare and stability of the colony as a whole, but could hardly be expected to welcome reputed 'profligate' women of the lower class, who would swell the 'pestiferous dens' already established in Adelaide's Light Square.¹⁵

In spite of the influx of Irish immigrants in the period 1849 to 1855, the membership of the Society remained small.¹⁶ The founders of the society retained their dominance within it: by 1855 the office-holders had simply changed places; Kingston now President and Newenham, Torrens,

14. Observer, July 14, 1849.

15. Observer, February 9, 1850.

16. It would appear, too, that the Society was becoming less exclusive as a national body as it became more exclusive in class terms. The annual dinner of 1856 was attended by the new Irish Governor, Sir Richard MacDonnell, but by only 80 of the colony's Irishmen. St. Patrick's day was celebrated by possibly most Irishmen: there was horse racing at Thebarton in 1854; Mass and 'many happy gatherings in many parts of the city' in 1855; and in 1856 the Irish working men of the city staged their own celebration in the Launceston Hotel in Waymouth Street with a zeal that eventually 'approached nearly to a riot' and resulted in a wounded head for one Walter Bourke, cut open by an iron bar wielded by John Reardon. The formal dinners of the St. Patrick's society would have been out of the reach of most colonial Irish, at one to two guineas a head.

Major O'Halloran and Captain O'Halloran as Vice-Presidents. While the low membership was never directly said to be the result of an aversion of Irish Catholics to the Protestant domination of the Society, and though the society deliberately eschewed religious affiliations,¹⁷ there were early disputes involving national antagonisms¹⁸ and some Irish Catholics were no doubt alienated by the acquiescence of the Committee, in their first annual report, in the general condemnation of the female orphan immigration. In addition, membership of the society entailed expenditure, not only for fees (which were five shillings for admission and five shillings annual subscription) but also for the projects envisaged by the society, the first proposed of which was the erection of a shelter for newly-arrived immigrants. Such expenses would have been avoided by the poorer Irish immigrants, who had to establish themselves in the new settlement, and most of them simultaneously would have had to contribute to their Church.¹⁹ More timid characters too might have been reluctant to make this national identification at a time when Irish immigration (and often the Irish character) was under attack in the Australian colonies.²⁰

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17. At the inaugural meeting Torrens was applauded for his declaration that 'They had met in the spirit of nationality. They had burned all recollections of former contentions. They would twine the orange lily and the evergreen shamrock into one immortal wreath. Of that union there should be no repeal'. Observer, July 14.
18. e.g. the allegations of Dr. Cotter at the first annual meeting of April 30, 1850, that all the disruptions at meetings were caused by English members.
19. In the 1840's wages for unskilled labourers were £16 to £32 p.a. with rations or £1 per week without. State aid was granted to religion in South Australia only between 1847 and 1851, and was rejected by Bishop Murphy for 1849, placing a further burden on the Catholic laity.
20. J.D.Lang's attacks on Irish immigration were published by the Register, August 26, 1848, and others on Catholicism followed on May 6.

Most of the Irish Catholics among the members of the St. Patrick's 21 society were, then or subsequently, also prominent in Catholic associations. It would appear that, as the Church developed in South Australia, especially following the arrival of Bishop Murphy in 1844, such Catholics gained their sense of identification from their membership of the Church and its Irish character, rather than from the assertion of Irish nationality itself.

In the first decade of settlement, colonial attitudes to the Catholic Church, as represented by the press, had an air of unreality. The bias was, initially, in favour of this small community and the efforts to gain a resident pastor and a place of worship.²² The report of the South Australian on the opening of the first Catholic school on October 5, 1845 was certainly tendentious -

The sight of the day was of course the bishop in full canonicals; his dresses were certainly very gorgeous, and it was evident that a considerable degree of splendour was attempted throughout. The principal part of the ceremony - which appeared to us unmeaning - was performed by the bishop in person. - 23

and the Observer commented on the 'novelty' of the service of confirmation of forty-three Catholics in January the following year.²⁴ The press was

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21. These included Henry Johnson, Thomas Young, Dr. Cotter, Edward McEllister, Charles Fox and Richard Counsel.
 22. An advertisement inserted in the Southern Australian, September 11 and 18, 1839 by a local Catholic, W. Phillips, commented on the 'large debt of gratitude' owing to Protestants of the colony for their donations and good wishes.
 23. South Australian, October 7, 1845.
 24. Observer, January 24, 1846.

unanimous, however, in its praise for the character and energy of Bishop Murphy, the first Catholic Bishop,²⁵ notwithstanding a constant awareness of the apparently unbridgeable gap between the principles of his Church and those to which the editors themselves belonged²⁶ and the continuing refutations of the validity of Catholic doctrines printed in favour forms by all newspapers.

Murphy was considerably more tactful than his predecessor, Father William Benson, who from 1842 had waged a vigorous (and ultimately successful) campaign against a proposed Marriage (divorce) Act, and who, in a letter to Governor Grey in February 1843, charged an even more fundamental attack on the vitality of Catholicism in the colony -

There are numbers of Irish Catholic boys running wild and idle about Adelaide and its plains - others tending flocks of sheep or herds of cattle; all without any chance of education. Their parents dare not send those employed even on Sunday for religious instruction. If the Right Hon. Secretary of State could apply some portion of the money necessarily expended as passage money for the Pankhurst prison boys, and allow these children an education in the tents of their own religion, he would probably keep them out of prison, and prevention is better than cure ... When this colony was established

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25. The cortege at Murphy's funeral was larger than at any former funeral in Adelaide, and was attended by ministers of all denominations. (T. Worsnop, History of the City of Adelaide, p. 155). The Observer also paid a tribute to Murphy on his temporary departure in 1846. (February 7, 1846).
26. The South Australian was edited 1843-51 by a Presbyterian, Andrew Murray and 1838-42 by Charles Mann, an Anglican turned Independent; the Observer 1843-50 was edited by a Wesleyan, John Stephens, who also owned the Register from 1845 (earlier owned by R. Thomas and edited by another Presbyterian, George Stevenson. James Allen, a Baptist, owned the Register from 1842-5, and the Adelaide Times for most of its duration 1848-58.

no Catholic Gent. of property was allowed to join, the Founders intending to keep it a little Dissenting Colony, exclusively Protestant Evangelical, and it was not until they were 12000 or 14000 strong that about 700 Catholic emigrants, mechanics, labourers, etc. were sent to assist, with an assurance at Home that they would find the means and liberty of practising their religion ... Yet it was the practice of our late Evangelical Governors always to put the question - Are you a Catholic? and refuse employment or preferment where the fact was acknowledged. 27

It is not clear whether Benson actually sent this letter, which is an indication more of his own frustration in the face of a small and poor mission, in which he was the sole labourer, than a factual record of the actual situation of the colony.²⁸ The statement as to the difficulty of establishing Catholic schools was one faced by the clergy in all the colonies, and was to drive even the veteran fighter Geoghegan to despair occasionally in later years. No public accusation was made concerning employment of Catholics until 1849, when an Irish Catholic, Joseph O'Shaughnessy, was allegedly refused a position in the police force because of his religion.²⁹ On this occasion, the press was unanimous in its condemnation of the officers responsible, Police Commissioner Tolmer and Inspector Litchfield, and of the principle of religious intolerance which allegedly motivated their stand.³⁰

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27. Dated February 18, 1843. Copy in Adelaide Archdiocesan Archives, uncatalogued. There was truth in Benson's statement that no substantial number of Catholics arrived until some years after the foundation of South Australia; there were only 1,055 Catholics by 1844.
28. Benson's mission in South Australia was generally a failure. He quarrelled with his congregation (which perhaps is an indication of their desire to live quietly with their neighbours in a Protestant majority colony) and with the Governor, which suggests he perhaps did send this letter.
29. Register, November 24, 1849; Times, November 26.
30. Register, November 28. Tolmer makes no mention of this incident in his Reminiscences, published in 1882.

Similarly in 1852 a Select Committee to consider the petitions of Mr. Jolly and Mr. O'Sullivan against their dismissal as school masters found that the charges against O'Sullivan by one member of the Board of Education, Peter Cumming, were motivated by the fact of O'Sullivan being a Catholic, and refuted the charges against him.³¹

Bishop Murphy's experiences in Sydney, where he had arrived in July 1838, and his earlier mission in Liverpool, England, 1829-36, had exposed him to much anti-Catholic bigotry, but his response to this took the form of calm and rational written rebuttal.³² Thus on his arrival in Adelaide Murphy's first sermon urged Christian charity and tolerance, and he followed the encouragement to Catholics to

... be ever ready to make the greatest allowances for the opinions and prejudices of your separated brethren, the majority of whom, as I know from experience, are only opposed to you because they never yet have had an opportunity of beholding your religion in its spotless beauty, but only through a cloud of erroneous publications and the darkest mist of misrepresentation. ³³ -

with the publication the following year of a 'Vindication of the Doctrines of the Catholic Church'³⁴ (which was, with a certain irony, posted on the door of the Catholic school on the day of the opening ceremony, there to be overlooked by at least one newspaper for some days). Murphy's rational approach to explaining the doctrines of the Church, and the current movement to High Churchmanship and Puseyism within the Church of England, which many

31. South Australian Parliamentary Papers 1852, no. 10, pp. 1-2.

32. Notes on Bishops and Education in South Australia, by Father Morrison, Adelaide A.A.

33. Register, November 13, 1844.

34. South Australian, October 14, 1845.

of the newly-arrived immigrants must have been familiar with, added to the unsettling effects of the move from traditional society to a new and mobile pioneering community, took a toll on the Protestants of South Australia. Thus Archbishop Polding, writing in 1845 to William Leigh (the recent benefactor of the Church in South Australia, following his own conversion to Catholicism in England) commented on the state of the new diocese -

The Bishop in his first letter to me expresses himself highly gratified by the general kindness he experienced on his arrival from all ranks ... There are in Adelaide about 1100 Catholics; of the Church of England about 9000 but disunion and indifference so far prevail. Thus of the two Churches one is closed up and the other only thinly attended. A spirit of enquiry respecting our Holy Religion is abroad and converts are daily added to the Church. 35

No doubt the cheerful aspect of this letter, the stress on the number of converts and the favourable comparisons with the Church of England, were influenced by the peculiarity of Leigh's personal position, and the indebtedness of the Church to him. Nevertheless, Murphy, in a letter to Geoghegan soon after his arrival, noted that 'I have found the Catholics of this place exceedingly well disposed',³⁶ and the Register, December 24, 1844, printed an open letter from R.L.Milne to the Anglican incumbent, James Farrell, complaining of the want of energy of the Church of England in the colony and contrasting this with the zeal of the Catholic Church.

35. Dated Sydney, January 7, 1845. File on Leigh Bequest, Adelaide A.A.

36. Dated November 12, 1844. Murphy-Geoghegan correspondence, Adelaide A.A.

Here is a Province to which Rome, ever awake while others sleep, has sent a bishop and two priests, professedly to attend to the wants of a few hundred Irish, but really to extend the ramifications of her future and expected domain. The work of proselyting (sic) is begun; and Rome is in treaty for the very parsonage in which you live, together with the Metropolitan Church of the Province, which is in debt, needs repair, and is shut up for want of a minister.³⁷

Milne's opinions certainly were extreme³⁸ but such comparisons of the two Churches, or of the Church of England with the Dissenters, were common.³⁹ They were essentially made, however, as arguments against state aid and church establishment, with the stress on the potential of the Catholic church in the colony, while the attacks on the universal Roman Catholic church or ridicule of the credulity and ignorance of its members were usually remote from the local situation. The Register's attacks on Bishop Short, for his failure to cooperate with Dissenters, for his allegedly High Church views, and his opposition to the principle of voluntary church support, were sharpened by the paper's fears of Catholicism and its advances in the colony, just as the Anglican clergy's own antagonism to 'Puseyite' tendencies within the Church - including those of Bishop Short himself - were informed by their awareness of the ease of transition from the Church

37. Register, December 24, 1844.

38. Milne was editor of the short-lived Australiana newspaper (September-December 1845) which devoted its columns to anti-Catholic tirades.

39. Register, November 13, 1844; Observer, January 10, 1846.

of England to the Church of Rome.⁴⁰

At no time, however, was the Catholic church in South Australia in any danger of direct and active persecution.⁴¹ Bishop Short's 'Protest' of July 1849, read in the various Anglican churches after evening Divine service on July 3, against Murphy's call for a collection of 'Peter's Pence' on behalf of the beleaguered Pope Pius, was universally ridiculed in the press,⁴² as was his protest the following year over the wearing of insignia and the use of a territorial title by the Catholic Bishop. The Times of July 13, 1850, condemned the appearance of a sectarian Protestant newspaper, the Australian Standard, with the comment

40. Short himself had been much attracted to Tractarianism during his years at Oxford, and had written an apologia for Newman's Tract no. 90, which many other Anglicans had regarded as countenancing a number of errors in the Catholic church. (F.T. Whittington, Augustus Short, First Bishop of Adelaide, 1837.., p. 27). Short had also created dissatisfaction by his refusal to pray in common with other members of the local branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, of which he had accepted the Presidency only reluctantly, and from which he was soon to withdraw. Most Anglicans must have also been aware of the financial loss to the Church of England in the colony by William Leigh's conversion to Catholicism, and of the controversy created in Sydney by the conversion there of two former Anglican clergymen in March 1848.
41. Apart from adherence to the principle of toleration, this attitude to the Catholic church enabled the non-Catholics to wield one of the most damaging arguments against that church - that it was authoritarian and exclusive. Here too came into play the accusation used so frequently in the education debates in all colonies, of the control exerted by the clergy over an unwilling laity. Thus the Rev. E. Baker alleged that the Catholic priest at Morphett Vale had coerced a layman into donating £3 and the use of his bullocks for the erection of a local Catholic church. (South Australian, May 2, 1848). A month later Baker argued that the doctrines and practices of the Church 'as a whole, are incompatible with the personal exercise of general spiritual religion' and that the body of the Church was composed of 'the rearward of society and of the weaker sex'. (Register, June 14, 1848).
42. South Australian, July 10, 1849; Times, July 16; Observer, July 14; Register, July 14.

We doubt very much if any publication of such an avowedly exclusive character, and so dogmatic in its sectarian tendencies, will tend to strengthen or enhance the satisfactory unanimity which has hitherto existed amongst the various denominations of South Australia in regard to religious matters.

The Register, in the precedence controversy that was waged in Sydney 1849-50, supported Archbishop Polding as the upholder of religious equality against the pretensions of Bishop Broughton, and even the South Australian, which asserted the right of Broughton to precedence, argued on the basis of the legal decision of Secretary of State, Earl Grey, rather than on any inherent inadmissibility of the Catholic Church to equality.⁴³ Certainly there were letters to the press antipathetic to the toleration of Catholicism, and alleging the attempt of that Church at domination, but these were usually inserted without comment, to be answered rationally or in kind by adherents of the Catholic faith or ignored as extremist and ignorant views. A generally accepted censure of the power and nature of the Catholic clergy did not damage the popularity of local priests, and Catholic organisations like the St. Patrick's Total Abstinence society attracted membership and support from many Protestants. Catholic functions were attended by all denominations, and the excellence of the Catholic church choir even enticed some Protestants to attend their church services.⁴⁴ The closeness of

43. Register, January 31, 1850; South Australian, February 12, 1850.

44. Comments of Murphy in letter to Geoghegan, April 17, 1845, Adelaide A.A.; letter in South Australian, July 24, 1849; letter Polding to Leigh, January 7, 1845, Adelaide A.A.; Murphy, Francis (Bishop). Extracts from a Financial Journal, S.A.A.

settlement, the small size of the Catholic community, and the principle of religious equality on which the colony was founded combined to ensure that the very real distaste in which the doctrines and practices of Catholicism were held did not entail the rejection or persecution of Catholics as such.

In this atmosphere of general tolerance, and without a J.D.Lang to campaign on the theme of 'Irish equals Catholic', the reception of Irish immigrants into South Australia was considerably less hostile than in N.S.W. or Victoria. As in the other colonies, there were differences over the best means of encouraging immigration. The question of the type of immigrants desired, however, was not as divisive in South Australia, where the pattern of settlement had not resulted in a conflict of the squatter and farmer interests. There were disputes over the number of labourers required at any one time - and in such an editorial of the Observer of July 29, 1843, a comparison was drawn with the periodic flooding of the labour market in England by Irish labourers. But the caution urged by the Observer in this and subsequent editorials was conditioned by the recent depression in the colony, and the paper had already begun to favour revived immigration by the following February.⁴⁵ There was much sympathy with the suffering in Ireland from 1847, and a readiness to donate to the relief funds and for colonisation schemes - though the Register in the same breath stressed that South Australia could not accept immigrants to any extent that would significantly ease the sufferings of Ireland.⁴⁶ It was the sudden

45. At this stage, the paper advocated the introduction of families with some capital, but by 1846 it favoured any immigration. (e.g. editorial, May 2, 1846 entitled 'Revival of Emigration and other good news from England').

46. Register, August 14, 1847.

announcement in 1848 that 6,000 female orphans⁴⁷ were to be sent to the colony, mostly from Irish workhouses, that initiated opposition to Irish immigration generally.⁴⁸ The Register felt constrained to stress that its resistance was not to the fact of the girls being mainly Irish, but being exclusively from one country of Britain⁴⁹ - and it was still taken to task by the South Australian for its condemnation of the girls before they arrived.⁵⁰ It is significant, however, that the latter paper's avowed efforts at vindicating the girls took the form of emphasising not only that they were 'the children, mostly of small farmers who died from fever or were reduced to poverty by the failure of the potato crop', but also that many were from Northern Ireland, and almost half were Presbyterian.

There was difficulty in disposing of some of the arrivals in the second ship for 1849, the Elgin, and there was obviously some truth in the comments on the low morality and lack of skills of some of the earlier arrivals. The condition of Ireland determined that the Irish girls often were inferior in personal habits and in experience of service with 'respectable' families. The opposition to further female immigration from Ireland was often based

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47. This figure of 6,000 was much exaggerated - only 621 arrived 1848-9, and most were soon taken up by Adelaide families as domestic servants. They had been sent, after all, in response to the demands of a revived prosperity in South Australia following the discovery of copper and the development of farming.
48. The initial plan was to send 14,000 male and female orphans to Australia and the Cape, to be taken from Irish workhouses. The scheme was extended to England in June 1848 with the consent of the Poor Law Commissioners. (Madgwick, p. 208).
49. Register, September 27, 1848.
50. South Australian, October 27, 1848.

on this deficiency in civilised qualities.⁵¹ No one suggested that the girls be sent back to Ireland, but many would have agreed with the suggestions of Catherine Hussey in 1855, that they be sent into the country, where society was less genteel and where they would consequently be less of an embarrassment, and at the same time be protected from close contact with those girls sent out who were already 'profligate'.⁵² Being females, they were also to some extent absolved from the blame for their position, even if they became prostitutes, in the light of current thinking on female passivity.⁵³ In spite of all the complaints about the arrivals, there was apparent a sense of concern and of responsibility: the Orphan scheme was curtailed in 1850 on the advice of the Orphan Board essentially because of the impossibility of adequate protection of the girls on the voyage out and once in the colony, and the failure of the Commissioners to ensure that only girls of good character were sent. This same concern manifested itself in response to the revived female immigration of 1855, when a concerted campaign led by the new Governor, Richard MacDonnell, emptied the government depot of idle women in a few months, moving them to employment in various country districts where they were absorbed without difficulty.

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51. As was opposition to Irish immigration generally - e.g. 'If it is desired to perpetuate in this colony that peculiar state of society that exists in Ireland, the surest way to accomplish this object is to bring over the Irish in masses - but then recollect that you will exchange the protection of the law, order, intelligence and morality for brute force and what has been termed wild justice'. Letter of 'Old Noll', South Australian, October 28, 1850.
52. Catherine Hussey, letter to John Baker, M.L.C., December 5, 1855. South Australian Archives.
53. See the spirited editorial of the Observer, February 9, 1850 (supplement).

The peculiar influences of this immigration, combined with the unusually high proportion of Irish in the assisted immigration generally 1850-1, created a sufficient stir in the English-Protestant majority colony for the Lieutenant Governor to note in July 1851 -

a great demand still exists for female servants, but there is a growing disinclination to employ Irish, if English and Scottish labourers are to be had; and the influx of Irish labourers has been in excess of the fair proportion which should be sent, as compared with the English and Scotch. ⁵⁴

The so-called disproportion of Irish in the immigration prior to Young's despatch was minor compared with that to the other colonies - in 1850 21% of the assisted immigration to South Australia was Irish, while they were 79% of that into N.S.W. Though the South Australian figure represented almost a doubling of the Irish proportion, as compared with 1849, the actual number of arrivals was lower.⁵⁵ There are difficulties, too, in validating Young's comments on the 'disinclination' of colonies to accept Irish immigrants. In July 1849 a deputation to the Governor of members of the St. Patrick's society, urging increased Irish immigration, was well received, and the only opposition to their request was provided by a correspondent to the Register, who was concerned with the effect of any large-scale immigration on 'those parties who have already sacrificed their all to transfer themselves to a portion of the globe where they have confidently depended upon public faith to meet with ultimate independence as the sure reward of industry and perseverance'.⁵⁶ In reply to another

54. Parliamentary Papers, 1852. Despatches on Emigration, p. 1.

55. In 1849 the Irish were 11% and numbered 569. In 1850, 21% and 506.

56. Register, July 25, 1849.

letter which commented upon the menial position of the Irish in the colony, alleging that the number of Irish employed on the roads was very high (six for every one Englishman), the editor of the Register admitted that these men - usually new arrivals - were forced into this position by lack of funds on arrival and by a prejudice against employing them, but added that, given time, 'the majority of them will become comfortable proprietors. Generally speaking, the Irish peasant makes a more successful colonist than the English one'.⁵⁷ The Observer similarly wished to

Bear testimony to the worth and integrity of very many of our Irish settlers. Not a few of them have we watched in their progress from a state of comparative servitude to one of independence; and, altogether with the manifest acquisition of wealth - honestly acquired wealth - we have rejoiced to observe a due respect for religious observances, a growing inclination to provide for their offspring, and a highly commendable desire to advance themselves in the scale of humanity and social improvement.⁵⁸

If this attitude tended to be patronising - if the idea was implicit that even Irish peasants, in a favoured English-majority colony, could eventually rise to the level of fully civilised human beings - any direct intimation of reluctance to allow these Irish into the colony was certainly absent.

Nevertheless, the St. Patrick's society received in reply to its petition a letter from the Emigration Commissioners, dated December 3, 1849, stating that they doubted if 'any measure for the special purpose of encouraging a larger number of Irish people to proceed to South Australia than would otherwise present themselves, would be acceptable to the majority of the

57. Ibid., April 9, 1850.

58. Observer, July 14, 1849.

settlers in that colony'.⁵⁹ It would appear that the attitude of the Commissioners was conditioned by the short-lived but concerted outcry from the colony over the quality of the single females 1848-9, and by the Select Committee on Colonisation from Ireland of 1847-8, at which a number of witnesses had attested to an apparent reluctance in the colonies to accept and employ large numbers of Irish immigrants.⁶⁰ The witness who spoke then on conditions in South Australia was David McLaren, former manager of the South Australian Co., who had left the colony in January 1841 and who, while there, had actively fostered the advancement of the Baptist and other Dissenting sects and discouraged the foundation of a Catholic Church.⁶¹ A Select Committee of the South Australian Legislative Council on Excessive Female Immigration in 1855 - following the second intake of single orphan women, when again most were Irish and the total received was considerably higher than in 1849 - reported that 'the Irish single female immigration under the auspices of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, began to be burdensome to the colony during the first quarter of 1855', but also cited the evidence of Dr. Handasyde Duncan, the immigration agent at Port Adelaide⁶² that 'There did not seem to be any prejudice against the Irish more than English servants previously to about the middle of the year 1854'.⁶³

59. South Australian, October 10, 1850.

60. House of Commons, Sessional Papers. 1847, vol. 6 p. 1ff; 1847-8 vol. 17, p. 1ff.

61. Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. 2, p. 177.

62. Appointed by Governor Young in 1848 in preparation for the organisation of the reception of orphan immigrants. C.W.Parkin, 'Irish Female Immigration to South Australia during the Great Famine', B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Adelaide, 1964, pp. 21-22.

63. South Australian Parliamentary Papers 1855-6, Vol. 2, no. 137, p.5.

This opinion was supported by an editorial in the Times of May 23, 1855 commenting that almost 3,000 of the 10,000 arrivals in the past year were Irish, that these were frequently 'miserably unsuited' to the needs of the colony and so had prejudiced the colonists against the reception of further such immigrants. Similarly, the unsuitability of many of the Irish women of 1855 had aroused national and religious prejudices against the employment of any Irish women.⁶⁴ The Observer spoke of its 'unfeigned pity' for the Irish women themselves in the same breath as it complained of the cost to the public of supporting them at the Government depot.⁶⁵ By 1856, however, it was evident that the real animus of the press was directed against those responsible for sending unsuitable immigrants, rather than against the arrivals themselves.⁶⁶

When South Australia gained its legislative independence in 1856, its dissatisfaction of the past decade with the selection methods of the Emigration Commissioners was reflected in the creation of the position of Emigration Agent,⁶⁷ who would have colonial rather than British interests at heart. As a further precaution against the erosion of the 'British character' of the colony, legislation was passed on June 5, 1857, supporting the motion of George Waterhouse, member for East Torrens, that

64. Times, June 23, 1855.

65. Observer, June 30, 1855.

66. e.g. Times, January 4, 1856, February 16; Observer, February 16, 1856.

67. The first Agent was Matthew Moorhouse, former superintendent of the Park Lands (female) depot. The position was abolished in 1860 following a trend towards decreasing support for expenditure on assisted immigration.

... in granting free or assisted passages, no undue preference be given to emigrants from any one of the kingdoms of which the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is composed, or to those professing any particular creed; but that the number of English, Scotch and Irish to be introduced, wholly or in part, at the public expense, be determined as nearly as possible upon the proportion that each people bears to the entire population of Great Britain and Ireland and that the same rule be applied to the forwarding of Emigrants of the Protestant and Catholic creeds. 68

During the debates on the motion, those favouring it sought to counter possible accusations that the resolution was sectarian, arguing that what the regulation would in fact do would be to prevent any such allegations in the future by fixing the proportions of the different races and creeds. It would appear, however, that most members genuinely believed that the issue was the 'fair' distribution of the Land Fund and were, in the absence of any concerted protest, unaware of the national-religious predilections subconsciously revealed by this equation of 'British' with English. It is equally obvious that a number of events in the preceding years, which had made Protestants generally more wary of the growth of Catholicism in the colony, contributed to the 'creeds' clause of the resolution,⁶⁹ but that this was allowed to go unchallenged because of the lack of Catholic spokesmen in the Parliament and the failure of either Bishop Murphy or Bishop Geoghegan to accuse those supporting the motion of religious intolerance. d

68. Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, May 26, 1857.

69. These issues included the re-establishment of the Catholic Hierarchy in England; the developments in Tractarianism and the conversion of numbers of prominent Anglicans; the manifestations of this in Australia with the conversion of two Anglican ministers in Sydney in 1848; and the state aid issue in which the Catholic Church shared in the attacks made on the Church of England by the voluntarists.

In further debates on the immigration policy in 1865, when it was seen that the nomination system, implemented in January 1858,⁷⁰ had undermined the 'fair proportions' clause of the assistance regulations, many members were loud in their praise of the efforts of Irish colonists on behalf of their countrymen and of the value of the Irish as settlers, but the move to regulate the inflow of Irish Catholics was re-affirmed.⁷¹ The 'proportions' regulation of South Australia was well publicised by those writing on the colony - usually with the implication that this was a wise move in view of the large Irish immigration into N.S.W. and Victoria and the resultant divisions within those colonies - and this sort of publicity may have been as effective in limiting the number of Irish wishing to emigrate to South Australia as the regulations themselves.⁷²

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70. This system allowed the nomination of persons for assisted passages by purchasers of land in the colony, in accordance with the amount of land purchased. The regulations for nominated immigrants were less strict than those for selected immigrants, and as a result some immigrants were brought for compassionate reasons rather than with a view to their suitability to colonial demands.
71. South Australian Parliamentary Debates, April 12, 1865. The Bill of 1857 was passed with only four dissenting voices: W.B.Dawes, Marshall MacDermott, Fredrich Krichauff and R.R.Torrens. The two latter opposed the Bill for its denial of any share in assistance to Germans, and Dawes wanted to 'stand up for the right of South Australians to send for labour wherever they could best be supplied'. The only Catholic then in the House, E.J.Peake, voted for the Bill, as did the Irish members J.T.Bagot and G.S.Kingston.
72. Dilke, C.W., Greater Britain. A record of Travels in English-speaking countries during 1866 and 1867, pp. 371, 373; W.Harcus, South Australia. Its History, Resources and Productions, p. 127.

The progress of early Irish immigrants to South Australia - those Irish who were essentially Protestant and middle class - is much easier to follow than that of the much more numerous and typically Catholic peasant emigrants who arrived in later years, both because of the publicity subsequently bestowed on all pioneers (considered to be those arriving before 1841) and because early arrivals tended to receive the greatest opportunities in a new colony, and so become prominent colonists. Thus among those pioneer Irish already mentioned, (p. 195) four became members of the Legislative Council, Torrens also being Treasurer in the first colonial ministry and later Colonial Secretary, and all became prosperous landowners. As in all the Australian colonies, land was the prime means of wealth. In the pursuit of personal fortune and property so glibly promised by popularisers of the colony like Torrens, a number of Irishmen were instrumental in opening up new areas of settlement, and so of aiding in the general development of the colony. Daniel Cudmore, born in Limerick in 1811, who arrived in South Australia from Hobart (where he had emigrated in 1835) in January 1837, established a brewery and malt house in North Adelaide the following year, took up farming on a small property at Modbury until 1847, when, after inheriting the family property in Ireland, he took up Yongala estate in northern South Australia with the proceeds of the sale of that property.⁷³ William Oldham arrived on the Lord Goderich from Gravesend on April 15, 1838 and was soon employed as protector of aborigines.

73. T. Borrow, The Cudmore Family in Australia, The Pioneers Association of Australia, no. 21, 1945; N. Robinson, Change on Change, p.

He conducted the school opened in Adelaide by the South Australian School Society from 1839-1842, and subsequently others at Gawler and Angaston, before taking a position as purser at the Kapunda mine in 1847. He was manager of the mine on behalf of C.H.Bagot from 1848-66, during which time he surveyed and subdivided the Kapunda township.⁷⁴ G.B.Yeates, who arrived with his family in January 1839, took a clerical position with a firm in Hindley Street on his father's death a few weeks after their arrival, speculated successfully with shares in the Kapunda and Burra copper mines, and by 1850 was able to take up a run at Melrose with his brothers John and Sydney.⁷⁵

In their ventures there was, however, nothing to distinguish these men as Irish. For many, their success in the colony ensured their commitment to it, and planned return visits to Ireland were often postponed. In 1843 Daniel Cudmore received a letter from his mother in Dublin, relating the current political situation in Ireland.⁷⁶ As Protestants and landowners, the Cudmores did not welcome O'Connell's Repeal agitation, and the letter must have made Daniel compare his colonial situation favourably with that which he had left. When he inherited the family property in Ireland in 1847, Daniel Cudmore returned to Ireland only to sell it, taking up further

74. E.A.D.Opie, South Australian Records, pp. 53-4; R. Charlton, p.14. Oldham conducted the first Congregationalist services in the district and was ordained a minister in 1858. (p. 67).

75. Geo. C. Morphett, The Yeates Family. The Pioneers Association of Australia, no. 11 (1942). Sydney Yeates married a daughter of Daniel Cudmore.

76. Cudmore family papers, S.A.A. PRG 189. Letter dated October 25, 1843.

land near Pt. Augusta with the proceeds. His contribution to Ireland from his colonial prosperity took the narrowly personal form of encouraging his brother Milo to emigrate and share his advantages.

C.H. Bagot, too, had been dissatisfied with developments in Ireland long before he emigrated. Speaking of county Clare in 1821, Bagot wrote

At that time, the baneful effects of O'Connell's agitation, which had since destroyed so completely that interesting country, had not begun to show themselves. -

and in the 1823 Clare election Bagot took an active part in the campaign against O'Connell on behalf of the sitting member, the Protestant landlord, Vesey Fitzgerald. It would appear that Bagot also took the course of encouraging friends to emigrate - a former friend, Dr. Bindon Blood, arrived in 1843, and was subsequently employed as medical officer at the Kapunda mine and became Kapunda's first Mayor-and may himself have been spurred to emigrate by the success in the colony of another former friend, William Oldham, who had arrived in 1838.⁷⁷

This type of immigration from Ireland was not reinforced after 1840. Assisted immigration consistently dominated the total immigration into South Australia prior to 1880. In the period 1836-40, 12,208 emigrants were assisted, compared with 1,634 unassisted.⁷⁸ One of the major attractions of South Australia originally was the fact that land buyers were entitled to a free passage for one emigrant for every £20 of land

77. C.H. Bagot, A Holograph Memoir of Capt. Charles Harvey Bagot, 1851. (no page numbers).

78. D. Pike, Paradise of Dissent, p. 180.

purchased. The majority of those assisted thus by land purchasers would have been people they hoped would work for them in the colony and this, together with the adherence to the policy of a 'sufficient' price for land, would have served to ensure a division in the colony between 'masters and men'. Nevertheless, the natural advantages for early arrivals in a new colony, and the effect of the propaganda concerning the intended tolerant and egalitarian nature of the settlement, combined to raise the status, or at least the self-esteem, of the assisted immigrants, such that subsequently 'the injudicious emphasis on independence was modified as experience proved that labourers were arriving in the province with too elevated a sense of their own importance'.⁷⁹

Certainly the 1836-40 arrivals had better opportunities to gain independence than the assisted immigrants of later years. At the census of 1841, 17% of the population were classified as landed proprietors, employers, merchants, professional men, etc., and 78% 'servants', compared with 8% and 89% respectively for N.S.W.⁸⁰ Following the lull in immigration during the bankruptcy and depression of the early 'forties, assisted immigration continued to provide the bulk of additions to South Australia, averaging 57% of the annual total immigration from Britain 1846-50, and 80% 1851-60.⁸¹ But the crisis 1841-3 had, while ruining many, consolidated the position of a few, and the fate of most subsequent immigrants was to be - at least for some years after arrival - a labour force for the

79. Ibid., p. 153.

80. F. Crowley, op. cit., p. 190.

81. If the unusual years 1849-50 are excluded, the average for 1846-50 is 75%.

purchased. The majority of those assisted thus by land purchasers would have been people they hoped would work for them in the colony and this, together with the adherence to the policy of a 'sufficient' price for land, would have served to ensure a division in the colony between 'masters and men'. Nevertheless, the natural advantages for early arrivals in a new colony, and the effect of the propaganda concerning the intended tolerant and egalitarian nature of the settlement, combined to raise the status, or at least the self-esteem, of the assisted immigrants, such that subsequently 'the injudicious emphasis on independence was modified as experience proved that labourers were arriving in the province with too elevated a sense of their own importance'.⁷⁹

Certainly the 1836-40 arrivals had better opportunities to gain independence than the assisted immigrants of later years. At the census of 1841, 17% of the population were classified as landed proprietors, employers, merchants, professional men, etc., and 78% 'servants', compared with 8% and 89% respectively for N.S.W.⁸⁰ Following the lull in immigration during the bankruptcy and depression of the early 'forties, assisted immigration continued to provide the bulk of additions to South Australia, averaging 57% of the annual total immigration from Britain 1846-50, and 80% 1851-60.⁸¹ But the crisis 1841-3 had, while ruining many, consolidated the position of a few, and the fate of most subsequent immigrants was to be - at least for some years after arrival - a labour force for the

79. Ibid., p. 153.

80. F.Crowley, op. cit., p. 190.

81. If the unusual years 1849-50 are excluded, the average for 1846-50 is 75%.

enterprises and properties owned by the few . At the 1851 census, the percentage of 'landed proprietors, etc.' in the total population had fallen to 2.2% or, if farmers are added, - and no distinction was made on the size of holdings - 6.7%. Under the land regulations of 1857, land could only be purchased at public auction, which acted against the interests of agriculturalists with a limited amount of capital. Although pastoralists could only hold leases for twelve months in a declared Hundred, many pastoralists themselves called for the declaration, waiving their right to an intervening period before the land was resumed, and then buying the choice lots at auction and gaining the corresponding right of commonage. For those farmers who did buy land, the 80 acre block remained the norm until 1859, and as late as 1867 more than half of the total farms were less than 100 acres.⁸² Although 7,090 were returned as farmers at the 1861 census, it was not until the Waste Lands Amendment Act of 1869, allowing for the first time the purchase of land on credit, that the promise of land ownership that had lured many to the colony became a reality.

Thus by 1860 South Australia was not the colony of independent farmers envisaged by Wakefield. The number of farmers had increased by 33% since 1855, but this still only represented 11% of the total male population, and was actually a decrease proportionately compared with 1855. The returns at the census of 1861 made no division within occupations for the various nationalities. In the breakdown by counties, however, the concentrations

82. G.L.Buxton, 'South Australian Land Acts 1869-1885', B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Adelaide, 1961, pp. 2-3; Statistics compiled by the Geography Department of University of Adelaide.

of Irish can be seen to have been in counties Adelaide, Light, Hindmarsh and Stanley. (see Table 6). But these were counties with the largest

Table 6. Number and Proportion of Irish in Select Counties, 1861.

Division	Total		Irish		Proportion of Irish (as a %age)		total
	male	female	male	female	male	female	
Colony	65,048	61,782	5,408	7,286	8	12	10
Co. Adelaide	32,659	34,781	2,466	4,121	8	12	10
Co. Light	7,835	7,145	966	951	12	13	13
Co. Hindmarsh	6,457	6,045	387	532	6	8	7
Co. Stanley	2,506	2,329	319	395	13	17	15

Source: South Australian Parliamentary Papers 1862, Vol. 1, no. 5.

populations generally, and the proportion of Irish in them was not much higher than in the total colonial population. Indeed, in Adelaide it was only the large number of Irish women that raised the proportion of Irish to nearly 10% - the Irish proportion of males was only 8%. Similarly county Hindmarsh, while accounting for the ^{third} ~~second~~ largest concentration of Irish, was only 7% Irish in its constitution and 6% in the male population. County Light had a slightly above-average complement of Irish, but even the proportion in county Stanley and in counties with very small total populations (Victoria, Gawler and Young) hardly stand out as really in contrast with the general colonial picture since, in a comparatively small aggregation, a few extra Irish could make a considerable difference to their

proportion. More than half of those in county Stanley, it should be noted, lived within the district council of Clare, compared with less than a quarter of the total concentrated in this area, and so the large number of Irish in the county does not constitute evidence of large farmer settlements there. In 1861 nearly half of the Irish male population of the colony was concentrated in county Adelaide, and 949 of these were in the four wards of Adelaide itself and another 110 in the district council of Hindmarsh. County Adelaide also had the highest number of labourers, and there is no reason to assume that the Irish did not contribute their fair share to their ranks. There is no definite evidence on this to support or to refute the allegation of the correspondent to the Register in 1850 that the Irish held only 'menial' positions.⁸³ There is evidence, however, to show that the Irish did frequently seek government support. In 1859 the return of labourers employed on public works showed many Irish among them. Those employed under a grant of £10,000 by the Legislature, administered by the Commissioner of public works in cooperation with the Central Road Board, totalled 539. No breakdown by nationalities was given, but Irish names figure largely in the list supplied of those so employed.⁸⁴ Of another 438 employed by the Government in the Botanic Gardens, on the Gawler extension railway and in trenching a reserve near the Houses of Parliament, 342 were Irish.⁸⁵ Similarly, the Irish figured largely in those seeking destitute

83. Register, April 9, 1850.

84. South Australian Parliamentary Papers, 1859 vol.2 no.114, p.2-3.

85. Parliamentary Papers, 1859, vol. 2, no. 144. Of the Irish, 159 had been sent by the Commissioners or nominated in the colony without money having been remitted, another 160 had been nominated with money remitted, and only 123 had arrived unassisted.

relief, though here the influx of single women in 1855 contributed significantly to the overall disproportion. For the week ended January 8, 1856, 1,116 Irish were relieved, almost as many as the English and Scots combined.⁸⁶ Of the Irish, 785 were adult females. From January to June, 1855, 484 English, 82 Scots and 1,258 Irish single women had arrived in the colony - seventeen, four and 144 respectively had to be relieved as destitutes. During the same period, 101 Irish families also had to be relieved, of whom 68 had been in the colony less than two months, 21 for two to six months and the rest for up to twelve months. This would appear to support the comment of the Register in 1850 that Irish immigrants found initial difficulties in establishing themselves, but ultimately succeeded as colonists.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the number of Irish families resident for more than six months receiving aid was greater than the number of English, and the total number of English families given any relief was only twice that of the Irish, even though the number of English families who arrived in that period was four times that of Irish.⁸⁸

Though the proportion of Irish receiving aid over the next seven years was consistently higher than their proportion in the population generally, the figures for 1855 were unique in the extent of the disproportion. For 1855 the Irish averaged 32% of those receiving outdoor relief; over the period 1856 to 1862, their contribution was 18.5%. Only in 1855 was outdoor

86. 881 English, 329 Scotch; Register, February 12, 1859.

87. Register, April 9, 1850.

88. Observer, July 14, 1855.

relief given to those in distress because of unemployment; usually, outdoor relief was given to able-bodied men only when they were ill, and to women with families in difficulties through the death or desertion of their husbands.⁸⁹ With regard to the other occupations in which the Irish are frequently assumed to be found in the cities: Constables Ryan, Dunne and Sullivan were among eight policemen dismissed from the police force between June 1859 and May 1860, each for charges relating to drunkenness⁹⁰ and Irish names are much in evidence among those who belonged to the force in 1867, or had belonged to it since 1857, though it is possible to positively identify only the obvious patronyms - possibly at least forty of the 168 men in the force in 1867 were Irish.⁹¹ Evident among these are the names of the most prominent South Australian Catholic families - McEllister, Sayers, Fox, Curran, Dempsey. In an enquiry into the police force in 1849, following allegations that an Irish immigrant had been refused acceptance into the force because of his religion, it had been found that Catholics were in fact over-represented.⁹² A Select Committee on the state of the force in 1867 reported as one of its recommendations that 'removal from the police force for the first offence of drunkenness should not be the invariable rule, but each case should be left to the discretion of the Commissioner', and revealed that the quality of men attracted by that profession was not of a desired standard, but made no reference to the national or religious composition of the force.⁹³ Nor is there any evidence

89. Parliamentary Papers 1862, Vol. 1, no. 4, p. 5.

90. Parliamentary Papers 1860, Vol. 3, no. 88.

91. Ibid., 1867, Vol. 3, no. 120.

92. Register, November 28, 1849.

93. Parliamentary Papers 1866-7, Vol. 3, no. 191.

that the Irish had any monopoly on the other 'traditional' Irish role as publicans. Adelaide was not short of hotels - there were 100 in 1854, and 240 in the colony as a whole - but licences at £25 were not easily purchasable by the impoverished immigrant. An Irishman who did establish a hotel was, however, fairly assured of success, as the Irish colonists tended to congregate, as in Ireland, in hotels making a concession to Irish nostalgia, as the Hibernian Inn established by John Pilcher in Brougham Place, North Adelaide, which attracted the Irish working men of that area.⁹⁴ The habit of considering a hotel as a secure investment for the earnings of one's youth was also apparent among the Irish farmers of the northern districts of South Australia. The very facelessness of the Irish of Adelaide and suburbs is the best indication that they functioned there as the workers of any nationality in any town or city - though it should be remembered that those living in Adelaide did not necessarily work only within the city environs, but might be employed anywhere in the surrounding agricultural districts according to the seasonal demands for labour.⁹⁵

The Irish residents in Adelaide and its immediate suburbs were not, however, fully representative of the inhabitants of county Adelaide, which extended to Salisbury and the Barossa valley in the north and Willunga to the south, and included the Gumeracha district to the east. In the Gumeracha district, for example, which through the system of special surveys was almost totally owned by the South Australian Co., there operated a system of land

94. P. Nagel, 'A Social History of North Adelaide 1837-1901, B.A. (Hons) thesis, University of Adelaide, 1965, p. 24.

95. See letters of Benjamin Boyce, an English emigrant, 1842-6. Mitchell DOC. 140.

leasing which attracted a number of Irish, among others, to the district. William Guthrie, who arrived in the colony in the 'forties, leased a farm from the company near Cudlee Creek, and farmed there for thirty years until, following a quarrel with the company, he left to take up another farm at Tungkillo. His son, Michael, later bought the Cudlee Creek property from the Company. Richard Hanna, who arrived in 1852 from county Monaghan, preceded by his fiance and her family, also became a tenant of the Company on a farm five miles from Gumeracha in 1866 after working for another farmer, J.D.Cave, in Gumeracha for eight years. Like many others, Hanna initially came not to South Australia as such but to seek his fortune on the goldfields of Victoria, and it was only after a few years there that he returned to farm labour.⁹⁶ By 1860 the district council of Talunga, in which Gumeracha was contained, showed a large proportion of the population to be engaged as farmers and farm labourers.⁹⁷ The Irish were by no means forward in reverting to the tenant system of land tenure, however; in 1861 the district had only 198 Irish, 7% of the total population of 2,759.⁹⁸ In the smaller district council of Willunga, also predominantly farming, but with a larger number of farm labourers and less farmers, there were proportionately more Irish. This was not a constant pattern, however, for

96. J.E.Monfries, A History of Gumeracha and District, pp. 94, 96-7.

97. Parliamentary Papers 1860, Vol. 1, no. 5. In 1844 the South Australian Co. had 92 tenants; in 1850 it had 476. But the return for the tenants for their labour was often no better than if he worked for wages. Pike, op. cit., pp. 218,330.

98. 1861 census, Parliamentary Papers 1862, Vol. 1, no. 5.

in Yatala, where there were 176 farmers and only 49 labourers, the Irish were in the same strength (11%) as in Willunga. Nor should it be assumed automatically that landholding was the desired end of all Irish colonists. The number of Irish residents who gave up farming after many years and bought and managed a hotel instead is remarkably high. Andrew Dempsey, an assisted emigrant from county Cavan with his sister Bridget in 1849, bought a team of bullocks and a block of land near Marrabel with the £500 he made on the Ballarat goldfields in 1851, but his two companions at Ballarat, Dan Brady and Jim Conaghty, each built a hotel at Dry Creek with their profits.⁹⁹

Within the area of Adelaide itself, there was a fairly even spread of Irish in three wards, but they were exceptionally numerous in Gawler ward. (see Table 7). The large number of Irish women generally in

Table 7. Proportion of Irish in Adelaide Wards, 1861.

Division	Total			Irish			Percentage of Irish		
	m.	f.	total	m.	f.	total	m.	f.	total
Hindmarsh	2,164	2,235	4,489	190	400	590	9	18	13
Gawler	2,099	2,424	4,523	376	583	959	18	24	21
Grey	2,652	3,221	5,873	256	463	719	10	14	12
Robe	1,506	1,912	3,418	127	260	387	8	14	11
Total	8,421	9,882	18,303	949	1,706	2,655	11	17	14

Source: South Australian Parliamentary Papers 1862, Vol. 1, no. 5.

Adelaide accounts for the overall disproportion of the Irish in the city. They outnumbered the males in the Gawler ward by no greater amount than in

99. J. Dempsey, 'The Dempsey Family in South Australia' MSS in National Library of Ireland.

any other wards, however; the high proportion of Irish there was due rather to the concentration of industrial enterprises in that area, to the fact of Gawler ward being the first district of Adelaide proper reached from the Port, and to the varied attractions of also being the theatre centre of Adelaide, of containing the 'red light' district (Light Square), the Catholic Bishop's residence on West Terrace,¹⁰⁰ and the heart of Ultra-Protestantism, Trinity Church on North Terrace. Above all, Gawler ward contained areas in which employment could readily be found for unskilled labourers, artisans and domestic servants, and where the housing was least expensive, frequently terrace housing; it contained in 1861 the largest number of one-roomed houses, and the least number with six rooms. It had also the largest number of buildings with more than six rooms - this is perhaps explained by the fact that Gawler ward returned in 1860 more inn- and lodging-house keepers than any other ward, in spite of its having only the third largest population of the four wards.¹⁰¹

On the other hand, the 1860 census shows the Irish to fall below their proportion in the wealthier residential districts of Kensington, Norwood and Walkerville - and this in spite of the considerable number of Irish women there, employed as domestic servants. Nor were the Irish disproportionately high in North Adelaide (Robe ward) as has frequently been

100. When Bishop Murphy suggested to William Leigh that the Bishop's residence be erected on land he had bought on West Terrace, rather than on that donated by Leigh in North Adelaide, one of his arguments was that West Terrace 'is surrounded by a Catholic population'. Murphy to Leigh, January 12, 1845. Adelaide A.A.

101. 1860 census, Parliamentary Papers 1860, Vol. 1, no. 5.

alleged. In 1860 the Irish were 13% of the Robe ward population, and the 1861 census showed 127 male and 260 female Irish in a total of 1,506 males and 1,912 females - i.e. 8% and 14%. What made their presence there noticeable was rather their geographic concentration, in parts of what is now called Lower North Adelaide,^{and} the contrast they and their dwellings presented to the other North Adelaide residents. Thus in the debates over the proposed new electoral district of North Adelaide in 1872 one member was moved to comment

... with regard to the Colonial Secretary's remark that North Adelaide was a fashionable spot, he would remind him that Irish town was there, and the member who might satisfy the top of the hill might not go down with Irish Town. ¹⁰²

In county Light, 30% of the Irish were concentrated in Kapunda township and district, as against 22% of the population generally. Most of these were attracted initially by the prospect of work at the Kapunda copper mines, where they were employed as labourers rather than miners, at which few Irish had experience.¹⁰³ From the mid-fifties many of these had

102. Parliamentary Debates 1872, p. 2,680.

103. I.J.Bettison, 'Kapunda, a study of the establishment of a rural community in South Australia', B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Adelaide 1960, p. 21. John Adams, a manager at the Burra mines, wrote to his stepson, April 4, 1849, of the demand for 'labour of the lowest kind, fellows who can work hard at anything', which would have ensured acceptance of any unskilled Irish who cared to travel to the mines. J.B.Graham, Papers 1813-1876. Adams comments were in the form of a diary, but were essentially addressed to his stepson, J.B. Graham. South Australian Archives.

'squatted' on unoccupied land some three miles from the main settlement. The unauthorised community thus founded, known as Baker's Flat, was considered a 'blot' by the residents of Kapunda,¹⁰⁴ but

The inhabitants squatting rent free soon developed a community feeling quick to resent any attempt at interference with their acquired privileges. At intervals, enterprising individuals proposed to impose and collect rents, but always in vain.¹⁰⁵

By 1861, however, relatively few of the residents of county Light were miners or labourers, while 4,370 were returned under the classification of agricultural, horticultural and pastoral pursuits.¹⁰⁶ This included farm labourers, as which most Irish male immigrants had been granted assisted passages, and it is possible too that some of the Baker's Flat residents - many of whom kept geese, pigs, poultry and goats - considered themselves farmers by virtue of their few animals or a plot of potatoes grown for their own use.¹⁰⁷

The success in Kapunda, through connection with copper mining, of two Irishmen, C.H. Bagot and William Oldham, has already been mentioned.¹⁰⁸

The celebratory Aldine history of South Australia in 1890 listed eight

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104. R. Charlton, The History of Kapunda, p. 18. Baker's Flat was so called after John and Mary Baker, members of the South Kapunda Mining Co. which had bought the land on speculation but found no copper there.
105. A. Buchanan, 'Kapunda Memories', by Senex. South Australian Archives.
106. 1861 census, Parliamentary Papers 1862, Vol. 1, no. 5, p. 3.
107. Charlton, op. cit., pp. 18, 42-3.
108. See p. 219-20. Dr. Blood also became the first Mayor of Kapunda.

Irishmen among 36 leading citizens of Kapunda. Of these, three were late arrivals in the district; among the others, there is a distinct pattern. Thomas Dermody arrived in Adelaide in 1849 as a boy of ten, was employed first on a farm near Adelaide, then for six years on farms in the Kapunda district, before taking up his own farm of 550 acres near Allendale. Edward Gurry, born in Meath in 1836, arrived in Adelaide in 1858 and farmed from 1860-79 in the Kapunda district, before leaving the land to become a publican. J. Jones and John Murphy, both born in 1829, migrated to Adelaide in 1851 and 1852 respectively and soon joined the rush to the Victorian diggings. On their return both began farming at Kapunda, where Jones was a member of the Council for many years. One of the few larger landowners was M. Shannon, who in 1875 took over the large sheep farm founded by his father, W.M. Shannon, at Kapunda, and by 1890 had increased it to 22,000 acres. Martin Shea also took up his own farm at Kapunda of 213 acres after working for the Shannons for ten years. 109

Mass was celebrated at the Kapunda mine by Father Ryan for the first time on February 24, 1845. Father Fallon arrived as the first resident priest in July 1849, and ministered there until his death in 1860. Some 3-400 people were present at the laying of the foundation stone of the first Catholic church, St. Johns, on April 4, 1850, when £95 was collected. It is impossible to say positively what was the correlation of Irish and Catholic

109. W.F. Morrison, The Aldine History of South Australia, Vol. 2, appendix. For other residents listed in the local directory for 1883, see Tarlee, Research Notes. South Australian Archives. Tarlee benefited by its situation on the track from Kapunda to the Wakefield mines and from Kapunda to Clare.

at this time, for at the 1861 census religions were not tabled in any detail, owing to the reluctance of some of the population to submit this information (which was not compulsory) and the consequently imperfect returns.¹¹⁰ At the census of April 1860, the returns showed Catholics to be 13.22% of the colonial population, as compared with the Irish-born as 10.38%. All the evidence does point to the fact of most Catholic immigrants of the 'fifties being from Ireland, and vice versa.¹¹¹ In the case of county Light, there were 1,610 Irish returned at the 1860 census and 2,163 Catholics of whom 885 were children. It is perhaps significant that the first church erected at Kapunda, on a grant some three miles south of the township, was subsequently found unsatisfactory because the Catholics south-east of Kapunda - i.e. those at Baker's Flat - were unable to attend whenever the Light river, which they had to ford, was in flood.¹¹²

County Hindmarsh, which took in the settlements of Mt. Barker, Yankallila, Goolwa, Victor Harbour, Port Elliot and Strathalbyn, was a district of varied enterprises. Goolwa was surveyed in January 1840, and most blocks were quickly taken up. It became the terminal for the River Murray trade, connected with Pt. Elliot, the seaport of this trade, by railway in 1858. The town of Pt. Elliot itself was surveyed in January 1852, and

110. Parliamentary Papers 1862, Vol. 1, no. 5, p. xvi.

111. Note correlation of number of Catholics and number of Irish introduced by assisted immigration each year, in Returns, compiled by the Immigration Agent. The mention of the need to correctly apportion assistance in terms of both creed and nationality in the 1857 regulation is, however, an indication of the number of Protestant Irish already in the colony.

112. Father Morrison MSS - file on The Church in the South East (sic). Adelaide A.A.

sold in quarter acre lots, 52 having been sold by June. An iron works was established at Goolwa in 1864 and ship-building grew up in connection with it, reaching a peak in the 'seventies.¹¹³ Prior to 1861, however, mixed farming was the most common enterprise in county Hindmarsh, particularly in the districts of Mt. Barker, Strathalbyn, Macclesfield and Yankallilla, and at the 1861 census almost a quarter of the population was engaged in agricultural-horticultural-pastoral pursuits.¹¹⁴ Mt. Barker, regarded in 1861 as a major agricultural centre¹¹⁵ was the first district outside Adelaide to receive a resident Catholic priest, and a small Catholic school was opened there in 1845.¹¹⁶ A national concentration, or at least a certain patriotism, is suggested by the name 'Little Dublin' given to a settlement two miles from Mt. Barker, where nineteen Catholics were confirmed by Bishop Murphy on January 16, 1846.¹¹⁷ In October 1862 the Vicer-General, Father Ryan, assessed Mt. Barker, together with Willunga, Morphett Vale and Gawler, to be an area of greatest Catholic concentration.¹¹⁸ In this distribution, things had changed little from 1848, when of the five priests sent into the country (the other three remaining in Adelaide) two were sent to Mt. Barker and one each to Gawler, Willunga and Morphett Vale.¹¹⁹ These were the areas of general dispersion from Adelaide. There

113. J.C.Tolley, South Coast Story, pp. 15, 21.

114. 1861 census, op. cit.

115. C. Fenner, A Geographical Enquiry into the Growth, Distribution and Movement of Population in South Australia 1836-1929, p. 128.

116. Father Morrison, Notes, Adelaide A.A.

117. Observer, January 24, 1846.

118. Ryan to Geoghegan, October 25, 1862, Adelaide A.A.

119. F. Byrne, The Catholic Church in South Australia, 1914.

is evidence that within established areas of settlement the Irish tended to group in national concentrations (Little Dublin, Irishtown, Baker's Flat); rarely, however, was there Irish initiative in opening up new areas as a national group, comparable with that by Germans in Tanunda or around Clare and Kapunda. This was partly a result of their lack of capital on arrival, which made it necessary for them to seek employment in established areas rather than land, and of their relatively late arrival in the colony, when the opportunities for initiative were less. It is also an indication that they did not experience the same sense of alienation on arrival as did the German immigrants, or find the need to establish whole communities to maintain traditions or an ethnic language. At no time was the right of Irish immigrants to a share in assisted immigration challenged. The desire for colonists did not include any additions, however, regardless of how well they adapted to the colony. During the immigration debates of May 1857 it was proposed by Mr. Krichauff to allow assisted passages to selected German immigrants. Peake (a Catholic) voiced the sentiments of many of his peers when he argued in favour of 'preserving the Anglo-Saxon character of the colony' and a new motion in support of assistance by Torrens was defeated 25:3 on June 5.¹²⁰ In 1851 the Register had opposed the creation of the new electoral district of Tanunda as an attempt to create a 'German Interest'¹²¹ and, shortly before the immigration debates mentioned, had given a detailed picture of what it saw as the essentials of South Australian society

120. Parliamentary Debates, June 2 and 5, 1857.

121. Register, February 1, 1851.

... not only was this colony founded by Englishmen, but that it is still a dependency of the British Crown. For our own part, we cannot consent to become a party to any act that would tend to the subversion of Anglicanism. We would throw open this colony, as it is now thrown open, to all the world, but we would also cherish its British character, and maintain the duty of upholding the exclusively British character of its public institutions. 122

In the equation of English with 'British' the Register indicated the exclusion of the Irish as well, and also showed how completely the onus of adaption was placed upon the non-English arrival in the colony. The position of Ireland within the United Kingdom ensured the acceptance of the Irish in the colony (and this was a time of comparative calm in English-Irish relations) and they avoided in the colony the extremes of national concentration that the Register criticised in the case of the German colonists. Nevertheless, many Irish were attracted to areas where there were already numbers of Irish, either because they emigrated specifically at the instigation of friends or relatives (and often with their assistance) and so joined them in a particular district, or simply because they were attracted by the same things - employment, land and housing - as other immigrants of the same class and expectations. These reinforcements to national concentrations could stifle initiative; on the other hand, it could also give impetus to future expansion into new areas, as one particular district became too populous and land consequently too expensive to enable expansion from holdings which proved too small to be economic after a few years cultivation or after the expansion of one's family. Andrew Dempsey

122. Register, May 5, 1857. See also the Times editorial of June 8, 1857.

left Cavan with his sister Bridget in 1849, after famine in Ireland reduced the family's fortunes and scattered its members, arriving at Port Adelaide on November 8. At the end of the famine in Ireland, his two elder brothers, John and Felix, returned from Scotland, where they had gone to work on the railway constructions in 1848, and John soon followed Andrew to South Australia, together with his sister Judith, arriving August 2, 1852. Andrew had taken up a block of land at Marrabel; after a few months on the goldfields and as a harvest labourer John joined him there, buying the adjoining block and also a team of bullocks, as Andrew had done with his earnings from the Ballarat fields. In June 1854 the rest of the family arrived, two brothers, two sisters and their parents Thomas and Mary Dempsey, all joining John and Andrew at Marrabel. When the brothers' leases expired in 1858, John and Felix purchased land on the Upper Wakefield (Andrew had been killed in a fall from a horse in March 1856) and all moved there, including Andrew's widow and her second husband, another Cavan emigrant. Here they all shared in the cultivation of the virgin land and used the two bullock teams to supplement the family earnings by carting ore from the Burra mines to Port Wakefield. Even in this extended family situation, the Dempseys frequently drove 14 miles to Mass in Marrabel, rather than the closer Sevenhill, in order to renew acquaintances there. When Felix married in 1863 (also to a Cavan woman) he moved to a new section, but only a mile south of the original homestead, and Judith moved only to Mintaro on her marriage the following year. Both John and Felix were able

to expand their holdings on the Upper Wakefield, but after the opening of land to the north after 1872 each of the brothers bought land there, and were accompanied by William Dempsey, son of a first cousin to Thomas Dempsey, who had emigrated in 1878 (no doubt under the revised passage warrant regulations of that time) and worked for his relatives both on the Upper Wakefield and after they moved north before taking up land for himself at Jamestown.¹²³

The other two areas of Irish concentration by 1860 were county Stanley and county Burra, again areas of general settlement. County Stanley, the fifth largest county with a population of 4,835, had an Irish component of 15% (17% of the women) in 1861. It contained the thriving town of Clare, the Jesuit college at Sevenhill, the wheat farming district of Upper Wakefield and the sheep runs at Mintaro and north of Clare. The Clare district had been proclaimed good pastoral country by Eyre after his exploratory visit there in May 1839, and had subsequently been claimed for special survey by an Adelaide syndicate that included John Horrocks, John Morphett and E.B. Gleeson.¹²⁴ In 1842 Gleeson, an Irishman who had arrived in 1838 (and who was a member of the first Committee of the St. Patrick's society) laid out the town of Clare on section 40 of the survey, and settlement followed the creation of small blocks. Most of the rest of the survey, which covered 15,000 acres (4,000 being bought by the syndicate,

123. 'The Dempsey Family in South Australia' MSS, op. cit.

124. Clare, Research Notes, S.A.A.; A. Horrocks 'Brief History of the Horrocks Family', May 12, 1868. S.A.A. Section 39 of the Special Survey was sold to the Catholic Church, per Bishop Murphy and Henry Johnson, for £150.1.0 Clare, Special Notes. S.A.A.

as was the usual practice) resulted in the establishment of large sheep runs north of the township; the area had in fact been stocked with sheep by Morphett and Horrocks even before the survey.¹²⁵ Clare was named by Gleeson after his home county, and his own homestead on section 43, Inchiquin, after a town in that county in Ireland.

Again, the development of the institutions of the Catholic Church may be taken as a guide to the movement of an Irish population into this area. A Catholic priest, Father McGuinn, arrived to take charge of the Catholics of the Clare district as early as 1849, but hardly had time to establish the mission before the district was depopulated by the rush to the Victorian goldfields. A Catholic population - returned diggers and new immigrants - reassembled in the 'fifties, most engaged as agricultural labourers and to tend to the flocks of the sheep-run owners -

North of Clare in the great sheep stations, or sheep runs, there were Catholic shepherds and station hands, and the Catholic population in and around the copper mines was increasing, and to tend to this portion of his flock Father Kranewitter frequently travelled seventy or more miles into the Northern Areas.¹²⁶

The first Catholic college was established at Sevenhill, five miles south of Clare, in 1856, testifying to the faith of the Church in the potential of the district. Nor was this faith misplaced; the college attracted wealthy Protestants as well as Catholics by the high quality of its education, including the older children of Daniel Cudmore, already mentioned, and was at the same time a centre of Catholic education for the colonial-born children of Irish immigrants who went north, including James Erwin, son of

125. Research Notes, op. cit., p. 1.

126. Father Morrison, 'Dawn of Catholicism', vol. 1 MSS, p. 110 in Adelaide A.A. Obviously Kranewitter's mission extended beyond the boundaries of county Stanley, to the Burra mines in county Burra to the east.

James and Ann Erwin who had emigrated from Galway in the 'fifties (but who left at age 11 to aid his brothers in carting ore from the Burra mines to Wallaroo, and Peter Paul Gillen, later M.L.A. for Stanley (1889-96) and Director of the Southern Cross, founded in 1889 under the editorship of another colonial-born Catholic, James Vincent O'Loughlin (whose parents also made the move from land tenancy at Gumeracha to land ownership at Kapunda in the 'fifties).¹²⁷

In 1861 there were 374 Irish in the district council of Clare itself (18% of the total population) and 714 in county Stanley (15%). Clare retained its importance, in its own right and as a staging camp, in the general trend to northward expansion over the next twenty years. When Vicar General Ryan wrote to Bishop Geoghegan in 1862 on the state of the diocese, it was Clare he saw as a hopeful sign for the advancement of Catholic education and the Church generally, as against an overall depressing picture in the country districts.¹²⁸

A few of the names of Irish residents have been remembered. One family that prospered was that of Edward and Ellen Travers, grandparents of the Hon. Leo Travers, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in South Australia. Ellen Doran was one of the many single women from Ireland who emigrated to South Australia in 1856, from county Kilkenny. The following year she met

127. Gillen's father emigrated from Cavan in 1855, followed by his brother Phillip in 1858. Phillip Gillen began storekeeping in Clare in 1876, and took his nephew, then aged 18, and already living in Clare, into the business. (W.F. Morrison, op. cit., Vol. 2). J.V. O'Loughlin senior had arrived from county Clare, Ireland, in 1840.

128. Ryan to Geoghegan, October 25, 1862.

Edward Travers, a recent assisted immigrant and a former acquaintance from their home town of Conihy. They were married at Clare by Father Pallhuber in 1858, and Edward embarked upon the familiar course of working as a farm labourer for a number of years - seven years erecting post and rail fences at the Bowman's station at Mintaro - before taking up his own farm in the district.¹²⁹ In 1875 Edward and his brother Joseph were among those who took advantage of the Waste Lands Amendment act of 1872. Before he moved from Mintaro, Edward sold his farm to Felix Dempsey, who had followed his brothers John and Andrew to the district with the rest of the family in 1854. The Dempseys soon followed the Travers north, and Felix Dempsey's niece Catherine married Joseph Travers. Soon the Pekina-Belalie-Tarcowie districts contained proportionately almost as many Irish farmers as had the Kapunda-Clare area in the 'fifties and 'sixties.¹³⁰ Others who made the move north were the family of James and Ann Erwin, emigrants from county Galway, who had settled at Sevenhill, where their sons had been engaged in carting ore from the Burra mines to Wallaroo until in 1872 they, with their three sisters, joined the trek north to select land in the newly-declared Hundred of Belalie East.¹³¹ A similar tale is that of Patrick

129. A. Travers, Travers' Tales of Talk and Travel, privately printed, 1967. I am indebted to the Hon. L. Travers for the use of this history of the Travers family, compiled by his brother Ambrose.

130. In the 1881 counties Victoria and Dalhousie, which contained these new areas, had 1,747 Irish born, compared with 2,731 in counties Light and Stanley in 1861, the respective total populations being 18,886 and 19,815.

131. N. Robinson, Change on Change, A History of the Northern Highlands of South Australia, p. 112.

Dowd, born in Cavan in 1811, an arrival in South Australia in 1857, who worked first on the railways and subsequently for 18 months at Virginia before taking up 24 acres at Farrell's Flat, north-east of Clare, which by 1890 he had increased to 3,000 acres, with another 4,000 at Yarcowie, the latter the result of having selected under the provisions of the 1872 Act. All four families were active supporters of the Catholic church in both districts in which they lived.¹³²

County Burra was populated largely because of the discovery there of copper in 1845. At the census of 1860, close to a third of the male population were returned as miners. There were only 222 Irish in the county at this time, 4% of the total population, and 151 of these were concentrated within the towns of Redruth, Aberdeen and Kooringa which together comprised the township of Burra. A considerable number of Irish had been connected with the mine from the commencement of operation, as draymen and carriers, and there may have been others like the Erwin brothers, who made their living carting ore from the mines, but did not live in Burra. During the strike of carters at the mine in 1848, in support of initial strikes by the miners, one Irishman at least figured as taking the initiative on behalf of his fellow workers. On October 18, 1848 this advertisement appeared in the Register, under the name of William Chace, of Little Para -

132. Farrell's Flat, Research Notes, p. 1, S.A.A.; W.F. Morrison, op. cit., Vol. 2. Parliamentary Papers 1870-1871, Vol. 2, no. 154 for a list of selectors in the Belalie Agricultural area. Joseph Travers was among those to take up 640 acres under the 1872 Amending Act, as was William Shannon. Parliamentary Papers 1877, Vol. 3, no. 122.

I wish it made known to my brother bullock-drivers that on Tuesday morning the 17th of October, I hoist my flag with 'Free Trade and Bullock-Drivers Rights' and 'Keep your drays at home' upon it, as the mottoes, and proceed to the Sod Hut, to make a stand until our rights are obtained and published for general information. Now, my lads, stick to it, and come under your captain's flag, and let us never furl it until we get our price; for they made your captain pay two shillings before they would receive his load at the Port, and so Tom Bray was served, and another with him; they told us at the same time that if we did not stack the ore where they wanted it done, we should not be paid.

The challenge had overtones of Vinegar Hill and Eureka, but this aspect of the issue was obscured when action taken against the Register by each of the nine members of the Burra Burra Board of Directors, on account of the editorials of that paper alleging mismanagement and dangerous conditions at the mines, shifted the emphasis to a consideration of the extent of freedom of the press.¹³³ It is possible that such agitation by an Irishman would have alienated the mine managers against Irish employees: more important, however, was the opening of Port Wakefield in 1859, which halved the time and distance for carting ore (originally taken to Port Adelaide, a round trip of three weeks by dray) and enabled the mines to reduce the number of carriers employed from some 600 to 100. In 1860 only 93 carriers were recorded in county Burra, and occupations had diversified in accordance with the development of Burra as a country centre, though only 53 farmers were enumerated.¹³⁴

133. Register, October 18, November 1 and 15, 1848. The case against the paper was not pressed by the mine owners.

134. The Burra mines closed finally in 1877, activity having been suspended 1867-9. It is perhaps significant that no Irish were among the list of prominent Burra citizens compiled by Morrison in 1890.

By 1860 then, it would appear that relatively few Irish - in comparison with other nationalities, and with promises and expectations - had achieved independence on the land, though many more were to do so in the next twenty years. The 'fifties were a prosperous time for the colony, but the years 1858-60 had seen drought, bad harvests and falling wool and copper prices, and assisted immigration was suspended for 1861. If one accepts that most Catholics were Irish, a melancholy picture of the situation of the Irish in the colony was drawn by the hierarchy at this time. Thus in 1860 Bishop Geoghegan wrote -

However promising may have been the circumstances of the diocese in previous times, it may come to my lot to receive it in a very depressed condition. This latter has been chiefly caused by a continued drought of three seasons the sad results of which have overwhelmed the small settlers and other industries, to which the mass of our Catholic people belong. Another depressing cause has arisen from the discovery of new and rich goldfields in the neighbouring colonies of Victoria and N.S.W., inducing a most dangerous exodus of our population and which will certainly continue to operate for some time to come. 135

Nor did things quickly improve. In September 1862 Geoghegan, writing from Ireland where he had gone to gather funds and priests for the Adelaide diocese, spoke of the difficulties in persuading priests to come to South Australia because of the name Adelaide had gained for the poverty of the diocese, and in October he wrote -

I fear we must always be a more struggling church than that of any of the other Colonies - struggling for want of population and means - but we will with care be able to pursue an 'even tenor' which will secure us peaceable minds for our struggles. Debt beyond all to be eschewed. 136.

135. May 18, 1860. Incomplete, addressed to 'Sir'. Adelaide A.A.

136. Geoghegan to Vicar-General Smyth, September 25 and October 26, 1862.

There can be no doubt, however, that South Australia offered more to many Irish immigrants than Ireland. The Irish colonists were consistently dominant among those nominating immigrants for assisted passage; in 1858, for example, 1,643 Irish were among the total of 2,395 nominated¹³⁷ and in 1862 they were 239 of 448 nominated. A distinct trend, too, in Irish nominations was the predominance of single adults among those nominated, as compared with a greater proportion of married couples and children among English and Scotch nominees. The occupations given also repeated the pattern among Irish assisted immigrants generally - thus of the 239 nominated in 1862, 83 were domestic servants and 109 were labourers.¹³⁸ The colonies were obviously regarded as providing a new life, and a life sufficiently rewarding for Irish immigrants to disregard the occasional pin-pricks of antagonism to them as newcomers, as ignorant or disloyal Irishmen, or as Catholics. The official limitations on Irish immigration, the public warnings that too many were not welcome, and the less overt discrimination by the concentration on gaining immigrants from England or Scotland¹³⁹ were offset by the word-of-mouth testimony by friends or relatives already in the colony. An Irishman or woman might emigrate alone, but rarely did this not result in the subsequent emigration of another member of the family or of the village. Thus Edward Travers, the emigrant of 1857, was soon followed by one brother, Joseph, and by brothers

137. Register, April 18, 1859.

138. Parliamentary Papers, 1862, Vol. 3, no. 95.

139. In 1865 there was only one selecting agent in Ireland, as compared with three in Scotland and sixteen in England. (Parliamentary Papers, 1866-7, Vol. 2, no. 76).

John (1874) and Denis (1886), and by members of the next generation (children of Mary Travers, Edward's sister, who had remained in Ireland and married Edward Delany in 1880) in the early years of the twentieth century. Roger Minogue, a farmer at Kenton Valley and later Lobethal, was induced to emigrate in 1864 by his brother-in-law, Edmond Stanley, who had married Roger's sister, a single female emigrant from Ireland some years previously.¹⁴⁰ Mary Comerford, another of the single female emigrants of 1855, who arrived from county Kilkenny in the Grand Trianon, was later followed by her brothers, John and Michael.¹⁴¹ The other unrecorded instances must be numerous.¹⁴²

Such activity on behalf of fellow countrymen by Irish colonists was not sufficient to maintain the proportion of Irish-born in the colonial population, which fell from 10% in 1861 to 7.7% in 1871. In a colony with so small a complement of Irish in the population, the role of these Irish must be primarily as colonists, rather than as a national group willing and capable of maintaining their identity as Irishmen. An editorial of the Register prompted by St. Patrick's day in 1862 showed how far the Irish of the colony were considered to have come on this road, and what

140. A. Travers, op. cit., p. 40; J. Monfries, op. cit., p. 109.

141. 'Aherns of Yankallila', information by Father Morrison gathered from descendants in 'Dawn of Catholicism', Vol. I, pp. 39-40, Adelaide A.A.

142. When the nominations opened for 1862, for example, all the applicants at the Gawler office were Irish. (Register, February 22, 1862). Even in the nominations, however, the Irish were kept to their 'fair proportion'. The excess number of Irish nominees thus came rather from the laxity of the English and Scotch in fully utilising their rights of nomination - to February 19, 1862, certificates had been issued to $184\frac{1}{2}$ Irish statute adults, $11\frac{1}{2}$ English, $4\frac{1}{2}$ Scotch and 4 Welsh.

further was expected of them -

St. Patrick's day in Adelaide has also had its characteristic celebrations heretofore, the sons of the sod having dined and fought after dinner with as hearty goodwill as if their potteen were brewed in bogs or fastnesses, where law and order were unknown, and kippeens grew on the Park Lands, as they never did grow except in the forest of shillelah. We have fallen, however, on altered times, and have adopted humdrum habits. Pat in Adelaide seldom breaks the law or a friend's head; he has lost half his fun, but he has doubled his industry. He never drags an apology for a coat along the ground in the hope of getting a decent excuse to resent an invited indignity with a blow from his blackthorn; but he generally manages to have a good coat and the good sense to take care of it. He is an indifferent dancer; but he has taken a fancy to digging and other laborious pursuits, and his present 'full and plenty' contrasts not unfavourably with the 'hunger and ease' of the land he left behind him. When Pat in Adelaide, who has manfully bettered his condition by the only way in which a poor man can do it effectually, by steady and industrious conduct, turns his attention to a matter that ought to be dear to every Irishman's heart - the education of his children - he will be a still more happy subject and a far more useful citizen. Uneducated as he is, the colony has no cause to be ashamed of him; educated, his children will become a people of whom any country may be proud. 143

Ironically, education was the first issue to elicit concerted action by the Irish colonists, and then the response was in their religious, rather than their national, corporate identity; nor did it win them the approval of the wider community or further acceptance by South Australian society.

CHAPTER V

NEW SOUTH WALES, VICTORIA AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 1860-1880

The period 1860-1880 was one of relative calm and stability in the three colonies, compared with the upheavals of the previous decade and the financial boom and feverish speculation of the eighties. It was a period when colonists rather than immigrants dominated the scene: not yet the era of the native-born, but a time when the immigrants of the forties and fifties began to act in their capacity as permanent residents of the colonies, when it was they who came into control of the finances and destiny of their adopted land, and even determined the introduction of other members of the United Kingdom. The men who guided the colonies through this period had been moulded by their experiences and environment in the Old World, and were not yet 'Australians', but their position in colonial society was gained by their stance on colonial issues, and they were to be judged on their contribution to their new country.

The part played by Irishmen in this determination of colonial fortunes varied from one colony to another. Irish immigrants of the forties gained and held a firm footing in the legal, financial, economic and social life of Victoria, and two particular arrivals from Ireland continued to wield the political power they had gained after the granting of self-government in 1856. New South Wales lost the apparent Irish dominance of politics that had been the province of Roger Therry under the governorship of Sir Richard Bourke in the 1830's. J. H. Plunkett never gained the leadership of any political faction and always denied any role as a specifically Irish representative, and the most successful Irish-born politician, James Martin, totally rejected any obligation to his countrymen. The New South Wales coterie of Irish solicitors and lawyers, to which new arrivals from

Ireland were introduced by letter of recommendation,¹ was not reinforced by the immigration of the gold rush decade that contributed to the Irish legal establishment in Victoria. In South Australia, the early political, social and economic ascendancy of a number of pioneer Irish Protestant colonists had been lost by the sixties; nor did the Irish immigrants of the fifties, most of whom were Catholics, supply any leadership in their place.

The declining proportion of the Irish in the colonial population generally created a threat to the distinct identity of the mass of Irish colonists, in spite of the continuing acquisitions to their number by immigration. This was not immediately recognised, as the majority of the new immigrants were adults, while the colonial-born population that was undermining the immigrant dominance was yet largely composed of children. For a while, in fact, the new waves of immigration aided a sense of belonging and of shared interests among the earlier arrivals, by providing a common focus of hostility for unemployment and the erosion of wages. By 1870, however, the trend towards the limitation or suspension of assisted immigration was clear, and there were regulations in each of the colonies specifically designed to prevent any massive reinforcement of the Irish population. In this situation, it became obvious that accommodation within existing colonial society must be sought, and that some modification of the Irish self-image would be necessary, if the Irish immigrants were to flourish in a country whose values and institutions continued to be dominated by its English origins.

1. A. E. Stephens, 'The diary of Thomas Callaghan, B.A., District Court Judge in New South Wales', Royal Australian Historical Society, Journal and Proceedings, 1948, vol. 34, pp. 267-8, 270-1.

Two contradictory but, to some extent, co-existent images developed. The stereotype drawn of the Irish in the early forties, when most Irish immigrants were uneducated, unskilled, and often destitute, had never been substantially altered by the economic success of many immigrants or the changing character of Irish immigration. It was reinforced by the increasing urbanisation in the colonies from the sixties, the permanent settlement of at least half of the Irish population in the cities despite new land selection opportunities, and the subsequent participation of these Irish colonists in political, labour and union issues. The other image was that fostered by the Church, the Catholic press, and Irish and Catholic spokesmen in each of the colonies. It presented the independent Irish Catholic farmer as the typical, successful Irish immigrant, loyal to his faith and his country, but dedicated to his own and his family's future in Australia, resolved to live in harmony with fellow colonists of all races and creeds and to preserve his own civil and religious liberty and theirs. It was not an entirely false picture, but it was at best a partial one. The Church was saved from the danger that it might obscure the view of urban reality by a political issue whose resolution devolved upon a counting of heads. After the preoccupation of the fifties with internal problems of finances, personnel and credibility, the Church returned to politics over the education issue. Only in Victoria were there sufficient Irish in the rural districts to influence elections, and the Irish population in the country electorates was decreasing rapidly. The Church had to recognise that the urban Catholic populations were its strength on this issue. In a long battle to claim the first loyalties of colonial Catholics, the Church

entered into other areas affecting the lives and standing of their people in Australia. The national loyalty of Irish Catholics which had often been regarded as a hindrance to the full acceptance of the Catholic Church in Australia, was ultimately harnessed to the cause of Catholic civil and religious equality. The Church entered into the labour organisations that attracted so many urban Irish and Catholics by the promise of improved wages, conditions and influence. These moves, together with the ever more aggressive claim of the Roman Catholic Church to 'truth' and to a distinct role in the development of world thought and society, ensured the future of the Church in Australia. The Irish national sentiment that lingered long after the native-born Irish population had dwindled to numerical insignificance was accommodated by the Church, and only rarely after 1880 did Irish nationalism per se distinguish the interests and values of Irish colonists and their descendants from those of their fellow colonists.

This Irish identification with the Australian Catholic Church did not involve an immediate, total acceptance of 'Roman' Catholicism, as some historians have alleged.² Indeed, as has been shown, the retention of a peculiarly Irish and independent form of Catholicism by Irish immigrants was a continuing cause for complaint by some members of the Australian Hierarchy. The response of colonial Catholics to the struggle of the Pope against the forces of nationalism in Italy from 1859 illustrates the limitations of their Rome-orientation. The interest of the Catholic press (at that time represented solely by the Sydney Freeman's Journal) centred on the military exploits of the Irish brigade, which had been

2. John Malony, The Roman Mould of the Australian Catholic Church, argues that hostility to the Irish came to be personified by colonial vilification of Pope Pius. (p. 61).

recruited in Ireland to fight with the Papal army against the nationalists. There was no attempt, or even recommendation, to raise a parallel force among the Irish Catholics in the colonies. Even amongst Irishmen in Rome itself there were reservations as to the justice of the Papal cause. Bishop Hynes, uncle of Bishop Goold of Melbourne and Rome-trained in the best Irish tradition, alleged that many of those recruited had been under the impression that they were 'going to fight the English'. He was disturbed that an Irish contingent had been 'so unfortunately raised for a hopeless impolitic and illiberal enterprise'. This opinion was shared by many of the educated of Ireland, including some of the clergy. Most of the funds for the expedition were supplied by a small number of wealthy English Catholics, and the troops recruited were often attracted by the wages offered rather than by the cause of the Pope. They met with little respect from the Papal army, being used as an expendable front line at the battles of Spoleto and Ancona, though their losses in such battles only enhanced their reputation for valour among their far-flung countrymen.³

The Freeman's Journal supported the Papal cause in this war, following the line that this was a struggle against the forces of anti-Christ.⁴ Controversy arose in the colonies rather over the criticisms published by the Freeman's Journal of the tardiness of the Australian Hierarchy in forwarding a message of sympathy and support to the Pope. The reasons for this delay were never made clear, but the stand taken by the paper brought

3. Bishop J. T. Hynes to his nephew, Bishop Goold of Melbourne, October 5, 1860. Hynes letters, Melbourne Archdiocesan Archives. I am indebted to Professor Gough of the Adelaide University History department for this and other references to the Italian issues.
4. Freeman's Journal, April 13, 1861; November 19, 1862; December 17, 1862.

it into disrepute once again and resulted in the resignation of the editor, J. K. Heydon, suggesting that there was little support for any exaggerated pro-Rome orientation.⁵ The Hierarchy did subsequently send a message of sympathy and the meeting in Sydney of July 19, 1860, to raise funds for the Pope's defence, attracted an attendance of 1,000 and contributions totalling £455. Significantly, the Papal cause had to compete with collections for St. John's college (to be built in connection with the University of Sydney) and the Donegal Relief fund for dispossessed peasant farmers.⁶ Future collections were similarly affected by the counter-claims of local and Irish appeals: in 1879, for example, Bishop Reynolds of Adelaide wrote in confidence to his Vicar-General that he intended to use that year's collection of Peter's Pence to pay the passage to Adelaide of six sorely-needed priests.⁷ The ultimate authority of the Pope was conceded by Hierarchy and laity alike, but the immediate needs of the Australian mission and the pressing misery of Ireland's situation often took precedence over the obligation to support the distant and alien Father of the Church.

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5. Heydon's notice of resignation appeared in the Freeman's Journal of June 2, 1860. It should be remembered that these moves against the Papal authority in Italy followed close upon controversy within the Church in Australia during which the Freeman's Journal had appealed to Rome as the supreme arbiter in its quarrel with the colonial Hierarchy. Possibly the agitation by Heydon on Pope Pius' behalf was thus influenced by the desire to prove his loyalty to the highest Catholic authority, as well as to reveal the Australian Hierarchy as once again lax in its organisation of the laity and its activity for the advancement of the Church.
 6. Report of this meeting in Freeman's Journal, July 21, 1860. The two causes of the Donegal Relief fund and the St. John's College collection had between them already raised £26,000. (Freeman's Journal, July 11, 1860).
 7. Bishop Reynolds to Monsignor Byrne, November 16, 1879. Adelaide A.A.

Thus the initial impact of the events in Italy from 1859 was to reinforce Irish national sentiment in the colony. In addition to the appeal of the Irish Brigade, Irish colonists could argue that England's support for the Italian national cause made her opposition to a parallel movement in Ireland indefensible and hypocritical. Early in 1863, the Freeman's Journal supported the possibility of an Irish revolution, arguing that England had just supported such a revolution in Italy, and must now expect their own tyranny in Ireland to be challenged.⁸ The Irish National movement founded in Ireland the following year was supported in New South Wales amid considerable expression of anti-English sentiment, provoked by English interference in the Italian wars.⁹ A decade later, however, the loyalties of many Irish colonists had been drawn into the local struggles of the Church, and identification with Rome was correspondingly stronger. During the Vatican Council of 1869-70, the Australian Catholic bishops were numbered among the least independent of the Pope's supporters, and no criticism of this stand was forthcoming from the Catholic laity. At that time, the Church was under severe pressure over the education issue, and was possibly seeking strength for the coming struggle in a statement of Catholic unity and authority. Subsequently in the education campaign, the Australian Hierarchy was to draw upon the Irish heritage of suffering and oppression in order to unite the ranks of the laity.¹⁰ This identification was made easier

8. Freeman's Journal, January 17, 1863.

9. Ibid., April 23 and May 7, 1864.

10. 'We hoped that we had escaped from all forms of tyranny and persecution by coming so far away - where we were told that all were equal and that all were free ... But all this seems to be a vain illusion - a dream from which we are to be aroused by about the most ingeniously devised piece of scientific persecution that has been invented in modern times. The end of the more brutal form of persecution and ^{of} the more cultivated is one - it is to destroy our holy religion.' Speech of Vaughan at Balmain, November 9, 1879, in R. B. Vaughan, Pastorals and Speeches on Education, pp. 27-8. See also comment in R. Fogarty, Catholic Education in Australia, vol. 2, p. 258.

because of the stand taken by England against the Church in Italy, as well as by the firm position taken by the Irish Catholic Hierarchy against national education after 1859. This renewed accommodation of Irish patriotism within the Church could not, however, perpetuate the Irish character, as a distinct identity, in the face of a rapid decline in the Irish colonial population. The ultimate result of the attacks on the integrity of the Catholic Church by English protestants begun in Italy in 1859 and continued in Australia in the long education campaign, was to bring the Irish Catholics of the colonies further into the universal Roman Catholic mould. This new identification was made the more rapidly and completely in response to hardening, non-Irish-colonial stereotyping of the Irish as Catholics, coupled with the refusal of Irish Protestants to claim any leadership of fellow Irishmen in Australia. The Irish and Irish-Australians did not discard their national identity, but after 1880 this came to be increasingly implicit in their religious affiliation, rather than a distinct and separate loyalty.

The first link with Ireland to be broken in the transition from Irish Catholic to Roman Catholic colonist was that of immigration. The readiness of Irish immigrants to take advantage of immigration regulations enabling them to gain assisted passages for friends and relatives, prior to 1860, has already been shown. Many more Irish were aided to emigrate between 1860 and 1880 by the agency of friends in the colonies, and this means of introduction protected them against the increasing general

hostility to assisted immigration in its detrimental effects on employment and conditions.¹¹ Nomination regulations were in force in New South Wales between 1860 and 1867, allowing the introduction of immigrants, subject to age and occupation qualifications, on payment of about one-third of their passage by friends in the colony.¹² During the seven years operation of this system, 21,052 immigrants were introduced, of whom 15,205 were Irish and 12,898 Catholic.¹³ The same system, at the same rates of contribution, operated in Victoria from July 1861, and accounted for the introduction of 52,000 immigrants between 1861 and 1872.¹⁴ The Irish disproportion in the nominated immigration was, however, cancelled out by the efforts of the Emigration Commissioners to balance it against the selected immigration. Thus, in 1862 when the Irish were 75% of the nominated immigrants, the Commissioners 'endeavoured to adjust the proportions as far as lay in our power by selecting only 48 candidates from Ireland, in addition to the 320 nominated in the colony'¹⁵ with the result that the Irish finally constituted only 25% of the total assisted immigration for that year. Similarly, the inauguration in 1862 of a system of passage warrants in South Australia was speedily taken up by the Irish colonists

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11. It was generally agreed that nominated immigrants were more easily absorbed into the labour market and more evenly distributed upon arrival. See T. A. Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, vol. 2, p. 920; K. Bray, 'Government-sponsored immigration into South Australia 1872-1886', B.A. thesis, Adelaide University, 1960, p. 169.
 12. Initially £7 for a male aged 12-40 and £3 for women in the same age range; lower for children (£3.10.0 for males, £2.10.0 for females) and higher for those over 40.
 13. Calculations from New South Wales Parliamentary Papers. J.D. Lang calculated that 16,623 Irish and 12,219 Catholics arrived over the period 1860-1870 (An Historical and Statistical Account of New South Wales, vol. 2, p. 143).
 14. Victorian Parliamentary Papers, Statistical tables for 1861 to 1872.
 15. Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1862-3, vol. 4 no. 58.

there,¹⁶ and the further readiness of this section of the population to utilise the nomination regulations renewed in August, 1876 was one factor in the decision of the Legislature to end this system in April, 1879 - even though, as in Victoria, the proportion of Irish in the total assisted immigration was artificially limited by the parallel selection process, and did not rise above 20% over this period.

There were, nevertheless, other factors operating against assisted immigration during these years, and the desire of Irish colonists to aid particular countrymen to emigrate did not extend into a general welcome to all immigrants. The support of Catholics for the anti-immigration Land Convention in Victoria has been referred to in chapter 3. In 1861, Edward Cohen was hissed for his advocacy of assisted immigration at an election meeting in East Melbourne, a working class constituency with an Irish component (23.72%) well above the colonial average.¹⁷ In New South Wales, the Irish population had to contend against attacks made on Irish assisted immigration specifically, as that made by Henry Parkes in 1869, and against the institutionalisation of such sentiments in the 1870 immigration regulations, which instructed the newly-appointed Agent General in London to ensure the 'correct proportions' of each nationality in the immigrants granted assisted passage. This apparent discrimination hindered

16. Register, November 21, 1862.

17. Argus, July 16, 1861.

concurrence by the Irish colonists in any restrictions on assisted immigration.¹⁸ Even the Freeman's Journal agreed in 1871, however, that a wholesale revival of assistance was unnecessary, as it would place too great a strain on the market for unskilled labourers.¹⁹ Instead, it recommended the continuation of the nomination system, as best aiding the distribution of new arrivals and at least likely to depress the labour market. In South Australia, the Political Association formed in 1859 to agitate against assisted immigration proved most popular in Kapunda, Burra, Clare and among the working men of Adelaide - all areas in which the Irish had an above-average representation. The revived association of the same name, whose members were again mainly artisans, favoured nominated immigration in a resolution of 1877. This was the only system of immigration assistance under which the Irish had been able to share in the benefits to any considerable extent, and it had been early advocated by the Hierarchy, so there was little conflict for the colonial Irishman between his national-religious obligations and his individual economic interests. In February, 1872, the Adelaide Catholic organ, the Irish Harp, argued that 'the importation of labour of any kind is not one of the legitimate functions of Government' and that immigrants should come at their own expense or that of 'those who want them'²⁰ - an indication of the Harp's

18. The Irish immigrants were very much aware of the efforts being made to restrict their entry into the colonies. John Bermingham, an emigrant from Kildare to N.S.W. in 1864, wrote later from Otago, New Zealand '... wages is coming down very fast for there is a constant flow of Emigration to New Zealand, all poor miserable Scotch coming out to their Scotch friends so that no Irish need apply'. John Bermingham to his parents, November 22, 1870. Bermingham letters, privately loaned by Christopher Bermingham of county Kildare.

19. Freeman's Journal, July 1, 1871.

20. Irish Harp, February 3 and 28, 1872.

championship of a denomination that was largely composed of working men, whether in the towns or agricultural labourers, and that had received little benefit from the general schemes of immigration assistance.

The eagerness with which the Irish as a community utilised immigration assistance schemes on behalf of countrymen has, in fact, led observers into the error of comparing their attitudes with those of the Irish in America, and of assuming a more total commitment to aid those left in Ireland than actually prevailed. Arnold Schrier has estimated that 40% of the remittances sent to the United Kingdom (mainly Ireland) from America between 1848 and 1887 were in the form of pre-paid passages.²¹ This implies that the other 60% could have been used to sustain families in Ireland. There is little evidence of this practice by Irish emigrants to Australia.²² Rather, the attitude prevailed that emigration was the only solution to personal poverty, as was expressed by Patrick Danaher to his patron, Lord Monteagle, in 1853

I am glad to hear that the American as well as the Australian immigrants are taking away as much as they can of their friends from a land which refuses them a livelyhood (sic).²³

Letters of other immigrants show that they felt at least the obligation to aid those left in Ireland, but that any money sent was an initial gesture.

21. Arnold Schrier, Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900, p. 109.

22. The General Reports of the Emigration commissioners detailed remittances sent from North America to the United Kingdom, but made no reference to any comparable situation in Australia.

23. Patrick Danaher to Lord Monteagle, Geelong, February 2, 1853. Monteagle Papers, National Library of Ireland.

Satisfaction with the life and wages found in the colonies prompted encouragement of other members of the family to emigrate. Ann and Thomas Quilty wrote to their daughter Ellen from Tumut in 1850 that they sent now a hard-won £10, but that they would find it impossible in future to send more. She must therefore come out to New South Wales as soon as possible, where her brothers and sisters were flourishing (but apparently would not contribute to maintain Ellen in Ireland).²⁴ Peter R. of New South Wales sent his mother £7 soon after his arrival from Ireland, but only £2 was for herself - the rest was to outfit 'the child' for the voyage to join him in the colony.²⁵ Among those who sent money to Ireland, young women appear to have been predominant, as in America. But most women did not stay single for long in the colonies, and marriage brought with it new demands on the earnings of such women, or removed them from the labour market altogether. Ellen and Mary Sullivan, domestic servants at Geelong, were able to send £10 to their parents shortly after their arrival in the colony, but Catherine Martin of Melbourne was able to give only £1 to her mother, because of the expenses entailed by the recent illness of her husband.²⁶ In 1852, a correspondent to the Freeman's Journal, who signed himself 'A Tipperary Man', berated the Irish of New South Wales for their failure to send remittances to Ireland, and pointed to one practical

24. Ann Quilty to Ellen Quilty, October 15, 1850. Monteagle Papers.

25. Caroline Chisholm, Emigration and Transportation Relatively Considered, appendix p. 45.

26. Ellen and Mary Sullivan to their mother, Geelong, October 7, 1852; Catherine Martin to her mother, Melbourne, January 15, 1851. Monteagle Papers.

difficulty in this, that it was not possible to get bank notes payable in London or Dublin for sums under £5.²⁷ Another factor of later years, particularly the sixties, was the apparent improvement in the condition of the Irish peasant: by 1862, the average weekly wage of agricultural labourers in Ireland had risen to 7/2d, compared with 4/10d in 1850, and this was fairly standard throughout the four provinces.²⁸ At the same time, all classes of workers in the colonies were obliged to accept wage levels considerably below those of the gold rush decade. Some immigrants appear to have waited until they were established before sending aid or passage assistance to relatives at home. John Bermingham, for example, arrived in New South Wales in 1864, but did not send for his brother Michael until 1878. He then also paid for the passage certificate of his widowed sister's daughter, and promised his parents at least half of that year's rental on their farm in Clare.²⁹ Obligations were usually terminated more rapidly than this, however, either by the encouragement to relatives to join them in Australia or by a firm communication that conditions in the colonies were not as prosperous as had been believed, and that the high cost of living and the support of a family demanded all one's wages.³⁰ The

27. Freeman's Journal, February 12, 1853.

28. Schrier, op. cit., p. 165, table 14.

29. Two undated letters of John Bermingham from Casino Post office, Sandy Creek, Richmond River. The date of 1878 is calculated from comments in other dated letters and from a letter of John's niece, Mary Bermingham, dated January 28, 1879. Bermingham letters.

30. John Bermingham's gestures on behalf of his family were not typical even of that family. In a letter of April 27, 1884, John complained of the brother whom he had aided to emigrate 'When I was going to write last July I wrote over to Mick saying let me have 2 or 3 pounds, I want to send some money home to my poor mother. Mick wrote me an answer very soon telling me a lot of things but saying that he would not.' Bermingham letters.

areas in the colonies which retained a high proportion of Irish through chain migration were primarily farming districts, where the demand of farmers for labour or the availability of land ensured that a patriotic gesture would also be of practical benefit to both the emigrant and his sponsor. 31

The social progress of the Irish most discernible between 1860 and 1880 was that of the immigrants of the forties and fifties, particularly those already established in the country districts. The Land Acts passed in each of the colonies during these years prevented some of the new arrivals from entering the labour markets of the city and towns, but were more commonly used by the earlier arrivals, the agricultural and pastoral labourers and small farmers, to gain new or better holdings. The future of the majority of the Irish was as an urban working class. Many of the new immigrants still came in search of land (though they were increasingly dissuaded in their expectations of the easy availability of land by friends in the colonies), and they brought to the political life of the colonies their often misguided preconceptions about Australia, as well as the fears and beliefs and occasionally the methods taught by their Irish experience. Like their compatriots in the earlier self-government and land issues, however, these immigrants soon directed their efforts and their hopes by the realities of the Australian situation.

Because of the implementation of land sale in South Australia from its inception, there was little conflict there between squatter and selector.

31. For evidence of this in relation to particular areas, see D. R. Crawford, 'The Irish at Killarney and Koroit', B.A. (Hons) thesis, Monash University 1969, pp. 8-9, 39; P. McCaughey, Samuel McCaughey, a Biography, p. 49 (re the Riverina); M. Durack, Kings in Grass Castles, (re Goulburn and Yass); and the story of the Travers and the Dempseys in the northern districts of South Australia.

Wheat had been established as the basic staple as early as 1842. Before 1869, farm units averaged 80 acres, and the Wakefield principle of concentration of settlement had been largely maintained.³² By the late sixties, however, the disadvantages of small holdings and single crops had become obvious. This, together with a feared loss of farming population to the new and more attractive land holding systems of Victoria and New South Wales, caused agitation for land reform in the colony and paved the way for the 1869 Act, by which up to 640 acres of land could be selected after survey in proclaimed areas, for the first time on a credit plan and a 20% deposit on the total purchase price. Such selections had improvement and occupation conditions that militated against abuse by pastoralists, and enabled the trebling of the area under cultivation between 1870 and 1880, particularly following the even more favourable amendments adopted under the Waste Lands Amendment Act of 1872.³³

In New South Wales, there was little immediate rush for land under the provisions of the 1861 Act. It was rather the increasing profitability of wool in the seventies that roused land hunger in that colony. The clashes that developed between squatter and selector were not clear-cut divisions between pastoralist and farmer: rather, the selector fought for the right of the small grazier to partake in the wealth to be made from the sheep.³⁴ In 1872, the area under cultivation was still less than that of Victoria ten years earlier, and in 1881 was only 578,243 acres - less than one acre per head of population.³⁵ The physical qualities of New South Wales

32. D. W. Meinig, *On the Margins of the Good Earth*, p. 19, 25.

33. Coghlan, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 1003-7.

34. C. G. Karr, 'Political protest and general development in rural New South Wales 1865-1895'. Ph.D. thesis, University of New South Wales, 1969, p. 27.

35. *New South Wales Parliamentary Papers, 1889, vol. 3. Statistical Register for 1888.*

militated against the establishment of small farming communities comparable to those in Victoria or South Australia, and sheep farming was constantly growing and required scattered settlement. Most of the land alienated under the Robertson Act went to pastoralists. Nevertheless, an additional 21,000 men had been settled on the land by 1879, and the area under cultivation had doubled.³⁶ What was negligible in terms of total land sales represented almost one-fifth of the total male population over 21 years on the land. The squatters who remained in control of large areas were required to make at least a more substantial contribution to the colonial revenue for their land than prior to the 1861 Act.

The history of the land acts in Victoria was a similar story of failure and abuse in the face of squatter power. Alienation of land far exceeded the expansion of the area under cultivation, and between 1865 and 1870 the very ease of selection militated against the settlement of even the bona fide selectors in one place. Again, however, there were some positive results. The number of holdings and the area of these more than doubled between 1863 and 1872, and the land under cultivation rose from 465,430 to 937,220 acres.³⁷ Though many selections were subsequently resigned or reverted to the Crown for failure to fulfil selection conditions, there were in 1870 a total of 30,214 holdings (excluding pastoral leases), which was 12,000 more than prior to the 1865 Grant Amending Act.³⁸ Under the further amending act of December 1878, 2,223 new selectors applied for 518,980 acres in the four months from January 1 to May 1, 1879.³⁹ Under the

36. B. Fitzpatrick, *The British Empire in Australia*, pp. 137-40.

37. Coghlan, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 978.

38. Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

39. *Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1879-1880*, vol. 3 no. 73, p. iii.

provisions of every act there was extensive dummyming and false application: nevertheless, between the ~~cen~~censuses of 1871 and 1881, the number of the population engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits doubled⁴⁰ and this represented a considerable increase in the number of independent farmers as well as in the number of pastoral workers employed on expanded sheep stations.⁴¹

It is impossible to estimate exactly how well the Irish in each of the colonies were represented among those who became independent farmers and landowners, and the degree of their success varied from one colony to another. Until the Strangways Act was passed in 1869, land could not be bought on credit in South Australia, and under regulations passed in 1857 it was sold at auction, which acted to the disadvantage of those with limited capital. Many returned diggers from the Victorian fields had sought land from 1852, which increased the price of land generally and made economic holdings harder to obtain for those arriving later in the fifties, as most of the Irish had.⁴² There were a few other possibilities for those unable to purchase land outright. The South Australian Company leased land in a number of districts, as did a number of individual large landowners - the Catholic land agent and Member of the House of Assembly,

40. 65,056 in 1871 compared with 124,202 in 1881.

41. Many selectors frequently sought seasonal work as shearers and general labourers to supplement their income (M. Kiddle, Men of Yesterday, p. 403), but such men probably still returned themselves as 'farmers' at the census.

42. In 1864, more than 70% of the settled area of South Australia was taken up by 80 acre sections. In 1853, the number of blocks surveyed doubled that of the previous year, and the figure was almost as high in 1854. Two thirds of the blocks surveyed in 1853 had been under 80 acres. After 1854, the cost of 80 acre blocks had risen so high as to make subdivision of existing blocks (in the high rainfall areas) a profitable practice. Information and figures from Geography department, University of Adelaide.

Edward McEllister, was one of these. As has been seen, however, no great number of Irish took advantage of the South Australian Company's terms in the Gumeracha district, preferring the freehold farming districts of Willunga and Mt. Barker.⁴³ Even though it is likely that Catholic landlords were partial to Catholic tenants, the number of such large landowners was limited in South Australia, and the number of tenants on the land of any single owner was necessarily restricted.⁴⁴ Edward McEllister was accused by John Baker in 1857 of having used for his own purposes the immigrant nomination rights that accrued to Baker by his purchase of land to the value of £2,000.⁴⁵ It is likely that the immigrants thus introduced by McEllister were countrymen and co-religionists, for McEllister was later praised by the Catholic newspaper for his cooperation with Father Ryan in aiding the introduction of Catholics from Ireland.⁴⁶ Merely aiding such immigration did not, however, ensure the settlement of new arrivals as farmers or even labourers. When McEllister opposed the revival of free immigration in 1859, pointing out that many men already hung about Hindley Street for want of employment, he was taunted by John Dunn (Baker's successor as Member for Mt. Barker) with having himself been responsible for the introduction of many of 'that class'.⁴⁷

43. See chapter 4, pp. 227-8.

44. G. L. Buxton, 'South Australian Land Acts 1869-1885', B.A.thesis, University of Adelaide, 1961, p. 3.

45. Adelaide Times, September 10, 1857. The land purchase regulations allowed the nomination of two immigrants for assisted passage for every purchase of 80 acres made in the colony. The regulations for such immigrants were less stringent than those for selected immigrants.

46. Southern Cross and South Australian Catholic Herald, July 20, 1868.

47. South Australian Parliamentary Debates, June 10, 1859, p. 192.

In spite of the general concentration of settlement in South Australia, and of particular instances of chain migration in certain districts, there was no evidence of the development of Irish farming enclaves comparable to those of the German immigrants in the Adelaide Hills or Barossa Valley and the Irish in the Western district of Victoria. Contemporary commentaries do not support the idea that most Irish in South Australia were farmers: even the Catholic newspaper was ready to confess the menial condition of the local Catholic laity.⁴⁸ There is no doubt, however, that many Irish were among those who joined the dispersion north following the declaration of new Hundreds after the 1869 Act and the extension of settlement and of the wheat-farming frontier beyond Goyder's line after 1872.⁴⁹ The main reason for this was simply financial - the new Acts allowed the spread of payment for land selected over five years, with 20% of the total cost as deposit. The readiness with which land was taken up under the new provisions indicates the existence of a previously unappeased land hunger. By this time, however, the flow of Irish immigrants into South Australia had virtually ceased: those Irish taking up new land in the north were largely

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48. The Southern Cross referred to 'Catholic prospects' in the colony on August 20, 1868, with the comment that 'our Catholic community is not a highly educated nor an influential one' and reiterated on November 20, 1868 that 'the Catholic Church in South Australia cannot boast of either wealth or position. We have few technically "leading men" and we don't in any remarkable degree influence the political or social world here'.
49. Meinig, op. cit., p. 47, mentions that 'a fine Roman Catholic chapel' was one of the first buildings in the new northern town of Georgetown. In 1871, three Sisters of the recently founded colonial Order of the Sisters of St. Joseph were sent to Port Augusta, where there were already a good number of Catholics (Register, May 22, 1871. At the 1881 census, the Irish population of the northern counties, Victoria and Frome, was higher in proportion to total population than the average colonial Irish representation (7.5% and 7.4% compared with 6.5%), and in county Dalhousie, it was almost double (12.1%) and came close to equalling the total English-born population.

arrivals of the previous decades, particularly those who had been labourers in the farming districts and those who already held land but were seeking larger or more productive holdings for themselves or their sons. The Irish who moved north after 1869 were those from the closer northern counties - Gawler, Light, Stanley and Burra - where they had gone for the mines and farming from the forties.⁵⁰ The overall gains to the number of rural Irish were not great - almost half of the Irish colonists were concentrated in county Adelaide in 1881, as they had been twenty years before, and this represented further additions to the working class as the farming districts in county Adelaide were encroached upon by the commercial and manufacturing interests of the city.⁵¹

In New South Wales, assisted Irish immigration maintained its volume numerically until 1865, and represented 70% of the total assisted all throughout the decade.⁵² Thus, though the nucleus of the Irish population had been established before 1860, there was a continuing reinforcement, by new arrivals seeking better conditions, to the Irish colonists who wished to improve their situation. In contrast to South Australia, however,

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50. For a description of the response to the Strangways Act and following legislation, see Nancy Robinson, Change on Change; a history of the northern highlands of South Australia, pp. 93-104. For particular instances of Irish movement north, see 'The Dempsey family in South Australia', typescript, National Library of Ireland; Ambrose Travers, Travers Tales of Talk and Travel, p. 34ff; and Robinson, op. cit., pp. 108-112, 134-5.
51. For details of the occupations of the 1881 census, see South Australian Parliamentary Papers, 1883-1884, vol. 4 no. 74. The increased number of Irish in county Adelaide was more significant in that most of the increase was of males - Irish women had always been disproportionately large in Adelaide, but were much less so by 1881.
52. New South Wales Parliamentary Papers, 1889 vol. 3, gives Birthplaces and Religions of Assisted Immigrants, 1860-1888. Total Irish assisted were 15,205, compared with 4,396 English and 1,451 Scots.

there was no immediate rush to select land following the institution of land sale on credit in 1861. Many of the new arrivals went to swell the population of Sydney and the suburbs. In 1871, there were 12,533 Irish in the Sydney population of 74,423, representing a higher proportion than in the colonial population generally, and almost one-fifth of the total Irish number. The population of the suburbs of Sydney was increasing and was to double in the next decade 1871-1881, indicating the permanent settlement of many of these suburban dwellers as wage earners. By 1881, almost as many Irish lived in Sydney and suburbs as in the total rural population of the colony.⁵³

The pressures on Irish immigrants to remain in the city during this period were the same as those influencing arrivals of the forties and fifties - lack of capital, unwillingness to forgo the comfort derived from the company of fellow Irishmen, fear of the Australian 'bush', ignorance of the farming techniques most suitable to this new and strange environment - coupled with the general trend of the colonial economy to secondary industry and thus to urbanisation. These conditions existed in each of the three eastern colonies to some extent, but the situation in New South Wales was particularly influenced by the predominance of large-scale sheep farming. The selection Acts from 1861 increased the number of sheep-farmers rather than establishing communities of cultivators; the Irish moved into the interior as pastoral labourers and shearers, or as general

53. New South Wales Parliamentary Papers, 1882 vol. 3 no. 87. There were 239,944 Irish in Sydney and suburbs, 18,150 in the towns and villages, and 26,950 rural Irish. These represented respectively 10.8%, 8.5% and 8.6% of the total populations in these divisions.

labourers and tradesmen in the growing country centres. Though the total number of independent landowners doubled between 1862 and 1879, as intended by the Land Acts, it does not appear that the Irish contributed largely to this increase.

The number of Irish in rural areas in New South Wales in 1881 was less than in 1861 (26,950 compared with 31,005), even though the total Irish population had increased by almost 15,000.⁵⁴ Among the 26,950 rural Irish, more were women than was normal in the rural adult population. Of the 16,022 Irish men in the country, more appear to have been recent immigrants than was so in either Victoria or South Australia, and the influence of relatives in aiding them to emigrate and then in drawing them to the country was often vital. Samuel McCaughey, an emigrant from county Antrim in 1856, became the sole owner of a 42,000 acre freehold property in the Riverina in the early sixties. Conforming to the pattern of chain migration by which he himself had been aided to emigrate by his uncles, he sought to bring labourers for his property directly from Ireland, through the agency of his mother in county Antrim.⁵⁵ Thomas O'Dwyer, a Catholic emigrant from Ireland, made his Riverina selection in 1876 from Wallan, Victoria, where he had been settled for a number of years as a post and rail contractor. Thomas had vacillated for months about becoming a selector, but was encouraged to survey the situation in New South Wales by his brother, Michael, who had already selected there. Thomas eventually

54. The Irish population at the 1881 census was 69,192; in 1861 it was 54,829.

55. P. McCaughey, Samuel McCaughey, a biography, pp. 49-50.

selected for himself close to his brother's selection at Mulwala, and was later followed to the district by another brother, Joe, who worked with him in the fencing of the selection and the erection of a pine log house.⁵⁶ John Bermingham, an emigrant to New South Wales from Kildare in 1864, had worked on farms and stations for fifteen years, but in 1879 was finally enticed to select land for himself on the Richmond River. It would appear he did this on behalf of his brother, whom he had aided to emigrate with his family the year before by purchasing a passage warrant in the colony. It would seem from John's remarks that within his area there was considerable swapping of selections between friends, and that friends tended to select in close proximity to each other: in his letters to his parents in Ireland, John mentioned many local selectors whom his parents had known in Ireland, which suggests the operation of some sort of chain migration from Killeen.⁵⁷

In 1860 Father Newman, a Catholic priest in Sydney, had suggested to the Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes of the Metropolis that a thousand Sydney residents be encouraged to settle in the interior, after which

I have no doubt that emigration of some of the inhabitants of Sydney would follow; for in the first place on the part of newly arrived immigrants, it is timidity which prevents their going into the country, and secondly if these persons went into the country, settled and got on well, their friends and others in Sydney would hear of their success, and the force of their example would lead others to follow. ⁵⁸

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56. Thomas O'Dwyer, 'Diary of Thomas O'Dwyer, Wallan, 1876'. Manuscript copy in Latrobe Library - relevant entries are those for January 5, February 18-23, March 27, May 31-June 6, and September 14-30.
57. Bermingham letters, 1879-1884, some undated.
58. New South Wales Parliamentary Papers, 1859-60, vol. 4, p. 100.

Father Newman's first contention appears to have been valid with reference to the Irish colonists: however, 'the force of their example' does not appear to have had much influence on residents of Sydney who were not related to existing country dwellers. The first years on a selection were difficult - John Bermingham noted that his brother Michael 'will have to build his own home, put up his fences etc', and John himself continued to work for wages at shearing time and during sugar-cane harvest.⁵⁹ A selector's success was not assured even if he was willing to work, for the maximum selection of 640 acres was often too small, in low rainfall areas, to constitute a viable economic unit. The position of the small and part-time farmer was increasingly undermined by the pastoral interests, already well established when the first selection Acts were passed. This affected not only the new selectors but also the older tenant farmers - a group more numerous in New South Wales than in Victoria or South Australia because of the tradition of large land grants to individuals during the colony's years as a penal settlement. In the Riverina, for example, many Irish tenants found their small farms increasingly unprofitable but were unable to compete with the stock for more land. The sense of injustice felt by these farmers was evident from the prevalence of cattle stealing and 'impounding' in the district in the sixties and seventies, and from the considerable sympathy with Ned Kelly and other self-declared rebels against the power of the 'landlords'.⁶⁰ Similarly,

59. Bermingham letters, April 27, October 20, 1884, another undated.

60. G. L. Buxton, The Riverina 1861-1891, pp. 102, 138-42. Ned Kelly's activities were, of course, centred in Victoria, but the situation of the poor 'cocky' farmer was similar on both sides of the border.

in the Queanbeyan district there were many Irish among both bushrangers and police, but fewer on the land: small farmers everywhere were gravitating to the town centres, and the Irish who became prominent in the country districts were the business and professional men of the towns - Wagga Wagga, Queanbeyan and Yass particularly.⁶¹ There were Irish graziers and pastoralists, particularly along this same line of settlement south of Sydney to the Victorian border at Albury.⁶² These were, however, usually men who had arrived before 1860, and they flourished as individuals rather than as typical representatives of Irish success in the country districts.⁶³ The results of the land legislation of the sixties and seventies, though not as inadequate as some observers have suggested, meant little to the unsuccessful aspirant. As in Victoria and South Australia, the country residents had an advantage over other intending selectors, and the landowner was in a more favourable position than the

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61. For individual Irish successes in Wagga Wagga, see K. Swan, A History of Wagga Wagga, pp. 22, 58, 78, 97, 106-110, 127; in Queanbeyan, see E. Lea-Scarlett, Queanbeyan, District and People, pp. 34-5, 113-4.
62. For a description of the spread of settlement from Sydney, see T. M. Perry, Australia's First Frontier, and James Waldersee, 'Some aspects of Catholic society in New South Wales, 1788-1860', Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, Chapters 4 and 5.
63. These included John Cox, who had arrived in the thirties and become one of the most influential landowners in the Riverina; William McIntyre, who had arrived from county Tyrone in 1854 and selected land near Wagga Wagga in 1865, which he soon extended; and James Gormly, who ran the Wagga Wagga-Balranald coach service between 1858 and 1872 and then settled down to his extensive business and farming interests in the district. Swan, op. cit., pp. 78, 97; James Gormly, 'Reminiscences' (3 v. MS, Mitchell library). John Fitzgerald wrote to the Freeman's Journal from Yass in 1860 that there was a 'thorough Catholic population' in Yass and Tumut districts, but that the press in these areas was controlled by Protestants, and was being used to convert Catholics. (May 16, 1860).

agricultural labourer or tenant when land was sold at auction. Many recent arrivals must have been disappointed, and many Irish may have reacted with the same bitterness apparent in the situation described by an arrival from county Antrim in 1884.

... as regards the farming, I had a notion of going back to New England about February or March but there had been a land Bill past (sic) that is a great barrier to the settler. It is in favour of the squatter. There is a great many of them in power so they make the laws to suit themselves like the landlords of Ireland. ⁶⁴

In Victoria, too, the patterns of settlement fashioned in the early years of the colony influenced the response made to the land selection Acts of the sixties, but in Victoria this acted to the advantage of many of the Irish immigrants. Because of the early Irish entry into Victoria in large numbers (they constituted 27.75% of the population in 1846), there were a considerable number of Irish squatters and pastoralists, frequently powerful men as individuals and as Members of the colonial Parliament. By mid-1879, 1,502 runholders held millions of acres of colonial land, more than half with runs of 1,000 to 10,000 acres.⁶⁵ There were more Irish among these than was apparent in New South Wales, where the greatest opportunities for acquiring land had been in the years prior to large-scale Irish immigration. Many of the Victorian land owners had arrived in the forties, and taken up land as soon as they had gained some experience of the colonial system of landholding. James Lecky, a Presbyterian who arrived from Dublin in 1841, leased a run at Gardinia Creek in 1846, and bought much of it freehold when the area was opened

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64. John Milliken to his brother James, October 30, 1884. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, 'Material relating to Australia', copy in Latrobe library, Melbourne.
65. Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1879-1880, vol. 3 no. 73. 880 leaseholders had runs of 1,000 to 10,000 acres, 408 had runs of 640 to 1,000 acres.

for selection in 1862. Henry de Little arrived from Dublin in 1846, took up a pastoral property of 8,000 acres on the Wannan and purchased another property of 7,000 acres in the same area two years later. He prospered, and soon bought the 17,000 acre Caramut station and later Ledcourt, which he purchased jointly with his brother and brother-in-law in 1858. Samuel Baird, an emigrant from Strabane in 1849 with his sister, followed the lead of the brother who had preceded them to the colony in purchasing an interest in a number of properties, in New South Wales and Queensland as well as in Victoria. John Joseph Twomey, an emigrant from Cork in 1843, was in 1851 able to purchase Kolor, a pastoral property near Penshurst, added another 9,000 acres the following year and later the adjoining property, and made a considerable profit when he later subdivided this freehold property.⁶⁶ These men are only examples; they are not unique, nor are they typical. Of those mentioned, only Twomey can be identified with certainty as a Catholic (though he provides a delightful instance of a Catholic who conformed to some aspects of the Irish stereotype, with one son who bred and raced horses, and another sent to All Hallows, later to return to Australia to become a parish priest at Tumut, New South Wales). There were other Irish pastoralists, Catholic and Protestant, who arrived in the early years of colonial development and acquired huge runs in Victoria while it was still a part of New South Wales - Francis Murphy, Speaker of the Victorian Assembly and Member for Murray boroughs from 1856-1871, who held licence to 60,000 acres in the

66. A. Henderson, Early Pioneer Families of Victoria and Riverina, pp.113, 249-53, 269-71, 428-30.

Murray district; George Coghill, with 67,200 acres in Gippsland; Denis Egan, with the 'Howqua' run of 12,000 acres; or Henry Dwyer, S. P. Winter, and the Fitzgerald brothers, all with large estates in the Portland Bay district before the era of free selection.⁶⁷ Some of these landowners and licensees leased land and thus enabled other Irish immigrants to become tenant farmers: however, the main contribution of this group to their countrymen was in their representation of the level of prosperity that Irishmen could reach, the pride with which other Irishmen could point to their success, and the counter-example they provided to the frequent denigrators of the whole Irish race.

The more typical, and more lastingly influential, Victorian rural Irish were the small farmers. The early establishment of Irish farming communities in Victoria created a unique reinforcement of Irish identity in the colony, and also influenced land occupation as extended by the Selection Acts of the sixties. As in New South Wales, the Victorian statistics did not distinguish the nationalities of selectors, and it is impossible to exactly state the number of Irish taking up land after 1862. In the first rush to select after the Duffy Act, however, the largest number of applications came from the tradesmen and artisans of Hamilton, Camperdown, Warrnambool and Ballarat, and from the farmers and farm labourers of Hamilton, Belfast and Camperdown - districts which, at the 1861 census, had a large proportion of Irish residents. In many districts, including Ballarat and Camperdown, it was found that many of the applicants for selection were squatters or connected with them. In at least Belfast,

67. Victoria, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1853-4, vol. 2 no. C4.

however, Duffy learned that 'the land has to a great extent fallen into the hands of the class whom you most desired to get it, such as farmers, farm servants, artisans, shopkeepers and workmen in the towns and villages.⁶⁸ Of the 2,476 individual selectors who sought a total of almost one million acres during the first eight weeks of the operation of the Duffy Act, 737 were classed as farmers, farm labourers, gardeners, vinedressers, etc., and 728 were tradesmen, artisans and persons engaged in commerce. In the districts to the north and north-east, Kilmore, Benalla and Beechworth, and the older mining districts of Sandhurst and Castlemaine, there appears to have been little attempt to abuse the selection regulations, but in those districts there was also less activity in taking up land generally.⁶⁹ The general pattern seems to have been of bona-fide selection in those districts which were already established farming districts or adjacent to them, while there was widespread dummyming and false representation in areas where squatters had long held unchallenged dominancy or where the exceptional fertility of the area encouraged intense rivalry and speculation.

Many of the Irish who selected during this period were former farm labourers or men who had rented land, especially from the two large estates of Atkinson and Rutledge, together with others who had already bought small farms but wished to move to larger or more fertile selections. John Atchinson, who had farmed on the Rutledge survey for sixteen years after his arrival in Port Fairy from Derry in October 1843, took up a selection at Koroit immediately following the Duffy Act, and farmed there for the next 23 years. Michael Clancy, who had emigrated from county Clare to the

68. Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1862-1863, vol. 3 no. 17.

69. Ibid., p. 8, tables I and II.

Ballarat diggings in 1854 and subsequently rented a farm on the Fahram estate, first selected land at Kangaroo Flat in 1867 and later took up another selection near Wimmera, where he farmed from 1874 to 1885. James Clowry from Dublin came for the diggings in 1850, and prospered sufficiently on the Bendigo and Pettingil fields to buy land at Mortlake in 1858, but he too took advantage of the later selection provisions to take up new land at Garvoc in 1865. He contributed greatly to the foundation of the town of Garvoc, erecting a store, a hotel, a butcher's shop and a Catholic chapel, as well as acting as the district postmaster. James and Richard Wilson, from northern Ireland, farmed for six years on a rented 200 acres on the Rutledge survey, before enabled by the provisions of the Grant Amending Act to take up land at Dundonald on which to breed horses.⁷⁰ Other selectors of the sixties had no previous experience on the land in Australia, but were former tradesmen, labourers and diggers. With all their inadequacies and abuse, the selection provisions of the sixties and seventies allowed many colonists a new chance for independence and self-advancement. Father Courtenay, whose mission at Portland had been characterised by the poverty and unemployment of the population, was able to rejoice in 1866 that 'a good many farmers have taken up land in the Mansfield district, the majority of whom are Catholics'.⁷¹ Father Finn wrote to Bishop Goold the same year that 'the far districts of the Heidelberg mission are being peopled with Roman Catholics. Lilydale has progressed most wonderfully'.⁷² The Advocate welcomed the legislation passed in August 1869, improving upon

70. A. Sutherland, Victoria and its Metropolis: Past and Present, vol. 2 p. 29ff.

71. Father P.A. Courtenay to Vicar-General Fitzpatrick, May 15, 1866. Melbourne A.A.

72. Father William Mason Finn to Bishop Goold, April 17, 1866. Melbourne A.A.

the provisions of the 1865 Grant Amending Act by allowing all annual rental payments to be credited against total land price, with the comment that

For a long time past it has been a cause of satisfaction to Victorian Irishmen to see the old familiar names of their countrymen ... figuring largely in the lists of new settlers under the 12th and 42nd clauses of the Land Act of 1865, and the friends of Ireland have looked to the final passing of the Land Act now before Parliament as a means by which this kind of settlement would be most effectually promoted. 73

Occasionally the readiness of farmers to change selections was deplored, as in the Advocate's report of January 17, 1874 on the depopulation of Kilmore ('The land fever seems to have taken a determined hold of the better class of our farmers, who have gone and selected about Shepparton, on the Broken River, and other places, where they will, no doubt, soon take up their permanent abode, and the farms here will fall into the hands of a few people who will remain.')

Not all Irish labourers in the rural districts became farmers under the Selection provisions, nor possibly even desired it, but the movement of farmers into new areas provided a boost to rural employment and prosperity generally. A quite considerable number of Irish immigrants put their savings from years of labour into the establishment of hotels and businesses in the many new country towns.⁷⁴

73. Advocate, August 28, 1869.

74. Dominic Keating, for example, was a labourer for eleven years in Belfast before taking over the management of the Union Hotel there in 1877, becoming the owner in 1885; Michael Clancy gave up his farm on the Wimmera after eleven years, to build and manage a hotel in Dennington. (Sutherland, op. cit.). Irish businesses were particularly common in Ballarat and Kilmore, and Irishmen early gained a prominent place among colonial brewers and innkeepers. They were also prominent in the police force - see appendices to the Select Committee on the Police Force of 1862, in which lists there are many Irish names. (Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1862-1863, vol. 2 D no. 36). The Royal Commission called after the depredations of the Kelly gang also attested to large numbers of Irish in the force. (Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1881 vol. 3 no. 22). For the Irish involved, as police and as offenders, see Frank Clune, The Kelly Hunters, and Colin Cave (ed.), Ned Kelly, Man and Myth.

Even those who did not directly benefit from the Land Acts - the new immigrants and the Melbourne wage earners - shared in the general prosperity. The economy of Victoria enjoyed a period of unhindered development throughout the sixties, and unemployment appeared in Melbourne only from the mid-seventies.⁷⁵ The attraction for residents and new arrivals to remain in the city was therefore strong: of the 186 farms of forty to 320 acres offered in the Melbourne district under the Duffy Act, only eleven were selected in the first eight weeks of operation, none by Melbourne labourers.⁷⁶ This separation of the population into urban-rural components was partly influenced by the changing expectations of new immigrants, though it was ultimately determined by developments in the Australian economy.

Irish immigration into Victoria in the sixties, though constituting the largest national group, totalled only 13,000. In the seventies, the flow was negligible, and the Irish population decreased for the first time in the history of the colony. These immigrants left a country where the land question, though still central, was devoid of the desperate immediacy of the potato famine era, and often subordinate to considerations of Irish legislative independence. Arriving in Victoria after 1860, they had not experienced the zeal and the propaganda of the 'unlock the lands' campaign that preceded the first Selection Act. The land situation of Ireland

75. E. C. Fry, 'The condition of the urban wage-earning class in Australia in the 1880's', Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1956, p. 27.

76. Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1862-1863, vol. 3 no. 17, p. 4.

itself had been changing all through the fifties, with a move away from small subsistence plots, and to farm consolidation and pasture rather than exhaustive tillage.⁷⁷ Letters from Irish colonists began to suggest to relatives in Ireland that those with their own farms should not emigrate, though those with a future only as labourers would earn a superior living in Australia. Even those reports that were positive reflected only a particular time and place, and conditions could change in the year or more that might elapse between the determination to emigrate and arrival in the chosen colony. The letters of Michael Normile from New South Wales between 1854 and 1869, of John Bermingham from New Zealand and the Clarence River between 1870 and 1884, and of Phillip Mahoney from Melbourne, 1881-1882, clearly illustrate the narrow and personal reports of the colonies that most relatives in Ireland were receiving. On April 1, 1855, Michael advised 'A man having a comfortable living at home with his family, convenient to chapel and a good bed to lye on I would advise him to stop there', but in the same letter he offered the enticement 'you will get land here for as much as you like from 1000 acre down to one acre', and the following year he commented 'This place is not like Derry, when you buy a piece of ground its yours and yours after.' John Bermingham's letters give a constantly changing picture of the Australian situation, with regular comments that things weren't as good as before, but generally favourable comparisons with Ireland. Phillip Mahoney, an emigrant from Cork in 1870, summarised the situation as he saw it from Melbourne in 1882

77. Between 1851 and 1861, the number of holdings of 15 to 30 acres had increased by 61,000; those over thirty acres increased by 109,000; but the total number of holdings in Ireland decreased by 120,000, indicating the extent of the decrease of those less than 15 acres. (Nicholas Mansergh, The Irish Question 1840-1921, p. 231).

in the same ambiguous manner

There is nobody I know of more suitable to this country than servants at home. There are of course many farmers sons and daughters too out here, but how they are situated, they are working hard from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same for a living in a burning hot climate far different from Home, and after all we find we are the poorest of the different nationalities in Australia. 78

The hardships of pioneering farming were greater in the further, drier areas in which new selections were offered, and the farmer or labourer in the country, with experience of colonial conditions and practice, was in a superior position to choose wisely, leaving even less choice for the newly arrived immigrant. These factors contributed to a geographic separation of old and recent immigrants in Victoria, a trend that was evident in New South Wales and South Australia and part of developing colonial urbanisation, but which was more discernible in Victoria because of the stronger country Irish representation with which to compare the Melbourne Irish.

This growing urban-rural division was apparent in each of the colonies in varying degrees after 1860. The distribution of the Irish in the three colonies is not directly comparable, since the measures used in the statistics were different. At the 1881 census, the New South Wales population was enumerated as resident in Sydney and suburbs, rural districts, or towns and villages. In Victoria, the population was either rural or living in the cities, towns and boroughs, while South Australia counted by counties. Taking these as the broadest urban-rural divisions,

78. Normile letters, April 1, 1855 and August 3, 1856. Mahoney letter, September 18, 1882.

42,094 of the New South Wales Irish (60%) were urban (Sydney and suburbs plus towns and villages), and 26,950 were strictly rural.⁷⁹ In Victoria, 42,266 Irish lived in the cities, towns and boroughs, some 50% of the total Irish colonial population of 86,733.⁸⁰ In South Australia, 47% of the Irish population of 18,246 lived in county Adelaide alone, and most of the remaining Irish colonists lived in four counties along a line reaching directly north from Adelaide,⁸¹ reflecting the first movement of Irish immigrants to the Burra-Kapunda mining districts and their subsequent movement further north following the opening of the land there for selection. In very approximate terms, it would appear that in each of the colonies about half of the Irish lived in or near the main city and towns by 1881, while the rest were spread throughout the colony, with a somewhat larger proportion of the New South Wales Irish being urban and of the Victorian Irish being strictly rural.

These rural Irish displayed distinct colonial differences with regard to employment, concentration and national assertion, but they also shared characteristics that came to distinguish them from fellow Irish in the cities. The value of a comparison of the two groups lies not in the discovery of any overtly different response to Irish national issues, but in the hints given of the factors affecting the integration of the Irish within colonial society.

79. Of the 1881 census population, 23,944 Irish were in Sydney and suburbs; 18,150 lived in towns, villages etc. of more than 100 inhabitants; and 26,950 were in the rural divisions. New South Wales Parliamentary Papers, 1882, vol. 3 no. 87 table 29.

80. Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1882-1883 vol. 3 no. 41. More than half of the Irish population were women, which was the reverse of the situation of other immigrant groups.

81. South Australian Parliamentary Papers, 1881 vol. 3 no. 74.

There were two main elements to the rural Irish distinctiveness. One was the reality of the situation - the fact that the relative social cohesiveness and stability of a rural community was more conducive to a ready adaptation to colonial values and adoption of colonial interests and loyalties. The other element was the constant emphasis on this image of the Irish immigrant by urban Irish and Catholic spokesmen - an emphasis which made little impact on the Irish stereotype held by other colonists, but which expressed Irish pride in the achievement by their fellow countrymen of the landed status and security denied to them in Ireland and so widely vaunted as the right of all colonial settlers. The colonial Hierarchy were particularly instrumental in promoting the image of the industrious and prosperous rural Catholic settler. Archbishop Polding contrasted the sparsely populated district of Maneroo in New South Wales, which he visited in 1868, as a refreshing relief from the situation of the centre of his archdiocese -

A fine open country with people altogether fitted to it, untainted by Sydney vice and grumbling. There is such a noble opening for zeal and spiritual enterprise. A vast proportion of the country is in the hands of Catholics. The Harnetts, Cliffords, Cosgraves and others are large squatters; then the greater part of the Free Selectors are of us. 82

Polding believed his mission would be easier and, for him, more rewarding, were all the Catholic laity settled and content men on the land: certainly he was at this time severely disillusioned with the Irish who constituted

the bulk of the Sydney Catholics, for what he termed their inconsistency and ingratitude.⁸³ The Victorian Catholic newspaper, the Advocate, frequently made a distinction between town and country Catholic, implying that those with an established and stable occupation were correspondingly more conservative and more constant in their approach to the practice of their religion.⁸⁴ In 1860, Bishop Geoghegan of Adelaide wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith of the drought of the last three seasons that had 'overwhelmed the small settlers and other industries, to which the mass of our Catholic people belong'.⁸⁵ The South Australian Catholic paper, the Irish Harp, stated in 1872 that 'The welfare of the colony depends mainly on the crops, and a very large number of the farming class are Irishmen and employ Irish labourers'.⁸⁶ Such statements were often less a measure of the actual situation of the Irish colonists than an idealisation of the position most favoured by the Church. The Hierarchy feared the influence of a mixed and scattered population upon adherence to the faith, a fear summarised by the South Australian Catholic monthly, The Southern Cross and Catholic Herald, in 1868 -

83. 'I long and long to retire. As a humble missionary I might do some good; but in my present position, not knowing whom to trust to, I am only a burden to myself and to others. The more I see of the Irish character, the less estimable it seems to be. Thoughtless, inconsistent, ungrateful, yet detecting ingratitude, impulsive - one day is, with them, in contradiction with another.' Birt, op. cit., p. 339.

84. Like the other Catholic newspapers, the Advocate pushed the image of the colonial Irish as farmers or at least wishing to become farmers (e.g. February 1, 1868). It continued to encourage assisted immigration against the protests of the Melbourne labourers, and to encourage regular improvements of land selection regulations. In 1874 it condemned the 'devious means' used by squatters in the Riverina district to prevent selection on their runs, (May 16, 1874), though without commenting on the current 'test case' on this issue, which involved John O'Shanassy as the squatter 'villain'. For details of this case, see G.L.Buxton, The Riverina, 1861-1891, pp. 166-70.

85. Geoghegan letters, May 18, 1860. Adelaide A.A.

86. Irish Harp, January 20, 1872.

The daily intercourse with men of every shade of religious opinion weakens the presence of faith, and were this even of little moment, there are so few things to remind Catholics of their religion ... Here the population is so scattered that all have to be almost of one family, and are in fact of one mind, with interests and pursuits in common, except on one subject, and in the bush even the Sunday ceases to bring this forward. The Catholic, fresh in the recollections of home, may resist this influence, and even the traditions of youth, or the warm, affectionate recollection of early days may keep alive a faith which would otherwise fade away. But what is to become of those who have not these traditions? What is to become of those whose minds are nurtured under so cold a shadow? What is to become of our youth? Need we urge, now, therefore, that there is much cause for anxiety about the future Church of Australia? 87

The reality of the rural situation was not always that of Catholic piety, Irish industry and harmony with other religious and national groups. The seventies were years of peculiarly deep sectarian animosity in New South Wales, and this penetrated the country districts in political contests and in group and even personal relations. A number of the rural districts of New South Wales had been populated by distinct and antagonistic national-religious groups, and this enabled the maintenance of old loyalties and traditions and, consequently, inherited prejudices. Some instances of this were amusing, as depicted by 'Tom Collins' in the novel, Such is Life, in reference to the hostility between an Irish Orangeman, Martin,

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87. Southern Cross and Catholic Herald, August 20, 1868. A similar attitude was apparent in the Advocate's attack on Higinbotham's education proposals in 1869, when it commented on the new generation of Catholics 'Their fathers have grown up amid time honoured traditions which they imbibed unconsciously; they were surrounded in early life by happy influences which half-imperceptibly but irresistably gave a certain tone and colouring to their minds and feelings, moulded their sentiments and shaped their destiny. It is impossible not to perceive that much of this must needs be wanting in a new country. What may be called education by circumstances may not at home have been perfection, but it were absurd to deny that it is very much superior to what can be hoped for here.' (Advocate, March 6, 1869).

and his fellow worker on a sheep station in the Riverina, the Catholic Irishman, Moriarty -

Now there was just one man within a hundred miles who knew less of Irish history than Martin, and that man was Moriarty; consequently the two jostled each other as they rushed into that branch of learning where scholars fear to tread - each repeatedly appealing to me for confirmation of his outlandish myths and clumsy fabrications.⁸⁸

Other instances had political and divisive local repercussions, as when the English Catholic teacher at the Queanbeyan public school construed the opposition of the 'Irish faction' to the election of a member of the School Board, with which he had been in conflict, as indicating support for his cause against the Board, and sought to encourage this support by an anti-English speech at the local O'Connell centenary celebrations the following year.⁸⁹ Again, at Kiama, a local Catholic, Barney McGucken, made an alleged attempt on the life of the leader of the Kiama Orange Lodge in 1868, inflamed by the anti-Irish response of the Orange members to the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in Sydney earlier in the year.⁹⁰

In Victoria, the situation was rather different. There the rural conflicts arose not only between Irish and non-Irish or Catholic and

88. J. Furphy ('Tom Collins'), Such is Life, p. 277.

89. E. Lea-Scarlett, op. cit., pp. 107-8.

90. Information of Arthur Gray, great-grandson of George Grey, in private interview, October 6, 1972. Arthur Gray said that the attack was on William Grey, a possible cousin of George Grey who, together with a number of other county Fermanagh Orangemen, had been encouraged to emigrate by George Grey in 1843. M. Lyons, in his account of the incident, says that the man attacked was John Grey. ('Aspects of Sectarianism in New South Wales circa 1865-1880', Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1972, p. 202.

Protestant in one area, but also within the local Irish Catholic community. Contrary to the picture painted by the Church Hierarchy, the existence of a close Irish farming community did not necessarily ensure the stability and obedience of the local Catholics. Father Dunne's rebellion against Bishop Goold's centralising authority took place from the rural centres of Belfast and Geelong, and he gained support from many of the local Irish. Father Rankin, a Gaelic-speaking Scots priest appointed to the Western district in response to the needs of a considerable Scots Catholic population there, met at least one Irish woman who could not accept his authority, 'thinking that a Scotchman could not be a Catholic priest'⁹¹ and there was mutual and immediate rejection of each other by the Italian priest, Father Bassetto, and the Irish community to which he was appointed in Belfast in 1870.⁹²

In New South Wales, where many districts maintained early national concentrations, the national-religious groupings generated sectarian divisions that entered into political contests. The Australian-born Catholic of Irish parentage, E. W. O'Sullivan, experienced a 'sectarian election dodge' when standing for Queanbeyan in 1878 when the uncle of his opponent Walter Palmer sent a letter to each of the 'Hibernians' of the district urging 'Do what you can for Walter Palmer, my nephew. Cardinal Moran is favourable to his candidature; the local priest has got orders to help him.' O'Sullivan countered this dodge in like form by proceeding to send copies of this letter

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91. M. F. Kelley, 'Reminiscences and early history of Coleraine district and south-west Victoria'. Letters of Kelley to T. J. Fitzgerald, President of the Coleraine Historical Society, 1932-1939. Privately loaned. This comment is in a letter dated January 31, 1932.
92. Rev. Nicholas Bassetto to Dr. Fitzpatrick, July 13, 1870 from Belfast, re 'Catholics speaking only the Irish language and come to confession ignorant'; Rev. Thomas Slattery to Fitzpatrick, August 8, 1870, 'You will find Bassetto, like all foreigners, useless'. Melbourne A.A., Correspondence, miscellaneous.

to all the Orangemen of the district, who then refused to vote for either candidate.⁹³ Not all sectarian contests were settled so peaceably: police had to be called to the Braidwood election of December, 1869, where the Irish digger Michael Kelly was standing against a rumoured Protestant Political Association candidate, when sectarian violence threatened to erupt at the polls.⁹⁴ In Victoria, the proud boast of the rural Irish that they maintained in power the leading Irish politicians was also not achieved without cost. Again, however, the dissention over this vote occurred largely within the Irish community, and after 1860 centred mainly upon attitudes to the state aid and education questions. Richard Ireland was defeated in Gippsland in 1868, allegedly by the power of the Irish vote there, after his quarrel with the Irish patriot, Duffy.⁹⁵ Jeremiah Dwyer, a Catholic candidate for Villiers and Heytesbury in the same elections, made strong protest against the influence of the Belfast priest over the Irish Catholic electors after his defeat.⁹⁶ O'Shanassy was defeated at Kilmore

93. E. W. O'Sullivan, 'Reminiscences - mainly political', Lone Hand, August 1, 1910, p. 299.

94. Lyons, op. cit., p. 272.

95. Age, January 25, 1868.

96. Age, January 28, 1868 ff; Advocate, February 8, 1868. Dwyer had stood against another Catholic, M. A. McDonnell, who supported denominational education, while Dwyer supported national education and the 1862 Common Schools Act. Dwyer generally had an unsuccessful career in politics, being defeated for Villiers and Heytesbury in 1868, Kilmore and also Williamstown in 1871, and Villiers and Heytesbury again in 1874, before being returned for that electorate in 1877. Dwyer was recommended by the Advocate for Williamstown in 1871 (March 11, 1871), but a correspondent to that paper protested when he set up against the Irish Catholic Michael O'Grady in 1874, and Dwyer was placed lowest of all candidates at that election. (Advocate, January 17, March 28, 1871). The Age's advocacy of Dwyer's 'cause' against the Catholic clergy in 1868 did nothing to endear Dwyer to his co-religionists.

in 1874 by a second Irishman, and in 1883 he complained bitterly of the 'ingratitude' of the Irish electors of Belfast after another defeat.⁹⁷

In both colonies, the religious associations formed by both Protestants and Catholics to influence elections and legislation penetrated to some degree into the country districts. National and religious prejudices were less challenged by new contacts, education, or a changed way of life. The Catholic vote in the country districts was more amenable, more controllable, than in urban electorates, partly because of the concentration of the Irish in some rural constituencies (the farming communities of Victoria, the rural towns in New South Wales) partly because of the influence of the priest and community sentiment in creating unanimity. The influence of the local priest in favour of a particular candidate could, in times of sectarian strife, be more of a burden than a blessing, but the very commonness of the denunciations of 'priestly interference' is itself evidence of the effect of the priest's recommendation or condemnation. Letters to the colonial Bishops from parish priests show that the rural Irish were not always generous or obedient Catholics, but it is apparent that, where a priest was accepted (and it helped to be Irish, especially in Victoria) he could have a greater influence on a numerically small or close country parish, where the Church was often the centre of social activity, than was possible in the city or suburbs. Even in the huge

97. W. H. Archer, 'Sir John O'Shanassy - a sketch', Melbourne Review, vol. 8, July 1883, p. 257; letter of O'Shanassy to J. J. Winter, February 26, 1883 re '118 Catholics who openly betrayed their cause'. (J. J. Winter scrapbook, Latrobe library).

scattered 'outback' missions of New South Wales or northern South Australia, the priest had a greater potential influence, his opponents being time and distance rather than the many rival 'causes' that claimed the energies and loyalties of the urban working man. In each of the colonies, the priest was himself very often Irish and this also served to maintain a sense of community based on heritage, often long after ties with Ireland had lapsed.

Yet, in spite of the conflicts generated by the maintenance of national groups and the continuation of the traditions of the Old World, the rural areas were often more tolerant and comfortable venues than the towns. Prejudices rarely operated on the personal level. In 1867 John Neeson, a Catholic emigrant from county Antrim in 1856, and John Waters, an Orangeman from county Armagh, jointly selected and then divided an allotment in the parish of Tarrayoukyan, near Nareen in Victoria. The two friends continued to expand their holdings and to farm and raise stock in the district, meeting each evening after work at each other's home to drink and to argue about Home Rule.⁹⁸ As farmers and graziers, the Irish were subject to the same interests and concerns as other men of their class. They appear to have neither time nor inclination to band together in formal national associations. St. Patrick's day celebrations in the country were general social occasions (in Belfast, the day was a public holiday and

98. Notes compiled on John Neeson by a great-grandson, Ewan F. Neeson, owner of the Neeson estate at Nareen, Victoria. I am indebted to Ewan Neeson for an interview on October 16, 1972 (and for his hospitality) and for the loan of the notes he had researched extensively from official records and family papers.

was celebrated by a race meeting);⁹⁹ a day regarded even by good Catholics like Michael Normile of Mitland as one to be celebrated by heavy drinking.¹⁰⁰ The St. Patrick's society founded in Colac in 1868 had failed for want of support; when revived in 1875, it was opened to Irish of all denominations and Catholics of all nationalities, but even then it soon dissolved from the lack of interest of members.¹⁰¹ The Celtic Association founded in Sydney in 1856 succeeded in establishing only one branch outside Sydney, at Bathurst in 1858,¹⁰² and even the Sydney branch of the Irish National League created auxiliary branches only at Bathurst and Newcastle, and had no success in encouraging the foundation of other branches in Victoria, even in Melbourne. The country Irish were always generous in their financial support of national causes, but because of the nature of their occupations, their greater sense of security, and their often scattered situation, they did not form permanent or organised national societies to express their loyalty to Ireland.¹⁰³

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99. D. R. Crawford, 'The Irish at Killarney and Koroit 1841-1881', B.A. thesis, Monash University, 1969, p. 49.
100. Normile letters; this from letter April 1, 1855 from New South Wales.
101. I. Hebb, The History of Colac and District, p. 333.
102. Freeman's Journal, November 10, 1858 reported the meeting at Bathurst on November 4 to establish the branch.
103. There were various social organisations founded in the country town centres, but these were never organised on a colonial basis, and they appear to have been venues for 'Irish talk' rather than action. Farmers and farm labourers who had no set hours of work were not willing or able to take official positions in such societies. In the early Melbourne St. Patrick's society, a large number of the office-holders were brewers, hotel-keepers and artisans: in Belfast, Dominic Keating became Treasurer of the Belfast Hibernian Society in 1877, after he gave up his labouring position to become a hotel manager of the Union Hotel. In spite of its championship of life on the land as the ideal situation in the colonies, the Freeman's Journal complained that country Catholics were the worst in their subscriptions to that paper, even though they included some of the wealthiest Catholics of the colony. (December 8, 1858). This was, of course, before the Selection Acts settled many more small farmers and graziers in the country.

The response of rural Catholics to their religious duties and obligations was also affected by these considerations. The country missions were always bedevilled by lack of funds because of the poverty of many rural Catholics, and parish priests were increasingly disturbed by the tendency to mixed marriages by the Catholic population. This was particularly evident in New South Wales, where the Catholics were both widely scattered and more largely native-born, but it was also evident in some areas of Victoria and in South Australia, where there was a disproportion of Irish women in the country in addition to a mixed population. The annual reports of the New South Wales parish priests to the Archbishop (of which a large number of the late seventies and early eighties have been collected in St. Mary's archives), reveal the problem of mixed marriages to have been severe in the country, and the native-born Catholics to have been particular offenders. Father Cunningham wrote from Mt. Carmel in December, 1877 that 'very nearly 30% of the married population are mixed ... The native population seem to me to make very light of this matter particularly within the past few years.' Archdeacon Rigney wrote from Parramatta in 1878 that some fifty women and twenty men were married to non-Catholics, out of a congregation of 2022, and Father Auliffe commented from Queanbeyan in October, 1877 that 'there are very many Catholic women married to Protestants. I am quite sure there are eighty mixed marriages in the district' - this in a Catholic population of 1500.¹⁰⁴ In Victoria, the

104. Parish Reports, Sydney A.A. Correspondence from Father John Cunningham, December 27, 1877; Archdeacon Rigney, January 18, 1878; Father James Auliffe, October 18, 1877. In all districts, women were much more common offenders than men. This was partly because they were more numerous (59% of the rural Irish population in 1881 were women); partly, therefore, as suggested by Patrick O'Farrell, because they would not otherwise marry at all; or because Irish women sought to improve their social status through marriage to non-Catholics. (Hans Mol, Religion in Australia, pp.240-41)/

country priests frequently sought dispensations from Bishop Goold for mixed marriages and advice on their attitude to Catholic parents who sent their children to Protestant schools, and the South Australian clergy were beset by the same problems.¹⁰⁵ On the whole, however, the Church may have profited by these marriages more than it lost. A generation later, Dr. Delany, coadjutor Bishop of Hobart, said of the conversions to the Church in Australia 'No doubt in most instances the faith of the children is due to the Irish mother or grandmother; but the fact still remains, and is very significant, that the faith is thus assimilating material which has been all but refractory.'¹⁰⁶ A warm and practical national spirit was often displayed by the more concentrated and established rural districts. Bishop Murray wrote to Dr. Moran in Ireland of the new See to which he had been appointed in 1866 -

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105. Father Henry Bradbee wrote from Tarraville, April 29, 1870 asking Bishop Goold for dispensations for mixed marriages; Father Richard Ellis of Ballarat did the same on June 12, 1870, also asking for directions as to whether to give absolution to parents whose children attend Protestant schools; and Father Henry Allen of Castlemaine sought a decision on whether he could allow a local Catholic to continue to send his son to Geelong Grammar. (Miscellaneous correspondence, Melbourne A.A.). Dean Fitzgibbon wrote to Bishop Geoghegan, August 6, 1861 of the poverty of the Mt. Gambier mission and of his disappointment with the numbers attending the newly founded Catholic school there. He, too, indicated the baneful effects of mixed marriages by adding 'There are a good many on whom I calculated who have not sent their children as yet, for example, Mrs. Crouch, who I hoped would be one of the foremost, told me that she was afraid of insisting with Mr. Crouch, lest he might take them into his hands altogether. She says that Mr. Crouch calls our movement bigotry.' (Adelaide A.A.).
106. Proceedings of the First Australasian Catholic Congress, 1900, p. 145.

I must now tell you that I am quite delighted with the people of Maitland. They are all Irish and as warm-hearted as our people at home and really attached to religion and the Holy See. No doubt there is a splendid field for the labours of a few zealous Priests and I find that a really good Priest will get any amount of money if the people see that he devotes it to religion.¹⁰⁷

Murray, Bishops Lanigan of Goulburn and Quinn of Bathurst, made enormous progress in their dioceses during a period of confusion and dissatisfaction within the Sydney archdiocese, where Archbishop Polding had for thirty years fought against Irish dominance in the Church and opposed national expressions of sympathy with political movements in Ireland. The joyful mingling of the Catholic and Celtic spirit in support of the Church was noted by William Finn all throughout North East Victoria in his journey through the district in 1869,¹⁰⁸ and his view of Kilmore was endorsed by the local priest, Father Brannigan, shortly before his death the following year.¹⁰⁹ The Irish of the Western district were often refractory, and the fortunes of the district tended to fluctuate, but again the Irish proved to be a loyal and generous laity, responding warmly to any priest who recognised his dependence on them as well as their duties to him as a

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107. Bishop Murray to Dr. Moran, November 21, 1866. In Maitland folder, Parish reports, Sydney A.A.
108. (Rev.) W. F. Finn, Glimpses of North-east Victoria and Albury, New South Wales, published 1870, from a series of articles that appeared first in the Advocate in 1869.
109. Rev. M. Brannigan to Bishop Goold, May 27, 1870. Melbourne A.A.

representative of the Church.¹¹⁰ In South Australia, the Church inherited by default the Irish national loyalties that could not be expressed in a society which equated 'British' with 'English' in forming the character of the colony's institutions and values. The one national society founded in South Australia before 1880 was Protestant-dominated and attracted few Catholic Irish. In the country St. Patrick's day was celebrated by a strictly social and religious observance: frequently the day was chosen for the consecration or foundation-laying ceremony of a new church or

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110. John Neeson and his family were proud to be able to provide hospitality to travelling priests and nuns, and in 1875 to Bishop O'Connor (Ballarat) and later to Bishops Moore and Foley. (Notes on John Neeson, prepared by Ewan Neeson, op. cit.). George Kelley's cottage in Coleraine was used for the celebration of mass before a church was erected in the district, and George's sons were baptised there by Father Rankin in 1856 ('Reminiscences' of Michael Francis Kelley, op. cit.), and John Fitzgerald, who had arrived from Ireland in 1841 and taken up Menenia sheep station in 1844, was host to Father Meade and other priests who conducted mass at the station for those unable to attend churches at Mortlake or Ararat. (Letter of Molly Casey, grand-niece of John Fitzgerald, September 28, 1972 to Mrs. Robertson of Lake Bolac, Victoria. I am grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay Robertson for allowing me to see these letters in October, 1972). The Irish were used to an unpaid clergy in Ireland: that situation had brought about a mutual dependence between priest and people which many of the laity were loath to give up with a state-paid clergy. Priests who were too independent, proud or culturally alien from the Irish community to which they ministered often had a very hard time in their mission. The experience of Father Bassetto has already been noted; Father See, another Italian priest, was similarly unsuccessful - Father John Sullivan commented on See's mission at Brighton 'It is impossible to make an Irish congregation care for his ministrations. This is the experience of every priest with whom he has lived.' Dated May, 15, 1871 to Bishop Goold. Melbourne A.A.

Catholic school.¹¹¹ Probably a majority of the rural Irish of South Australia were poor, but it was to the few wealthy farmers and graziers of the north and south-east first looked for support in establishing Catholic secondary schools, and it was the sons of these men who later attended the fee-paying Catholic colleges.

The Church was rarely disappointed in the appeals it aimed specifically at the rural Irish Catholic population, and it was the landed Irish and farming communities that were celebrated by both Irish and Catholic observers as the symbol of Irish success in Australia.¹¹² The Church's expressed preference for a settled, country-dwelling laity was based on the proposition that such a population would be less vulnerable to the appeal and promises of rival 'causes' and less exposed to the temptations of Mammon,

111. Earlier St. Patrick's day appears to have been celebrated as a national holiday - sports seem to have been inaugurated before the arrival of Bishop Murphy, the Register noting 'Yesterday being St. Patrick's day, the natives of the Emerald Isle kept their anniversary by a game of football in the neighbourhood of the City Market, Thebarton, after which an ox was roasted whole, with which they regaled themselves and their families in genuine Irish style.' Quoted by Father R. A. Morrison, 'beginnings of Catholic education in South Australia', unfinished Mss in Adelaide A.A. Bishop Murphy was Irish and by no means hostile to the adoption of Irish Catholicism in Australia, but his experience with the Irish Catholic workers in Liverpool, England had made him aware of the reinforcement of anti-Catholicism by anti-Irish feeling. In 1848 he prohibited a series of lectures by Father Coyle on the history of Ireland, allegedly because he believed they were 'tending to a purpose' and would cause 'discussion'. (Register, May 17, 1848). For an account of Murphy's early life, see Father R. A. Morrison, 'Bishops and Education in South Australia', Mss in Adelaide A.A.

112. Especially, C. G. Duffy, My Life in Two Hemispheres, vol. 2; J. F. Hogan, The Irish in Australia (1888); P. S. Cleary, Australia's debt to Irish nationbuilders (1933); and Irish delegates to Australia for Irish national causes, e.g., Michael Davitt, Life and Progress in Australasia (1898) and John Redmond's comments, recorded in D. Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond. When John O'Shanassy visited Ireland in 1866-7 his lectures there reinforced this view of the state of the Irish in the colonies. (see report of a lecture at Clonmel of October, 1866 in the Argus, January 16, 1867).

the flesh, or false doctrine,¹¹³ and in fact the basis of this belief was sound. Nevertheless, the Church was not blind to the movement of population and the growth of the major cities: at the 1885 Plenary Council, the Bishops and Archbishops still urged all Catholics in the country districts to 'strive to secure for themselves a just share in the public land', but they simultaneously recognised that many Catholics were unskilled labourers, to be found in employment 'wherever the hours are long, the climate merciless, the labour unskilled, the comforts few, and the remuneration small.'¹¹⁴ It was the urban working class Irish and Irish-Australians who represented the largest and fastest-growing group in each of the colonies, and it was they who supported both the old image of the Irish as a distinctive and often dissident element in colonial society, and the newer image, of the Catholic bound to support the views of his Church in politics, and even in the labour organisations that began to attract widespread support in the seventies, regardless of how this affected the interests of his class.

There were obvious reasons why the city Irish should have continued to be regarded as 'typical' in spite of some very real differences from their brethren in the country. Being more numerous and more concentrated,

113. The rural-urban division, even more pronounced a generation later, was summarised by a priest ministering to inner-Sydney Catholics in 1912 - 'There is a vast difference between the country or suburban and the city 'stray'. In the suburbs or the country, the majority of the men and women who abandon the practice of their religion do so through carelessness. In the city it is generally through downright loss of faith or morals ... If in the country souls grow careless, their faith may often be revived without extraordinary difficulty; but here, in numbers, the city lad is being irrevocably robbed of his faith; the city girl of her virtue. False prophets are in their midst without number, the voice of the True Shepherd is alone unheard.' J. M. Cusack, 'Some Impressions of a City Priest', Manly, vol. I no. I, 1916, in Patrick O'Farrell, Documents in Australian Catholic History, vol. 2 p. 211).

114. O'Farrell, op. cit., pp. 19, 21.

the city Irish displayed many of the superficial and overt characteristics of the Irish stereotype - the brogue, the wit, the expressions, the vigorous celebrations, the readiness to argue and to brawl - and these characteristics were reinforced by the new immigrants who largely remained in the cities, at least after 1860. The non-Irish press, which perpetuated the stereotype, was urban-oriented, and visitors to the colonies inevitably based their observation on the capital cities and very largely found what they expected to find.¹¹⁵ Observers content to note that the Irish of the colonies retained many of the character traits of their race were neither wrong nor particularly profound, but those who gave the further impression that the Irish had not been changed at all by their transplantation were at best misleading. Important changes were being effected in the Irish colonial population by the steady decline of Irish immigration, and if they were ignored by the rest of the population, they were noted with alarm by some Irish colonists. There were regular calls in New South Wales for the formation of national societies which would be able to promote Irish literature, history and culture, particularly for the education of the

115. e.g. John Martineau, Letters from Australia (1869 - mostly written in Australia in 1867 and published initially in the London Protestant paper, the Spectator) on the Irish of New South Wales ('multiply much faster than the rest of the population ... an element of disturbance and lawlessness in their separate and sectarian organisation ... Roman Catholicism among the Irish in Australia seems to be becoming less a Church than a political society') p. 127; on corruption in the O'Shanassy government, p. 53; Fenianism among the clergy, p. 130. Comments by colonists were often no less stereotyped, as in G. W. Turners History of Australia (1897) or A. M. Topp, 'English institutions and the Irish race' in Melbourne Review, vol. VI, January 1881. These writers were no less biased than the patriotic Irish observers - the two groups only chose to present one of two distinct sides of the Irish identity in the colonies, to the exclusion of the other.

colonial born children of Irish immigrants.¹¹⁶ In Victoria, the Irish had gained a considerable role in all aspects of colonial life, and were accordingly less anxious about the future of their community. Many, including Duffy, continued to see themselves as the original 'soggarth aroon', but there was an increasing awareness that Irishmen would not always act in a manner acceptable to their fellows just because they were Irish.¹¹⁷ But it was in South Australia, where the Irish had always been a small and unimportant community, that the most lasting manifestation of this erosion of the Irish body first became apparent. This was the assimilation of the Irish character in the growth of Catholicism, the replacement of a distinct national identity by a religious affiliation. This occurred at different rates in the three colonies, and met with varying degrees of resistance, but even by 1880 it was a distinct trend in each.

Part of the transition was effected simply by the force of numbers. Between 1861 and 1881, the Irish proportion of the New South Wales population fell from 15.6% to 9.2%; of Victoria, from 16.23% to 10.06%; of South Australia, from 10.00% to 6.5%. At the same time, the Catholic

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116. Freeman's Journal, June 14, 1856; January 10, 1863. Often these calls were made partly to express dissatisfaction with the current leadership of the Church; increasingly after 1860, however, the stress was upon Irishmen and Catholics organising for the cause of Catholic education and against a bigotry that would keep them out of political office because they were Irish and Catholic.
117. The Duffy-O'Shanassy split of 1859 had been well-publicised, and Duffy was later to charge O'Shanassy with an 'appeal to anti-Irish feeling against me' (My Life in Two Hemispheres, vol. 2, p. 218). Nevertheless, this and subsequent quarrels among Irish politicians basically centred upon personalities and attitudes to religion rather than to national patriotism, and it was not until the moves to make the religious loyalty the prime affiliation in the late seventies that any issue made one group of Irish inherently opposed to another.

population of each colony retained a stable position in the total population, rising in Victoria from 20.4% to 23.3%, and in South Australia from 13.2% to 15.2%; in New South Wales falling slightly from 28.3% to 27.6%. In New South Wales, as the oldest established colony, the Catholic population was almost double that of the Irish population by 1861: in South Australia and Victoria, the Irish and Catholic populations were closely correlated, until undermined by the combined effect of a decline in Irish immigration in the sixties and the contribution of earlier Irish arrivals to a large colonial-born Catholic generation. In South Australia, where the Irish population had always been a minority and, with the exception of a few Protestants, without wealth or influence, the move to identification with the Church and rejection of national exclusiveness had begun very early, and met with little resistance. In New South Wales, the Irish had been numerous since the inauguration of the penal settlement, but declined steadily from a peak of almost one-third of the population in the forties to less than a tenth in 1881. This did not entail an immediate restriction of Irish influence - the actual numbers of the Irish continued to grow right up to the eighties - but few colonial Irish were successful in politics after 1860, and even fewer accepted any particular responsibility towards their fellow countrymen when they did gain political office. Many of the attitudes of the New South Wales Irish, and of non-Irish colonists towards them, had been formed in the years before colonial self-government and universal male suffrage, and no Irishman arrived among the post-1856 immigrants who was able to capture the national loyalty and the imagination of his fellow colonists. Irishmen who did attain political position felt

very strongly both the pressure from non-Irish society to eschew sectarianism and the partisan stance expected of them by many Irishmen, but almost inevitably chose the colonial rather than the Irish way of politics, at least partly because the sectarian Irish vote could not ensure a majority in any electorate. The Catholic community was, however, a steadily growing community which maintained its proportionate position in the colonial population, and Catholic voters and politicians responded to the education cause, advanced by the Hierarchy after the passage of the Public Schools Act, with an ardour much enhanced by the new encouragement of the Irish-Catholic connection within the Church. Victoria, which had passed the parent colony in its number and proportion of Irish by 1860, could not equal that colony's Catholic population until the end of the decade.¹¹⁸ In addition, the Irish of Victoria were more easily able to find expression for their national pride and loyalties in colonial politics and society. The number of Irishmen in nineteenth century Victorian politics and professions was a continuing source of satisfaction and community self-esteem for the Irish of the colony and Irish visitors. Because there was much that was positive about the Irish situation in Victoria, national identification was a rewarding attachment. The movement of this group into the area of activity defined by the Church was therefore less rapid and less total than in the other colonies, and the separation of

118. Only Queensland rivalled New South Wales in its Catholic representation in the total population, and even that did not surpass it until the 1911 census. The New South Wales Catholic proportion averaged 28% between 1861 and 1881; that of Victoria about 23%; and that of South Australia about 14%.

the terms Irish and Catholic, in politics and in everyday activity, remained justified longer than in the sister colonies. Ultimately, however, it was only the success of the Church's campaign on the education question that enabled the perpetuation of Irish culture in Australia, through the education of Catholic children by and in the values and beliefs of native Irish Catholic religious.

The Irish-Catholic correlation reached its peak in South Australia around 1860, most Irish immigrants having arrived in the later fifties and most being Catholic. But many of these immigrants were single women and this, together with the decline in Irish immigration generally in the sixties, contributed towards an increasing discrepancy between the Irish and Catholic representations: by 1871, the Catholic population was double that of the Irish born.¹¹⁹ The Irish were never a major force in South Australian society. They arrived in large numbers over limited periods, each time met by concerted and effective protest from the general South Australian community. This appears to have strangled immediately the national self-assertion of Irish immigrants, for they were neither defended by Irish residents nor possessed of the education or qualifications to refute complaints about their 'suitability' to the new colony. The St. Patrick's society had been formed in Adelaide in 1849 to gain for Irish emigrants a fair share of the assisted passages to the colony, but its largely Protestant, landed and official middle-class members endorsed the general opposition to an influx of Irish women of the lower classes in 1849 and 1850. There was a call to the West Adelaide electors in 1855 to reject Anthony Forster, at the coming Legislative Council by-election on the

119. Catholics were 28,587 (15%); Irish were 14,255 (7.7%).

ground that he had denigrated the character of the Irish female orphans who had arrived that year:¹²⁰ however, Forster was elected, and even attended the St. Patrick's day dinner of the following year without exciting comment, which suggests that few were willing to make a stand against anti-Irish expression. There were too few Irish to bargain for concessions in return for their vote, or to hope to be able to return their own representatives at elections. There were Irishmen in Parliament, but they were not there as Irishmen, nor could they be relied upon to pursue the interests of their countrymen, particularly as most Irish Members were of a different class and often religion from most Irish colonists - the county Kildare Protestant, Captain Bagot, was one of the first Members to complain when the 'proportions' principle in assisted immigration was not strictly followed.¹²¹ Bishop Geoghegan, a fearless advocate of Irish Catholic rights in his prior Victorian mission, early gave up the fight against inflexible South Australian hostility to Irish immigration, and could only advocate that the Church 'join the party opposed to spend the colonial revenue on Immigration'.¹²² The lone voice of P. B. Coglein, the Irish Catholic Member for various electorates between 1860 and 1884, was of no avail in increasing the aid given to those wishing to emigrate from

120. Adelaide Times, September 3, 19, 1855.

121. South Australian Parliamentary Debates, June 15, 1859.

122. 'Here our only safe policy is to join the party opposed to spend the colonial revenue on Immigration - the inflexible course pursued in refusing any of those funds towards the introduction of Irish Immigrants until the English and Scotch shall be compensated for a surplus, or excess, as they term it, of Irish brought to the colony in past years leaves us no other resource - and we shall be fortunate if we succeed so far.' Bishop Geoghegan to Bishop Gould, December 17, 1859. Melbourne A.A.

Ireland, the only major source of reinforcements for the local Irish community.¹²³

In direct contrast with their Victorian countryman, the Irish of South Australia had little cause for satisfaction or pride in their local situation. Limited in influence and restricted in their growth by the immigration regulations, there was little to hold the Irish community together or to nourish their self-esteem. It is commonly recognised that the moves towards an independent system of Catholic education were made first in South Australia, a colony in which the Catholics never exceeded 15% of the population. This is generally explained by noting the influence and organising activity of a few individuals within the Church, especially Father Julian Tenison Woods and Mary McKillop. But would a population with a greater sense of security and of its rightful place in colonial society have proved so amenable to an appeal that would give them an identity and community only at the expense of a bitter and perhaps permanent division from a majority of their fellow-colonists? It was particularly difficult to be a professing Catholic in South Australia, but the Church at least offered positive rewards for conformity to its values.

The Catholic Church had had an often bitter struggle for existence in South Australia. Bishop Murphy, who had arrived when the Catholic body was very small, had been able to co-exist peaceably with Protestant colonists, and often received their financial support but had nevertheless

123. There is no doubt that the Irish wished to come, and made use of assisted schemes and of nomination regulations, but they were always restricted. Only about 3,000 Irish received immigration assistance in the sixties, and a little over 5,000 in the seventies, of a total assisted of respectively of 13,730 and 25,415.

been constantly short of funds and priests for the mission.¹²⁴ His successor, Bishop Geoghegan, took a more aggressive stance on Catholic rights in the matter of education, and accordingly met greater resistance and hostility. Neither Geoghegan nor his successor, Bishop Shiel, had any faith in the reality of ~~Catholic~~^{Protestant} tolerance.¹²⁵ Poverty that hampered the growth of the Church was as evident in the comments of Bishop Reynolds in 1879 and 1880 as it was in the letters of Bishop Geoghegan twenty years earlier, in spite of the growth of the Catholic body.¹²⁶ On most issues, the Church avoided public confrontation with those whom, in private, it considered to be enemies of the Irish and the Catholic religion. The first Catholic newspaper, The Southern Cross and Catholic Herald, went out of its way to present the humble situation of local Catholics, and to stress that they had no political interests distinct from other colonists except in the matter of education, and were free to align themselves as they wished

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124. Murphy had had a long experience of Irish Catholic poverty and Protestant hostility in his previous mission in Liverpool, England, and in Sydney from 1838 to 1844, and he made a point of living in harmony with his Protestant fellow colonists in South Australia, without compromising the Church's basic interests. In return, he gained the admiration, respect and very often the contributions of these Protestants, in spite of periodic protests - by the less tolerant members of other denominations, including the Anglican Bishop. By the end of his episcopate, Murphy had established seven Catholic schools, but most of these were miserable buildings with poorly trained teachers. Father Morrison, 'Beginnings of Catholic Education in South Australia' and 'Bishops and Education in South Australia', Mss in Adelaide A.A.
125. 'I was foolish enough to believe that the demolition of the Irish Church would have toned them down a little; but I must now come to the conclusion that South Australian bigotry is incurable.' Bishop Shiel to Vicar-General Smythe, January 15, 1870. Adelaide A.A.
126. Bishop Reynolds to Father Byrne, 1879-1881; Bishop Geoghegan to Father Ryan, 1860-1861. Adelaide A.A.

upon every other question.¹²⁷ Charles Fox, editor of this paper's successor, the Irish Harp, attempted from 1870 to inject a new aggressive spirit into local Catholics by urging that the newly-formed Catholic Association¹²⁸ undertake agitation for Catholic influence in politics and for lay participation in Church affairs.¹²⁹ He became the second president of the Association the following year and this position, together with the advocacy of the Harp, augured well for his ability to develop Catholic consciousness and unity. But Fox's criticism of the clergy offended many Catholics, and the Association was dissolved by Bishop Shiel in October 1871, following the Harp's veiled censure of the Bishop's behaviour towards the Sisters of St. Joseph and the apparent agreement of some members of the Association with this stand. The Hierarchy was intensely concerned with Catholic education, but it still hoped for legislative concessions that might be jeopardised by an assertion of Catholic 'rights' and voting strength which in fact did not exist in South Australia.

Fox maintained a brave front of independence in the face of official censure and continued to call for Catholic organisation at subsequent

127. Southern Cross and Catholic Herald, March 20, July 20, November 20, 1868; September 20, 1867.
128. The Catholic Association was founded in October, 1870 'to encourage and assist every religious, moral, social and political undertaking of the Catholics of this province'. Its first lay President was Dr. Michael Gunson, a leading Catholic convert, and it was under the spiritual direction of Father Bernard Nevin. Catholic Record, February 18, 25, 1881.
129. Irish Harp, November 4, 1870. '... it will afford facilities for concentrating Catholic influence, and bringing it to bear upon questions affecting our interests. Of the necessity of such an association in the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed in this colony, we think there can be no question.'

elections¹³⁰ but this issue revealed how completely the transference of Irish loyalties to the Church had already been made. An anonymous letter to Fathers Byrne and Reynolds (joint administrators of the diocese after Bishop Shiel's death on March 1, 1872) by an Irish Catholic colonist of 24 years residence summarised, inelegantly but pointedly, the stances taken on the dispute -

I beg of you from my very soul to turn to your good brother Priests and take council from them for they will not betray you same as is the nature of the English Saxon. Ever since I came to this colony which was before your time and as your own experience will tell you what I say to be true, the hearts of the Irish Roman Catholics, their hard earnings and their sweat have been generously given up to the support of their holy religion, to build Churches and to maintain the priests of their holy faith, and I trust that you an Irish priest will not do anything to scandalise our faith or to grieve us in carrying out this law suit... Things are bad enough, the Irish Harp has done for the last ten months many bad things and so has the Protestant Advocate for the last three weeks said very bad things too, but, in God's name and for the sake of our holy faith let there be no law suits, throw the one evil against the other, and as a Priest put your foot on both newspapers and the trash they contain. 131

Fox was an English Catholic and, like many of this class in England and the other colonies, showed great concern with Protestant opinion of the

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130. There was a progressive modification in Fox's assessment of the candidates that the Catholic body could successfully return. In 1874 and 1875 he recognised that the return of Catholic Members was unlikely, and by 1877 the paper's successor urged simply that Catholics support 'EDUCATED, liberal-minded gentlemen'. Irish Harp, January 30, 1874; January 29, 1875; South Australian Tablet, March 29, 1877.
131. The writer of this letter originally signed his name, but it was later crossed out. Letter dated April 22, 1872. Unfiled in Adelaide A.A. The law suit in question was against the printer of the Protestant Advocate, for libel on the Sisters of St. Joseph, and it was carried through, resulting in Lewis' conviction, with a £50 fine and 6 months imprisonment. (Register, June 7, 1872).

Church, and was particularly eager to deny Protestant condemnation of the Church as illiberal and authoritarian by asserting for the laity freedom of speech and the right to criticise specific decisions of the Hierarchy.¹³² Like Duncan in Sydney twenty years earlier, Fox had little success in advancing these views upon the Irish Catholic laity. He was accused of being motivated by anti-Irish sentiment in the depiction of three Irish priests as the trouble-makers in the diocese, and it was asserted that the Harp was an English paper, edited by an Englishman, and thus necessarily unrepresentative of Irish Catholic interests.¹³³ A meeting at the Temperance Hall in support of one of these priests, Father Nowlan, at which a petition was drawn up 'to show disgust at certain articles which had appeared in the Irish Harp - a paper which was supposed generally to represent Roman Catholic interests, but as far as he could see failed very much in doing so', was attended by more than 400 Catholics, none of whom protested against the resolution.¹³⁴ In his reply, Father Nowlan himself stressed that the Harp was not Irish, had no Irish on its staff, and had not been accepted as an official organ of the Church by the late Bishop. Before his death, Bishop Shiel had removed the ban of excommunication upon Mary McKillop, and Catholics who might have supported the Sisters against the clergy were not willing to prolong the division

132. For a discussion of the mentality peculiar to converts to Catholicism, and the ways in which such converts sought to increase the respectability, intellectual and social, of their faith, see M. Shanahan, Out of Time, Out of Place, p. 141; J. L. Altholz, The Liberal Catholic Movement in England: the "Rambler" and its contributors 1848-1864. For a fair example of Fox's views, see Irish Harp, January 27, 1872.

133. Irish Harp, October 7, 1871.

134. Register, March 21, 1872.

on Fox's behalf.¹³⁵

It would be easy to criticise the Church leaders of acting purely negatively on this issue, but in fact they had a better understanding of South Australian reality and of the national loyalties of local Catholics than did Fox. Anti-Catholicism in South Australia was very finely balanced: it existed very strongly at the doctrinal level¹³⁶ but, as long as the Catholic Church remained within its defined boundaries, overt expressions of hostility to the Catholic community were generally

135. There was a meeting of the Catholic laity on April 3, 1872 at the home of Dr. Butler, to consider the dissensions among the clergy over the Sisters of St. Joseph, but that meeting had concluded 'it is not the province of the laity to interfere in the management of ecclesiastical affairs.' Irish Harp, April 6, 1872.
136. The Protestant clergy of South Australia were particularly active in their agitation against the "errors" of the Catholic religion. Typical of such activity were the lectures of the Rev. Watsford in 1868 ('He was an uncompromising foe of Popery. There was not a Roman Catholic but that he loved, but the system he hated with all his heart.');
- the agitation of the Rev. James Jefferis against Ritualism in the Church of England, in which his opposition was motivated by detestation of 'Romish' rites and practices; a similar campaign by the Rev. J. Pollitt from within the ranks of the Church of England, with a zeal for the furtherance of the Christian faith that prompted him to revive the Orange lodge in Adelaide; the stand of the Rev. O. Lake at the East Torrens election of 1875 against E. T. Smith because of Smith's favourable attitude towards Catholic sensibilities. Even the Anglican Bishop, Augustus Short, was often unable to conceal his dislike of the Catholic Church, a dislike all the more readily expressed because of Short's own High Church leanings, and the need to distinguish these from the Ritualism so detested by Low Church members.

condemned.¹³⁷ Both sides were concerned to limit the offence they might give the other, within the limits of conscience. The inauguration of an independent system of Catholic education, announced by Bishop Shiel in April, 1867, was accompanied by speeches from both Father Woods and J. G. Daly that the meeting was not intended to encourage political agitation on the education issue, but to better the Catholic position by their own voluntary efforts.¹³⁸ There were some objections to this proposed system, on the ground that soon the Catholics would be asking for a separate grant, and Woods was ridiculed for his 'exposure' of the

137. The re-appearance of the Orange lodge in 1871 called forth the comment from the Register of 'regret that such a society should be formed in a land where perfect religious freedom has always prevailed, and where the last relics of religious inequality are fast disappearing.' (November 7, 1871). Riots in Queensland in 1874 when Catholics attacked the Rev. Porteus for his lecture on Luther at Ipswich in November, elicited the satisfied observation of the Register that such bitter religious feelings were unknown in South Australia, and the comment that the revived Orange lodge 'has not acquired an influential position' (November 10, 1874); and Protestant clerical interference in elections like that of Rev. Lake in 1875 was similarly condemned, the Register protesting that the Catholics had done nothing to deserve such attacks. (February 12, 1875). There was an extreme Protestant organ in South Australia, the Protestant Advocate founded in 1870, which divided its purely negative commentary between Ritualism in the Church of England and 'Popery', but it folded at the end of two years weekly publication. Even this paper distinguished between 'our respected Irish brethren' and the Catholic "tools" of the Church.

138. Register, April 29, 1867. J. G. Daly was the son of the Catholic Governor of South Australia between 1862 and 1868, Sir Dominic Daly. He was a solicitor and practised in Adelaide during his years there, meanwhile taking a major role in all Catholic activities. He resigned from the Central Council for Catholic education in December 1867, because he felt that the political action planned to be undertaken by that body (the presentation of a petition against the current Education regulations) would compromise his father. Governor Daly died in 1868, and his son left the colony for Mauritius in 1871.

sectarian teaching allowed under the present Education Board, but the Register applauded the Church's independent stance, and later testified to the progress made in the first year under the Council and the Sisters of St. Joseph. ¹³⁹

The problems met by the Council in the next few years were largely internal: there was very little appearance of education as a sectarian issue at elections. Yet, though there was little of the public clamour about 'priestly dominance' that surrounded the development of an independent system in New South Wales a decade later, there was a new awareness of potential Catholic influence, felt by Protestants and Catholics alike. Distrust of the Catholic Church, in spite of its poverty and minority position, had been displayed in the debates of October, 1860 on the Catholic petition against the use of the Bible in public schools, when a number of Members opposed the notion on the basis that the clergy would not be content with that concession, but would be encouraged to agitate for denominational schools. ¹⁴⁰ The success of the independent Catholic move strengthened Protestant suspicions as it generated confidence and independence among the Catholic community. When the Register took a stand favourable to concessions to Catholics in 1873, the Irish Harp regarded this new 'understanding' as a feint, intended to disarm Catholic opposition to the free and secular Education Bill currently before the Council. ¹⁴¹ There was

139. Register, March 7, 1868. In spite of any personal antagonism to the Catholic Church, all voluntarists had to agree in principle with the move by that body to establish and finance its own system of education.

140. South Australian Parliamentary Debates, October 10, 1860. This suggestion was made by Reynolds, Cole, Hanson, and, more militantly, by Magarey ('He knew the Roman Catholics as a body loved to read the scriptures (Oh, and Hear). It was the clergy alone who objected that they should do so.') p. 1064.

141. Irish Harp, November 14, 1873.

surprisingly little agitation by any denomination against the next secular Bill, introduced into Parliament in July, 1875, mainly because the emphasis was upon improving the quality of education per se, but after the Bill had been passed by both Houses, the Anglican Bishop raised a point that reflected a new dimension of mingled fear and respect in attitudes to the independent Catholic system of education -

There is another view also of the question forced upon us by the attitude of the Roman or Vatican Church. If Protestant States exclude religious instruction from their national schools, it becomes a duty for believers to set up denominational schools for Christian children. Thus, too, would be justified the sectarian action of the Roman Church in establishing everywhere village schools under the Sisterhood of St. Joseph, or the Christian brethren, as in France; colleges, such as Stronghurst and Sevenhills, under Jesuit Fathers; and finally completing the educational edifices by Roman Universities, as proposed in Ireland, France, London and elsewhere. Then comes the Pope first, the Queen second, and then follows the dread alternative now offered to Europe and the world - Vaticanism or infidelity. Are these the coming results of free, compulsory and secular education?

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The Catholic Church and the laity of South Australia were to face an enormous financial burden in maintaining their separate schools and teachers, and continued to petition for legislation enabling them to use some of the funds they contributed towards the general education system, but the venture begun in 1867 was, by any standards, an enormous success. It raised the spectre of 'Rome rule' in the colony, but it also won for the Catholic body a new regard from some of their fellow-colonists, as evident in the Legislative Council debate on religious teaching in schools

142. Bishop Short, Register, December 29, 1875.

in 1881.¹⁴³ Most importantly, it gave the Catholic population a new sense of self-esteem, a new confidence. There was still protest against the costs of supporting education, embarrassment in the face of the inadequacy of other institutions, backsliding by some Catholic parents who continued to send their children to the public schools, and little unanimity in Catholic voting behaviour. There was little to spare for secondary education, and this limited the intellectual, social and economic advancement of the Catholic community - the Christian Brothers arrived in 1879 and established a secondary school in Wakefield Street and subsequently Rostrevor college, but the Brothers were obliged to exact fees, and the establishment of Rostrevor was indirectly responsible for the closure of the only other college, St. Aloysius' at Sevenhill, in 1886, for there were not enough wealthy Catholics to sustain two institutions.¹⁴⁴ But it was the Catholic schools that provided the next generation of Catholic leaders - men who also won for themselves a respected position in South Australian life and thereby added to the

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143. South Australian Parliamentary Debates, July 5, 1881. The Hon. H. Scott stated that 'He respected the Catholics for the course they had taken, and he was certain that unless some measures were adopted to facilitate religious education in schools, the Church of England, the Wesleyan, the Lutheran and other denominations would follow the lead of the Catholics in the matter.' (p. 166).
144. Father Morrison, 'The story of Catholic education in South Australia; IV. The Christian Brothers 1879 - .' MS pp. 12-16 in Adelaide A.A.; R. Fogarty, Education in Australia, vol 2, pp. 316, 321, 330.

status of their community.¹⁴⁵ In 1900, the Marist Brothers opened a school at Port Adelaide, later known as Sacred Heart college, Glenelg, which, like Rostrevor, became an enduring and highly esteemed institution. The advancement of individual members of the Catholic body was a slow process - the Church turned to the small landed elite for support of the colleges¹⁴⁶ and the sons of landowners and the existing professional and business minority were most readily able to take advantage of higher education - but every successful Catholic was an argument against Catholic inferiority and the temptation to reject faith for material advantage.¹⁴⁷

One further development of the seventies was a revival of Irish national awareness in South Australia, which for a short time brought the Irish of that colony closer in touch with their fellows in the eastern

145. Peter Paul Gillen, born at Clare, South Australia, and educated at a Catholic school there, became Director of the (revived) Catholic paper, the Southern Cross, was Member for Stanley 1889-1896 and Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Holder ministry and the Kingston administration, and a member of the Clare corporation and an auditor of the district council. James Vincent O'Loughlin, born at Gumeracha in 1852 and educated at Beasley's Catholic school at Kapunda, was the first editor of the Southern Cross with Gillen, was an early member of the A.N.A. and President of it from December 1903, became the Member for Flinders 1910-1912 and M.L.C. 1888-1902, and was Chief Secretary in the Kingston ministry of 1896, Commander of the Irish Corps and Vice-president of the Irish National Federation, and took part in the 1913 Irish-Australian convention held in Melbourne, at the instance of Archbishop Mannix. William Joseph Denny was of a later generation, born in 1872, and attended the Christian Brothers college in Adelaide before taking his law degree at Adelaide University and becoming a long-time member of the Assembly (1900-1933). He also was a member of the A.N.A. and was the second editor of the Southern Cross after O'Loughlin, holding that position 1896-1903, when he resigned to take up law studies.
146. Catholic Record, January 28, 1881.
147. In 1968, South Australia had the largest proportion of Catholic children at non-Catholic schools (Hans Mol, Religion in Australia, p. 180) but many of these were the children of Italian and other European immigrants of the post-war era, with no experience of or pride in the nineteenth century struggle for Catholic schools.

colonies. Between 1876 and 1880, largely under the impetus of revived immigrant nomination schemes,¹⁴⁸ more than 4,000 Irish arrived in South Australia, a considerable addition to a population which at the 1876 census totalled less than 14,000.¹⁴⁹ These immigrants came from an Ireland much changed from the condition in which the South Australian Irish immigrants of the fifties had left it, and very much more assertive politically under the Home Rule league founded in 1873 and increasingly radical under the leadership of Parnell after 1877, and they were able to make a particularly immediate impact upon the Irish of the colony because of the system under which they had arrived, many having been nominated by friends or relatives. Yet it also seems that the new Catholic unity on the education issue aided this sense of national identity. The Irish consciousness of the clergy had been apparent during the conflict with the Irish Harp between 1871 and 1872, and it was the Norwood Catholic priest who called in 1878 for the congregation to join the St. Patrick's day procession 'to show they were true Irishmen and had the faith'. An anonymous letter to the Register protesting against this mingling of a national with a religious procession evoked a retort from Hugh O'Neill that it would and should be both national and religious and that the Irish

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148. Quite a large number of these immigrants were, however, Protestant Irish, part of an increased emigration from Northern Ireland as a result of increasing agrarian and political strife under the agitation of the Land League and the Home Rule Association.
149. At the 1876 census, there were 13,881 Irish, only 211 of whom were under age 15.

needed no help from the English to celebrate, and a number of other replies that the Register declined to publish, 'as being altogether stronger than the circumstances required or justified'.¹⁵⁰ The celebration was attended by more than 3,000 colonists, including non-Irish, and though the Register chose to see this as 'pleasing evidence of the loyalty of our Irish fellow-colonists and of their contentment with their position as South Australians',¹⁵¹ it was perhaps more important that the celebration exhibited a primarily national character at all, since for many years the day had been observed by masses and by concerts or lectures at which the speakers and audience were Catholic, with the proceeds of the performances going to various Catholic institutions and funds.¹⁵² In 1880, the proceeds of the St. Patrick's day concert were devoted to the Irish relief fund, a fund begun by the Adelaide Mayor in December 1879 to aid famine distress in Ireland, which extended to all the colonies and collected £73,000 in less than four months.¹⁵³ The Irish Land League, National League, and Home Rule agitations that followed were to revive national hostilities all throughout the colonies, but the Irish cause was supported in South Australia by

150. Register, March 2, 4, 1878.

151. Register, March 18, 1878.

152. In 1869, St. Patrick's day was celebrated by a soiree in St. Francis Xaviers', with a lecture on 'Some worthy sons of St. Patrick' by J. G. Daly and Irish songs, the proceeds going to poor children. In 1873 there was a concert and a lecture by Dr. Gunson on Venice in St. Francis Xaviers'. In 1875 there was a presentation of a staff to Bishop Reynolds, and in 1876 there were masses and social gatherings in St. Francis Xaviers' and St. Ignatius (Norwood).

153. For report on the inauguration of this fund, see Register, December 20, 1879. The Mayor, Vicar-General Byrne, Archdeacon Russell, J. G. Bray, M.P., Sir George Kingston, and other Members of the Parliament and many clergy were at the meeting.

native-born Catholics¹⁵⁴ and by Irish Catholics long resident in the colony and previously devoted only to Catholic causes,¹⁵⁵ as well as by the recent immigrants from Ireland: a stance that might not have been taken had the Irish Catholic community not been encouraged earlier to act as conscience demanded, even against the pressure of conformity to majority South Australian English-Protestant society.

New South Wales and Victoria presented a different situation from that of South Australia, and a more complex one. They boasted much larger Irish populations, and the evidence of Irish self-assertion was strong, if spasmodic, in both colonies. There were differences in the constitution of the Irish population of these two colonies: more than half of the Irish to emigrate to New South Wales before 1880 did so prior to 1850, but by far the largest number of Irish to emigrate to Victoria did so in the fifties. These immigrant groups may have shared the same experiences and hardships in Ireland, but emigrants of the forties were often differently motivated from those emigrating in the fifties.

Even in the forties, Victoria had attracted Irishmen of wealth and qualifications, lawyers, farmers and graziers drawn from Ireland and from New South Wales itself by the opportunities offered in a developing

154. e.g. Patrick Whelan, born at Clare in 1855, was one of the founders of the National League, and its secretary until 1890. He represented South Australia at the 1883 Irish National Convention, and was one of the organisers of the reception for the Irish envoys (Dillon, Grattan, Bart, Esmonde and Deasy) in 1889. He was secretary of the Land League fund-raising committee, June 1882-April 1883.
155. Dr. Michael Gunson was also on the fund-raising committee formed on behalf of the Land League in June 1882 and, though always a moderate in his expression of Irish patriotism, attended many of the meetings held by the Redmond brothers in Adelaide in 1883, and chaired the first meeting in the Town Hall.

district. In the fifties, the lure of gold attracted many single men and women, often poor and illiterate, but emigrating because of the excitement and promise of the new land, not because they were crushed by intolerable conditions in Ireland. The colony they came to may not have been 'paved with gold', but it offered often spectacular wages, a wide choice of employment and the right to participate in the government and future of the colony. Those who were dissatisfied with their situation could, after 1858, use their vote to voice their opinions, and there were plenty of Irishmen for whom they could vote. Because of their numbers and spread throughout society, the Victorian Irish felt themselves neither alien nor inferior. The decline of Irish emigration to Victoria in the sixties was not surrounded by the overt anti-Irish, anti-Catholic sentiment that was evident in New South Wales regulations of this period. Rather, it was part of a decline in assisted immigration generally, and as such it weakened ties with Ireland without arousing Irish consciousness and unity against a sense of colonial oppression.

In New South Wales, the Irish had been numerous since the inauguration of the penal settlement, but declined steadily as a proportion of the total population from the late forties. Fears aroused in the forties, when the Irish represented almost a third of the population and expressed themselves

as aggressive nationalists, hostile to English rule and institutions,¹⁵⁶ were sustained in the sixties and seventies by constant reference to an Irish faction or an Irish vote, but in fact few Irishmen were successful in politics after 1869 in New South Wales, and even fewer accepted any responsibility towards their countrymen or co-religionists. The expression of Irish nationalism in New South Wales therefore often took the form of an exaggerated defence of everything Irish in defiance of colonial opinion, a meeting of intolerance with their own form of bigotry, and support of all Irish movements in the (perhaps unconscious) attempt to improve their colonial standing by changing Ireland's political and economic situation.

The men who led these national organisations in New South Wales were a small, discernible group of mainly tradesmen and artisans¹⁵⁷ most of whom

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156. A quite spectacular instance of the retention of old national groups comes from the papers of Sidney Harold Sheedy, made available to the Mitchell library, Sydney, in 1966. These papers include a history of the Society of United Irishmen in Australia, 1791-1863, purportedly from the diaries of James Sheedy, who was transported in 1806, and his brother Michael, transported in 1818, who were in succession the secretaries of the Society. There is little evidence that the Society actually did anything, and it appears to have received few new members after 1820. When the society was closed finally in January, 1864, Michael Sheedy wrote 'It is now evident in this year of 1864 that the old hatred between ourselves, the Loyal Lodges and the landlords is being pushed into the background by Gold and Steam-engines. However, the political battle is still by no means won, there are still a lot of people who hate one another politically'. There was no information on such a Society in the colonial press, and at no time do these Papers give membership figures, but they represent an interesting example of the degree to which some long-resident Irish colonists could still totally maintain the thoughts and feelings and prejudices, learnt in Ireland. (Sheedy, Sidney Harold, Papers. Ms. in Mitchell library, Sydney).
157. For an excellent summary of the men behind the movements of this era, see Mark Lyons, 'Aspects of Sectarianism in New South Wales circa 1865-1880', Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1972. His appendix gives a short biographical summary of many of these men, some of which will subsequently appear in volumes of the Australian Dictionary of Biography.

had arrived in the colony in the forties and who appear to have been motivated by the fear that the Irish heritage would be lost by the native-born population which by 1851 already outnumbered any of the immigrant nationalities. The desire that their colonial-born children should know their ancestral country and its culture combined with organisation for Irish self-preservation in an often hostile environment: the danger/^{was}that the expression of this Irish heritage would be largely negative, since many of those who urged and founded such societies had left Ireland at a time of extreme depression and bitterness, and even now saw in colonial hostility to Irish emigration a continuation of the old oppression. Initially, however, the tone of the Irish national societies was positive and forward-looking, and their creation was in response less to colonial rejection than to the inadequacies of the Church in meeting and seeking through education to disarm attacks on the literacy and qualifications of assisted Irish Catholic immigrants. The Celtic Association was formed in 1856 in response to the call of the Freeman's Journal, then under the editorship of the pro-Irish and anti-clerical ex-priest, Joseph Sheridan Moore, for a society that would 'bring Irishmen closer together in all the relations of life ... preserve and foster the traditions we love ... become the guardian of our Anglo-Irish literature ... (and) soon become a source of blessing to old Ireland and a national benefit to Australia, by promoting a healthy Irish immigration to these shores.'¹⁵⁸ Though the Celtic Association never attracted a large membership and appears to have established

158. Freeman's Journal, June 14, 1856.

only one branch outside Sydney¹⁵⁹ it gained control over much local Irish activity, suggesting that there was little alternative cohesion. It was the Celtic Association that organised the St. Patrick's day dinners between 1857 and 1860, the meeting to refute censure of Irish female immigrants in April, 1858, and the Donegal relief fund the following month. In October, 1859, however, the Association resolved to devote more attention to its own immediate concerns - the organisation of debating classes, lectures and meetings¹⁶⁰ - and this appears to have been 'the beginning of the end'. The St. Patrick's day dinner the following year witnessed a testimonial to Denis Kearney for his zeal on behalf of the Association, but it also heard J. H. Plunkett, as Chairman, justifying such celebrations for the benefit derived 'by causing the exchange of festive civilities between men of different countries, and by thus making them better Australians in more intimately amalgamating them.'¹⁶¹

Many of the Celtic Association's former members were among the founding members of the Australian-Hibernian society established in February, 1861. The founding committee established fees at one shilling per quarter, to give all a chance to join, and by mid-March the Association had almost 100 members. Like its predecessor, the Australian-Hibernian society was an avowed national body, and it inherited something of the anti-clerical

159. By February, 1858, the Association had 170 members. The branch formed outside Sydney was that at Bathurst, founded in October, 1858.

160. Freeman's Journal, October 29, 1859.

161. Ibid., March 21, 1860.

character of the Celtic Association:¹⁶² but it promised a more total commitment to the colonial situation and the 'social and intellectual advancement of Irishmen and their posterity in the new country of their adoption.' In 1864, however, enthusiasm for the Irish national League, founded a few months earlier in Ireland under John Martin and the O'Donaghue brothers, led to the supersession of the Association: the Association did not itself become a branch of the League, but many of its members became supporters and office-holders of that organisation, and the Australian-Hibernian Association was soon lost from sight.¹⁶³ The Irish National League was a much more widely popular body than either of its predecessors; in October, less than six months after its foundation, the League boasted 2,000 members and branches in many Sydney suburbs.¹⁶⁴ The

162. The foundation of the new body was heralded by a letter of 'Erionnach' to the Freeman's Journal, published January 10th, 1863, who stated 'I have nothing to say against Young Men's societies here or elsewhere; but they are organised on an entirely different basis from that on which a Celtic Association should be founded. Such an association ... should be founded on broad Irish national principles - should be in correspondence and united with all societies of the same description throughout the world, with the different Irish brotherhoods of America, Ireland, etc., and extend its ramifications and affiliations to all parts of this colony and the sister colonies. There are plenty of us in Sydney, true-hearted Irishmen; and if anyone gives the lead, we shall follow heart and soul.'
163. The Treasurer, Richard Creagh, became secretary of the Sydney branch of the League, and both the President, McCaffrey, and the Vice-president, T. O'Neill, became founding members. Former Celtic Association members and officials also joined, including Denis Kearney, Richard Cleary, Michael Riley, James Butler (who became Vice-president) and J. J. Moore, the first I.N.L. Treasurer.
164. Freeman's Journal, October 22, 1864.

major distinction was that the League acted in support of a movement in Ireland, rather than to promote Irish unity and culture in the colony¹⁶⁵ and it appears that this emotional appeal was considerably more effective than any proposed cultural advancement. Those Irish who did refuse to join based their decision either on the argument of 'what good could it do' for Ireland, or on the suspicion that the League would be used for other purposes.¹⁶⁶ The first objection was easily answered by the fact that subscriptions to the association (a membership fee of one shilling per annum) were sent to the headquarters of the movement in Dublin, to support nationalist candidates and agitation for Ireland's independence, and by the assertion, often repeated during the Home Rule movement, that England could not ignore united colonial Irish opinion against the maintenance of the Union. The latter objection was an echo of the problem faced by the Celtic Association. One of the last meetings of that body recognised that 'Some of the members, who only joined it to serve their own purposes, had used the Society as a tool towards the attainment of their object, and then deserted it'¹⁶⁷ and it was this theme that provided the basis of non-Irish antagonism to the Irish National League branch in Sydney. The 'object' for which the Celtic Association had been

165. 'The branch of the Irish National League in Sydney shall be a Public Association, whose sole object will be to cooperate with the Members of the League in Ireland, to advocate a separate and independent Irish Legislature, and the Rules of the Irish National League shall be adopted by this branch so far as practicable.'
Rules and By-laws of the New South Wales branch of the Irish National League, p. 7.

166. Freeman's Journal, July 9, 1864.

167. Ibid., May 10, 1862.

used was apparently that for which a number of Victorian Irish had used the Melbourne St. Patrick's society in the forties - the achievement of municipal office. When the I.N.L. elected John Robertson, an English Protestant Member of the Assembly, as President of the League, the Herald was quick to discern a potential political weapon, alleging that 'It is now attempted to erect the Irish difficulty into an Australian wall of separation' and that Robertson's sympathy for Ireland 'is simply a scheme to collect about him a certain number of adherents for his own special purposes: that the organisation to rescue the Emerald Isle from British domination is simply a plan to recruit for local war.'¹⁶⁸ The secretary of the League immediately sought to refute these allegations, pointing out that many League members were supporters of the Martin government¹⁶⁹ but it is interesting that Robertson was chosen for this position at all. Robertson had no record of anti-Irish sentiments or actions, but neither had he adopted any notably pro-Irish stance. He may have been chosen with some consideration of the sympathetic support of Irish independence by a potential New South Wales Premier, but Robertson as President could also provide respectability to the I.N.L. in the colony, and a buffer against accusations of national exclusiveness. Though both the League and Robertson himself were ridiculed by the Herald, concerted hostility was only aroused by subsequent events in Ireland, with the intrusion of Fenian activity into the movement in Ireland and the equation of Irish nationalism with violence and terror, and the apparent adoption of such tactics by the colonial Irish in the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in Sydney in March, 1868.

168. Sydney Morning Herald, September 3, 1864.

169. Ibid., September 6, 1864, letter from Patrick Thomas Crogan.

The Victorian Irish did not join their New South Wales countrymen in their support of national institutions. There was no branch of the Irish National League formed in Melbourne, and the existence of Fenianism in the colony alleged by a prominent English Catholic, Dr. A. C. Brownless, in 1866, against which Bishop Goold resolved to 'use his episcopal authority'¹⁷⁰ was neither credited by the colonial press nor manifested itself in any formal organisation.¹⁷¹ The response to colonial criticism of 'the Irish' was at once more moderate and more effective than in New South Wales, and did not leave an extreme nationalist fringe with no voice but that of sectarian intolerance and exclusiveness. This had been a very early development, because Victoria in the forties and fifties was a much more fluid society than the older New South Wales. Irish colonists who had joined the Melbourne St. Patrick's society founded in 1842 were soon involved in municipal politics, and entered colonial politics with the establishment of an elective Legislative Council in 1851.¹⁷² The St. Patrick's society went into decline in the fifties, in spite of the valiant efforts of Edmund Finn: between 1859 and 1860 it was almost dissolved for

170. Argus, September 12, 1866.

171. The 'evidence' of Fenianism discerned by Brownless was at a meeting of the Melbourne Catholic Young Men's Society, where a lecture on Theobald Wolfe Tone was seen as having scattered 'the seeds of Fenianism and disloyalty'. It is likely that Goold was rather sceptical of Dr. Brownless' fears, just as in 1874 he disagreed with Archbishop Polding over the potential spread of Fenianism in Australia in 1874. (Goold to Dr. Fitzpatrick, January 25, 1874, from Rome). Had there in fact been any real basis to Brownless' fears, the Age, at least, would certainly have taken up the attack on such 'importations'.

172. John O'Shanassy, President of the Society 1845-1850, was returned to the Legislative Council in 1851, and two other members, Patrick O'Brien and James Murphy, were returned at the 1853 election, for Kilmore and Melbourne respectively.

want of capital; the benefit society aspect absorbed the original national-religious orientation, and in 1862 the society was officially registered as the St. Patrick's Benefit Society.¹⁷³ In contrast, the political life of the Irish community flourished. Charles Gavan Duffy arrived in 1856, and soon shared with O'Shanassy a powerful role in Victorian politics. An average of eight Irishmen, mostly Catholic, were returned for the Legislative Assembly in each of the first nine Parliaments, 1856-1880 - not a large number in a House of 78 Members,¹⁷⁴ but considerably higher than the average Irish representation in the New South Wales Parliament. Accordingly, the Victorian Irish sought their equality in colonial society within the institutions of that society; a lead given by the Irish patriot and 'rebel', C. G. Duffy, when he accepted position in a colonial government that avowed allegiance to the British throne. The Victorian Irish were as generous to appeals for sympathy and financial aid from Ireland as their fellows in other colonies¹⁷⁵ but their attitude to Ireland's claims on them was rather more independent. The greater degree of assurance with which they maintained and expressed their national ties was a reflection not only of their greater numbers, position and security in Victorian society, but also of a widespread belief in their ability to significantly influence and participate in colonial development.

The importance of this political weapon in sustaining Irish confidence in Victoria is more apparent when we observe the often dismal reality of

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173. Advocate, February 22, 1873, for a short history of the Society.
174. The Assembly had 60 members until the Act of 1858, increasing it to 78. No new electoral act was passed until 1876, when the number of Members was increased to 86.
175. They contributed £29,378.9.3 to the Irish relief fund in 1880, an amount equalled only by New South Wales.

the colonial situation of at least the Melbourne Irish, and their conformity in many respects to the unflattering stereotype drawn of them. The birthplaces and religion of criminal offenders began to be distinguished in the Victorian annual statistics from the fifties. While this may not have been a deliberate move to discredit the Irish immigrants¹⁷⁶ it was much in advance of parallel practice in New South Wales, and from the very beginning these statistics proved damaging to the Irish image. In 1861, Irish-born were 33% of the total offenders taken into custody, a proportion double that of their representation in the population.¹⁷⁷ Though a great many of the arrests were for the offence of drunkenness, and two-thirds of the Irish men and women were among the cases 'summarily disposed of or held to bail', the obvious disproportion of Irish among offenders of law and order was a powerful weapon in the hands of those arguing Irish 'unsuitability' as immigrants and colonists. Nor could this unfavourable situation be explained in terms of the general lawlessness of the gold rush era termination and the problems of assimilation of Irish immigrants who had only recently arrived, for the Irish representation in

176. The Registrar General from January, 1859 was an English convert to Catholicism, William Henry Archer, one of the most ardent supporters of the Church in the colony and a close confidante of Bishop Goold. He had been acting Registrar General from July 1853 and assistant Registrar General until his succession to that position, and thus it seems likely that the decision to collect detailed statistics was in the interests of complete records than any hostility to any group. Similarly in New South Wales, the Registrar General under whom fuller information on immigrants, offenders, the insane, etc. began to be collected was T. A. Coghlan, an Australian-born Catholic of Irish parentage, one of the greatest statisticians of that colony's history.

177. Parliamentary Papers, 1862-3, vol. 3 pp. 34-5.

the crime lists continued with little variation - in 1867, they were 5,775 of the 18,791 men and 2,315 of the 4,930 women taken into custody, and in 1877, when the Irish were only 13% of the colonial population, they were 28% of the male and 40% of the female prison population.¹⁷⁸ In addition, the Irish rated poorly in terms of literacy, relative to the rest of the population. This was singled out in both the assisted immigration statistics and in the annual marriage statistics, in which the participants in Catholic marriages much more regularly 'signed with a mark' than those of other denominations.¹⁷⁹ Though the Victorian situation was probably no worse than that in New South Wales, the latter colony did not record nationality and religion in the criminal statistics until the late seventies, and ridicule of the Irish community without actual figures could be more easily dismissed as bigotry.¹⁸⁰ In Victoria, the Irish 'distinction' was

178. Parliamentary Papers, 1868, vol. 2 Statistical Register for 1867, p. 38: Parliamentary Papers, 1878, vol. 3 p. 211.
179. In 1861, of 381 assisted Irish immigrants, 52 could neither read nor write, and 57 could read only. In 1871, there were 948 Catholic marriages, and 379 (40%) of those involved had signed the Register with a mark, compared with 180 for 1014 Anglican marriages (18%) and 134 in 962 Presbyterian marriages (14%). Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1872, vol. 2 no. 71.
180. In the sixties, religions were given only of men executed, and both men executed in 1861 were Catholics, as were two of three executed in 1871 and two of three in 1882, one born in Ireland and the other in South Australia. When, from 1879, the nationality of prisoners was recorded, the Irish and Catholics of New South Wales fared badly: 2,055 of the 8,382 males received into prison in 1879 were Irish, and 3,796 were Catholic; while 602 of the 1,954 females were Irish and 981 Catholic, a representation almost double the Irish and Catholic proportion in the total population. The New South Wales figures for drunkenness in the eighties show the Irish numbers regularly exceeding that of the English or the New South Wales-born, and up to one-third of the total offenders. New South Wales Parliamentary Papers, 1889 Vol. 3, Statistical Register for 1888, p. 25.

eagerly pointed out by the press and by those opposed to aiding further Irish immigration or education in denominational schools.¹⁸¹ The Irish population was, however, able to keep some sort of reign on overt denigration of the whole Irish race by the deployment of their vote, or at least the threat of it; before 1867, there was as much approbium attaching to the 'Orange' label as to extreme 'Green' tactics, and political candidates did not lightly risk such a tag.

The varying responses of the colonial Irish to developments in the late sixties was much influenced by their changing local situation, by the relation between Ireland and England, and the level of compromise reached between national loyalty and identification with the Church. During the sixties, Ireland experienced a resurgence of aggressive and often violent nationalism, an essentially secular and anti-English movement under the Fenian organization founded in America in 1858. As an avowed revolutionary organization, the Fenians were condemned by Rome, and this response was adopted by Cardinal Cullen in Ireland. This threatened the division of Irish nationalism and the Church for the first time on a major scale in modern Irish history¹⁸² and provided a potential clash of loyalties for the Irish people. In fact, this conflict was often more apparent than real - many of the clergy privately supported the Fenians, and the Irish

181. e.g. Argus comments on the disproportion of the Irish in the criminal returns, January 29, 1864 ('Crimes of violence are in the ascendant, the Irish eclipsing all their competitors for the distinction of breaking most heads'); and those of W. M. K. Vale during the immigration debates of 1870, opposing Irish immigrants as likely to introduce both crime and Catholicism into the colony (Victorian Parliamentary Debates, June 7, 1870, p. 733).

182. There had been some conflict between the Church and the nationalist leaders during the Repeal agitation of the forties, and this appears to have permanently affected some of them, like Duffy and John Mitchel, but there was no open conflict of loyalties for the mass of Catholic supporters of Repeal.

laity considered themselves both Fenian supporters and Catholics, minimising the hostility of the Hierarchy to the movement by arguing that Rome had been misguided as to the aims and methods of the Fenians by interested English advisors. This was made easier by the support given to the aims of the Fenians by some highly placed Bishops and priests, and by the fact that the movement was not actually condemned by name from Rome until January, 1870.¹⁸³

In Australia, the loyalties of the Irish were being tested by a more immediate issue, that of education. While the Church was particularly anxious at this time not to alienate the Irish laity, as campaigns were mounted in each of the colonies to combat the trend to national and secular education, the ultimate result of this issue was to subordinate national allegiances. This result was not achieved without internal division within the Irish Catholic community, the extent of such conflict varying from one colony to another. At first the Freeman's Journal was the only forum for discussion (the South Australian monthly, the Southern Cross, was founded only in 1867, and the Victorian weekly Advocate began publication the following year) and, under the influence of the recent arrival, Richard O'Sullivan, younger brother of A. M. O'Sullivan of the Dublin Nation and a former member of the literary staff of that paper, it took an increasingly partisan stance toward the Fenian movement in defiance of public antagonism to the activities of that body. Yet even the Freeman's stand was never solely motivated by patriotism: its comments reflected a response not only

183. Maurice Harmon, Fenians and Fenianism, pp. 11-23; T. W. Moody, 'The new departure in Irish politics' in H. A. Cronne, Essays in British and Irish History in honour of James Badie Todd, pp. 303-333.

to non-Irish condemnation of the movement, but to colonial developments affecting the Irish in other ways. In December, 1866 Henry Parkes' Public Schools Act, introduced the preceding September, was passed by both Houses, generating a new urgency in the Church's campaign for separate Catholic education. The largely Irish or Irish-Australian Catholic laity had to be convinced that the Act was an instrument of tyranny and oppression, an injustice, a denial of their religious and civil rights, and it is not, perhaps, unreasonable to view the subsequent stance of the Freeman's Journal on Irish affairs in relation to these developments in the colony. The Fenian issue could not be ignored after 1866, and the Irish populations in each of the colonies were forced to evaluate their position on Ireland and their peculiar obligations as Irishmen in the face of a revived and controversial national activity. The Hierarchy and prominent lay Catholics may often have wished that the Freeman's had been less successful in arousing local Irish support for the Fenian cause, but the Catholic press in each colony, and ultimately most of the Irish Catholic population chose to follow the lead also given by that paper, of adapting a heightened national consciousness to the Catholic cause.

The attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh, visiting Australia in an official capacity as a representative of the British throne, by an Irish Catholic colonist in Sydney on March 12, 1868 was a spectacular but not in itself significant act: in spite of the 'Fenian scares' that followed, there was no evidence that it was endorsed or condoned by any Irish

colonists.¹⁸⁴ However, the responses to the incident provide an insight into the situation of the Irish in each of the colonies, and their reaction to sectarian attack, at a time when the Church was gathering its forces for a long struggle against the combined forces of extreme Protestantism and secularism. Those who benefited most from O'Farrell's act were the extremist Protestant organisations, particularly the Orange lodges, and it could not have escaped the notice of the Church how adroitly Irish and Catholic loyalties and characteristics were combined to produce a total image of the 'typical' Catholic colonist on whom the future of the Church in Australia would depend.

A wave of anti-Irish sentiment, together with fear of an alleged Fenian organisation in the colonies, swept the Australian press immediately following the attempt on the Duke's life. The attitude of the Sydney press was especially harsh, because of the shame felt that the incident had happened in their colony. In its first reports of the assassination, the Herald urged moderation and restraint in seeking to blame any individuals or associations, but by the next day it had made the connection with Fenianism, and on the 16th expanded this into a long and bitter criticism of all Irish colonists -

184. The prosecutions under the Treason Felony Act, passed a few days after the assassination attempt without a division in the New South Wales Parliament, were hardly conclusive, being largely arrests for sentiments insulting to the Queen made by Irishmen in hotels, and for processions in support of Irish national independence. See Register, April 4, 1868; Freeman's Journal, March 28, 1868. There appears to have been only one prosecution, - of a Goulburn Irishman who said while 'in his cups' that the Duke's assassination 'served him right', and no Fenian connections were demonstrated in his case.

... But we do ask, what has Fenianism to do with Australia, and by what right a Fenian pollutes the soil of this colony with his blood shedding atrocities. It is a violation of what is due to his adopted country. Australia is an open land and free to all comers, if they come to be Australians. But we do not wish this corner of the earth, so remote from Europe, to be the scene of European feuds. We welcome Irishmen, but we do not welcome Fenians ... It is the duty of all true Australians not only to discourage but to put down with all their might all attempts to interweave with Australian affairs foreign questions with which they have no concern There is no class of our fellow colonists who should more carefully consider this matter than those who have come from Ireland. If they study the prevailing temper of their co-Australians, they can scarcely fail to see that the obtrusion of Irish affairs within the circle of Australian politics gives offence and provokes a little reaction. They subject themselves to a large amount of unnecessary hostility, and provoke against themselves a large amount of undeserved prejudice, by making their career as Australians subordinate to their past history and sympathy as Irishmen. They isolate themselves from the larger body of their fellow colonists; they check the natural and necessary process of social amalgamation, they place themselves in a perpetual minority and by turning their eyes rather to the past than to the future, they miss the destiny that is possible for them. No class would gain more by abating the fervour of national antagonism than our Irish fellow colonists. No class has so much to lose by a fanatical preservation of hereditary hatred. It is to their own interest as well as to the interest of Australians generally, that Irish questions should be expurgated from our local politics. 185

In Victoria, where there were no Irish national organisations equivalent to those in New South Wales which had provoked this view of the non-assimilating Irish, the reaction was different. The Melbourne Age quickly accepted the 'evidence' that O'Farrell was a Fenian, but turned its attention not to the links of the Irish colonists with such organisations, but to the alleged support of Fenianism by the Catholic

clergy and to an attack on the newly founded Advocate and the Sydney Freeman's Journal as exponents of Fenianism.¹⁸⁶ The first concern of the Argus was with the shame that accrued to all Australians because of the deed, and regret that O'Farrell had until recently been a resident of Ballarat.¹⁸⁷ It too stressed that O'Farrell had been a 'leading member' of the Catholic Church in Ballarat, but maintained from the first that 'There is no evidence whatever that any such (Fenian) organisation exists, or that the movement to which that name has been given has any active or influential sympathisers in any one of these colonies'.¹⁸⁸ The South Australian Register initially credited the presumption of a Fenian element, but the following day rejected this as unproven, reiterating this after O'Farrell's execution in April. Like the Herald, the Register assumed a distinct Irish response to the incident and to Fenianism; unlike that paper, however, the Register also recognised that the ambiguous position in which the Irish had been placed was unfair and largely undeserved,¹⁸⁹ and its thoughtful editorial on a group who had given little cause for alarm in that colony was cited by the Catholic Advocate of Victoria as most praiseworthy.¹⁹⁰

The various attitudes expressed by these papers were a measure of the Irish position in each colony, and the Irish responses were similarly

186. Age, March 17 to 21, 1868.

187. Argus, March 13, 1868.

188. Ibid.

189. Register, March 13, 14, 16, 1868.

190. Advocate, March 28, 1868.

conditioned. In South Australia, the Irish took their cue from the Register and the majority opinion it represented: at the condolence meeting of March 16 in Adelaide, prominent Irish Catholics sat on the official platform, and Irish speakers were most forward in their condemnation of the assassination. They were rewarded by the attitude taken by Protestant speakers - 'It said in effect to the Irish Catholics that whatever slur the crimes of Fenianism may cast on their nationality and their faith, they will be viewed as South Australians rather than as Irishmen or Catholics'.¹⁹¹ The 'one note of discord' came from J. T. Bagot, protesting against the implications of the Register that the Irish looked upon assassination more lightly than other men when it was implemented in the national cause. Bagot was, however, a Protestant, a landowner, a member of the Legislative Council, and a respected citizen, and had little to fear from this demonstration of national spirit.

Besides a history of Irish passivity in South Australia, feelings over the shooting were also modified in that colony by the lack of any Irish or anti-Irish organ that might act as a focus of hostility.¹⁹² The situation in New South Wales was very different. There the Freeman's Journal had been under attack for some time prior to the assassination, for its support of Fenian activity in Ireland. In his first notice of

191. Register, March 17, 1868.

192. The Catholic monthly, the Southern Cross and Catholic Herald, had begun a few months earlier, but devoted itself to Catholic affairs. It was a Church organ, under Father Woods, and did not enter the controversy over the assassination beyond a few words of abhorrence of O'Farrell's action.

the incident , the editor (Richard O'Sullivan) was obviously shocked -

It is with feelings of horror and indignation which almost deprive us of the physical power of handling a pen, we sit down to write that a deed has been perpetrated, which will cast a darksome stain upon the annals of New South Wales as long as time shall endure.... The prayer which was fervently uttered by thousands of our countrymen on their learning the sad affair was "Pray God, that he be not an Irishman". 193

In the face of the subsequent but unproven accusations and assumptions of Fenian influence and of Irish Catholic sympathy with the attack, the Freeman's Journal took an aggressive and provocative stand, assailing the Orange lodges, the Herald and Henry Parkes, and alleging that an anti-Irish crusade was being conducted under the provisions of the Treason Felony Act passed a few days after the shooting.¹⁹⁴ In general, however, there was little public stand by Irish or Catholic spokesmen - the Herald commented on March 30 on the numerous appeals for better understanding of the Irish by 'the more articulate of their class', but there were none able or willing to organise Irish protest against their shabby treatment over the incident. The Freeman's Journal boasted that St. Patrick's day was celebrated by huge numbers that year - only five days after the assassination - but this 'demonstration' took the form of attendance at Church services, not a national gathering. There had apparently been an assemblage of 200 'Fenians' in Sydney, but their planned procession was abandoned under the joint persuasion of a Catholic priest and the presence of a body of mounted police.¹⁹⁵ No public defence of the Irish character came from leading

193. Freeman's Journal, March 14, 1868.

194. Ibid., April 18, May 2 and 9, 1868.

195. Register, April 4, 1868.

Irishmen - Plunkett, T. A. Murray, Edward Butler - or Australian Catholics of Irish descent - Geoffrey Eager, W. H. Dalley or Michael Fitzpatrick. Most Irish were apparently willing to allow the Freeman's to fight their battles for them, or unwilling to accept that they, as individuals, shared any responsibility for the current anti-Irish sentiments being presented. This may have been because they felt the hostility was not general (though this was implicitly refuted by the beleaguered mentality evident in the Freeman's and by the enormous growth of Orange lodge membership), but more likely it was a refusal to enter into a controversy which must inevitably distinguish them as supporters of Fenianism and thus as disloyal to the lawfully constituted authority of the British and colonial government. There might indeed have been very few Fenian sympathisers or even radical Irish patriots in the colony, but the denials of the Freeman's Journal and its correspondents were of necessity simply protestations, not proof. The image of the Irish presented by the Herald was compelling as long as a few Sydney Irishmen gathered in national organisations and the Freeman's spoke of particular Irish attitudes, for there was no alternative, positive Irish character which could readily be shown to refute the stereotype.

In Victoria, the Fenian allegations were immediately branded by the Advocate as a political ploy, a suspicion also advanced by the weekly Australasian.¹⁹⁶ The Advocate took a much more moderate and calm stand than its New South Wales counterpart, stating that 'There is not a tendency in the Australian mind to misjudge Irishmen and Catholics. But there are

196. Australasian, March 28, 1868.

men whose political interests and private animosities impel them to strive by every means, fair and foul, to bring about such a tendency'.¹⁹⁷ This was typical of the inclination of the Victorian Irish to seek redress of discrimination or sectarian attack through political means. The usual St. Patrick's day dinner was held that year, and Duffy led a vigorous condemnation of the assassination, but followed this with the contention that the Irish as a community were 'neither responsible for nor sharers in the act of a man who would probably be found to be a monomaniac, and altogether alone in his crime.'¹⁹⁸ The Irish rejected the idea of holding a specifically Irish indignation meeting, but willingly attended the general meetings held to deplore the crime. Sectarian feeling aroused at subsequent elections was possibly more organised because of the new strength and activity of the Orange lodges, prompted by the attempted assassination, but it was not a new element in Victorian society, nor were the Irish electors or candidates intimidated by taunts or memories of the incident.

After O'Farrell's execution in April, there was apparent a considerable sense of shame among colonists and the press for the hasty condemnation elicited in March. Even in New South Wales, where the spectre of a Fenian conspiracy was prolonged by Henry Parkes, there was a growing disbelief in the reality of O'Farrell's 'confession', and the report of the Select Committee on this issue, while not accusing Parkes of fabrication, concluded

197. Advocate, March 21, 1868.

198. Argus, March 18, 1868.

that there had been no grounds for his 'evidence' of a widespread Fenian organisation in the colony.¹⁹⁹ In the debate on the report, Macleay argued -

He believed that what was called Fenian sympathy was nothing more than a feeling of wrong which every true Irishman would feel with regard to the treatment of his country; and that feeling had been drawn out here in sympathy for the poor people at home, who were misled by the outbreak of American Fenianism - for Fenianism was no doubt a thing of American growth altogether. It was a species of republicanism utterly opposed to Christianity of any kind whatever, and it had always been opposed by the priests of the Roman Catholic Church. 200

Yet the long months of suspicion had affected at least the 'respectable' Irish of the colony. It is not clear how representative the Freeman's Journal was under O'Sullivan's editorship in the year or so previous to the assassination - the time of O'Sullivan's control coincided with the development of the Fenian movement and its support in Ireland, and it is impossible to say which was the motivating spirit for the paper's increasing national radicalism. It was clear, however, that the eruption of the Fenian movement into violence, the failure of the Fenian insurrection in 1867, and above all the assassination attempt in Sydney, had damaged the confidence of many of the local Irish in their national assertion. A fund initiated by the Freeman's in May, 1866 to support the families of Irish

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199. William Macleay had moved for a Select committee following the discussion by Parliament of Parkes Kiama disclosures on December 10, 1868. The Report of the Committee on the Fenian Conspiracy was presented to Parliament on February 3, 1869 and debated on the 16th in the Assembly, where much of the actual import of the Report was lost when the issue was made a political one, revolving around support for or opposition to Parkes. See proceedings in the Sydney Morning Herald, February 17, 18, 1869.
200. Sydney Morning Herald, February 17, 1869.

political prisoners, had been criticised as endorsing Fenian crimes, but it had been 'munificently' contributed to.²⁰¹ Another fund, initiated after the O'Farrell incident, by a letter of 'Doon' to the paper complaining that the recent pardon of thirty-four of the sixty Fenian prisoners transported to Western Australia in 1867 was a mockery in view of the inability of these men to afford the passage home, was quickly endorsed by O'Sullivan and a number of correspondents, but O'Sullivan also recognised that the collection 'will not probably be a fashionable one, we do not expect to see the names of many persons of wealth or influence figuring upon the list'.²⁰² The members of the committee were those who had held positions in earlier national organisations²⁰³ and the contributions noted were usually small amounts, no prominent Irish names figuring on the lists published throughout June and July. The division revealed by this appeal was not a new one, as was bitterly noted by William McCurtayne, a long-standing observer of the Irish situation in New South Wales -

There is no person more sensible than I am of the social barriers that interpose between the legitimate wishes of Irishmen desirous of occupying their proper social status in this and every other British colony - where English ideas and customs become predominant. But unfortunately many Irishmen become imbued with the notion that the surest and quickest way to equality with their English friends is, to persistently keep aloof from every movement whose aim and tendency may be in the remotest degree Irish. This in nine cases out of ten do these tinselled sticklers for rank throw their country overboard and like the ancient Israelites prefer to squat alongside the 'flesh-pots' of their hereditary task masters - than to stand erect like men and patriots in the consciousness and rectitude of a just and holy cause. ²⁰⁴

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201. Freeman's Journal, May 5 and 12, 1866. The fund was in response to arrests made in Ireland of Fenian and Irish National League leaders and members following the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland in February, 1866.
202. Freeman's, June 5, 1869.
203. Bernard Caffney, T. O'Neill, James Murphy, with O'Sullivan as secretary of the fund.
204. Freeman's, July 17, 1869.

The conflict of national loyalty with a desire for acceptance in the colony was highlighted when it was proposed that the released prisoners assisted by the fund should come to Sydney before leaving for Ireland or America, instead of departing from Melbourne as originally planned. O'Sullivan noted with disgust that this proposal created alarm among those 'who had worked well enough as long as they thought the "Fenian convicts" would be kept at a respectful distance from them, but who lost all their self-possession and who seemed altogether upset on learning that the men would, of pure necessity, have to come to Sydney'.²⁰⁵ But even he counselled that there be no demonstration on the prisoners' arrival, since 'Nothing would better please the "loyal" fanatics in the city than to be able, by the most violent stretch of the despotic provisions of the Treason Felony Act, to lodge in Darlinghurst any of the liberated men or of their sympathisers'.²⁰⁶ O'Sullivan was to resign from the Freeman's Journal later that month after a disagreement with the paper's co-owners over support for the fund, and retired from Australia the following February, severely disillusioned with the failure of the New South Wales Irish to respond to Ireland's situation. But the tardiness of the Irish colonists in this issue was not simply a personal failure for O'Sullivan. Earlier movements in support of national agitation had regularly divided the Irish community in New South Wales, not over the merits of the movements themselves, but over the advisability of the pursuit of Irish causes by those who had long since left Ireland and made a permanent home in Australia. It was usually the Freeman's Journal, under a variety of editors, that had

205. Ibid., September 25, 1869.

206. Ibid., October 2, 1869.

publicised such movements, and almost inevitably it had met resistance from the Church, which required that attention be given first to Catholic issues (and Archbishop Polding was increasingly opposed to anything Irish after his troubles in the fifties); and from prominent Irishmen like J. H. Plunkett, Peter Faucett or P. A. Jennings, who urged accommodation within Australian society. In each such case, the outcome was modification in the expression of patriotism in the Freeman's (often achieved by a change in editor)²⁰⁷ and frustration for the section of the Irish community who could or would not participate in colonial causes, but whose involvement in Irish affairs only made their situation in New South Wales less rewarding.

Once again, the New South Wales reaction was both more timid and more sectarian than that in Victoria. The Melbourne Irish contributed to the Released Prisoners' fund with little public controversy, the Advocate being the receiving agent for subscriptions. The response to the prevention of the ex-prisoners from remaining in the colony, under the provisions of an old (1852) Influx of Convicts Prevention Act, was not impotent anger but a deputation, including many Members of the Assembly, to the Chief Secretary.²⁰⁸ McCulloch refused the request to waive the Act, but the decision was at least argued on constitutional grounds, and when Duffy raised the matter in the House on August 5, the only comment was from

207. As was now done, O'Sullivan being replaced with Thomas Butler as editor. Under Butler, the Freeman's made this response to the comments of the Herald during the immigration debates that such funds proved that Irish colonists acted in exclusive organisations - 'but this exceptional circumstance disproves the assertion of the Herald, for the persons who took part in it (the Irish state prisoners reception) were very few compared with those who stood aloof; and their sympathy - a very natural one - was with the individuals on account of their sufferings for their native land.' April 16, 1870.

208. Australasian, August 7, 1869.

Robert Byrne in favour of allowing those wishing to stay to do so.²⁰⁹ There was much less evidence of division over the national ties implicitly expressed by support of funds like this: though the prisoners were not allowed to remain in Victoria, they were permitted to visit Melbourne to collect the money raised on their behalf, and their arrival upset neither English nor Irish colonists - it was only the refusal of one ex-prisoner, John Kenealy, to comply with the 21 day limit on his stay in Victoria that created the legal issue.²¹⁰ The Advocate expressed anger at the decision, and compared the action to the expulsion of Father Flynn from New South Wales in 1817²¹¹ but made no attempt to prolong the controversy. The Victorian Irish may have been as glad as the 'respectable' Irish of Sydney to see the last of these 'Fenians', but they were not forced into any painful crisis of conscience by the action taken against them, largely because neither the Advocate nor any individual Irish colonist sought to emphasise the issue or to relate it to any statement on the oppressed position of the Irish in the colony. Victoria had no avowed Protestant organ at this time, and the Irish Catholic community was not subjected to the anti-Irish, anti-Catholic harangues suffered by the New South Wales population from the Australian Protestant Banner (later the Protestant Standard), or the extreme anti-Catholic sentiments of the Protestant

209. Victorian Parliamentary Debates, August 5, 1869, p. 1591.

210. Kenealy's case was brought to trial in 1870, with Dr. George Mackay, an Anglo-Irish immigrant, as his lawyer. The Act was sustained, and thus the conviction of Kenealy for defiance of it, and though Mackay gained a hearing by the Supreme Court, the conviction was upheld. Mackay's co-counsel in the Supreme Court hearing was D. C. O'Leary, probably the same O'Leary whose lecture on Tone in 1866 had so disturbed Dr. Brownless that Fenianism was making advances in the colony. J. B. Forde, The Story of the Bar in Victoria, pp. 119-120.

211. Advocate, September 11, 1869.

Advocate that attacked the Church and all its manifestations (including an alleged championship of Fenianism in Ireland) in South Australia between 1870 and 1871.²¹² This further enabled the Irish colonists to see sectarian attack as something fostered only by individual bigots, rather than a concerted and widespread sentiment in Victorian life. Duffy was able to give a lecture on 'Why is Ireland poor and discontented?' in February, 1870, without offending 'the susceptibilities of his English auditors', or those of the Argus which devoted an editorial to a review of the lecture.²¹³ The Orange lodges were attacked by the Australasian in May, 1869 as an organisation that 'cannot be too loudly denounced'²¹⁴ and the following year the Argus objected strongly to the aid given by Orange lodges to C. E. Jones in his candidature for re-election to Ballarat East, adding that 'A secret political society of any kind is an anachronism and an absurdity in a country like this, where thought and speech are absolutely free, and any man may print or publish anything he pleases, short of blasphemy or sedition'.²¹⁵ The social and political climate of Victoria was by no means free from intolerance and bigotry and circumscribed loyalties,

212. This, too, was testimony to the Irish willingness to participate in general colonial politics, and the rejection of national organisations for political gain. It is not surprising to find that an extremist Protestant organ began in 1881, shortly after the Church appeared to be gaining ground in its campaign to gain the obedience of voters and politicians and for Catholic organisation at elections for narrow ends. In spite of its first protestations that it would not enter party politics, the Victorian Banner made clear in its second issue its hostility to the Constitutional party for its alleged accommodation of Catholic biases.

213. Argus, February 11, 1870.

214. Australasian, May 15, 1869.

215. Argus, September 30, 1870.

and there were Irish immigrants prepared to express their hatred of England and English rule at the expense of colonial disapproval and even loss of employment.²¹⁶ But prejudice was rarely institutionalised or publicly condoned, except as a defensive measure, and the Orange lodges were regularly taunted by the secular press with the accusation that they were themselves imitating the 'priestly interference' in elections that they so loudly condemned. The rather tolerant Victorian situation of the late sixties was to reveal weaknesses when challenged by the fact of an 'Irish' government under Duffy in 1871, but even here the stances adopted were determined as much by politics as by national or religious affiliations. Though supporters of the government, and Duffy himself, subsequently made much of the national antipathies allegedly behind the government's dismissal in 1872²¹⁷ it was events following the censure motion that determined a new sectarian climate in Victorian politics in the seventies.

Developments in Victoria in the seventies brought Irish Catholics there closer into line with their fellows in other colonies, though not without considerable resistance and the ultimate alienation of some members of that

216. Philip Mahoney, an evicted peasant farmer from Cloyne, county Cork, who had emigrated to Victoria around 1870, had been dismissed from the job he held at the Melbourne Harbour Trust during the Russian scare of 1878 for refusing to 'put on the red and blue'. Instead, 'in the presence of Turks, Jews and Gentiles, John Bull's Germans and all others I pitched the Queen and all Her followers to Hell and left, of course I was called a dynamiter but what did I care! I was and is still thinking that considering the cruel manner in which poor Ireland is used no Irishman should be so mean as to assist Queen Vic. in any shape or form.' Mahoney had not regretted his act, and had been able to gain another job without any evident discrimination. Letter of Philip Mahoney to Lar Shanahan, Lurrig, from Footscray, August 18, 1881, loaned by Maurice Quirke, Crocune, county Cork, Ireland.

217. J. F. Hogan wrote in 1878 that the main cause of the opposition to the Duffy ministry 'was the fact of the Premier having been born on Irish soil', The Catholic Case Stated, p. 13; C. G. Duffy, My Life in Two Hemispheres, vol. 2, p. 308.

body. There was little alternative. No nationalist movement in Ireland was able to capture the popular imagination of Irish colonists between the debacle of the Fenian insurrection of 1867, and the new activity of the Home Rule Association under Charles Stewart Parnell from 1877. The attention of Irish colonists was directed instead towards colonial issues, particularly with the development of formal class divisions and the growth of distinct parties and platforms to replace the old political factions. At the same time, however, the Irish were to be distinguished in colonial politics, this time in their role as Catholics. Many were unwilling to allow this to interfere with their cooperation with non-Catholics on other matters, particularly in Victoria where the issues of Protection and Parliamentary reform were already demanding distinct political allegiances; but it was a role thrust upon them by the Church, co-religionists, and a hostile Protestant minority alike, and one which few could reject without censure and the risk of losing faith not only with the Church but with one's fellow Catholics and Irishmen.

As has been seen, there was little alternative for the Irish of South Australia to acceptance of their religious affiliation, as the only 'importation' tolerated by South Australian society.²¹⁸ The New South Wales Irish were similarly restricted in the expression of their national identity by an unrelenting and often harsh insistence by the press, political leaders, prominent citizens and even their own Archbishop upon assimilation and adoption of an 'Australian' character. In Victoria, the readiness of both Irish politicians and clergy to participate in national

218. See pp. 303-319.

demonstrations and celebrations had allowed the Irish population to retain a strong faith in their compatriots simply because they were Irish, and thus created a sense of unity and strength by which overt attacks on racial pride and Irish patronage were more easily resisted. Irish candidates could rely on the support of Irish voters - to a degree that some observers felt to be dangerous to the real interests of the Irish Catholic community.²¹⁹ Irishmen who were believed to have betrayed this trust were correspondingly harshly regarded, even though they might have promised nothing - George Higinbotham's support of national and secular education in Victoria won him a much more immediate and total condemnation than did James Martin's parallel position in New South Wales, for the Irish of the latter colony had fewer alternatives in their choice of political representation and lesser expectations of Irish-born candidates.²²⁰ But the concern of the Church and, from 1868, the Advocate, with state aid and denominational education, introduced considerable problems into this simple pattern of political affiliation and, ultimately, destroyed the cohesion of the Irish body, as a national grouping.

219. Father Backhaus at Sandhurst wrote to Bishop Goold in 1865 'What a pity there exists so small an amount of political energy amongst us. Mr. Sullivan is more likely to be our representative, I think. Owing to his Irish name, the most, if not all of my people are in favour of him.' Letter dated October 8, 1856. Melbourne A.A. The Victorian in 1863 also warned its readers against too much complacency because of the presence of Duffy and O'Shanassy in the government. (May 2, 23, 1863). The dangers of this confidence in Irish representation could also work in the opposite way - thus it was always easy to blame the defeat of Irish and Catholic candidates upon bigotry, rather than attempt to assess the inadequacies of these candidates, as was done by the Advocate following the 1868 ministerial elections (May 30, 1868).

220. In an editorial of March 6, 1869, the Advocate revealed this sense of disappointed expectations when it followed an attack on Higinbotham with an expression of regret that the new Catholic generation lacked in their education those 'time-honoured traditions ... which half imperceptibly but irresistibly gave a certain tone and colouring to their minds and feelings, moulded their sentiments and shaped their destiny.' For other attacks on Higinbotham, see June 6, 1868 and June 25, 1870.

Almost without exception, Irish candidates for political and municipal office in Victoria could be relied upon to be political progressives, at least in the early years of their political career. On the other hand, many Irish Members had a bad record as representatives of their Church, particularly on the state aid issue of the sixties. John O'Shanassy, entirely acceptable to the Hierarchy on education and state aid issues, was increasingly unpopular with electors because of his growing conservatism and his landed interests. He was absent in Ireland 1866-7 and took a seat in the Legislative Council on his return: when he sought to re-enter the Assembly in 1874, he was defeated by another Irishman, a local newspaper proprietor, for his old constituency of Kilmore.²²¹ On the other hand, Duffy, who had long before replaced O'Shanassy as the Irish leader both within and outside the House, was distrusted by the clergy and by those who placed the interests of the Church above political considerations. When the education issue erupted in Victoria following the publication of the report of the Royal Commission on Public Education in January 1867, however, O'Shanassy was in Ireland, and the nature of the proposals in the report demanded immediate political activity to prevent their implementation. Bishop Goold provided a line of attack for Irish Members in a Pastoral published on the proposals on February 10, shortly before departure for an

221. Nor was O'Shanassy any longer totally supported by the clergy. The Kilmore priest, Father Michael Farrelly, wrote to Dr. Fitzpatrick on April 16, 1874 criticising O'Shanassy for expecting Hunt to withdraw at the last moment in his favour, and commenting that 'I hear Sir John does not care for the clergy much, except so far as they may be auxiliaries to him to carry out his views - and the time is not very far remote when he was not (if report be true) on the best of terms with his Bishop.' Letter in Melbourne A.A., miscellaneous correspondence.

ad limina visit to Rome, in which he stated that the proposed regulations 'would deprive Catholics of their right to a fair share of the vote for education, taken out of the general revenue ... and would appropriate it, as the tithes in Ireland, to a purpose totally at variance with our conscience'.²²² This approach was adopted in debates on Higinbotham's subsequent Bill in May by the Irish Members J. J. Casey, Michael O'Grady and R. D. Ireland, and Higinbotham withdrew his Bill before the division on the second reading. The response of the Members and of Catholics generally was very successful: the Argus applauded 'the energetic remonstrances of the Roman Catholics against the Education Bill',²²³ and even the Age believed that 'at the present stage of the Bill they (the Catholic and Anglican laity) would support their clergy, although they would probably fall in with the new system should it become law'.²²⁴ Nevertheless Dr. A. C. Brownless, a leading Catholic layman, an English convert and confidante of Bishop Goold, wrote dispiritedly of the Catholic position in June -

I cannot but view the accession of many professing Catholics long estranged from the Catholic interests as due to political causes rather than any steady returning devotion to the principles of the Catholic Church. I must confess I have very little faith in Victorian politicians and I don't think your Lordship has a great deal beyond Mr. O'Shanassy. I believe we have no member of either House we can trust and although Mr. Duffy handled this matter very ably the subsequent style in the later numbers of Public Opinion makes me feel with others that he was playing a great card for Irish influence in his favour before Mr. O'Shanassy should come again before the Victorian public as a Candidate for Office. I am sorry we are obliged to be suspicious of Political Men, but if I was politically uncharitable to Mr. Duffy and his party your Lordship will I feel sure admit that their conduct in Victoria both in regard to the Church and Mr. O'Shanassy has laid them open to suspicion. 225

222. Argus, February 11, 1867.

223. Argus, May 24, 1867.

224. Age, May 28, 1867.

225. A. C. Brownless to Bishop Goold, June 27, 1867. Melbourne A.A.

Duffy had opposed the Bill because it distinguished Protestant from Catholic, not on the Church's argument of the necessity of a religious education. His major concern - a prophetic one - was with the possible permanent alienation of the two populations through separate education.²²⁶ Duffy was obviously not happy in the role of a Catholic champion, and his dilemma when faced with a Church ultimatum on education was to be shared by many other members in the seventies.

For the Victorian Irish Catholic community, however, Duffy and the other Irish members were a powerful argument against a frequently alleged incompatibility between a Catholic and a liberal vote, and the absence of any easily discernible anti-Irish or anti-Catholic leaders further enabled the Irish colonists to delay in making a choice between their national, personal and class loyalties and their religious obligations. It was not until the late seventies that the Church and the Advocate attempted to force Irish voters into a narrowly Catholic mould, and it was certainly partly due to the strength of Irish national cohesiveness and years of political and social influence that this attempt both needed to be more coercive and was less totally successful than in New South Wales or South Australia.

226. 'The majority of people do not sufficiently realise the idea that Catholics are essentially a part of the community, that they sit beside us here in Parliament, that they buy and sell with us, eat and drink with us, walk and talk with us, and do everything except pray with us. When I assert that the Catholics of Victoria do not believe in the Education Act, I mean that if we walk down Collins St. or Bourke St. every fourth person we meet is utterly opposed to that Act ... If Catholic children are educated entirely separate from other children (they) will grow to maturity with all the feelings of a religious caste (and) a sense of injustice against the State.' Victorian Parliamentary Debates, October 16, 1867.

The peculiarity of the Victorian situation becomes clearer when compared with the development of a Catholic orientation among the New South Wales Irish at this time. In Victoria, Higinbotham's Education Bill of 1867 had been defeated primarily by the opposition mounted by the Catholic community, but they had not been alone in their fight; the two Melbourne papers, the Anglican clergy and laity, and many other Protestants had also campaigned against it. Many colonists had felt that the Bill had been specifically aimed against the Catholic denomination, and this had adversely influenced their view of its more general provisions. Here the lack of any Catholic organ may again have been fortuitous, for there was no denial thereby of the stress of prominent Catholics like Duffy on the common rather than the distinctive interests of the Catholic community on this issue. The situation of New South Wales during a consideration of Henry Parkes' Bill the previous year had been the reverse. Catholic objections to the Bill, as stated by Archbishop Polding in a Pastoral in September, were to the provision that the State take control of education, rather than to any potential discrimination against one denomination under the new system. Hostility to denominational education was only implicit in some of the proposals, and there were no clauses that could be assumed to be aimed directly at Catholic schools. It was not believed generally that the Bill would become law, nor had Parkes yet been recognised as an enemy of Irishmen and Catholics. As the Bill reached its third reading, however, the Freeman's Journal began to flail about, finding enemies and condemning

the alleged mentality behind the Bill, in a manner calculated to alienate non-Catholic sympathy.²²⁷ The Church had little hope for resisting the Bill but the united action of its people - there were at least six Catholic members in the Assembly but this was of little import in an Assembly of 72, and even these could not be relied upon.²²⁸ Consciously or not, the Freeman's Journal began to urge Catholic political organisation by an appeal to a joint national-religious identity and history: arguing that Catholics 'have not their due political importance' in New South Wales, the editor urged -

It would be just as well if Irishmen made up their minds to be flattered or cajoled no longer ... looking at the present state of things in the colony, seeing the assaults that have been made, and successfully made, upon the dearest rights of Catholics, it is manifest that Irishmen should be prepared to make their power felt, or else content themselves with existing as citizens upon the mere sufferance of those bitterly opposed to their country and their creed. 229

The Catholic population of New South Wales was only maintaining its proportionate position in the colonial population, and it was increasingly

227. 'From first to last - from the moment when Mr. Parkes struck the first key note of vituperation and slander to the last shuffle of Mr. Martin, or the final 'fling' of the elated Buchanan, the progress of the performance has been marked by violence, ruffianism, and treachery.' Freeman's Journal, November 3, 1866.
228. Only William Cummings and James (?) Donnelly attended the meetings organised by members of the clergy to protest against the Bill and to attempt to educate the laity into the reasons why they could not, as Catholics, accept national education. Even Plunkett stressed that his opposition to the Bill in the Upper House did not indicate his rejection of the present government.
229. Freeman's Journal, November 10, 1866.

apparent that if the interests of the Church and its members were to be protected from a minority position, the Catholic vote would have to be wooed and disciplined. The strategy for this was limited by certain facts of political life in New South Wales, as well as by the size of the total 'Catholic vote'. Unlike Victoria, where there was a supply of candidates who were both Irish and liberal, New South Wales had always presented candidates who were acceptable in their political beliefs but antagonistic to the Irish race or to Catholicism, or Irish and Catholic candidates who were attacked by the Church as unsuitable representatives, all the more dangerous for being Catholics, or unacceptable to the majority of Irish electors because of their conservatism. The Rev. J. D.Lang had been actively supported by Edward Hawkesley and other Catholics in the 1851 Legislative Council elections, and both Lang and Parkes were supported in their campaigns by D.H.Deniehy throughout his active political life, 1854-1865.²³⁰ Irish names figured largely on the requisitions for Parkes and Martin, even after both had shown their hostile feelings towards Catholicism or Irish immigration: the readiness of the Irish to forgive Parkes was a perpetual source of dismay to the Freeman's

230. Deniehy to Parkes, September 29, 1855; March 19, 1856; etc., in Autograph Letters, Low, Deniehy, etc. to Parkes; and Deniehy's letters to Parkes, 1854-1857; Mitchell Library, A71 and A709 respectively. See also Deniehy to J.D.Lang, June 6, 1854, in Lang Papers, Mitchell Library, A2227. Edward Hawkesley wrote to Lang in 1851 - 'As a member of the Roman Catholic Church, I regret exceedingly that some intemperate members of that Church should have been so unwise to bring forward a candidate on purely religious grounds' - and observed that Archdeacon McEncroe's attack on Lang had in fact persuaded many Catholics to vote for him. July 26, 1851, in Lang Papers, Mitchell Library A2226.

and the clergy.²³¹ As for the Irish and Catholic representatives: Martin and T. A. Murray were at best nominal Catholics - Martin took no part in national celebrations and Murray played a leading role in the annual St. Patrick's day revelry only as long as the activities were untainted by either the lower class of Irish or radical sentiments.²³² Plunkett favoured national education and in addition shared with Murray the lack of the 'common touch' in dealing with his social inferiors;

231. Archbishop Polding does not, however, appear to have been willingly to enter the political arena. In 1863 he had written to Bishop Goold of the colonial situation in rather defeated spirit - 'Of a truth, politically speaking we are in a bad way - Perfaset ne pas, Charley Cowper cuts his way - and whether he holds the reins or his opponents mount the box seat, is simply a choice between worse and worsen.' Polding to Goold, August, 1863. Melbourne A.A. This was before the Public Schools Act was passed, but even this does not appear to have been able to revive the sorely disappointed Archbishop, who left the organisation of Catholic opposition largely to Fr. Sheehy. In the late sixties, the newly arrived suffragan Bishops began to take up cudgels against Parkes, an indication that they recognised him quickly as the main enemy. Shortly after his arrival in 1866, Bishop Murray had written to Dr. Moran in Ireland that Parkes speeches were directed against the Catholic clergy, and that 'Mr. Martin the Prime Minister is a Catholic, is married to a Protestant, all his children are Protestant and he himself neither goes to Mass or meeting house. Behold the two leading men who are so much concerned about the education of the rising generation.' November 21, 1866. Maitland diocese folder, in Sydney A.A.
232. Murray's diary for 1869 shows him to have attended many services at St. James (Anglican) church, and even to have acted as a Sunday school teacher. He was amused when a friend showed surprise that he had been to hear the preacher, Mr. Graham, noting 'He was evidently under the impression that I was a Catholic and adverse to attending other places of worship and little knew how frequently I had been to hear Mr. Graham and how much I also admired him.' Murray's impressions of Alderman Hurley, one of the inveterate joiners of Irish national associations as well as a regular participant in the St. Patrick's day celebrations, were singularly unflattering, and it was evident from comments in the Freeman's in 1870 that many Sydney Irish had no great love for Murray's brand of patriotism or religion. See Murray Papers, series 4 (Sir Terrence Aubrey Murray), item 2, Diary for 1869; and Freeman's Journal, March 26 and April 2, 1870.

and potential leaders from the Australian-born generation like W. B. Dalley and Michael Fitzpatrick also clashed with the Church on the necessity of religious education as an article of political faith.²³³ The opponents of the Church, on the other hand, demonstrated no such equivocation: the course of the political history of New South Wales for the next decade was marked by the growth of extremist Protestantism allied incongruously but effectively with secularism, and Irish Catholics were to be placed increasingly on the defensive by charges of disloyalty and of wilful refusal to accommodate themselves within the values and institutions of colonial society.

In this situation, two lines of approach were open to those aiming at a united Catholic vote. One was that advanced by the Freeman's Journal under O'Sullivan, following the passage of the Public Schools Act - that of 'Catholic organisation', the selection of Catholic representatives, and the recognition by the Catholic laity of their duty to support only candidates with acceptable views on education.²³⁴ This mood was symbolised by the formation of a Catholic Association under clerical guidance in

233. Dalley subsequently adopted the Church's views on education and became the leading Catholic representative in the colony, and the major opponent of Parkes; but Fitzpatrick died unrepentant in 1881, amid controversy over his right to Catholic rites at his burial that damaged the standing of the Church in many eyes.
234. This was suggested in editorials like that of February 8, 1868 on 'The necessity for Catholic Organisation', in which the moves of Protestant voters to gain legislation favourable to their interests was seen as a 'natural tendency', but one which must be countered by similar Catholic pressure if the situation of Catholics was not to be threatened.

November, 1867, but it was more successful in arousing Protestant hostility and counter-organisations than in disciplining the Catholic vote.²³⁵ It became very obvious that Catholic voters, especially the Irish of Sydney, were voting as economic or personal interests dictated, and that Henry Parkes had a very strong hold on the political loyalties of Irish voters and Members alike, in spite of his Education Bill and his abuse of the Fenian scare of 1868.²³⁶ It was this support of Parkes, together with the manifest failure of the campaign to gain Catholic representatives,²³⁷ that suggested the second approach to an improvement of the total Catholic situation. This was essentially a Catholic middle-class exercise, not endorsed by the Hierarchy, apparently regarded as

235. After the December, 1869 election, the Freeman's rejoiced that the Catholics had improved their position in the Assembly, but soon changed its emphasis when the Herald voiced its misgivings over a potential Catholic faction, and stressed instead that there were only 8 Catholics in a House of 72 members, a position much less than the Catholic proportion in the population. Freeman's Journal, January 1, 1870.
236. W. A. Duncan wrote to Parkes around August, 1868, 'I wish to God you could manage to conciliate the Irish (in some manly way of course) on that cursed Fenian business. They are not difficult to satisfy and they are too numerous for any public man to defy. I know you had cause to complain of the atrocious attacks of a few of the clergy and of the writers who adopt their views, but it would be a grievous injustice to confound the whole body with a few noisy characters; and there are many, who to my certain knowledge, would be glad of an opportunity of placing themselves on your side, if you could only do or say something which would form a basis for reconciliation. A few conciliatory words, and an admission that an atrocious crime committed may have led you to a too easy belief in the existence of a conspiracy connected therewith, and the amende to a wronged nationality would be generally accepted.' Duncan/Parkes, no date, in Parkes Correspondence, vol. 51. Mitchell library CY921. Parkes in fact compounded his Insult to the Irish community with an attack on Irish immigration in 1869, yet the East Sydney Irish allegedly voted for him 'almost to a man' at the 1874 election. (Herald, December 10, 1874).
237. The Freeman's issued a list of potential Catholic candidates on November 27, 1869. Few of them stood, and only one, Edward Butler, was elected. Most were men known to the public through their activity in Irish national or Catholic associations, and only Dalley and Butler were the professional men, the other suggested candidates being landowners or owners of businesses.

worthy of a trial by the Freeman's under the new editorship of Thomas Butler, but without enthusiasm, based on the recognition that a pro-Catholic or, at least, neutral, Henry Parkes as head of government was a more potentially attainable goal than an Irish or Catholic leadership. Mass Catholic support for Parkes, it was argued, would make him more vulnerable, once in office, to pressure on issues directly related to religion; it would also prevent him from seeking support from extremist Protestants or secularists who might similarly lobby for their own ends, ends antagonistic to denominational education and state aid for the Catholic Church. Had this been a decision for the Irish Catholic community alone, it would have probably been endorsed. Even after Parkes' anti-Irish, anti-Catholic speech on immigration in October, 1869, there were Irish Catholics willing to accept his leadership. At the 1872 election, many Catholics sought to secure Parkes' return for East Sydney, provoking the warning from Dalley that -

... this scandalous and dishonest alliance will prove of no benefit to them, while it will not fail to be prejudicial to the religious liberty of the country. Mr. Parkes will succeed; and those Irish Roman Catholics who yesterday regarded him with unspeakable horror will on Wednesday lead him into power. But their days of remorse will come again. 238

In fact there was an apparent sound basis for this new spirit of Catholic-Protestant cooperation against extremism, in addition to the instinct for self-preservation, for even the Herald had begun to protest against the intrusion of sectarianism into unrelated issues, particularly against the

238. 'A Terrible Indictment', W. B. Dalley on Parkes, 1872. This was published as a pamphlet after Dalley's speech at the East Sydney hustings was ignored by the Sydney press, allegedly accidentally. Copy in Mitchell library, a reprint from 1880.

new strength and aggressiveness of the Protestant Political Association under John Davies.²³⁹ When Parkes formed a ministry a few months after the 1872 election, he chose the Catholic, Edward Butler, brother of the editor of the Freeman's Journal, as his attorney general, and also made conciliatory gestures to Michael Fitzpatrick for not including him in the ministry. A year later, however, the Catholic honeymoon with Parkes was over, consciously destroyed by Parkes by the attitude he adopted in response to Butler's protests at not being appointed to the position of Chief Justice.²⁴⁰ The gamble on Parkes failed partly because the Catholic community were not united in accepting him as their political representative, but largely because Parkes was very well aware that Catholic voters had no alternative. Robertson had 'gone to the Wall' in the 1872 election because he refused to adopt a sectarian stance, while Martin had accepted the support of Orange and Protestant organisations. The foundation of a Lay Catholic Protection Association in 1871, with the aim of organising for political influence, had been opposed by both the clergy and the Freeman's, and the Association had resolved to discontinue its operations at its first annual meeting in August, 1872, a few months after the election, leaving no weapon of potential Catholic retaliation against betrayal by Parkes.²⁴¹

239. Herald, February 17, 1872.

240. Parkes initially told Butler that he had preferred Martin for the position because he had been longer in the profession than Butler (November 10, 1873), but Butler and many other Catholics were convinced that it was because Butler was a Catholic that he had been passed over. Letter of Butler to Parkes, November 14, 1873, in Parkes Correspondence, vol. 2. Mitchell library A872.

241. Freeman's Journal, August 17, 1872. On its dissolution, the Association disbursed its remaining funds equally between the Good Shepherd institution and the Marist Brothers.

The Protestant vote was stronger numerically and more organised than any Catholic vote, and Parkes was too astute a politician to allow Martin to gain it all simply by default. Parkes consistently denied that he had any sort of agreement with Catholic voters or representatives, but the harshness of the Catholic condemnation of Parkes after 1873 indicates an element of confidence betrayed or expectations disappointed.²⁴²

The Catholic-Irish distinction that had affected the Irish role in Australia since the transportation of the first Irish prisoners became increasingly clear after this rejection by Parkes of the support of the Irish Catholic community. Over time, the emphasis of the Irish-Catholic connection had changed, and it had varied from colony to colony. During the transportation era, it was the political and social climate of Ireland that had essentially moulded British attitudes to it, and influenced the colonial response to Irish transportees and even the first free priests. In the thirties and forties, identification of Irish nationality and Catholicism was strengthened by the arrival of thousands of Irish Catholic immigrants, and the religious and national loyalties of these immigrants seemed parallel. Under the influence of Roger Therry and Governor Bourke,

242. This was especially evident in the letters of Butler to Parkes over the Chief Justice position ('You certainly flatter me in no uncommon degree when you say that you "there for the first time saw that you were not dealing with a single member of the Government but with a member who had a 'people' in combination with him which you understood to mean either his Church or a party of which you knew nothing". No wonder then that you came to the conclusion that "the freedom of Government was really in danger from the projected influence of an ecclesiastical corporation".'), and with some justification, for Butler had worked for Parkes in the 1872 election as a stated link with 'our people', the Catholic community. See latter correspondence in further letters of Butler to Parkes, Parkes Correspondence vol. 49, Mitchell library A919.

Catholicism was allied with liberalism in politics, aiding the retention of the 'Irish Catholic rebel' image in the colonies as immigrants from Ireland joined the agitation for civil and religious liberty and a role in colonial self-government. In the fifties, however, the Catholic, national, and political interests of the Irish immigrants began to diverge. Irish allegiance to political movements, parties and individuals able to improve their colonial situation could conflict with their religious and national obligations as seen by the Church and Irish patriots: this was particularly so in New South Wales where the main political leaders, whether from personal conviction or tactical considerations, opposed the development of Catholicism in the colony and national movements in Ireland. For a time, many Irish colonists shuffled their priorities, shelving now their religious, now their national and, less often, their local social-economic interests in order to gain some particular immediate concession or measure.

In national issues, the Irish were virtually leaderless - even the '48 rebel, Duffy, had accepted British rule in the colonies, and the stimulus of concerted movements in Ireland was spasmodic and, before the Home Rule movement, largely uncoordinated. In religious issues, the Irish immigrants could look to the spiritual strength of the Church: during the fifties, however, the Church in Australia was weakened by internal dissensions, and offered no leadership on practical issues like immigration, though the Hierarchy recognised and, in private, bitterly condemned the various manoeuvres undertaken in all colonies to limit Irish Catholic immigration. At the local political level, there were many candidates

favouring progressive and democratic legislation and improvement of the position of the working classes: in each of the colonies except Victoria, however, such men could often be supported only by sacrificing national pride and sectarian loyalties. After the most pressing political issues - suffrage, land legislation, tariffs - had been resolved, a new phase developed in colonial history. Essentially this was an internal struggle, as against the previous conflicts with British authority, and it was concerned with the determination of the social and moral character of Australia and its institutions. It was at this level that the Irish-Catholic allegiances of Irish colonists were most severely challenged.

The extent to which Irish immigrants could introduce their national heritage and loyalties into colonial society was circumscribed - by the conditions of the first settlement of Australia, by Irish entry into Australia at a low point in Ireland's history, by their minority numbers and relatively inferior social and economic position. The institutions and values of British society had been established in Australia long before Irish immigrants had any voice in colonial life, and attempts to modify these were rarely tolerated, even by the native-born. The Irish national image was poor all throughout the nineteenth century, and while Irish immigrants persisted in their nostalgia and affection for 'Home', Irish spokesmen were obliged to concentrate on Ireland's past glory when eulogising their homeland. The path that many Irish believed to be the only one leading to improvements in Ireland - national independence - was still largely unacceptable to Englishmen, and as a result Irish immigrants in Australia could advocate an Irish renaissance through political

separation only by alienating many fellow colonists. Support for Home Rule was possible as long as the Home Rule movement emphasised separation through constitutional and peaceful process: when violence arose, many Irish colonists showed their first loyalties to be to British institutions and law, rather than to their Irish nationality. Because Irish national agitation was largely disorganised before 1880, however, and did not result in a major conflict between England and Ireland, Irish colonists were not called upon to choose between their own and their adopted country. Individual Irishmen were accepted in the colonies on their merits, in spite of persistent derogatory stereotyping of the Irish immigrants generally. Without the constant need to assert their loyalties, most Irish colonists could relegate their national identity to a minor place in their daily lives. The few Irish envoys and patriots who visited Australia demanded no more than financial and rhetorical support: they limited their demands to what the Irish Australians would be willing (and permitted by the rest of society) to contribute to the land they had left. Ireland's patriots spoke of the tragedy of mass emigration from Ireland, but Ireland gained enormously in propaganda, financial support and an improved economy by this emigration - and never was it suggested that it was in the interests of these emigrants or Ireland itself that they should return.

The Church, on the other hand, had to insist upon its vital and continuing role in the lives of these emigrants. Unlike Ireland, the Church was an actual entity; unlike the national leaders in Ireland, it consistently sent representatives to maintain the faith in those emigrants. Ireland existed regardless of its members in Australia: the Australian

Catholic Church did not. With the decrease in Irish immigration into Australia in the sixties, the Church turned its attention to the native-born population; its survival depended upon their existence and, in a country where Catholicism was not a part of the cultural heritage, it saw the necessity of the maintenance of the faith through education. There were vast political problems and clear dangers of sectarian division inherent in this effort by the Church to ensure denominational education, but the Church was fighting for survival. To allow even one generation to grow up in Australia without a Catholic education could be fatal; the spiritual independence of individual Irish Australians had already been demonstrated during the fifties, and by the seventies the counter-prevailing influence of Irish Catholic immigrants could no longer be relied upon.

The Irish immigrants were not simply passive instruments of the Church, as many Protestants implied, but they were used to the participation of the Church in their daily lives, and found tradition harder to deny than their native-born children. Catholic education as proposed in Australia was not, however, traditional in Ireland - national education had been generally supported by the Irish clergy before 1859. The Church therefore sought to ally the cause of Catholic education with the broader concepts of Irish heritage and national loyalty. The importance of this was that Catholic education was presented as a duty devolving upon Irish Catholics because of their distinct origins. Being a Catholic had always involved some degree of alienation in the colonies, and the denominational education issue was to further existing sectarian divisions. But by presenting the issue as the one means by which the Irish Catholic community might preserve

its distinctiveness, as well as supporting the true faith, the Catholic Church in Australia was able to ensure both its own continuity, and a permanent contribution to Australian culture by its Irish immigrants.

The new Catholic champion in New South Wales was to be Roger Vaughan, who arrived as coadjutor Archbishop of Sydney on December 16, 1873. It was to be a long struggle before the Church could rely on the laity to support their education stance over other considerations, and even longer before general Catholic pressure effected any positive results.²⁴³ In fact, the Church did not fully gain the allegiance of the Catholic laity until it accepted, under the leadership of Cardinal Moran, the championship of the social, political and economic interests of the large and growing body of working class Catholics, and even then many gave priority to their labour rather than their religious interests. But Vaughan recognised the existence of a long-frustrated and battered Irish pride among the Catholic laity and, though himself an Englishman, successfully drew upon this to gather a following for the battle before him. Until Vaughan's campaign, the attempts of Irish colonists to improve their image had been a losing one. In its comments on immigration in 1863, the Herald had reverted to the old racial stereotypes ('there is the skilled Scotch mechanic, there is the stout English labourer, and the affectionate Irish maidservant') and urged mixed immigration for the 'moderating influence upon

243. At the 1874 election for Parkes' constituency of West Sydney, two candidates had been endorsed by the Church, but both of these and the working class candidate, Angus Cameron, were rejected in favour of a vote for Parkes. In fact, there were much less choice than might appear, for the two approved candidates were both representatives of business and mercantile interests, and thus anathema to the working class voters, and Cameron was supported by the Education League, which was agitating for a more secular public education act.

prejudices and passions, which has observed and felt, and a diffusion of the different forms of civilized life which tends to so much improvement²⁴⁴. Similar ideas informed the Immigration Report of 1870 of the Select Committee on Immigration as had influenced the Report of the Legislative Council on immigration in 1841. These attitudes were made explicit by the Herald in its comments in support of the report, in which it alleged that Catholics in New South Wales 'band themselves together in civil life ... vote in masses ... follow particular leaders as a class' and that 'in importing immigrants from Ireland we are importing men who are indifferant, at all events, to the interests of the United Kingdom, if not avowed enemies of the British Crown.'²⁴⁵ Such comments did not go unanswered by Irish colonists, but the response had been to minimise or explain the Irish distinctiveness, by referring to Irish history or to the actual situation of Irish immigrants in the colony.²⁴⁶ Vaughan's flattery of the Irish laity, particularly coming from a distinguished English Catholic, simultaneously soothed wounded national pride and made the Irish Catholic body more amenable to direction by the Hierarchy. Thus the move by Vaughan of accommodating Irish sentiment within the Church (as previously made by Bishops Murray, Quinn and Lanigan in their country dioceses) prepared the way for the dominance of the religious over the national

244. Sydney Morning Herald, August 20, 1863.

245. Freeman's Journal, April 23, 1870.

246. The Irish city auditor, James Garvan, disagreed with the Herald's assessment by stressing that Irish immigrants were a large proportion of those taking up selections, that they were more than half of the mining population, and that they were under-represented only in positions requiring capital or professional training. (Freeman's Journal, April 30, 1870). Charges of Irish and Catholic illiteracy and crime were answered by a reference to Irish history, and the depressed state in which the Irish had been kept by the rule of England. (Freeman's Journal, February 7, 1863; April 32, 1866; May 18, 1867; November 14, 1868).

character of the Irish colonists achieved under Cardinal Moran a decade later.

As previously indicated, the Victorian Irish took a more wayward (though also essentially political) path to identification with the Catholic church than their fellow Catholics in New South Wales. The creation of the Duffy ministry in 1871 had augured well for the maintenance of Irish consciousness and national pride and partisanship - not necessarily antagonistic to other nationalities, but potentially reinforcing national distinctions. The ministry was heartily criticised on its formation because of the conflicting political principles held by its members, but even the Age attested six months later that 'Mr. Duffy is at the head of a ministry that is deservedly popular.'²⁴⁷ At no time during its brief life was the ministry alleged to be partisan to Catholic feelings or at the mercy of the dictates of the Catholic clergy. The vote of censure of the ministry in May, 1872, for failing to consider the state of education in the colony, was attacked by the Advocate not as a sectarian move but as a personal expression of Francis' dislike of Duffy and 'an uncontrollable lust for power and the premier position of the head of a Government', and in fact it was not this motion, but a subsequent accusation that the ministry had abused its power of patronage, that brought down the Government on May 30. The response to the ministry's defeat was an indication that the

247. Age, February 1, 1872.

issue was essentially political, influenced by Duffy's apparent inadequacies in office, of which his alleged nepotism was one, but in which education was only included because of Duffy's total lack of policy on that issue, not because of any pro-denominational stand. The editor of the Argus commented very plainly on the ministry's national affiliations shortly after the defeat,²⁴⁸ but only introduced the matter of Duffy's religion in connection with a composite 'Irish Roman Catholic' mentality, making no allusions to a specific alliance or understanding between Duffy and the Church in the matter of education. As has been seen, the clergy and some prominent laymen distrusted Duffy as a Catholic advocate, and in office he had avoided all issues potentially related to religion. Nevertheless, the existence of the ministry had been at least a barrier against the introduction of measures harmful to the interests of the Church, and Bishop Goold apparently believed that the government's defeat was a prelude to an attack on denominational education. This prompted him to publish a Pastoral on education, condemning state interference in education and 'admonishing' Catholics that they were not free to decide for themselves on this issue. Needless to say, this Pastoral admonition created a furore in the liberal secular press. Though Duffy was not directly accused of complicity with the Bishop in this timely publication - and indeed, he may

248. The Argus editorial commented on 'that feeling of antagonism to England and English institutions which is active in the minds of some of Mr. Duffy's compatriots and which threatens to become a dangerous disturbing element in Victorian political life if scheming men continue to aggravate and inflame it for their own ends' and suggested that 'Granting that the disabilities under which Irish Roman Catholics suffered so long were a grievous wrong, the subject is totally irrelevant to a Victorian election contest'. (June 5, 1872).

well have been appalled by it - the Catholic population was thus distinguished in a manner that must necessarily make them an object of suspicion or derision by their fellow colonists. The importance of this in relation to the national distinction was obvious from an editorial of the Age on the Pastoral on June 24. Prior to this 'Papal bull', Syme argued,

It was an open question whether it was nationality or religion that made Mr. Duffy's partisans so demonstrative. It is a great pity that either consideration should have any influence on Australian politics but, of the two, national predilections are less harmful than sectarian rancour.

- but now, he believed, it was obvious from whom these partisans took their cue. Somewhat in contradiction, the Age also argued that the attitudes taken in the Pastoral were those of the clergy only, and the Argus also observed the same day that 'the more independent and enlightened Roman Catholics of Victoria must feel insulted by the tone and tendency of the "Admonition", which commences with a misrepresentation and ends with a menace'. In fact, there was considerable Catholic resistance to the Church's ruling on accepting the provisions of the Education Act passed on November 30, 1872 under the new Francis ministry, both by Catholic parents and by Catholic politicians. Education was not made a big issue at the 1874 election by any group, and there was little sectarian feeling displayed. But neither were there any Catholic champions in the Parliament. Duffy did not seek re-election, and left the colony in 1874 to visit Ireland. Michael O'Grady, who had led Catholic opposition to the Education Bill in 1872, died in January, 1876; and O'Shanassy's attempts to re-enter the Assembly in 1874 and again in 1876 were both defeated.

However, the hierarchy, particularly Bishop Gould and Archdeacon Slattery, began to step up the campaign in 1875, organising lay meetings to demonstrate that allegations of a lay-clerical division on the education issue were false. As in New South Wales, the education issue was seen as vital to the survival of the Church. At the end of that year, Bishop Gould wrote to Dr. Fortune at All Hallows in Ireland -

In matters ecclesiastical, it is uphill work here, as in Europe, and now this Godless Education Bill is the law of the land, and the priests and their people are compelled to supply their own schools at their own expense. Nothing in my poor opinion is as important as to give the children a religious education in this new country, and it is the burden of my song on many a Sunday to my people to transplant the faith of St. Patrick in Young Australia, and leave behind them the faith of their fathers to their children. 249

The Advocate, recognising that many Catholics wished to maintain their liberal political affiliations, had been searching for some sort of compromise. It welcomed warmly Duffy on his return in 1876, but Duffy made no attempt to assume a position of leadership or coordination. It approved the policies of the newly-formed National Reform League in January, 1876, and deemed the programme of the Berry party at the following election 'very attractive'.²⁵⁰ Subsequently, however, the firm stand taken by Berry on maintaining the 1872 Education Act, together with the Protectionist principles advocated by most members of his party, alienated that section of Catholic opinion represented by the Advocate, and determined a greater

249. Gould to Fortune, December 29, 1875. All Hallows College Letters, Overseas Missionary Correspondence, 1842-1877. National library of Ireland.

250. Advocate, January 22, 1876; February 24, 1877.

readiness to accept the idea of a distinct Catholic party, an idea presented by a number of correspondents between 1875 and 1877.²⁵¹ Early in 1878, the Advocate condemned as 'anarchy' the Kerry government's move in attempting a showdown with the Council by dismissing civil servants. Six months later, it launched its first concerted attack on prominent Catholics, particularly politicians, who refused to comply with the Church's teaching on education.²⁵² The 'defection' of Bryan O'Loghlen and William O'Hea on the education question twelve months later sealed the determination of the Church that Catholics must act as a distinct and united community in their political behaviour.²⁵³ This move was to be ultimately successful. In spite of the allegations made since the first Report of the Education Commission in January, 1867, that the Catholic laity did not support the

251. The letter of 'Omega' published in the Advocate, April 28, 1877 urged 'It is only as a party that the Catholics can put forward all their strength, and as it is necessary that it be all employed in the struggle, there is no doubt of the advisability of organising a party ... The exact point has been reached where the Church has a right to have her supremacy acknowledged, and this, surely, is no time to let that supremacy go by default, to minimise her claims, and to bow to the dominant State.'
252. Ibid., August 24, 1878. Two Members of the Assembly, Mason and O'Hea, were singled out for censure because they had taken part in the opening ceremonies of a number of public schools. The editor stated unequivocally 'No Catholic, then, without violating the loyalty he owes and professes to the Vicar of Christ can by act or word express approval of our system of education.'
253. Advocate, July 19, 1879. O'Hea and O'Loghlen moved an amendment against a resolution of a Catholic meeting at St. Kilda on July 13, that a Catholic organisation be formed to influence the general election in order to gain concessions for Catholic education. Their amendment was lost, and they were accused of having considered their private political ambitions before the interests of their community. For a non-Catholic report on the St. Kilda meeting, see Argus, July 14, 1879.

rigid views of their clergy on secular education, the 'Catholic vote' became an important factor in the elections between 1879 and 1884, and a Royal Commission on education was gained under the Berry-Service coalition in 1884. Though the Catholic 'balance of power' strength was diminished by the failure of the O'Lochlen ministry, the Victorian Labour movement left maintenance of the Education Act an open question in the nineties,²⁵⁴ a testimony to the achievement of the Church in influencing the Catholic laity.

This victory had been achieved with much less sectarian violence, and much less damage to the Irish-Catholic self-image than that in New South Wales. A paper begun in November, 1872 which addressed itself directly to the Irish of the colony, and seemed to propose to supply the loss of a specifically national focus created by the demise of Duffy in the political arena, failed within four months.²⁵⁵ A proposal from Ballarat in 1874 for the creation of an Irish organisation was swiftly rejected by the Advocate, as being too exclusive. But these ventures were unsuccessful not because they proposed a union that might be unacceptable to non-Irish

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254. C. L. Hamilton, 'Irish-Australian Catholics and the Labour Party; a historical survey of developing alignments in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland 1890-1921', M.A. thesis, Melbourne University, 1957, p. 82.
255. This was the Irishman, owned and edited by Michael O'Reilly, former editor of the Banner of Belfast (which has supported Father Dunne against the strictures of Bishop Goold in the fifties). The paper appeared on November 28, 1872, with the aim to combat sectarianism by organising the Irish colonists, for 'If Irishmen were united as they should be, their numbers, and the conspicuous ability possessed by so many amongst them, would secure them an influence in the State to which they have never yet attained'. Its last issue appeared, without warning of the paper's cessation, on March 28, 1873.

colonial opinion, but because they specifically denied the Irish-Catholic connection. Michael O'Reilly, editor of the Irishman, alleged that the clergy opposed the circulation of his paper because it constituted a rival to the Advocate ²⁵⁶ and in fact this may have been so. But this preference was itself informed by the fact that O'Reilly's publication aimed at a total Irish audience, and must therefore underplay the role of the Catholic religion in Irish nationality. The response to the Ballarat proposal for an organisation 'to crush out all sectarianism and party feeling, and join together merely as Irishmen' was similarly motivated: the Advocate took pains to point out that the Church was not a sect and that a Catholic organisation could not therefore be accused of sectarianism, and that Catholics should not obscure, by joining such an association, the fact that they were Catholics.²⁵⁷ It was evident at the 1883 election that very nearly a total connection between Irish and Catholic emphases had been established: the two facets existed on equal terms as long as there were issues to elicit them equally, as with the education and Home Rule questions of that year. The Victorian Irish supported Home Rule with few dissident voices (though some noticeable absences) from 1881, and were not intimidated by the furore surrounding the alleged connection of the Land League with the Phoenix Park murders in 1882. Certainly it is true that support of Home Rule broadened in Victoria, as in the other colonies, after the conversion to the cause of Gladstone in 1886, by which Home Rule was made less vulnerable to charges of an anti-British orientation. But it

256. Irishman, February 27, 1873.

257. Advocate, May 30, 1874.

would appear that the greater relative support of Home Rule by the Victorian Irish was a measure of the lesser extent to which they had been intimidated in the struggles over education, and the more prominent role of Irishmen in the radical, liberal and secular movements in colonial society and politics. Thus the Victorian Irish saw themselves less exclusively as Catholics than did their counterparts in New South Wales or South Australia, and were more secure in their position of integration with the majority line in colonial thought, from which they could thus confidently make their assertion of a simultaneous minority concern for the independence of Ireland and the state support of independent Catholic schools. This situation was gradually undermined as the Irish component of the Victorian population diminished and colonial ties with Ireland weakened, but again it was not in vain that Archbishop Mannix appealed to the national sentiments of the Irish (or, rather, Irish-Australians) of Victoria in 1914, during his revival of the campaign for aid to Catholic education.

The Home Rule movement was the last episode in the saga of the Irish of the Australian colonies. For many, it appeared as a chance to do something positive for Ireland, to strive towards the definite aim of Irish national independence. This idea was strengthened by the comments of a number of contemporary observers that sufficient pressure from the colonies could force England to grant Home Rule to Ireland.²⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Home Rule as it entered colonial life with the Redmond tour in 1883 was a much misunderstood concept, confused by many with the earlier Land League. Colonists who had experienced the land monopoly of squatters sympathised with the aims of the League, while other Irish patriots were concerned with the imprisonment of Parnell and other members of the since-outlawed League as another instance of English oppression. Hostility to the mission also stemmed from these associations, particularly the accusations aimed against Irish ingratitude for the Gladstone Land Bill of 1881, which had granted many of the initial demands of the Land League. The speeches of the Redmonds during their Australian tour revealed their awareness of these conditions, and concentrated on appealing to an essentially historical sense of legitimate Irish grievances against England, while simultaneously stressing the constitutional basis of the Home Rule demand and attempting to draw parallels between this and the legislative independence enjoyed by

258. 'Perhaps not the least grave fact of the case, in the eyes of us colonists at least, is the general sympathy of the colonial Irish throughout the Empire with the Home Rule demand. This is happily as yet a hardly known power for disturbance, but the late incident as to the Queensland Governor may be regarded as not impossibly only the beginning of trouble, while at the same time it is not necessarily associated with disloyalty in the colonies.' W. Westgarth, Half a Century of Australasian Progress, (1889), pp.391-2.

the colonies.²⁵⁹ As yet, Home Rule had not taken on the exclusive religious association summarised by the equation of Home Rule with 'Rome Rule' - rather it was the news of the alleged connection between the Land League and the violent assassination of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and his Under-Secretary in 1882 that most seriously damaged the mission in 1883. Even here, however, the damage was more to the respectability and constitutional image presented by the advocates of Home Rule, deterring those who had already been reluctant to commit themselves to this controversial cause, and did not perceptibly affect the flow of funds from the Irish community in general.

During the revived Home Rule movement of the 'nineties, after the defeat of Gladstone's Home Rule Bill of 1886, an important role was played in Australian support of the movement by Cardinal Moran of New South Wales, and a new element was introduced by his successful moves to gain the support of the new Australian Labour parties. In the early 'eighties, however, the Home Rule movement in Australia was essentially a Victorian movement, with substantial support from the large and recently-introduced Irish immigrant population of Queensland. The first branch of the Land League was founded in Gympie, Queensland, in 1880, and the South Australian Irish were among

259. 'What do I mean by Home Rule? I mean by Home Rule the restoration to Ireland of representative government, and I define representative government to mean government in accordance with the constitutionally expressed will of a majority of the people and carried out by a Ministry constitutionally responsible to those whom they govern ... The idea at the bottom of this proposal is the desirability of finding some middle course between separation on the one hand and over-centralisation of government on the other.' John Redmond in Melbourne, July 1883. Quoted in D. Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, p. 52.

the first contributors of the cause, but the League was organised on a federal colonial basis from Melbourne in 1883, its Treasurer Joseph Winter, its main 'advocate' the Victorian Catholic paper of which he was editor.²⁶⁰ At the Irish-Australian Convention held in Melbourne in November, 1883, 117 of the delegates were from Victoria, compared with twenty-three from New South Wales and only six from South Australia, and almost half of the funds collected during the ten month period of the Redmond tour were contributed by the Victorian Irish.²⁶¹ The response of the Irish in the various colonies to the movement was a measure of their condition and conditioning in colonial society, as Catholics as well as Irishmen. Thus reactions to the Redmond tour may be regarded as a useful measure of the position achieved by the Irish in each of the colonies at the closing point of this study.

In South Australia, as in each of the colonies, the press was hostile to the mission, though it could find only ingratitude, and not sedition, in the speeches given by Redmond. The men taking a leading part in the reception and subsequent meetings of the lecturers were those who normally represented the Catholic community, and the Bishop himself accompanied John Redmond to his first Adelaide meeting. That meeting was held in the Town Hall and was presided over by Charles Cameron Kingston, colonial-born son of a pioneer Irish Protestant arrival and Member of the House of Assembly for

260. For a detailed study of the Home Rule movement in Australia, see G. M. Tobin, 'The Sea-Divided Gael', M.A. thesis, 1969.

261. Irish-Australian Convention, Gathering of the sea-divided Gael. Report of the Proceedings of the Convention, pp. 4-5, 11.

West Adelaide. Nor were other halls refused for the Redmonds' meetings as they were in the other colonies.²⁶² The Redmonds had completed their Adelaide tour, however, before news arrived that an informer had linked the murders of Lord Cavendish and Under-secretary Bourke with the Land League. It was after this information was received that Kingston, though asserting his sympathy with 'very many of the objects' of the League, refused the Presidency of the newly-formed Adelaide branch of that body.²⁶³ The protest meeting against the mission held on February 13, addressed by an Irish Catholic of no prior fame who wished 'to give the English side' of the issue and chaired by G. J. Cotton, Member of the Legislative Council and former head of the defunct South Australian Protestant Association, drew an audience of only 300, most of whom arrived late. Nevertheless, correspondence to the Register indicates a wide range of fringe hostility to the mission or to its aims and arguments. 'Philo', for example, blamed drink as the large part of Ireland's problems, as did 'Brin'. G. W. Cotton and 'Liberal' resented the lack of any gratitude by the Irish for England's recent attempts at reform. J. S. Reilly objected to the disturbance a local branch of the League would cause to the 'peace and harmony' of South Australia, while 'A Sufferer' put the case of the Irish landlords who were placed in a miserable position by this tenant violence and agitation.²⁶⁴ Few Irishmen opposed or ignored the appeal, however; there were no conspicuous absences to

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262. A South Australian delegate to the Convention, J. A. Hewitt, did say, however, that a major hall in Adelaide has been refused to the mission. Irish-Australian Convention, op. cit., p. 18.
263. Evidence of the Influence of this news may be found in two letters to the Register of John Green Ark, one of February 8, 1883 supporting the mission and Home Rule, another of March 1, 1883 repudiating this stand. News of the alleged connection of the League with the murders was published in the Register on February 19. The Redmonds had left the previous day.
264. Register, February 13, 15, 23, 1883.

which the Register could point, as it did with reference to Victoria.²⁶⁵ Possibly the absence of any previous national agitation made expectations less of the South Australian Irish. In addition, the mission was endorsed by Bishop Reynolds and by Dr. Michael Gunson, a leading Irish Catholic layman, who chaired the large Redmond meeting held in St. Francis' hall. But Gunson had made it clear that he did not favour an Irish Republic, and it was apparent from the comments made by the Bishop and other supporters that it was the aims of the Land League with which they were in agreement, rather than the newer, political, 'Home Rule' demands for Irish national independence. Thus Bishop Reynolds stated -

... he was convinced that this was a sacred cause, second to none but that of holy religion - a cause whose object was that Ireland should be free and united with England and Scotland in a prosperous nation. 266

One correspondent, 'Probable Subscriber', asked why prominent Catholics at the Redmond lectures were not agitating on behalf of farmers in the colony and compared rental conditions in Ireland favourably with those in South Australia,²⁶⁷ but there was no evidence of the influence of the mission in the next election of April, 1884.²⁶⁸ There was no discussion of Home Rule in the South Australian legislature, and even objections to the landing of

265. Register, June 14, 1883.

266. Register, February 10, 1883. My italics.

267. Register, February 13, 1883.

268. It is possible however, that the most active supporters of the movement met personal hostility. J. A. Hewitt, a delegate to the Convention in November and a resident of South Australia since 1840, said he believed the Redmond mission had revealed intolerance he had never expected in his 43 years experience of the colony. Irish-Australian Convention, op. cit., p. 18.

the Phoenix Park murder informers in Melbourne in August, 1883 were made in general rather than in national terms by all but the lone voice of Irish member, P. B. Coglein.²⁶⁹ The movement does not appear to have had a lasting effect even upon the young Irish-Australians of the colony, who gravitated instead to the Australian nationalist movements and who were to be found among the earliest volunteers for the Australian Expeditionary Force in 1914 and 1915. The South Australian Irish did not figure largely in reports on the mission circulated subsequently in Ireland. Michael Davitt, writing of his lecture in 1895, said of Kapunda -

I met many of my own countrymen here, as in every other centre of activity and enterprise in Australasia, and they were as keenly sympathetic with the fight for Home Rule going on in 'the old land' as if Kapunda were somewhere in Connaught instead of being 14,000 miles away. The Land League had one of its world-encircling branches here, in its time. 270

This was essentially rhetoric, however, and testifies to the emotional rather than the practical involvement of long resident Irish immigrants with developments in Ireland. Comments on the Redmond mission singled out Adelaide for the enthusiasm of the local response²⁷¹ yet it soon became evident that this enthusiasm could be very closely controlled by what was allowed by the English Protestant majority society. In fact, real acceptance of Irishmen and of Catholicism in South Australia was not general, but the expression of this was so often covert and implicit

269. South Australian Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, August 1, 8 and 22, 1883.

270. M. Davitt, Life and Progress in Australasia, p. 63.

271. D. Gwynn, *op . cit.*, p. 51.

that it was not usually recognised except at times of abnormal crisis. In 1881, the Irish were only 6.5% of the South Australian population, and Catholics only 15%. There was obviously little that the Irish community of this colony could contribute to the national cause, and it was soon apparent that not all even wished to. Every move to organise support for the Irish movement, beginning with the Land League defence fund in January, 1881, met with a quite disproportionately hostile response and subsequent repudiations of the move by (usually anonymous) Irish colonists.²⁷² It is clear from the reports of the meetings in support of the Land League that each man created his own priorities and assigned to the League the aims and ambitions which he felt he could accept and justify.²⁷³ Thus the response to the movement was a measure of individual and Irish group position achieved in the colony, and revealed the extent to which small numbers and years of substantial, if covert, pressure to conform to the norms and values of colonial society had reduced the self-assertion and

272. A meeting of January 26, 1881 at St. Francis Xavier's hall to raise funds for the defence of charged members of the Irish Land League drew a spate of letters commenting on the current extent of agrarian crime in Ireland and blaming this on the activities of the League (including one from 'An Irishman' who wished to inform the South Australian public that 'all Irishmen are not under the fanatic influence of the Parnell party' - February 3, 1881). A meeting to express sympathy for the Land League, June 30, 1883 prompted a Register editorial warning against making donations to the Land League because the funds would be used for the Home Rule agitation rather than to gain land legislation; and the first Redmond meeting of February 9, 1883 prompted a protest meeting in the Town Hall on the 13th.

273. Thus at the 1882 meeting in sympathy for the recently outlawed Land League, the first consideration of Dr. Munson was to gain a formal repudiation of the Phoenix Park murders and their connection with the League or the Irish people as a whole (Register, July 1, 1882); and, following objections raised to the meeting of January, 1881 in support of the Land League, one of the Irishmen attending that meeting sought to stress the loyalty of colonial Irish at the subsequent St. Patrick's day dinner at which he took the chair. (Register, March 18, 1881).

possibly even the self-awareness of the South Australian Irish community.

In New South Wales, Home Rule and the Redmond mission were consistently supported by the Freeman's Journal, though without the total commitment of the Advocate in Melbourne. The Sydney Morning Herald played down the Redmond tour, preferring to allow the failure of prominent men to support the lectures speak for itself. News of the altered connection of the Land League with the Phoenix Park murders preceded the mission to Sydney. A number of prominent men withdrew their support in response, and the first meetings were dismal failures. John Redmond himself later commented -

When I arrived at Sydney the Phoenix Park murders were the talk of the colony. I received a chilling reception. All the respectable people who had promised support kept away. The priests would not help me, except the Jesuits, who were friendly to me as an old Clongowes boy. A leading citizen who had promised to take the chair at my first meeting would not come. Sir Henry Parkes, the Prime Minister, proposed that I should be expelled from the colony, but the motion was defeated. The Irish working men stood by me and, in fact, saved the situation. 274

This support could not, however, give the movement the respectability it had lost in many eyes. Even the St. Patrick's day banquet of that year, at which John Redmond was a guest, attracted less members of the Assembly than did a protest meeting against the mission on March 6th. Stances taken by prominent political figures were basically the same as on earlier Irish issues, with John Robertson implicitly supporting the League by his presence at the banquet, and the 'Kiama Ghost' Parkes the main speaker at the protest meeting against the mission. James Martin dissociated himself from either group, as he had always done in Irish affairs, and

Orangemen in the Assembly were eager to capitalise on the antagonism provoked by the lectures. The climate of New South Wales generally was unfavourable to a dispassionate and objective appraisal of the Home Rule demands. Historic Irish grievances had been much exploited in recent years by the Freeman's Journal and the Catholic hierarchy in its education campaign. On the other hand, many Irish who might have supported the movement were intimidated by the disloyalty accusations raised against them following the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868 and the declaration of Papal Infallibility in 1870. Nor was the advocacy of the Irish cause by Irish colonists always in the best taste or the best interests of the movement: Henry Copeland, Member for East Sydney, aided the Redmond mission little by his comments on the strength and partisanship of the Irish vote within the colony and the implication that this would be used for sectarian causes.²⁷⁵ The Herald was unable to accuse John Redmond's speeches of sedition or even of intemperance, but it found cause for dissatisfaction with the echoing of his sentiments by men who had long left Ireland and its problems behind. Thus it remarked caustically on the comments of the speakers at the St. Patrick's day dinner that year -

Many of Erin's sons having taken up a very safe position on these shores have ample opportunity to be patriotic as well as devout, and they utilise the position fully. 276

This type of comment may have been harsh in its implication, but it was not entirely unjust. Just as the Catholics of the colonies paid lip service to the cause of the Papacy in 1860 and lauded the efforts of the Irish

275. Sydney Morning Herald, March 19, 1883.

276. Herald, March 23, 1883.

Brigade, but made no attempt to actively join the fight against the forces of 'anti-Christ', so there was no move by colonial Irishmen to prove the statement of J. G. O'Connor in 1889 that 'if it were necessary, there were thousands of Irish-Australians prepared to die for the Old Land'.²⁷⁷ The distinction made by a clerical delegate at the Convention in November between -

... two great classes of Irishmen - the sentimental and the true. The former was an Irishman while the character cost him nothing; the latter was an Irishman at all times and under every circumstance, whether trying or prosperous.²⁷⁸

was particularly relevant to the Irish of New South Wales, but the 'true' Irishman anywhere in Australia still need only support his countrymen and Irish national movements from his position within the colonies, against the expressed antagonism or misrepresentation of his fellow colonists. The danger that a patriotic Irishman faced was not a physical one, but condemnation or ridicule or even the loss of position or promotion. The concern of the Sydney press with the number of 'respectable' men supporting Home Rule, or any other agitation, is an indication of this element or implied threat of risk to one's standing in supporting national movements.

The Irish of New South Wales had supported earlier national causes, including at least the aims of the Fenian movement, but the apparent manifestation of this violent organisation in the colony with the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868 had limited the sympathies

277. Speech at picnic, October 30, 1889 for the Irish delegates John Dillon, T. G. Desmonde and John Deasy. Report in Irish National Association archives, Sydney.

278. Irish-Australian Convention, op. cit., p. 31. Comments of Father Fallon of Burrowa, New South Wales.

of the local Irish, and severely tested the tolerance of the non-Irish colonists. The sense of individual colonial identity was very strong at that time, and the people of Sydney - indeed, the whole of New South Wales - had felt keenly the shame of this incident occurring in their colony.²⁷⁹ There had been a wide spectrum of opinion regarding the blame accruing to the whole Irish community for the deed of one of their number, but the ultimate result of the incident was the imposition of a sense of guilt upon the local Irish body. It would appear that many Irish accepted this situation, probably with a sense of bitterness but largely without argument, since attempts to counter the implications of an inherent Irish disloyalty were treated as mere blustering. The success of this intimidation was first seen in the failure of many colonists to support the Irish State Prisoners' fund in 1869; the declaration of Papal Infallibility at the Vatican Council the following year, and the interpretation of this by non-Catholics as an assertion of temporal authority over all Catholics, further exacerbated mistrust and intimidated the Catholic body.

These events of 1868 to 1870 had thus severely damaged national self-assertion, yet without modifying the Irish stereotype in the eyes of other colonists. When the Sydney press alleged that many Irishmen were 'skulking' in their failure to attend the Redmond meetings, this did not take into account that many of those formerly active and prominent in Irish national demonstrations were dead, and it ignored the support of the

279. Cowburn, P. M., 'The attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh 1868', Royal Australian Historical Society Journal and Proceedings, vol. 55 pt. I, March 1969. The Argus in Melbourne was disturbed that 'The sad affair will be known as the crime of an Australian, though of Irish birth, and it will matter little in England that it occurred in the east, and not in the middle or the west portions of the continent.' March 13, 1868.

movement by Irish Catholics who were not political figures and by many native-born who were yet to make their impact on colonial life. More importantly, such comments revealed that critics of the Home Rule movement were at the same time disturbed to find Irish colonists who agreed with them in opposing the mission. Irishmen were expected to act as Irishmen. Any diversity or deviation from expected form made stereotyping and classification (and therefore simplistic explanations or ridicule) more difficult. As a result, allegations of 'skulking' came not only from those who supported the mission and its aims, but from non-Irish who were themselves antagonistic to the cause, even though such 'defections' were simultaneously used to show that the Home Rule cry was not a genuinely national aspiration. Irish colonists found themselves hamstrung, as they had been a decade earlier over the O'Farrell incident. The Redmond tour, which might have provided a catalyst for all the indignation and repressed national pride of the New South Wales Irish, instead revealed how completely they had been tried and limited by stereotyping in their combined religious-national role, and how much they were prepared to sacrifice a natural enthusiasm for their country, in the desire for peace and acceptance in the colony.

The strength of the Home Rule movement in Victoria could not be denied by even the most hostile critic, but there was also in Victoria evidence of defection from the cause by individual Catholic champions. This was obscured by the wholehearted support given by the Catholic organ, the Advocate, and

by the rivalry increasingly implied between supporters of the movement and the Orange order, (championed by the Ase), which was essentially a religious-political rivalry. Articles in the Advocate specifically linked Irish nationalism with Catholicism, thus potentially alienating Protestant Irish identification with Home Rule.²⁸⁰ Nevertheless, the Advocate was not prepared to go beyond the bounds set for colonial nationalist expression by previous local organisations. Thus it stressed that the Irish Catholics of Australia, while advocating Home Rule, were only spectators of developments in Ireland, and would not aid the achievement of that end except through constitutional means. This stand was entirely acceptable to the colonial clergy, who were prominent among the official supporters of the Redmonds at most of their lectures, but it did not modify colonial hostility towards the mission or its Home Rule aim, nor did it encourage participation by those who disagreed with the Advocate's emphasis on a Catholic orientation in the national movement, especially those who had already been antagonised by this religious emphasis in colonial affairs.

The leading Irish politicians had opposed the action of the Hierarchy, through the Advocate from 1870 and through the Roman Catholic Defense Association founded in 1879 of promoting the single issue of education at the expense of general reform measures. This conflict was resolved for

280. 'Ireland's strength is in Catholicity and virtue; her weakness is in irreligion, disorder and crime. She is fighting not one battle but two; she is struggling against ruthless oppression for her political rights; she is contending against the forces of evil for the preservation of her Catholic spirit and fame.' Advocate, September 2, 1882.

the Catholic politicians by the passage of the Reform Act in 1832: the action of the Hierarchy and the resultant equivocation of Catholic members and electors had, however, alienated many members of the Berry reform party and created a distrust of the sincerity of Catholic liberals. Possibly this was influential in limiting the overt support given by Irish politicians to the Home Rule movement, since this could be regarded as another instance of an exclusive affiliation. It is not surprising to find that Francis Longmore, the lone Protestant signee of the Grattan address in 1882, was the only one of the five Irishmen signing that statement who did not feel constrained to apologise for that action in order to safeguard his political career.²⁸¹ Nor is it surprising to find Bryan O'Loughlen, for example, joining the advocates of Home Rule only after 1886, after the famous 'conversion' of Gladstone to the cause significantly broadened the basis of support for the movement.²⁸² On the other hand, it is unlikely that a Catholic champion like John O'Shanassy was alone in his objection to local interference in what was essentially a question of Ireland's relations with England. The man who had declared in the debates on the Lord Cavendish-Burke murders in 1882 -

281. The Grattan address was a message forwarded to the people of Ireland by five members of the Victorian Legislative Assembly in 1882 expressing their support for the Home Rule demand. The message spoke of the Imperial Parliament as an 'alien' government, but the main objection taken to the document in Victoria was to the fact that the five Members signing it (Duffy, Callaghan, Toohy, Brophy and Longmore) had done so as members of the Victorian legislature and thus had allegedly compromised that whole body. The issue was debated in the Assembly on May 31, June 6 and 8, 1882 on the motion of censure of Patterson of the five members. An amendment to accept instead their avowals of loyalty to the Queen and 'regretting' their action was passed without a division on June 8. See Victorian Parliamentary Debates, 1882, pp. 448-525. At the following elections, all of the members except Longmore made public apologies at the hustings.

282. P. Breen, *op. cit.*, p. 8; G. M. Tobin, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

As an Irishman, I feel proud of having been born in Ireland. I love that country and its traditions; and I certainly will not sit in this House and silently hear any man slander a brave and ancient nation because of the misconduct of a few individuals. 283

was appalled to find the question of Irish loyalty brought nearer home by the Grattan address controversy and the proposed Redmond lecture tour, and stated -

I think it would be very desirable if my countrymen here would endeavour, as much as possible to avoid interfering in the exciting scene which is now going on, and particularly as the best endeavours are being used to bring the question to a settlement ... We here enjoy perfect liberty and great constitutional rights; and though every Irish colonist would naturally desire his native country to be placed in the same fortunate position, yet it is very desirable to love your country wisely and not too well - certainly not to show love by demonstrations which, when they come to be valued, will be found to be of very little importance. 284

The assumption that Irish colonists, of Victoria or elsewhere, supported equally each aspect of the Home Rule movement, cannot be accepted. The 'payment of Members of Parliament' fund was only a quarter of that subscribed to the Land League, and that for the Parnell defence fund was even less.²⁸⁵ As G. M. Tobin has stated in his study of the Home Rule movement in Australia, colonial Irishmen advocating Home Rule 'accepted and adhered to basic values concerning the rule of law and the respect due

283. Victorian Parliamentary Debates, May 9, 1882.

284. Parliamentary Debates, May 31, 1882, p. 457.

285. Of the total of £22,430.9.2 collected between October, 1882 and July, 1887, £15,188.2.4 was subscribed to the Irish National League, £3,996.10.1 to the Payment of Members fund and £2415.0.6 to the Parnell Testimonial fund. Printed sheet entitled 'Winter v. Syme. Slanders Refuted', a supplement to the Advocate. Copy in J. J. Winter Scrapbook in Latrobe library.

to constitutional processes'.²⁸⁶ Colonial Irish support of Home Rule should not be blown out of proportion, nor regarded as evidence of a continuing rejection by Irish immigrants of the life and values they found in the colonies. Tobin draws a delicate picture of 'the loneliness of the Irish community, torn between the natural desire to give aid and comfort to their suffering kinsfolk and the equally strong desire to retain the goodwill of their fellow colonists'.²⁸⁷ But in fact the nationalist movement in its colonial manifestations allowed for a wide range of involvement, and collections for famine relief and other essentially humanitarian causes in Ireland aroused objections only from an extremist fringe.²⁸⁸ The peaks of concern for Home Rule in the colonies were both limited in time and externally determined, and the problems of conflicting loyalties varied accordingly for the colonial Irish. The Australian Home Rule organisations were maintained after 1883, especially in Victoria, but suffered from the problems of all societies, of lack of enduring public interest and reliance on a few individuals for their continuing existence.²⁸⁹

286. Tobin, op. cit., p. 284.

287. Ibid., p. 124.

288. The collection for famine relief for Ireland in 1879 was very widely subscribed to and generally supported in the colonial press, including the Age.

289. Breen, op. cit., p. 10.

CONCLUSION

The position reached by the Irish in Australia by 1880 was little affected by the interest or rejection displayed by Irish immigrants in developments in their homeland during the Home Rule agitation. Certainly the success of the Irish appears to have been more limited than that of English or Scots immigrants, and the predominance of the Irish in the labour force as unskilled workers, domestic servants, publicans, and the most menial positions in the country, was a fact in reality as well as in popular lore. Yet it would seem that Irish colonists had adapted to a remarkable degree to the views and demands of colonial society, despite the hindrances of arriving from a country which had provided many of them with no capital, frequently little education, and the enormous handicap of a Catholic faith in a basically Protestant environment. It is clear that Irish immigrants were well aware of the disabilities met in the colonies simply on account of their race and religion, and that they resented these, often bitterly. But the fact that prejudice did not extend to all sections of society, nor usually to personal relations, together with the impossibility of returning to Ireland, ensured that most Irish immigrants persisted in their attempts to reconcile their differences with the norms of colonial society. This did not involve the total sacrifice of an Irish heritage or the alienation of the Irish community and its isolation into narrow national groupings, for colonial society was flexible enough to accommodate a modified form of Irish patriotism. Irish immigrants entered into land, Labour and Australian-nationalist movements that were to vitally influence Australian history, and, though they might introduce into these struggles the experiences, the bias and the expressions of their Irish past, the Irish thus gained a sense of involvement

in and responsibility for the future of their adopted country.

The most important single influence upon the assimilation of the majority of Irish immigrants - one which acted both as a barrier to total assimilation, and as a vital link between the old and the new that made integration more possible - was the Catholic Church. In many ways, the Church was still proving inadequate to the realities of the Australian situation, and to the secular needs of its members: the Plenary Council of the Catholic Hierarchy, held in 1885, still urged its members to 'strive to secure for themselves a just share in the public lands, otherwise, when these latter are no longer in the market, their children must necessarily be shearers or farm labourers, wandering from shed to shed, and from harvest to harvest' and to 'Save your earnings for a couple of years, get homesteads, and make for yourselves some provision and resting place for the evening of your life ... God never meant the Irish Catholic to be the wanderer that he is over the face of the earth.'²⁹⁰ In the face of the attraction of the Labour movement, however, the Church was forced to re-evaluate the situation of the laity, and the first Catholic Congress of 1900 discussed the trend to city living, while the third, in 1909, considered the relations between 'The Church and The Worker' as an issue integral to the future development of Catholicism in Australia.²⁹¹ The

290. Archbishops and Bishops Pastoral in Plenary Council, November 29, 1885. Quoted in P. O'Farrell, Documents in Australian Catholic History, vol. 2, pp. 21, 19.

291. Paper delivered by Thomas Hughes at the First Australasian Catholic Congress (Proceedings of the First Australasian Catholic Congress 1900); P. S. Cleary on 'The Church and the Worker', Proceedings of the Third Australasian Catholic Congress 1909, pp. 248-70.

perpetuation of the education issue, and the emergence of other major areas of Catholic vs. non-Catholic division, as over socialism, have ensured that the Catholic Church has never been considered just another denomination in Australia, yet Australian society and the Church itself regard extremist opinions and overt bigotry as aberrations from a norm of tolerance.²⁹² In 1880, there were still many battles to be fought over Catholicism, and the last vestiges of Irish-Australian deviation from the standard of Imperialist loyalty were yet to be seen. But by this time, the Australian colonies provided an environment in which a man could be both an Irish nationalist and a loyal Catholic, and still largely feel himself in harmony with the pulse of colonial society, and bound to Australia's future. Perhaps the last word should come from such a man, Philip Mahoney, the evicted Cork tenant farmer who in 1879 had in Melbourne 'pitched the Queen and all Her followers to Hell'. His nationalist sentiments were as hearty and as uncompromising as any member of the New South Wales Irish national societies of the sixties, and his nostalgia for friends and a life abandoned in Ireland was as warm and deep as any emigrant. But Mahoney had lived over ten years in Melbourne, with unskilled but constant and satisfying employment, accepting the Church's

292. 'As a matter of course, the majority, by a good deal, of Australians are far from seeing eye to eye with Catholics in regard to the origin and constitution of the Church. Many of them even regard the Church's claims as wholly inadmissible on purely dogmatic grounds. There are men who take a sour view of Catholic progress and foresee nothing but evil to come of it ... But the important fact to note here is that nearly all such attempts to discredit the Church in the esteem of the Australian public recoil with more or less injury upon their authors; certainly the net result to the Church is always satisfactory ... We must own, and indeed we are proud to own, that not a little of the money which stands to the credit of Catholic institutions come out of the pockets of Australians who are not themselves Catholics.' Right Rev. Dr. Delany, co-adjutor Bishop of Hobart, at the 1900 Congress, op. cit., p. 143.

strictures against national education, taking a lively interest in colonial conditions and developments as well as in the state of Ireland, proud of his son's concern for the 'olde countrie', but committed to a future in the new. Mahoney wrote in 1881 -

The youngsters are growing up well educated, with pure Irish blood running in their veins. With one of the best mothers in Victoria to steer them through a virtuous life, why should I be dismayed. I got this job I mentioned and is now better off than ever I was in my life and so are all the rest of my old associates who left the [Cork] Harbour Trust with me. Johnny is getting on first class at college in Melbourne. He is surprising the Jesuit Fathers in there, he is so clever. A neighbour, a woman who is very fond of Kate asked him a few days ago what he intended doing with himself, he replied he would yet be a member of Parliament in Ireland ... We have had a grand season in Victoria this year and sheep and cattle are coming in folling fat ... Though it's sad to part with such friends still it will be a consolation for you all to know that they are all happy out here away from perhaps tyrannical landlords and Irish Bailiffs. Glorious my dear old friend, glorious it would appear to us if you all in Ireland were possessed of the same amount of freedom that we have out here and without which no people can be prosperous. 293

The persistence of troubles in Ireland may have provided a continual demand on the sympathies of Irish immigrants in Australia, but it also ensured that comparisons between life in the two countries were weighted heavily in favour of the adopted land. The Irish were faced with the problem in Australia of being a minority nationality and of being forced to question their values and national self-image in the context of a largely British society which constantly challenged any extreme national assertion. They were confronted with an always implicit and often very

293. Mahoney to Mr. L. Shanahan ("My dear friend Lar"), Lurrig, August 18, 1881 from Footscray. Privately loaned.

real conflict between what was expected of them by their Church, what colonial society demanded of them as 'Australians', and their own political and economic interests as individuals or as a class. Before the formal development of parties from the seventies, the Catholic-Protestant sectarian division was one of the most potent issues in Australian politics, and as both a minority and an allegedly 'foreign' element, the Catholics fared badly in every encounter. Nevertheless, the religious and civil equality of the colonies was no empty boast, and the lack of any viable alternative to integration was a strong incentive for the Irish to reach a satisfactory compromise with colonial society. Rarely was the society they found, in practice, too rigid for this to be achieved.

SUMMARY

Irish immigrants to Australia constituted a large portion of the total population of the colonies prior to 1850, at times as much as one-third of the population of a particular colony. Irish emigration before 1850 was motivated and controlled by developments in Ireland rather than by the positive attractions of the colonies and, though this situation was later modified, it was the numbers and the character of the early immigration that determined the situation of the Irish community in the colonies and the response to them by fellow colonists. Prior to 1850, the situation of Ireland was extremely depressed and the emigrants from there were very largely poor, ill-educated and limited in their experience and outlook. English attitudes to Ireland during this period were hostile, either from economic causes, fear of Ireland as a threat to national security or antagonism to the Catholic religion embraced by a majority of the Irish population. These attitudes were transported to Australia by the English administrators of the first penal settlements, who found little cause in contacts with the brutalised convicts to question their preconceptions, and by the free English immigrants who constituted the majority of the population of each colony and who very largely provided the social and political leadership in Australia before 1900.

The Irish immigrants brought with them their own prejudices and loyalties, but to the extent that these clashed with English Protestant values they were forced to modify them. Resistance to this varied from one individual to another and from colony to colony, depending on the rewards offered for conformist behaviour as against the backing one received from fellow Irishmen for an aggressive national stance. The influence in this

of colonial newspapers almost uniformly hostile to any exclusive sectarian or national affiliation, and the ever-present but implicit delineation of the colonies as essentially 'British', is incalculable. The hindrances met by Irish immigrants were based on the assumption that behaviour exhibited by Irishmen in response to specific conditions in Ireland would be displayed in the radically different situation of the colonies. In fact, Irish immigrants did recognise similar injustices in the colonies, particularly in land legislation, that would not have been conceded by others, while the over-representation of Irish in the statistics of crime and insanity seemed to support expectations of eccentric and unacceptable behaviour from Irish immigrants. However, the very absence of separate or distinct Irish associations, whether of working men, farmers or simply patriots, and the conspicuous failure of attempts to found ethnic Irish newspapers, testify to the extent to which Irish immigrants were willing and able to accept the values and behaviour considered relevant to the situation in which they found themselves. Differences between colonies in this respect were largely fortuitous, defined by the numbers, time and arrival and rise of individuals rather than by anything inherent in the particular colonial situation or the immigrants who settled there.

Persistent criticism of Irish immigrants did ultimately limit the aid given to other Irish to emigrate and the integration of those who did arrive. But as ties with Ireland were broken, individually and as a group, Irish and Irish-Australians found their remaining estrangement from an emerging Australian nationality was defined almost exclusively by their religion. This was a development both forced upon them by constant identification as such by others and one which was actively fostered by

the Catholic Church in its struggle for the retention of state aid to denominational schools. Yet because at no stage after 1829 was proscription of Catholicism even mooted as a legislative move, and because the vaunted liberty and equality in the colonies was the stand from which accusations of discrimination levelled by Irish Catholics could best be repudiated, this lingering isolation of Catholics as a denomination was not sufficient to prevent Irish Catholics from regarding themselves as citizens of the colonies and being concerned with the Australian future as their own. The history of the Irish in Australia has been marked by differences of opinion rather than open conflict and these, except as they related directly to religion, were sporadic and short-lived. Allegations of discrimination in employment were made by both sides, but at no time were these deemed sufficiently widespread or one-sided to warrant legal investigation. In nineteenth century Australia, non-Irish and Protestant preconceptions were met by Irish and Catholic preconceptions. Because of their numerical minority position and the constitution of the colonies as English outposts of civilisation, the Irish immigrants were placed at a disadvantage in the ensuing clashes. Except in matters of religion, however, the result was not a conflict so deep or equal that both sides retreated into separate worlds. Colonists, and particularly those who discovered they had economic interests or social ambitions in common, found they could differentiate the specific from the general, and co-exist peaceably with their neighbours in the colony while continuing to endorse general criticisms of 'the Irish' or 'the English'. It is the failure to distinguish this that has given rise to some exaggerated impressions of the distinctiveness of the Irish in colonial society and the perpetuation of a sense of grievance among a section of the Australian population of Irish heritage.

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